

P25.5 BILLION NEW BOTSWANA CITY BREAKS GROUND, POSITIONING BOTSWANA FOR TRADE, JOBS AND DIVERSIFIED GROWTH

KEY TAKE-OUTS

- A major infrastructure investment has formally broken ground in Gaborone.
 - ✓ Estimated total project cost of US\$1.9 billion, (approximately P25.5 billion).
 - ✓ Scale is roughly equivalent to 10 percent of Botswana’s 2024 nominal GDP.
- New Botswana City is designed to support the transition from diamond dependence to diversified growth.
 - ✓ The development is positioned around trade, business events, investment, tourism, hospitality and enterprise activity.
- Phase 1 is anchored by the ALBADDAD Botswana Global Exhibition and Convention Centre.
 - ✓ The anchor facility is planned as a 124,000 square metre integrated events facility.
 - ✓ It is positioned as Botswana’s first international-standard exhibition and convention centre.
- BDC is the government partner in a private-sector-led project.
 - ✓ BDC is contributing land valued at approximately P198 million, equivalent to about US\$14.6 million.
 - ✓ BDC will hold a ring-fenced 5 percent golden equity shareholding.
- The project is expected to become a major employment platform.
 - ✓ Construction phase: approximately 14,000 to 21,000 total direct and indirect jobs.
 - ✓ Full operation: approximately 25,000 to 37,500 total direct and indirect jobs.
- ALBADDAD Holding brings global delivery capability to Botswana.
 - ✓ Founded in 1971 and operating across more than 50 markets.
 - ✓ Track records include COP28 Dubai, GITEX Africa, Riyadh Front, Hajj infrastructure and Guinness World Records.
- Sustainability and long-term operating performance form part of the project case.
 - ✓ New Botswana City is targeting IFC EDGE certification.
 - ✓ ALBADDAD’s EcoVadis Bronze recognition provides an external ESG benchmark.

Gaborone, Botswana: Botswana Development Corporation (BDC), in partnership with ALBADDAD Holding, today marked the groundbreaking of New Botswana City, a major mixed-use development within the Sir Seretse Khama International Airport Special Economic Zone. The event was officiated by the President of the Republic of Botswana, Advocate Duma Gideon Boko.

The project has an estimated total cost of US\$1.9 billion (approximately P25.5 billion). At this scale, New Botswana City represents a macro-level infrastructure commitment roughly equivalent to 10 percent of Botswana’s 2024 nominal GDP and is expected to accelerate Botswana’s diversification agenda while strengthening the country’s role as a SADC trade, business tourism and investment platform, with supporting demand for transport, logistics and local supply chains.



By bringing together an international exhibition and convention centre, business events infrastructure, investor-facing facilities, hospitality, retail and supporting urban systems, New Botswana City gives physical form to Botswana's diversification agenda. It creates a place where trade missions can be hosted, products can be exhibited, investor delegations can be received, conferences can be convened and business tourism can grow around a permanent national platform.

"New Botswana City must prove that strategic land can be converted into national value; that global capital can enter Botswana under clear terms, with clear benefits and respect for national priorities; and that private sector capability can work with a public development mandate," President Boko said.

"For young Botswana, transformation must become something they can touch: a site, a contract, a job, a skill, a supplier opportunity, a company opening an office, a product exhibited and a deal signed in Gaborone," President Boko added.

The Minister of Trade and Entrepreneurship, Honourable Tiroeaone Ntsima, said the development reflects Botswana's commitment to creating the infrastructure and enabling environment required to support the country's next phase of economic growth.

"New Botswana City represents far more than physical infrastructure. It is a strategic economic platform designed to unlock opportunity, facilitate trade, attract investment, and strengthen Botswana's role within regional and international value chains."

"For BDC, this project is about converting a strategic national asset into participation, economic activity and measurable value for Botswana. The equity stake is one part of the transaction. The broader return must come through jobs, procurement, skills transfer, tax revenues, tourism receipts, business activity and value retained in Botswana," said Mr. Oteng Keabetswe, Managing Director of BDC.

In his remarks, Dr. Alfateen Albaddad, Chairman of ALBADDAD Holding, said New Botswana City reflects a shared ambition to create a platform that will generate opportunity, attract investment, and support Botswana's long-term economic growth.

"New Botswana City is more than a development project; it is an investment in people, enterprise, and future generations. Through our partnership with Botswana Development Corporation, we are creating a destination designed to attract trade, business, investment, and tourism while supporting local businesses, creating jobs, and opening new opportunities for the people of Botswana. We are proud to bring more than five decades of global experience to this landmark initiative and look forward to working alongside Botswana to turn this vision into a reality."

A major national investment platform

At the heart of Phase 1 is the ALBADDAD Botswana Global Exhibition and Convention Centre, a 124,000 square metre integrated events facility positioned as Botswana's first international-standard exhibition and convention centre. The facility is planned to include international exhibition halls, large column-free and modular spaces, a convention centre, conference halls, executive meeting rooms, VIP lounges, media facilities, logistics and support infrastructure, restaurants, cafes, business lounges and extensive parking.

