WELCOME NOTES: BOTSWANA INNOVATION HUB CEO, MR. ALAN BOSHWAEN AT THE THESE HANDS & LETSHEGO BOTSWANA PARTNERSHIP LAUNCH

Good Morning and thank you for joining us.

- I want to start by commending the 2 parties; These Hands Enterprise and Letshego Botswana for establishing the partnership being announced today. The intended outcomes of this partnership; Letshego facilitating a Grant that These Hands was awarded by the Southern Africa Innovation Support (SAIS) for the IDIN-SADC (International Development Innovation Network – SADC) Consortium at zero interest is very pleasing.
- It is further pleasing to learn that through this partnership, innovators across Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia (partner countries) will benefit from Exclusive Financial Services from Letshego for their projects.
- BIH & These Hands have a long-standing relationship as institutions with a common vision of growing the innovation ecosystem through strategic collaborations and partnerships. Especially speaking to grassroots innovation, social entrepreneurship in communities in Botswana.
- As BIH, we are very encouraged to see a social enterprise such as These Hands that has grown through the BIH Incubation structures and now a network member establish partnerships that benefit innovators at large.

Allow me to use this opportunity to underscore the purpose of Botswana Innovation Hub. We were established in 2012 to deliver 4 objectives;

- ✓ To support growth of start-ups and existing companies through innovation capacity building, access to funding and national technology transfer office services
- ✓ To create linkages between different players in the national innovation ecosystem for collaboration opportunities

- ✓ To Attract like-minded, innovative and technology driven businesses to establish their operations in the Park
- ✓ To manage and develop the science and Technology Park to create a thriving innovation ecosystem

- As BIH, we are glad to continue to contribute to the growth of These Hands to be a trusted entity that can manage a project of this magnitude at **138 565 Euros**, for which they are the principal partner.
- Talking about creating linkages between different players in the national innovation ecosystem for collaboration opportunities, SAIS is one of the partners that we have worked with to support our innovators over the years.
- As you may all be aware, The Southern Africa Innovation Support Programme (SAIS 2) is a regional initiative that supports the growth of new businesses through strengthening innovation ecosystems and promotion of cross-border collaboration between innovation role-players in Southern Africa. SAIS 2 is supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Finland, in partnership with the Ministries responsible for Science, Technology and Innovation of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia, and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat. BIH is the specific focal point for all SAIS related projects implementation in Botswana.
- Our partnership with SAIS has given birth and supported a number of projects by our innovators, therefore, it is one that we cherish and grow.
- We look forward to a successful implementation of the SAIS grant to These Hands facilitated by Letshego Botswana by 2021.