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Deepening Engagement in the EU-SADC EPA Roll-Out

Southern Africa Trust

Table of Contents

Acronyms	3
1. Background	4
2. The Botswana Economy	4
3. The EPA Process	11
4. Status Of Implementation Of The EPA	15
5. Conclusion	20
6. Policy Recommendations	21
7. Recommended List Of CSOS / Stakeholders To Be Involved In National Consultations	22
8. References	23

Acronyms

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific States
ASF	Annual Stakeholder Forum
BFTU	Botswana Federation of Trade Unions
BOCOBONET	Botswana Community Based Organizations Network
BOCONGO	Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organizations
CEEP	Citizen Economic Empowerment Policy
CP	Competition Policy
CMT	Committee of Ministers of Trade
CPA	Cotonou Partnership Agreement
EDDS	Economic Diversification Drive Strategy
ENSAP	Empowerment of Non-State Actors' Programme
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement
EDTC	Economic Diversification and Trade Council
EC	European Community
EU	European Union
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IDP	Industrial Development Policy
IEPA	Interim Economic Partnership Agreement
JC	Joint Commission
LPI	Logistics Performance Index
MITI	Ministry of Investment Trade and Industry
NCTPN	National Committee on Trade Policy and Negotiations
NSAs	Non-State Actors
NTP	National Trade Policy
NEDC	National Economic Diversification Council
PSDS	Private Sector Development Strategy
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SCCTF	Special Committee on Customs and Trade Facilitation
SEZP	Special Economic Zone Policy
SSA	Sub Saharan Africa
TDC	Trade and Development Committee
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
WTO	World Trade Organization

1. Background

This Report on Botswana forms part of a major research project whose purpose is to gather detailed information on the SADC – EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) from the start of the negotiations, signing of the Agreement, to the present moment. The information is intended for the benefit of Non-State Actors (NSA), who have indicated that they were not adequately involved in the EPA process. The research critically examines and highlights key issues, weaknesses and gaps in the process. It also identifies opportunities and challenges, as well as implications of the EPAs on individual SADC EPA economies and the region and recommends priority areas for NSA participation in the process.

The Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA 2000) is premised on five key pillars:

- reinforcement of the political dimension of relations between the ACP countries and the European Union
- involvement of civil society, the private sector and other non-state players
- poverty reduction, confirmed as a key objective within the context of the objectives and targets agreed at international level, especially the Millennium Development Goals
- an innovative economic and trade development framework
- rationalization of financial instruments and a system of flexible programming.

The pillar referring to the involvement of civil society, private sector and other NSAs in the implementation of the Agreement is directly linked to this assignment. The provisions on Political Dimension foresee the need for information exchange, fostering of mutual understanding as well as the need to agree on priorities and shared agendas with stakeholders: regional and sub-regional organizations and representatives of civil society organizations, in order to attain the objectives of the Partnership.

Out of the seven SADC Member States that negotiated the EPA under the SADC configuration, six countries (Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland), signed the goods chapter of the Agreement in June 2016. Parallel to processes to fully operationalize and implement this first phase of the full EPA, preparations to negotiate a Trade in Services Agreement are ongoing. An opportunity exists for NSA to participate in the EPA process during implementation of the Trade in Goods Agreement that has entered into provisional application and is currently being implemented, as well as negotiations for the Trade in Services Agreement once they take off.

2. The Botswana Economy

2.1 Macroeconomic Overview

Botswana is centrally located within the Southern African region, bordered by Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Angola on the west, south, east, north and north-west respectively. The population was estimated to be 2.25m by December 2016.

Botswana is considered a development success story in Africa, having transformed from being one of the poorest in Africa in the mid-1960s to its current upper middle-income status. Current rankings in terms of global competitiveness, rank Botswana 64th out of 138 countries, after Mauritius (45th) and South Africa (47th). The country has an average GDP per capita of US\$ 7,013, and a GDP (purchasing power parity) per capita of about \$16 735, as of December 2016, these being some of the highest indicators in Africa. Botswana's high gross national income gives it a modest standard of living and the highest human development index in Sub Saharan Africa (SSA).

The current National Development Plan (NDP 11), indicates that Botswana's high economic growth rate experienced since the 1970s (averaging 9.2% for the 20-year period from 1975/76 to 1995/96 and 8.7% thereafter to 2007/08), plunged to an average of 3.9% during NDP 10. This was mainly due

to the 2008/09 global financial and economic crises, as well as declining diamond revenues as the demand fell during this period. This situation was compounded by other challenges, such as the country's high levels of poverty; the narrow economic structure and attendant overdependence on the mining sector; low productivity related to shortages of water and electricity; difficulties with the ease of doing business; unemployment and inequality. Growth in real GDP is expected to expand by 4.2% in 2017, led by the Mineral sector, which continues to play a key role in fostering economic growth and contributing to government revenue. The sector remains the largest contributor to GDP, followed by Trade, Hotels and Restaurants; General Government; and the Banks, Insurance and Business sector.

Employment during NDP 10 was observed to have been sluggish, representing an average growth rate of 1.5% by 2015. The unemployment rate was estimated at 20% of the total labour force in 2013 and 17.6% in 2016, with the women and youth being hard hit. All sub-sectors, excepting of the parastatal sector, experienced a decrease in growth rates with the government sector experiencing negative growth rates.

2.2 The Export Diversification Drive

Export diversification is one of the major development strategies of the government aimed at reducing heavy reliance on the Mineral sector. Export-led growth is considered critical in realising sustainable economic growth and employment creation.

In this regard, government has opened up market opportunities for Botswana goods and services through its membership to several trade agreements, including:

- Southern African Customs Union (SACU)
- SADC – EU Economic Partnership Agreement
- SACU - European Free Trade Association
- SACU – MERCOSUR Preferential Trade Agreement
- African Growth and Opportunity Act
- SADC Protocol on Trade and
- bilateral agreements such as the Botswana – Zimbabwe Trade Agreement.

The National Trade Policy (NTP), approved by Parliament in 2009, is at the apex of trade promoting policies and strategies in Botswana. Its main goal is to achieve reliable access to markets for the country's exports of goods and services, while enabling producers and consumers to access the widest choice of international goods and services on the best possible terms.

Despite efforts to diversify the economy and expand the export base, the economy continues to be driven by a narrow range of products and services, as well as being limited to a small number of markets.

The trade pattern reflects a dominance of diamonds with a share of around 80% in total exports of goods. Exports of goods and services outside minerals are not only limited and undiversified, but performance over the years has noticeably been either declining or stagnating.