The broader New Botswana City master development covers approximately 1.24 million square metres and brings together exhibition and convention infrastructure, a business district, residential buildings, hotels, retail, public amenities, green infrastructure and smart city systems.

Jobs, suppliers and local enterprise

Based on current employment-impact estimates, New Botswana City is expected to support approximately 14,000 to 21,000 jobs during construction. This includes approximately 6,000 to 9,000 direct roles and 8,000 to 12,000 indirect opportunities across areas such as building materials, transport and logistics, food supply, catering, equipment rental, security, cleaning and facility support.

Once fully operational, the project is expected to support 25,000 to 37,500 total direct and indirect jobs, including approximately 8,000 to 12,500 permanent direct jobs across the exhibition centre, business district, office towers, residential communities, hotels, retail, restaurants, cafes, lifestyle facilities, the Diamond Museum, security, maintenance, facility management and support services.

The majority of construction-phase positions are expected to be filled by Botswana citizens through recruitment, training and workforce development programmes. Beyond direct employment, the development is expected to create opportunities for local suppliers, SMMEs and auxiliary businesses across hospitality, tourism, retail, transport, food supply, logistics, professional services and business support.

For local households and businesses, the expected impact will be measured through wages, contracts, supplier opportunities, skills development and new demand for services around the site. That is where a national project becomes visible in the daily economy of workers, SMMEs, transport operators, food suppliers, hospitality firms, technicians and young people entering the labour market.

BDC's role and transaction logic

BDC is contributing land valued at approximately P620 million, equivalent to about US\$43 million, based on current working assumptions using an assumed market rate of P500 per square metre and subject to confirmation of the final land extent, currently estimated at 124 hectares.



BDC's land contribution represents approximately 2.25 percent of the total project cost. Through the transaction structure, this has been adjusted and ring-fenced into a 5 percent golden equity shareholding for BDC, giving Botswana direct participation in a privately financed development of national significance. BDC said the structure recognises the strategic value of the land contribution while allowing Botswana to participate in the project without carrying the full capital burden of a development of this scale.

The broader value to Botswana is expected to flow through construction employment, permanent operational jobs, local procurement, skills transfer, tax revenues, tourism receipts, hospitality spend, business services, retail activity and the long-term positioning of Botswana as a trade and investment platform.

ALBADDAD Holding's global capability

ALBADDAD Holding, founded in 1971, operates across more than 50 markets with a workforce exceeding 7,000. The group provides turnkey capability from concept and master planning through design, construction and ongoing operation under one accountable partner.

Its track record includes venue infrastructure for COP28 Dubai and GITEX Africa, operation of the Riyadh Front exhibition destination, annual Hajj infrastructure in Makkah, manufacturing facilities spanning approximately 1.5 million square metres, and four Guinness World Records, including producing more than 2.5 million square metres of large-scale event structures in a single year.

New Botswana City is ALBADDAD Holding's first development of this kind in Sub-Saharan Africa, placing Botswana at the centre of the group's next phase of continental growth and strengthening the country's position as a destination for investment, conferences, tourism and regional business activity.

Sustainability and long-term asset performance

New Botswana City is being positioned as a long-term, sustainable development. Its green design features include high-performance glazing, natural ventilation, improved indoor air quality, rainwater collection, hybrid vehicle parking, bicycle parking, energy-efficient lighting, water-efficient sanitaryware, waste recycling and public communication of sustainable solutions.

The development is targeting IFC EDGE certification, a recognised green building standard focused on measurable building efficiency. EDGE requires at least 20 percent savings in energy, water and embodied energy in materials compared with a conventional building benchmark.

ALBADDAD's EcoVadis Bronze recognition provides an external ESG benchmark across environmental practice, labour and human rights, ethics and sustainable procurement. Together, these benchmarks support the commercial case for the project by linking sustainability, governance, operating efficiency and long-term asset value.

A gateway for Botswana's trade future

New Botswana City is positioned as "The Gateway to Africa's Trade Future", a landmark development built in Botswana and designed for regional and international engagement. Its location in the airport zone is expected to support business travel, regional access, conferences, exhibitions, hospitality, investment engagement and year-round economic activity.

The development is expected to support Botswana's competitiveness under the African Continental Free Trade Area by providing a trusted platform for trade conversations, investment delegations, exhibitions, conventions and business tourism. Regionally, it strengthens the case for Botswana as a serious SADC trade, business tourism and investment platform, with supporting demand for transport, logistics and local supply chains.

BDC said the next phase will focus on execution discipline, including construction planning, local company readiness, skills development, supplier participation and coordination across government, BDC, ALBADDAD, regulators, utilities, contractors and local partners **-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 Energy, Manufacturing, Industry, Property, Services, Tourism, and Technology 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.