

ASSISTANT MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS
DEVELOPMENT THE HON. MOISERAELE MASTER GOYA'S
SPEECH AT THE HANDOVER CEREMONY OF PRE-PRIMARY
TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS BY THE
EUROPEAN UNION

SERINANE VILLAGE

3RD AUGUST 2016

Botswana has achieved a significant milestone in the provision of universal access to primary education. However, opportunities for preschool education, unfortunately, remain limited. Preschool education service to a large extent lies in the hands of the civil organizations and hitherto, the role of government has been limited to providing guidance and direction on matters of policy.

With present enrolments standing at 20% of eligible children, the country needs to double its efforts to expand

access to serve the remaining 80%, comprising mainly of the rural poor. Work has already begun in this regard.

Following the development of Botswana's Education and Training Sector Strategic Plan, has since stepped up efforts to increase pre -school education opportunities. Already some of our public schools, with surplus classrooms, have started running reception classes.

Frankly speaking, the move to offer pre- school service in government institutions was a bold one as some of the classes began before we could complete the process of procuring all the necessary teaching and learning materials.

It is interesting note that this challenge did not dampen the spirit of our teaching force. Despite limited resources our teachers shouldered on and continued to show professionalism and creativity to keep the programme alive. At this juncture I would like to commend the teachers for a job well done. Nothing really can stand in the way of a determined and spirited work force. Nothing

could stop the teachers because they understand it is vitally important not to leave any child outside the school system.

I am particularly pleased to note that following its huge investment in the production of ETSSP, the European Union continues to walk with us each step of the way. We are in the implementation phase. This is a critical stage testing our resolve and commitment to education reforms. For us as government the political will is there and there is no doubt about it. To demonstrate our commitment, we have recently appointed a new Secretary of Reforms to oversee the reform process and in a particular to work closely with our development partners in this regard.

We realize that our reform process would not come cheap. While we will do our best to finance the reform process within our normal budgets, we are conscious of the fact that our budgets will be overstretched. We will continue to knock on the doors of our development partners for we still both technical and material support.

The European Union deserves a special commendation for its unwavering support to the process of Education Reforms in Botswana. We feel very much honoured, that out of the many potential beneficiaries, the European Union has found Botswana worthy of its support. We aspire to develop an innovative and enterprising human capital. And providing pre-school education service will lay a solid foundation for the creation of Knowledge workers.

This investment, gives us hope that the lives of our young people in serinane village will be changed for the better. We expect university professors, medical doctors, engineers and other professions critical to our economic diversification drive to emerge out of this village.

Finally, let me once more thank profusely the European Union for its support.