Table 2 – Botswana’s Export Performance 2006 - 2015

Year	Copper – Nickel	Diamonds	Gold	Machinery & Elec Equipment	Meat & meat products	Salt & Soda ash	Textiles	Vehicles & transport equipment	Other goods
2006	15.6	72.1	0.8	0.9	2.0	0.7	3.7	1.0	3.2
2007	21.4	63.2	1.0	1.3	2.2	0.6	6.9	0.6	2.8
2008	18.9	63.0	2.0	2.4	1.8	0.7	5.5	0.9	4.8
2009	15.4	62.8	2.2	2.3	3.3	1.3	5.9	1.6	5.2
2010	13.4	68.4	1.7	2.2	3.4	2.0	3.5	0.9	4.5
2011	7.5	75.6	1.4	2.5	0.9	1.2	4.5	2.1	4.3
2012	7.9	78.7	1.4	2.3	1.1	1.0	1.3	2.2	4.1
2013	7.1	83.4	0.7	1.8	1.6	0.8	0.6	1.0	3.0
2014	5.8	85.7	0.5	1.9	1.4	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.6
2015	6.0	83.1	0.5	3.2	1.8	0.9	0.6	1.1	2.8

Source: Bank of Botswana Report 2016

By destination, the European Union continues to be the major destination for Botswana's exports, in particular, diamonds and beef, although the direction of mineral exports has recently changed due to the new trading arrangements as well as domestic policy shifts, following the relocation of De Beers aggregation and sight-holder sales functions from the United Kingdom to Botswana in 2012-2013. The share of diamond exports to Belgium and India (the world's largest diamond polishing centres) has since increased.

In 2015, the EU remained the largest importer of Botswana exports recording 44.3%, followed by SADC at 29.2%, the bulk of which (27.4%) were destined to the SACU market. India imported 12.9% of total exports, Canada 6.3%, Israel 6%, Switzerland and Norway 4.3% and 4.1% respectively, while the rest went to other destinations.

Trends in import merchandise also reflect diamonds have become increasingly dominant, accounting for approximately 33% on average of imports between 2012 and 2015, as Botswana receives substantial imports of diamonds from other De Beers subsidiaries in Namibia, South Africa and Canada. Other imports of significance are machinery and electrical equipment, fuel, food beverages and tobacco.

Complementary to the NTP, and in its pursuit for a diversified and export-led economy, the government has put in place a number of policies and programmes to facilitate a private sector enabling and supportive policy environment, to stimulate increased investment flows, and to enhance private sector competitiveness.

These initiatives include the following:

The National Export Strategy (NES): Developed in 2010 as a five-year strategy covering the period 2010 - 2016, the NES' main objective is to make Botswana globally competitive by expanding and diversifying its export base.

Specifically, the strategy aims to:

- make the export sector a major engine of growth for Botswana's economy and to maximize its contribution to employment creation, rural development, gender equality and poverty reduction
- improve the business environment and lower the direct costs of doing business
- increase production, productivity and value-addition in the identified export sectors
- enhance human skills, use of technology in the export sector to ensure access to lucrative international markets
- provide low interest-rate finance, up-to-date and detailed market information to exporters.

Industrial Development Policy (IDP): Approved in 2014, it has the objective to expand the country's industrial base through development of diversified, sustainable and globally competitive industries.

Specifically, it seeks to:

- develop export-oriented industries able to overcome Botswana's small domestic market
- unlock business opportunities for the private sector
- promote regional strategic industries that can find a niche in regional value chains.

Economic Diversification Drive (EDD) Strategy: Developed in 2010, the EDD Strategy aims to diversify the economy by developing sectors other than the primary sectors, so that they contribute meaningfully to GDP. The strategy has two components: short and long-term components.

The short-term component focuses on interventions that promote targeted domestic production and consumption, by leveraging the country's purchasing power to enhance participation of local enterprises in the economy.

The long-term component seeks to build productive capacity and develop competitiveness, which will enable Botswana to participate effectively in the global market on the basis of quality goods and services, enviable and productive labour force, technological innovation and adaptation, as well as the development of business linkages between small, medium and microenterprises (SMMEs) and large companies.

Special Economic Zones Policy (SEZP): Developed in 2011, the Policy seeks to attract world-class domestic and foreign investors into the country's SEZs to produce internationally competitive goods and services that will enable Botswana to compete effectively with the best in world markets.

Its specific objectives, include:

- diversifying the economic and export base of the country by promoting sectors with potential to grow
- provision of a hassle-free business environment
- creation of development opportunities for SMMEs suppliers
- development of a portfolio of public sector, private sector and Public Private Partnership SEZs as dictated by the market.

Citizen Economic Empowerment Policy (CEEP): This was developed in 2012 with the goal to promote effective participation of Botswana in the economic growth and development of the country and to benefit from such. A major objective of the Policy is to infuse entrepreneurial culture among Botswana, to build a foundation for global competitiveness.

Competition Policy (CP): Developed in 2008, the policy seeks to address the problems related to abuse of market dominance by firms and monopolization of key sectors of the economy, especially following the opening up of markets and the associated increase in cross-border trade. It aims at creating a business-friendly environment, promoting healthy competition, encouraging greater efficiency and widening consumer choice.

Private Sector Development Strategy (PSDS): The private sector is considered a key driver for export diversification. Launched in January 2008, the PSDS aims at creating an enabling business environment for private sector development and growth, as well as putting in place interventions to alleviate impediments to the sector's growth. The Strategy proposes interventions to help investors acquire capacity and skills to be able to compete in global markets. It proposes measures for reducing the cost of doing business; facilitating access to markets; and stimulating the development and growth of the country's private sector to play its role in socio-economic development.

A review of the NTP in 2015 by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) noted that the economy continues to be driven by a narrow range of products and

services, and that it has not achieved the level of economic diversification and transformation expected, despite the Policy and an array of other supportive and complementary policies and strategies that the Government has put in place.

While supporting this view, the Bank of Botswana Report (2016), identifies the challenges below as hindering progress in the export diversification drive:

- Low productivity of domestic firms resulting mainly from deficiencies in management systems and lack of basic infrastructure such as transport, electricity, water, telecommunications and internet connectivity.
- Relatively poor trade facilitation logistics. Although the Logistics Performance Index (LPI) has improved from 2.14 in 2014 to 3.05 in 2016 (out of a score of 5), the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) is still very low. For the LPI, Botswana ranks 57th out of 160 countries, while for the GCI, the country ranks 64th out of 138.
- Low innovation levels, which limit firms to produce at lower relative costs, achieve economies of scale and introduce cheaper and higher quality products.
- High costs of doing business are exacerbated by the fact that the country is landlocked. Compared to the SACU average, the cost of importing and exporting a standardized shipment of goods in Botswana is higher by US\$1,200 and US\$800 respectively.

2.2 Development Strategies for NDP 11

The country's development strategies are outlined in its National Development Plans. The theme for NDP 11 is "Inclusive Growth for the Realization of Sustainable Employment Creation and Poverty Eradication". The theme takes into account the development challenges of unemployment, poverty and income inequality facing the country, as well as the need to align the focus of the plan with global, continental and regional initiatives such as the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, AU Agenda 2063 and the Revised SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan.

