Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen!

Since all protocol has been observed, I will get right onto my brief remarks as a mentor who has benefitted tremendously from once being a mentee at TAWLA.

I have been under Dr Gilika’s wing (literally) since May 2011, when I knocked on the doors of TAWLA seeking to do voluntary work after I enrolled as a Gender Graduate student here at the University of Botswana. Dr Gilika could not say no to me, and let me tell you why: 2 things- Commitment and Passion.

Being mentored at TAWLA has been a fulfilling chapter in my life. TAWLA supported me in all my endeavors to be the person that I am today simply because I gave them a reason to believe in me (Today I hold a Master of Education in Gender Education, and I have also been recently chosen with other young women in Southern Africa to be part of the Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa (OSISA) professional leadership coaching & mentoring program for the year 2013-14).

One of the highlights is that I have had several opportunities to travel and most importantly interact with other energized young people in the region and internationally. That is the best exposure that one could ever have; I have had the ability to network across the region and forge long-term personal and most importantly professional relationships: This is what Tshipidi can do for you.

Mentoring is a two way process, but the truth is, the beacon of power lies in your hands as mentees. Prove that you are worthy of your mentor’s time: and one thing that you must not forget is to also show them the RESPECT and recognition they have earned in our society and rightfully deserve.
Most mentoring relationships are mentee driven, and it is up to you as a mentee that you show the necessary passion and commitment to this relationship if you are to fully reap the benefits. It is true that your mentors also have to honor their part of the contract, but they need to see more vigor and life from your side. Work hard, be persistent, ask questions and most importantly be consistent. I also urge the mentors to be fully committed to Tshipidi as this will go a long way. Take these young people under your wings: yes it gets busy and hectic, but try harder to create time to guide the mentees.

Lastly, what I can say to the mentees is that, yes it gets a little hard sometimes, things don’t always go your way and you may be hesitant to keep pushing, don’t let your hesitations hold you back from one of the most beneficial tools to developing your role as a leader. Both of you, put together a game plan and take it step by step. The sky’s the limit. And to you the mentees, just remember to return the favor once you start working your way up the ladder by never forgetting the little girls and boys that are right behind you on this similar path.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank You