

_VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW

STATEMENT BY MS. SONYA ROOPNAUTH, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF THE BUDGET

MINISTRY OF FINANCE OF THE COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

AT THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

18 JULY, 2019, NEW YORK

Guyana's global commitments to sustainable development have consistently been integrated into national and sectoral planning processes. The MDGs were an integral part of relevant sectoral plans and the SDGs have been incorporated directly into the national long term development plan the GSDS with related sectoral plans and performance indicators informing the national budget.

Since 2016, budget preparation has seen the requirement for SDGs to be included in theories of change and as an integral part of the discussions at the national budget hearings. Additionally, in 2018 we started reforms on our public investment management to improve the efficiency of our PSIP which will see criteria based selection of investments directly linked to the SDGs and other national targets.

In the budget implementation phase, the national monitoring framework includes the relevant indicators to support the measurement of SDG targets of each Goal. Strengthening M&E capacities has resulted in almost 700 senior public sector officials being training over this review period who are expected to implement performance reporting to support results-based budgeting. At every stage of the budget cycle we are working to strengthen a results-based approach. We have identified the need for training of Members of Parliament in M&E as part of ensuring that debates in the National Assembly on the budget become more performance based in focus and we have encouraged the Auditor General to have more performance based audits.

The enormous challenge has been the absence of robust DATA in several cases – either not collected, not collated and/or not reported, not timely and not sufficiently disaggregated. Disaggregation by gender and age are still being strengthened and collection times can vary depending on proximity to IT connectivity. Often times no information management systems exist to support access to data and the analytical work required so for example births and deaths registers are still in hardcopy. The VNR process reminded of this stark reality and as a result the Ministry of Finance and the Bureau of

Statistics will be conducting data clinics with both public and private sector as a matter of urgency with sector specific data development plans as an intended output.

Indeed, the risk of not even knowing where we are in relation to where we need to be is what we are trying to prevent and to promote more evidence-based decision making and informed policy choices.

Costing of the programmes and interventions within a M&E framework to achieve the SDGs and national development priorities will be comprehensively addressed later this year as we focus on advancing diversification of the economy and preventing dutch disease. When this costing exercise is completed target by target, Goal by Goal we will then have a clearer picture of what it will cost to achieve the SDGs and then be able to factor that into a medium term expenditure framework.

Institutional strengthening across all govt sectors to support realisation of the government policies to reach those most in need is reflected in how programmes are assessed in prioritisation for inclusion in the national budget. So, for example, child-friendly budgeting analysis has helped in this

regard. The consultations to inform the annual budget include engagements with women, youth, the elderly and the banking sector and the private sector, young entrepreneurs, to name a few in our own efforts to ensure no one is left behind.

I thank you.