The Plan carefully reviews past performance and challenges, and elaborates priorities, strategies, policies and programmes that would place the economy in a path to achieve high income status and prosperity for all by 2036.

The Bank of Botswana Report defines inclusive growth as long-term sustainable output growth that is broad-based across economic sectors; creates productive employment opportunities and reduces poverty. To achieve this, NDP 11 outlines the following six development strategies:

- Developing diversified sources of economic growth
- Human capital development
- Social development
- Sustainable use of natural resources
- Consolidation of good governance and strengthening national security
- Implementation of an effective monitoring and evaluation system.

While all these elements are critical for the sustainable development agenda, the strategy to develop diversified sources of economic growth lies at the centre of the Plan. It is regarded as the main strategy through which the "national cake" can be expanded to benefit the population. The private sector is expected to be the main engine for driving the strategy.

Such initiatives as beneficiation; cluster development; special economic zones; promotion of SMMEs, the informal sector and local economic development; research innovation and development; sustainable management of natural and cultural resources; climate change mitigation and adaptation measures; a conducive environment for the private sector to grow the economy and employment; improving the regulatory framework for doing business and global competitiveness will be promoted under this strategy, to generate the necessary growth and employment for Botswana.

2.4 The Place of Non-State Actors in Botswana

In our interaction with organizations interviewed for this assignment, it became clear that there was no common understanding regarding the meaning of the term NSAs in Botswana. There were questions as to whether civil society, NSAs and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) refer to one and the same thing. Below, we try to give meaning to these terms based on the literature reviewed.

2.4.1 Civil Society

Generally civil society is used to refer to social relations and organizations outside state control. Koketso Moeti (2012) argues that all of us are civil society, but where civil society is organized, it then becomes a civil society organization. Moeti also argues that CSOs can come in many forms, informal and formal such as NGOs, Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and Faith Based Organizations (FBOs). This type of society is usually a group of people who come together to fulfil a particular mandate driven by need.

2.4.2 Non-State Actors

According to the CPA, the term NSA refers to a representation of all non-governmental development actors, including civil society in all its diversity, according to national characteristics, as well as economic and social partners such as trade union organizations and the private sector. The SADC Treaty only refers to key stakeholders who are considered important partners in the implementation of the SADC programme of action. These include private sector, civil society, NGOs, workers and employers' organizations.

2.4.3 Non-Governmental Organizations

The National Non-Governmental Organizations Policy for Botswana defines NGOs as: "an apolitical, legally formed, autonomous organization that is involved in the socio-economic development of its constituents, that possesses non-profit status, and whose primary motivation is to pursue an identifiable set of interests, of public, community and/or group significance, as defined in its Constitution and/or Deed of Trust".

Further to this, the Government of Botswana and the EU jointly implemented a programme aimed at contributing to economic promotion and poverty reduction through the strengthening of the role of NSAs in Botswana and enhancing their role in the development process of the country. Implementation of the programme commenced in 2013 and is due to end in December 2017.

The programme has two main components:

- Support to NGO Empowerment
- Support to the Private Sector Development Strategy.

Therefore, in the context of this programme, it can be deduced that NSAs in Botswana are defined to include the NGOs, as defined by the NGO Policy on the one hand, and the private sector on the other.

The Government of Botswana has long recognized the important role played by NSA in national development. These entities have demonstrated their ability to reach the vulnerable and disadvantaged sections of the society as well as minority groups, complementing the role played by government at both central and local levels.

The National NGO Policy was developed in 2012 following the realization that:

- the absence of a policy has constrained NGOs from more effectively partnering with Government in the development planning process
- most NGOs were facing an uncertain future because of the declining external donor support

- that sustainability of NGOs in Botswana was a challenge.

The policy was therefore developed with the mandate to:

- Promote partnership and collaboration between NGOs, the government and other stakeholders.
- Strengthen lines of communication and cooperation with government, the private sector, NGOs and other stakeholders.
- Promote mobilisation and utilisation of resources between stakeholders in national development.

The Empowerment of Non-State Actors (ENSA) programme was formulated with the major objective to support Government in the implementation of the NGO policy, addressing the above key policy issues, including the establishment of the NGO Council. The mandate of the NGO Council is to advise Government on implementation of the Policy and facilitate effective dialogue, including establishing strategic partnerships for resource mobilization.

The Council operates under the auspices of the Ministry of Nationality, Immigration and Gender Affairs and is made up of 14 members, five of whom come from Government, four from Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organizations (BOCONGO), three from Botswana Community Based Organizations Network (BOCOBONET), one from Business Botswana (BB) and one other being an independent member from the general public appointed by the Minister, and co-chairs the Council with a representative from the Ministry.

Component 1 of the ENSA programme has specifically focused on supporting NGO empowerment with the following results expected:

- Enhancement of structural dialogue between government and NGO sector through implementation of the NGO Policy.
- Strengthening of the financial framework for the administration of public funds.
- Capacitating NGOs and strengthening coordination and cooperation mechanisms among NGOs.

Component 2 focused on supporting implementation of the PSDS with the following expected results:

- Strengthening of capacity and competitiveness of SMMEs and CBO
- Enhancement of service delivery of targeted intermediary organizations and business development service providers.

A number of achievements have been made, including but not limited to: establishment of the NGO Council, development of Policy Guidelines for financial support to NGOs, a mapping of existing NGOs in Botswana, development of a Sustainability Plan for NGOs, development of strategic plans for BOCONGO and BOCOBONET, establishment of regional networks who act as representatives of umbrella organizations in the regions, award of grants to selected NSAs and training to build capacity for dialogue, financial and project management among NSAs. The Sustainability Plan in particular, seeks to address resource constraints of NGOs, and contemplates the establishment of an endowment fund whose purpose will be to raise financial resources for financing their activities.

The NGO Council was established in 2012 and is fully functional. The Council connects with all NSAs across the country through the Annual Stakeholder Forums (ASF). The overall objective of the ASF is to provide a structured environment designed to maximize participation and cooperation between Government and CSOs, by bringing relevant partners into the discussions and ensuring that all voices are heard. The Second ASF is due to take place in October 2017. The objectives of this Forum will be to provide space for CSOs, and particularly NGOs and CBOs to engage with government and private sector on issues concerning development policy and priorities from the perspectives of

the poor and marginalized. Hence the ASF is an important organ for bringing NSAs together to engage with Government and for discussing issues related to sustainable development. Therefore, it is critical to ensure that all relevant and key stakeholders are part of this Forum. It is also important to ensure that effective and sustainable partnerships develop between NGOs and CSOs on the one hand and the private sector on the other. The resources of the private sector combined with capabilities of well-established NGOs and CSOs can provide the means for the vulnerable and disadvantaged sections of the society to live healthy and productive lives.

3. The EPA Process

3.1 Regional Context in Brief

The CPA established the basis for new trading arrangements between the ACP countries and the EU, aimed at aligning the EU unilateral, non-reciprocal preferential trade regime to the WTO system. For most ACP countries, including the SADC EPA countries, the EU constitutes a major trading partner. This explains why members of the SADC EPA group, particularly those that would not have had an alternative equivalent or better trading arrangement with the EU, namely, Botswana, Namibia and Swaziland, were under pressure to put in place an interim arrangement that would prevent loss of preferential market access into the EU by 31 December 2007, at which time the CPA trade preferences lapsed.

SADC countries started their consultations to define the SADC EPA configuration as far back as 2002 during the all ACP - EU negotiations. Defining the SADC configuration was not only complex, but also a sensitive and controversial matter due to overlapping membership of some SADC countries who are members of both SADC, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Central Africa regions. Another complexity was that South Africa already had trading arrangements with the EU defined in the context of the EU - SA Trade and Development Cooperation Agreement (TDCA).

The SADC Committee of Ministers of Trade (CMT) adopted the Guidelines for SADC EPA Negotiations during their meeting held in November 2003, in Blantyre, Malawi. The Guidelines served to define the objectives and principles on which the Agreement would be negotiated as well as the general approach to the negotiations. The Committee also adopted a Roadmap for the negotiations, defining the stages, scope and timelines for the negotiations as well as capacity building and technical assistance requirements to support the negotiations.

In February 2004, in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, the CMT also agreed on the SADC EPA structure for negotiations which consisted of three layers: Ministerial, Senior Officials and Technical levels. Botswana was designated the overall coordinator for the negotiations, with the Minister of Trade and Industry coordinating the Ministerial process within SADC and with the EC, while Botswana's Permanent Secretary in the same Ministry was designated a Chief Negotiator, leading the SADC EPA negotiations at Senior Officials level. Botswana also seconded a Chief Technical Advisor to the Secretariat to coordinate technical work and to be the liaison between SADC and the EC on EPA negotiation matters.

SADC EPA negotiations were launched in July 2004 in Windhoek, Namibia, during which time, eight SADC Member States had agreed to negotiate under the SADC EPA configuration. The first joint negotiation session with the European Commission took place following the launch and essentially agreed on the Roadmap for negotiations. South Africa initially participated as an observer, but its status later changed to a full negotiating partner in 2007.

An Interim Economic Partnership Agreement (IEPA) was initialled in November 2007 and signed in 2009. However, negotiations continued after the initialling of the Agreement in order to address concerns that had been raised by Namibia and South Africa on the IEPA and to conclude some of

the outstanding negotiation issues. Negotiations were concluded in July 2014, the legal scrubbing in August 2015, translation and legal vetting in March 2016 leading to signature of the Agreement in June, and the Agreement entering into provisional application on 10 October 2016.

3.2 The National Context and Involvement of Non-State Actors

As a member of the ACP group of countries, Botswana participated in the negotiations for EPAs both at ACP-EU level in 2002 and SADC - EU level from 2004. Negotiations were introduced through a briefing to Cabinet and Parliament as well as key stakeholders in view of the importance attached to the EU as Botswana's main trading partner.

Botswana has a dual role in the EPA negotiations, first as the overall SADC EPA coordinator, and secondly, as a negotiating partner with the EU. The Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI) is the overarching authority that spearheads the institutional framework for trade policy and negotiations in the country. Through the Ministry, in 2003, a National Committee on Trade Policy and Negotiations (NCTPN) was established, which has since been merged with the National Economic Diversification Council, becoming the Economic Diversification and Trade Council (EDTC).

The Committee served as a platform for interagency interaction and consultation on matters pertaining to trade policy and negotiations, including coordination and formulation of Botswana's negotiation positions. It was also mandated to promote constructive dialogue between government, NGOs and CSOs on bilateral and multilateral trade issues in order to facilitate effective participation in forums such as the WTO, SADC, SACU and other trade arrangements.

The NCTPN was timeously launched in March 2004 when negotiations moved from the all – ACP level to the regions. The NCTPN was established as a broad-based committee, drawing its membership from government institutions, private sector, NGO sector, labour, academia and other civil society organisations. Altogether, it included 30 representative organizations, the majority of which (24) were government and its parastatal bodies and the remaining six only, being NSAs/civil society organizations.

Despite this limited representation in the NCTPN, the NSAs who are members of the committee, have remained part of the consultative platform from beginning to end of the negotiation process, both at the main committee level and within several technical working groups which were established to support the NCTPN in the different areas of negotiations.

It is worthwhile to note that in both the SADC EPA configuration and SADC at large, NSA are generally not allowed to directly participate in the negotiations. They are either barred from entering negotiation rooms, or in a few countries where they may be allowed, their financial position may not always support them to travel to meetings as part of the delegations. The main reason advanced by Government officials for not allowing NSAs as negotiators is that negotiations are policy-making avenues, and only Government has the sole responsibility for policy formulation. The NSAs would therefore be consulted while they wait outside the negotiation rooms or back home where they are part of the consultative machinery.

In Botswana, the NCTPN served as a platform for engagement or consultation with the NSAs who were committee members, ensuring that their interests are considered in formulating the country's positions. However, participation is at the level of umbrella organizations who are then expected to regularly convene and consult their members to obtain their views and in turn present them to the main committee. This approach, although the most practical, has its own limitations in that the general membership of the organization is basically left out of the consultation process as the umbrella bodies do not have the capacity nor resources to reach out to these members across the country to obtain their views.

To fill this gap, the Ministry occasionally convened workshops with different stakeholders across the country to sensitize them on negotiations and obtain their views on certain aspects that fed into the

negotiations. National expos and trade fairs have also been used as avenues for creating awareness and educating members of the public about trade agreements and other government programmes and projects. There has been consistent publicity of the EPA in all the fairs that took place following signature of the EPA in June 2016, including the Business Botswana Fair, Consumer Fair and the Global Expo.

The role of the private sector in the negotiations is considered critical in Botswana. As agents engaged in trade, the private sector is expected to play a key role in providing technical knowledge to guide or influence negotiation positions. In this regard, the private sector is usually given a seat in the negotiation team, particularly where sectors of key export interest to the country, such as beef, are concerned. Officials of BB and in some cases, members of the private sector, were directly involved in the EPA negotiations as part of the Botswana delegation, providing the required technical information in a bid to ensure the country's positions in areas of specific interest are preserved.

However, discussions to establish the extent and effectiveness of involvement in the EPA process by some of the NSAs interviewed revealed the following:

Botswana Business (BB), formerly known as Botswana Confederation of Commerce, Industry and Manpower, is an apex body of private sector businesses in Botswana. BB indicated that although they have been part of the process from the beginning of the negotiations to end, its management prevented them from effectively engaging with their members to get their input, because most of the meetings were convened at short notice. BB also indicated that as an institution, they lacked the technical capacity to analyse and effectively input into trade negotiations.

BB was however instrumental in the convening of the post EPA signature workshops from which the following key issues were raised:

- The time allocated for workshops was inadequate to afford an opportunity to drill down issues and to get a thorough understanding of the export requirements in the EU market
- The workshops should be tailored to the specific needs of different interest groups so that the sector or group of stakeholders being trained can derive maximum benefits from the training
- There is need to continue to address issues of productivity and competitiveness as well as provision of the necessary skills to support the manufacturing sector, and enhance its capacity to export to the EU market
- The need for extensive research on potential export products (other than beef) to diversify the export base in the country
- Improving the business environment in Botswana was necessary in order to continue to address issues such as delays in issuing of licenses, business premises and plots, fees associated with product certification, simplification of customs procedures and other trade facilitation measures
- Lack of effective engagement and coordination among the local intermediary organizations who should otherwise ensure that the provisions of the Agreement are clearly understood by the members so that they can maximise the benefits of the Agreement.

Botswana Exporters and Manufacturers Association (BEMA), a member organization with the objective to promote the competitiveness of Botswana manufacturers and exporters has been a member of the NCTPN since the Committee was established and therefore confirmed involvement in the EPA process during and after the negotiations. They indicated that the fact that representation in the NCTPN is at the apex of the organization or secretariat level, prevents the information to trickle down to end users as the Secretariat has limited capacity and no thorough understanding of the EPA and other trade agreements, to be able to interpret them and advise their members on the benefits and application of the different provisions of the Agreements. They explained that they are currently working with MITI in the development of their EPA Implementation Plan, where focus will be on awareness creation with the hope that the Ministry will be available to run the workshops while they take the responsibility to convene their members to attend.

Botswana Community Based Organizations Network (BOCOBONET), an advocacy organization and communication forum involved in community based natural resource management and related activities established in 1999, was never a part of the NCTPN nor is it a member of the new formation, the EDTC. The organization is aware of the EPA and has been involved in some of the awareness creation workshops and meetings. There are indications that the organization is in discussion with MITI to find a way of cooperating with the Ministry on matters of mutual interest, such as the operations of the SMMEs. BOCOBONET's involvement with community-based organizations engaged in agriculture, community-based resource management and those using indigenous knowledge, cultural tourism, informal sector, gender etc. is key to issues pertaining to sustainable development and is worth considering in participating in the trade and development agenda.

3.2 Major Concerns regarding the EPA Negotiations

Of key concern to NSAs in Botswana during the EPA negotiations, particularly the private sector, was the loss of market access to the EU if the negotiations were not to be concluded by the set time line of December 2007. The country was therefore under pressure to ensure that an interim arrangement was in place and initialled by 1st January 2008.

The other major concern was capacity, which manifested itself at different levels.

- First was the weak negotiating capacity of the negotiators on the SADC EPA side to deal with a broad range of issues that were perceived necessary by the other party to make the full EPA. These included investment, competition policy, trade facilitation and public procurement, the so-called Singapore issues, which subjects had not yet been clarified at the multilateral level.
- Second, in so far as the private sector was concerned, the lack of productive capacity to produce for the EU market as well as fears that the Agreement would open up the SADC market to EU products, subjecting regional products to fierce competition, therefore putting local industries at the risk of collapse.
- Third, at the level of private sector support organizations, such as BB and BEMA, there was and is still the case that the necessary technical competence for negotiations and advice to their respective members in the specific subject areas is lacking, constraining their ability to facilitate the preparation of private sector papers that feed into Botswana's positions in the negotiations. Furthermore, internally, in such organizations, there is no research capacity nor specific expertise in trade policy and negotiations.
- Finally, there were concerns that the EPA would undermine regional integration in SADC. This was particularly so because SADC countries were not negotiating as a block but split in four different EPA configurations. By and large, these issues were carefully negotiated and packaged in the Agreement.

Concerns regarding the loss of market and undermining regional integration were key. However, efforts were made during the negotiations to ensure that the region is not negatively affected. Possibilities of loss of market access were avoided at all costs, with the IEPA initialled in November 2007 and signed in July 2009 while negotiations continued towards a full EPA which was ultimately signed in June 2016.

Issues relating to regional integration also take prominence in the Agreement. The Agreement recognizes regional integration as an integral part of the partnership, the affiliation of the SADC Member States to different economic groupings, at sub-regional, regional and continental levels. In this regard, Article 3 of the EPA maintains that the Agreement should be implemented in a mutually supportive manner considering the relevant governing instruments at different levels as well as respective levels of development, needs, geographical realities and sustainable development strategies.

The need to support ACP capacity building across all areas and sectors of cooperation is one of the fundamental commitments of the CPA. The CPA provides for economic and trade cooperation to assist ACP countries to play a full part in international trade on one hand, and to foster emergence of NSAs, build their capacities as well as strengthen structures for information, dialogue and consultation between them and authorities at national and regional levels on the other. Consequently, Articles 13 and 14 of the SADC - EU EPA outline various priority areas of cooperation aimed at building capacity to trade; addressing supply side competitiveness; developing business enhancing infrastructure, trade in services and trade related issues as well as trade data capture, analysis and dissemination. Other areas include capacity building to support institutional structures for EPA implementation management, trade negotiations and fiscal adjustment.

It is therefore critical that the provisions of the Agreement are clearly understood and applied in a manner beneficial to SADC EPA states and all stakeholders to the Agreement, individually and collectively. It is also important to ensure that all key stakeholders are involved in the EPA process, both private sector and NSAs and that the national EPA Implementation Plan (still under preparation) takes this into account.

4. Status of Implementation of the EPA

4.1 Institutional Arrangements

The SADC - EU EPA provides for establishment of institutions with responsibility for the administration and implementation of the Agreement. Article 100 establishes the Joint Council (JC), a ministerial level body responsible for implementation oversight. Article 103 establishes the Trade and Development Committee (TDC), an organ of the senior officials with responsibility, among others, to support the JC as well as monitor and evaluate the implementation of its decisions. The Special Committee on Customs and Trade Facilitation (SCCTF), established under Article 50, provides a forum for consultations on customs and trade facilitation matters.

The TDC had its first meeting in February 2017 following the entry into provisional application of the Agreement in October 2016. Among the key decisions taken were the following:

- The importance of involving civil society in implementation of the Agreement - the EU was requested to provide a concept note on the proposal for launching a SADC – EU EPA Civil Society Dialogue.
- The need to develop EPA Implementation Plans by national administrations and to strengthen engagement around these plans in the coming three months, with a view to finalizing them timeously.
- Technical Committees established by the Agreement were to start meeting and draft their own Rules of Procedure while consultations regarding when to convene the first JC would continue.

