

SHAPING BOTSWANA’S FUTURE: BDC AT THE 17TH NATIONAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE

Francistown– The 17th National Business Conference (NBC) organised by Business Botswana, held under the theme **“Invigorating Economic Transformation Through Private Sector,”** marked a pivotal moment for Botswana’s economic landscape. This year’s conference which ran from the 25th -28th of August 2024, brought together industry leaders, policymakers, and key stakeholders to deliberate on the crucial role of the private sector in driving Botswana’s economic transformation. With Botswana Development Corporation (BDC) as one of the key sponsors, the conference underscored the significance of collaboration, innovation, and strategic investment in achieving the nation’s long-term goals, particularly as envisioned in Botswana’s Vision 2036.

The theme of this year’s NBC is more than just a slogan—it is a call to action for businesses and industries across the country. For Botswana, this theme means leveraging the private sector’s agility, creativity, and resources to fuel economic growth, diversify the economy, and reduce dependence on traditional sectors. The conference highlighted that for Botswana to transition into a high-income country, as outlined in Vision 2036, the private sector must play a leading role in industrialisation, job creation, and fostering sustainable growth.

For the private sector, this theme signifies both an opportunity and a responsibility. Businesses are being called upon to innovate, invest, and engage in sectors that can drive the country’s economic transformation. The private sector must not only seek profit but also contribute to the broader national agenda by investing in initiatives that support economic diversification, create employment opportunities, and ensure long-term sustainability. This approach aligns with global trends where the private sector is increasingly seen as a critical partner in national development.

Vision 2036 is Botswana’s blueprint for transforming from an upper middle-income country to a high-income nation by the year 2036. It envisions a prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable economy, with the private sector serving as a key engine of growth. The discussions and outcomes from the 17th NBC are in perfect alignment with this vision. The focus on invigorating economic transformation through the private sector aligns with the pillars of Vision 2036, particularly those related to sustainable economic development, human and social development, and governance.

The Corporation had the honor of moderating a crucial panel discussion titled **“Enhancing Private Sector Growth Through Value Chain Development.”** This session provided practical insights and experiences on how value chain development can serve as a catalyst for private sector growth in Botswana. The panel covered a wide range of critical areas, including initiatives that can drive sector success, strategies for industrialization and employment creation, opportunities for investments, challenges in meeting international standards and market access, and identifying export opportunities that can expand market reach.

These discussions were not just theoretical; they offered actionable insights that businesses can implement to enhance their operations, contribute to the economy, and support the goals of Vision 2036.

Moreover, BDC played a central role in facilitating dialogue and collaboration among key stakeholders. The Corporation's sponsorship of the business lounge provided a unique space for B2B meetings, enabling conference attendees to network, forge partnerships, and explore new business opportunities in a conducive environment. The lounge was a hub of activity, fostering discussions that could lead to tangible outcomes for businesses and the broader economy.

The 17th National Business Conference was a resounding success, offering a clear vision for how the private sector can drive economic transformation in Botswana. Through active participation, BDC demonstrated its commitment to this vision, positioning itself as a key player in the nation's journey towards economic transformation.

As Botswana moves forward, the insights gained from this conference will be invaluable in guiding both the private sector and policymakers. By aligning their efforts with the goals of Vision 2036, businesses in Botswana have the potential to not only grow and thrive but also to contribute meaningfully to the nation's development, ensuring a prosperous future for all. **–Ends –**

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NOTES TO THE EDITOR

ABOUT BDC

Botswana Development Corporation Limited, or 'BDC,' is the country's main agency for commercial and industrial development. Established in 1970, under the Companies Act, BDC is a company limited by shares and fully owned by the Government of Botswana. BDC is mandated to provide, facilitate, and support funding of commercially viable enterprises that contribute towards building a sustainable and diversified Botswana economy; stimulate the growth of the private sector; to invest in the region and internationally; whilst generating wealth for the Shareholder.



The Corporation invests in commercially viable projects across all sectors of the economy except large-scale diamond mining. These include Manufacturing, Services, Tourism & Hospitality, Energy, Property, Innovation and Technology as well as Agriculture locally.

Throughout, BDC intends to promote best practices in business, governance and environmental standards in the funds or companies they choose to invest in. BDC conducts its business on a commercial basis and exercises special care and regard to economic and commercial merits.