Botswana has not established a specific committee or forum to deal with EPA specific matters. So far, all trade policy matters, including implementation of trade agreements are dealt with by the EDTC. The committee is mainly responsible for monitoring implementation of the EDDS and the NTP. It operates with various technical committees representing different thematic areas such as market access, export development and promotion and trade facilitation. It is co-chaired by the Minister of Investment Trade and Industry and the President of BB. The EDTC has a much larger representation of committee members compared to the now defunct NCTPN. The membership comprises of more than fifty representative organizations: Government and parastatal bodies, private sector, civil society, media, academia and research institutions. The representation is depicted in the bar chart below.

The EDTC meets four times in a year and the technical committees must meet prior to the main committee to undertake technical work and prepare all the necessary documentation. Depending on specific subjects, some technical committees such as the technical committee on market access, meet more frequently to deal with issues of negotiations as and when they arise.

A National Implementation Plan for the SADC - EU EPA is being developed under a well-defined implementation framework, which covers aspects such as capacity building and skills development; enterprise and product competitiveness, legal and regulatory framework; business dialogue and cooperation; and publicity and awareness.

The purpose of the plan is, among others, to identify policy and legal challenges that inhibit effective access to the European market, as well as areas of mutual interest for facilitating supply and value chains that foster industrialization on the basis of which financial cooperation may be developed. Under the priority area of Business Dialogue and Cooperation, the plan foresees the need for undertaking dialogue, among others, with civil society and business in order to promote continuous engagement for purposes of improving implementation of the Agreement.

Although still in its very preliminary stages of development, the plan endorses the existing institutional arrangements as being sufficient to incorporate EPA work and to only create new structures where there is absolute need to do so. The Plan will be approved by the EDTC once finalized. The issue is considered high priority by the national authorities, with concerted efforts to ensure its finalization as soon as possible.

It is indicated that uptake of the Agreement by local exporters so far is still very low, reflecting the need for extensive engagements with key beneficiaries and stakeholders to create awareness, address skills and capacity gaps and facilitate knowledge about the benefits of the Agreement. At this stage, only traditional exports (beef), are indicated to be utilising market access opportunities offered by the EPA in the EU.

4.2 Sustainable Development Considerations

Parties to the SADC – EU EPA have committed to promoting international trade to contribute to the objective of sustainable development in its three pillars: economic development, social development and environmental protection. In this context, Article 7 of the Agreement commits the parties to:

- apply the Agreement considering the human, cultural, economic, social, health and environmental interests of their respective populations and of future generations
- ensure that the decision-making methods embrace the fundamental principles of ownership, participation and dialogue.

The Article concludes by recognizing the need for the parties to work cooperatively towards the achievement of people-centred sustainable development. These commitments, in short, require all stakeholders, NSAs in particular, to play an active role in the implementation and monitoring of the Agreement, bearing in mind that sustainable development policies aim at ensuring a meaningful contribution towards poverty eradication and improvements in the quality of life of the people.

Botswana holds issues of sustainable development in high regard, not only for purpose of meeting its international obligations, but also in its quest to address the challenges the country faces of poverty, unemployment and inequality. Inclusive growth, which is the theme of the current National Development Plan, much more substantively entails sustainable development.

NDP 11 notes that some progress has been made in mainstreaming sustainable development into national development frameworks in the past including:

- Spearheading implementation of the Gaborone Declaration for Sustainability in Africa agreed by 10 African Heads of State in 2012 for which a Secretariat has subsequently been established in Botswana.
- Finalizing a National Framework for Sustainable Development, which domesticates Botswana's obligations under the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development.
- Preparation of a Natural Capital Accounting Framework and a National Climate Change Policy which are currently underway.

Chapter 7 of NDP 11 dedicates itself to issues of sustainable environment and elaborates strategies for ensuring a healthy environment for a healthy population; sustainable management of natural and cultural resources; climate change adaptation and mitigation; and sustainable human settlements. The Plan acknowledges the role of the private sector, civil society and development partners and pledges to ensure their active involvement in the implementation of policies, programmes and strategies, aimed at ensuring sustainable development.

Inclusive and sustainable development would naturally also mean that the disadvantaged groups of society, such as women, youth, people living with disabilities, etc. are included and participate in development processes. Several initiatives are in place to empower these groups and uplift them from poverty. NDP 11 confirms that such measures will be continued to facilitate their capacity building and empowerment.

From the above, it can be observed that effective implementation of Government policies, programmes and projects for sustainable development can contribute to the successful

implementation of the EPA. All members of the EDTC are in one way or another involved with issues to do with sustainable development.

What is key is to understand the linkages between trade and sustainable development agenda as well as the role and responsibilities of the different actors involved. Knowledge and proper packaging of the information to facilitate effective dialogue among stakeholders in the implementation of the EPA, will therefore be critical to the attainment of the objectives of the EPA and the sustainable development agenda.

4.3 Opportunities and Challenges of the EPA

Generally, trade agreements serve the purpose of enlarging markets to which countries can export and be able to diversify and expand their production under preferential market access opportunities, which arrangements reduce the costs of products and services being sold, making them competitive in that market. Trade agreements facilitate removal of trade barriers other than tariffs, providing opportunities for increased jobs and investments as markets widen. These reasons and many others depending on the scope of the agreement, explaining why even today, countries continue to negotiate new trade agreements at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.

Over the past decades, the EU has remained the largest trading partner to many ACP countries, including Botswana, so despite the narrow range of products exported, mainly in primary form. The EPA, which is expected to build on the successes of the previous LOME conventions, present the following key opportunities for Botswana:

- Duty free quota free market access for Botswana goods exported to the European Union.
- Vast potential for Botswana exporters to actively participate in the global market.
- Development of regional value chains and expansion of the industrial base, which incorporate cumulation principles as well as value-adding provisions for specific products.
- Enhanced prospects for increased investment flows into the country, bringing in new skills, capital and technology. Trade agreements also provide opportunities for joint investments and partnerships which are essential for growth at both firm and national levels.
- A partnership arrangement based on cooperative arrangements aimed, among other things, on enhancing supply side competitiveness and capacity, supporting SADC EPA countries to address competitiveness at national, institutional and firm level.
- Increased prospects for dialogue and effective partnering with NSAs in the implementation of the EPA, with particular regard to the sustainable development agenda.
- Closer regional integration within SACU as the EPA has facilitated the creation of a common trade regime among SACU countries in terms of their trade with the EU. Before the EPA, South Africa traded with the EU on the basis of the TDCA, while the other SACU countries traded under the ACP – EU trade arrangements.

The SADC EPA side, consisting of less developed and developing countries, has faced several challenges during the negotiations. These challenges still confront these countries at the time of implementation of the Agreement, and Botswana is no exception.

- Capacity in all its forms and at all levels, government, private sector and within the civil society, remains a challenge.
- Productivity at firm level is very low as firms lack both technical and managerial skills, the ability to innovate and undertake the necessary research to support production of new, quality and price competitive goods.
- Within government, there is a general lack of capacity to effectively coordinate and implement trade policies and negotiations. Successful implementation of the EPA will require continuous engagement to sensitize stakeholders on the potential benefits and threats arising from the EPA, so that benefits can be maximized with plans to mitigate the threats put in place. The Agreement also requires the setting up of EPA implementation institutions and structures as well as regulatory reforms in certain instances. This places a burden on the already limited system.

- CSOs and CBOs as the not-for-profit organizations generally lack the capacity, resources and skills to effectively run their affairs. The lack of well trained and experienced staff limits the extent to which they can plan, appraise, implement and monitor projects and programmes. Furthermore, the fact that umbrella organizations in the country are also limited in number means that they are overstretched with huge demands for participation in forums that require their involvement. Regrettably, to a large extent, these organizations and their activities are not well known or clearly understood by those who would otherwise volunteer their time to support them.
- The EU maintains stringent SPS requirements, as well as other standards which can present themselves as technical barriers to trade. These technical requirements make exporting to the EU market a major challenge. Rules of Origin are usually also an impediment to trade, although the EPA has simplified some rules for products of priority interest to the SADC EPA group, as well as presenting an opportunity for cumulation with other ACP countries.
- High costs of doing business, such as costs of labour, transport and internet connectivity, exacerbated by the fact that Botswana is landlocked make doing business not only with the EU, but also globally, a major challenge.
- The need to improve on both the LPI and the GCI to better facilitate trade and reduce the costs of doing business.

4.4 Implications for Regional Integration

The SADC – EU EPA has always been associated with the possibility of undermining regional integration in SADC more so that out of the 15 members, only seven negotiated under the SADC EPA configuration, with Tanzania in EAC; Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Seychelles, Zambia, Zimbabwe negotiating in the Eastern and Southern Africa configuration and the DRC in Central Africa. The discussions regarding how countries were to configure themselves for EPA negotiations were indeed characterised by confusion, animosity and fears of splitting existing regional economic communities, which in the view of ACP negotiators, was something apparently engineered by the EU through the EPA process.

At the onset of the negotiations, the SADC EPA group adopted a set of objectives and principles for negotiating the EPA, as set out in the guidelines. At the centre of these guidelines was the commitment to ensure that the EPA, among other things, contributes to efforts towards poverty eradication, facilitates smooth and gradual integration into global markets and furthers regional integration in SADC. The Agreement was therefore negotiated bearing these objectives in mind and with the intent to preserve regional integration in SACU, SADC and the African Union, as well as the development policies and political objectives related to such processes. Furthermore, coordination at the continental and ACP level was an integral part of the process during the negotiations aimed at ensuring cohesion, complementarity and alignment of policies within and across regional economic communities.

Although there might still be doubts regarding whether the EPA will deepen or undermine regional integration in SADC, there are several positive elements and lessons for regional integration coming out of the EPAs:

- The objectives of the EPA are aligned with those of the SADC Treaty and the SADC Protocol on Trade (SPT) in particular. Hence there is a clear intent by the EPA to support regional integration in SADC.
- At the sub-regional level, South Africa's market access offer has been aligned with that of Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland as members of the SACU. This is not only consistent with the construct of the SPT which recognizes SACU as a single customs territory but has ensured harmony in the SADC and SADC – EU trade regimes.
- Finally, SADC Member States must realize that deepening regional economic integration in SADC will remain a difficult if not an impossible task for as long as Member States continue their membership in different regional economic blocs. The EPA has confirmed and provided an opportunity for Member States to realize this.

5. Conclusion

The ACP – EU relations, which date as far back as 1975, remain important to the development aspirations of ACP countries, Botswana included. New trading and cooperation arrangements defined in the context of the Economic Partnership Agreements are driving a new development agenda, which considers sustainable development considerations as well as inclusive growth - both of which the Government of Botswana hold in high regard. This is evidenced by the current National Development Plan which not only seeks to address the major challenges facing the country of poverty, unemployment and inequality, but also the need to align its focus with global, continental and regional initiatives such as the Sustainable Development Goals. The need to involve all development actors in the planning, monitoring and implementation process therefore becomes paramount to the attainment of the development objectives that the country has set for itself.

Botswana recognizes the important role played by NSAs in the development process of the country. Most importantly, NSAs have been found to play a complementary role to government development initiatives, filling gaps left by the public service and being capable of reaching the most disadvantaged groups of society in the remotest parts of the country. Government also recognizes NSAs as agents of advocacy who contribute meaningfully to policy dialogue and reform, representing the interests of people they work with. Vision 2036 and NDP 11, two most important current policy documents of Government, outline in full, the envisaged roles and responsibilities of NSAs in the development processes of the country, the need to partner with these entities, and to empower them so that they become effective role players in the development process of the country.

The involvement of NSAs in the EPA process in Botswana has been confirmed by those who have been associated with the process as part of the EDTC. Workshops and meetings were convened for stakeholders to provide education on EPAs. These, however, were indicated not to have been adequate. There are gaps in knowledge that will prevent effective participation and maximization of the benefits from the EPA, implying that continuous engagement around the EPA and its application was still very necessary. This education must not be confined to umbrella organizations but must trickle down to end users for the country to maximise the benefits of the Agreement.

Who NSAs are, however, needs to be understood clearly by all those who need to embrace them in the development agenda of the country. As the CPA argues, there is no universal definition of NSAs, each country can define them according to its national context and agree which organizations can be categorized as such. Through the ENSA programme, efforts have been made to establish and empower NSAs working in different sectors of the economy, at both the national and local levels, including Human Rights, Health, Gender, Arts and Culture, Conservation, HIV & Aids, Youth and FBOs, and depending on relevance, these could form the core of consultations with the Ministry of Investment Trade and Industry on the EPA, and in particular, the sustainable development agenda.

While developing or establishing an engagement machinery for NSAs consultations with Government on the EPA, there is also a need to develop an effective and sustainable partnership between NGOs and CSOs on one hand and the private sector on the other, for these organizations to play a meaningful and beneficial role in social and economic development. Because of their different cultures and structures, these entities do not usually understand why they must work together. Nurturing this relationship may assist these organizations discover common ground and begin to recognize that by working together, they can improve the lives of the local communities in which they reside and enhance their respective strategic goals.

Awareness creation, information and capacity building on the EPA will be very crucial and should form an important aspect of the National EPA Implementation Plan. The information should be

packaged in such a manner that that the end users are able to fully digest and make the most use of it for their own benefit and the country at large. Private sector apex organizations must be strengthened or empowered to be able to effectively input not only in the negotiations, but also empowering their membership to be able to understand, realize, and maximize benefits from the EPA.

It may be important for MITI to relook at the structures for negotiations and consultations on trade policy matters assess, if representation is adequate and properly structured for implementing the National EPA Implementation Plan.

This notwithstanding, the challenges of EPA implementation need to be thoroughly assessed and urgently addressed. These challenges manifest themselves at all level, within firms, institutions and Government. NSAs have their own weaknesses of not being organized, as well as lacking the experience and knowledge to deal with issues such as trade policy and trade agreements. While efforts to empower and build their management capabilities continue, they should also strive to make their services and activities known and understood by the general public, so that they can attract highly experienced and knowledgeable people to support their activities. Government must also expedite the establishment of the Endowment Fund which would assist in financing activities of NGOs, thereby ensuring their sustainability.

6. Policy recommendations

- Effective Involvement of NSAs in the EPA process is critical particularly on the sustainable development agenda. Their involvement should be supported by a clear articulation of the expectations in terms of their roles and responsibilities as well as training and capacity to assist them carry out their mandate effectively.
- A Framework for NGOs/CBOs and private sector partnerships should be developed. This Framework should include principles and operating practices for effective and sustainable partnerships between these key players and seek to promote corporate social responsibility which may involve joint activities which are of strategic value to both parties. This would go a long way in addressing the financial needs of NGOs and CSOs.
- Government should consider fast tracking the operationalization of the NGO Endowment Fund as part of implementation of the Sustainability Plan for NSAs. Resources should be mobilized not only from within Government, but also from the International Cooperating Partners who also perceive NSAs as important development agents.
- Given that implementation of the EPA has effectively commenced, there is need to relook at the composition of the Economic Diversification and Trade Council, in particular, the technical committees responsible for trade and sustainable development agenda and ensure that they have adequate and appropriate representation. The terms of reference for the technical committees should be carefully elaborated or revised if available, to serve as an effective tool for the technical committees in the performance of their functions.
- Related to the above, MITI should consider nominating the Botswana Community Based Organizations Network (BOCOBONET) into the EDTC. BOCOBONET is critical in aspects of natural resource management.
- The relationship between the Ministries of Nationality, Immigration and Gender Affairs and Investment Trade and Industry should be redefined for purposes of implementation of the EPA, in particular, consideration should be given for MITI to be represented in the National NGO Council where NSAs have been organized to partner with government in the development process.
- The development of the National EPA Implementation Plan must be expedited. The plan should consider the views of all stakeholders to ensure that all implementation gaps are addressed, and stakeholders are fully aware of what is expected of them in the implementation of the Plan.
- At the regional level, it will be important the SADC Civil Society Mechanism is finalized as soon as possible to facilitate dialogue with the EU, including on EPA issues. Such a mechanism will

receive contributions and feedback from national structures, which will be consolidated and channelled to higher regional bodies as part of the regional agenda.

- Finally, there is need for effective monitoring of implementation of the EPA and NSAs. Therefore, the monitoring and implementation mechanism to be put in place for the SADC – EU EPA should recognize NSAs as important agents that can be useful in the monitoring of implementation of the Agreement.

7. Recommended list of CSOS/Stakeholders to be involved in National Consultations

Many NGOs and CSOs exist in Botswana. The Registrar of Societies indicates that there are more than 8 000 societies and NGOs registered across the country. However, because the list is not up to date, many of these may have ceased operations, but have not been removed from the register. Through the ENSA programme, support is being extended to the office of the Registrar to assist in streamlining operations and improving records keeping for enhanced service delivery. Through this support, the Society's Act and Regulations have been revised and some NGOs trained on the provisions of the Act and Regulations. Computerization of records is also underway. This would go a long way in providing the necessary information on existing entities.

The parties to the SADC – EU EPA intend establishing a NSA Dialogue platform within the SADC region and between NSAs in the SADC EPA Member States and their EU counterparts. Such engagements must be coordinated nationally, hence the need to identify those NSAs in the country who could be drawn upon to be involved in the EPA NSA process. While NSAs are important to the negotiation process, they are equally important in monitoring implementation and ultimately the impact of the Agreement on civil society and the nation at large.

Below is a list of NSAs recommended to be included in the EPA consultation process at a national level. These NSAs would be particularly relevant to issues of sustainable development. A brief description of their mandates is given against each one of them. The mandates of Business Botswana, Botswana Community Based Organizations Network and Botswana Exporters and Manufacturers Association are previously defined.

- Business Botswana
- Botswana Community Based Organisations Network
- Botswana Exporters and Manufacturers Association
- Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (BOCONGO) - coordinates the work of NGOs in the development of the country through capacity development, facilitating platforms for effective communication and advocacy between members and key stakeholders.
- Botswana Agriculture Union (BAU) – an affiliate of the Southern African Confederation of Farmers Unions that is a national general interest organization for farmers in the country.
- Botswana Federation of Trade Unions (BFTU) – is the national umbrella trade union representing 90% of all trade unions in the country, including all major unions.
- Hospitality and Tourism Association of Botswana (HATAB) – an umbrella body representing all sectors of the tourism industry in Botswana, existing to promote, encourage and police excellence in the hospitality and tourism industry.
- Botswana Chamber of Mines (BCM) – an affiliate of the Mining Institute Association of Southern Africa, existing to serve the interests of the mining industry in Botswana and to influence policy decisions and strategic intents within Government, NGOs and related bodies.
- Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Botswana – MISA is an NGO of media houses in 11 SADC countries, Botswana included, focusing primarily on the need to promote free, independent and pluralistic media as envisaged in the 1991 Windhoek Declaration.
- Botswana Council of Churches (BCC) – a member of the World Council of Churches, the BCC is a fellowship of churches in Botswana that seeks to fulfil the common calling of service to the glory of God the father, son and the holy spirit.

- Botswana Society for Arts (BSA) – an umbrella organization, devoted to the development and promotion of visual and performing arts in the country.
- Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS) - a national NGO focusing on conservation of Botswana's environment and wildlife resources.
- Ngamiland Council of Non-Governmental Organizations (NCNGO) – serves as an umbrella body of the Ngamiland NGOs and focuses on matters related to sustainable social and economic development.
- Botswana Network for AIDS Service Organizations (BONASO) – an umbrella body for AIDS service organizations in Botswana coordinating the civil society response to HIV/AIDS.
- Gender Links Botswana (GLB) – a gender-based NGO focusing on issues of equality and justice.
- Botswana Climate Change Network (BCCN) - an NGO whose mission is to create an interface between the marginalized and non-marginalized in addressing climate change, environmental management and energy for sustainable development.

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