

DOING BUSINESS

E-GOVERNANCE

ECOTOURISM



Sid Boubekeur
 Team Leader, JCIC project

Accelerating business reforms

Building on its reputation as one of the most stable and progressive economies in Africa, Botswana is determined to strengthen the transformation of the economy to build an equitable, sustainable, inclusive, and balanced country. To this end, the Government has initiated and implemented a suite of policies; legal, regulatory, administrative, and institutional reforms to further improve its business environment. These initiatives are anticipated to accelerate the diversification of the economy, with a focus on mineral beneficiation, value-added manufacturing, smart agriculture, value-added services sectors (tourism, ICT, financial services), environment friendly industries, renewable energy, digitalization, and circular economy.

In this context, the Government of Botswana has partnered with the European Union Delegation to Botswana and SADC under the Job Creation and Investment Climate (JCIC) project, to strengthen the participation and contribution of public and private stakeholders to the transformation of the business environment. Recognizing that sustainable development requires robust local institutions, JCIC invests in enhancing the capabilities of key stakeholders involved in trade, investment, and eco-tourism. This is done through targeted training and the establishment of collaborative networks, thus nurturing a skilled workforce ready to drive forward Botswana's economic ambitions.

The EU Funded project will make pragmatic recommendations accompanied by an action plan to accelerate the ongoing reforms to make the business environment attractive, impacting positively the digitalization and eco-tourism sectors known as job creators.

Inspired by the progress already achieved and in an effort to communicate with the public sector and the business community on the developments of the project, this JCIC **Kgolo Newsletter** first edition, presents informative articles which demonstrate the dedicated work underway.

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Ministry of Trade and Industry at the forefront of economic transformation



Tebo Motswagae
 Acting Director of the
 Department of Business
 Services

In an effort to bolster economic growth, diversification, and industrialization, Botswana's Ministry of Trade and Industry's Department of Business Services is at the forefront of promoting a conducive business and investment climate.

The primary role of the Department is to enhance Botswana's business environment. This is achieved through facilitating the implementation of business reforms, maintaining good regulatory practices, and shaping investment policies. The aim is to create an atmosphere that is not only conducive to doing business but also attracts both local and international investors.



The Doing Business Reforms Roadmap and Implementation Plan has been implemented by the Government. This plan includes 48 key reforms—21 legal and 27 administrative. To date, all legal reforms have been enacted by Parliament, and the majority of administrative reforms has been implemented.

With the support of JCIC, the Department of Business Services has initiated various actions to make Botswana an attractive destination for local and regional investors. These initiatives are

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integral to supporting the Government's broader economic reforms and include: Merging state-owned entities to eliminate overlapping functions and streamline operations; upgrading both Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and Commercial Dispute Resolution (CDR) frameworks to ensure quicker and more effective handling of business disputes; conducting audits and gap analyses of business and investment-related laws to identify and remedy inefficiencies and developing a Regulatory Sandbox Framework to support innovative and technological business initiatives, accommodating new business models and startups; Implementing phased digitization of the Botswana One-Stop Service Centre (BOSSC), improving the ease of doing business through better technology and service delivery and enhancing the skills and capabilities of the Department of Business Services staff to better serve the business community and manage reforms efficiently.

The proactive approach developed by MTI-DBS on the reforms for making an attractive business environment, is a positive trajectory towards enhanced competitiveness and economic diversification.



In alignment with the Ministry of Communications, Knowledge, and Technology's mission to foster a knowledge-based economy, DTCO has been pivotal in implementing strategic digitalization projects. Notably, our involvement in the Botswana One Stop Services Center (BOSSC) digitalization project under the JCIC framework, aims to significantly streamline business processes, reduce inefficiencies, and foster a conducive environment for investment and job creation.

Through these initiatives, we are not only enhancing service delivery but also ensuring that Botswana remains attractive to both local and international investors.

Going forward, we remain committed to transforming Botswana into a knowledge-based economy underpinned by a digitally empowered society, equipped to meet the demands of the global digital economy. Our joint endeavors with JCIC are a testament to the power of collaborative effort in achieving national development goals and reinforcing Botswana's commitment to innovation and excellence in the digital age.

Fruitful partnerships to leverage ease of doing business

The JCIC project has forged strong partnerships with various ministries in Botswana, driving significant advancements in sustainable development and digital transformation. These collaborations play a crucial role in enhancing Botswana's economic, environmental, and technological landscapes.

The collaborative efforts between JCIC and Botswana's ministries reflect a strong commitment to national development goals. By working together, these entities are paving the way for a prosperous and technologically advanced Botswana, ready to meet the demands of the global economy. These partnerships underscore the importance of sustainable development and digital transformation in driving Botswana's growth and resilience.

The JCIC's partnerships with MTI, MET and DTCO are a testament to the significant progress that can be achieved through collaborative efforts.



Chris Mokone DTCO Coordinator

DTCO is committed to improving the knowledge-based economy through the digitalisation of services

As we navigate through an era of unprecedented digital transformation, the Digital Transformation Coordination Office (DTCO) remains committed to pioneering initiatives that enhance Botswana's position as a digitally advanced society. Our partnership with the Job Creation and Investment Climate Programme (JCIC) has been instrumental in accelerating these ambitions, particularly through the development of the IGovCitizen platform that integrates digital solutions across various sectors.

Pivotal role of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism for boosting national and cultural resources

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), in partnership with JCIC, has made notable strides in integrating sustainable practices within Botswana's eco-tourism and cultural sectors. This collaboration underscores MET's commitment to environmental management and economic growth through innovative projects. Key initiatives include:

The Handicraft Project: This initiative bridges cultural heritage and economic development by preserving Botswana's unique artisanal traditions while expanding their presence in global markets. By providing local artisans with access to broader markets, the project facilitates economic opportunities and sustains traditional crafts.

Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM): The revitalization of CBNRM guidelines promotes the sustainable use of natural resources and actively involves local communities in conservation efforts. This ensures that communities receive tangible economic benefits from conservation, supporting the long-term sustainability of these initiatives.

These efforts are pivotal in ensuring that Botswana's natural and cultural resources remain sources of prosperity. They align with the ministry's mission to protect and sustainably use these resources, contributing to building a resilient, adaptive, and environmentally conscious nation poised for future growth.

Capacity of the Ministry of Trade and Industry in doing business services strengthened



Dev Chamroo
JCIC Doing Business Expert.

From the support of JCIC, the Department of Business Service (DBS) of MTI benefitted, in October 2023, from a training session dedicated to provide guidance and tools on doing business for rendering better services to its clientele and stakeholders.

The capacity building encompassed executive communication, fostering collaboration with stakeholders, knowledge management, and the development of soft skills crucial for customer service and effective time management.

Executive Communication: The training session underscored the importance of both verbal and written communications as official statements in public administration. It highlighted the need for careful consideration of words, actions, and gestures to ensure that the intended message is conveyed accurately and effectively.

Collaboration: This was another cornerstone of the capacity-building initiative. The presentation outlined a detailed plan for

setting up a network of focal points from different organizations. This network would aim to foster relationships, facilitate communication, and work towards shared goals.

Knowledge management: Preservation and sharing of institutional knowledge are pivotal to DBS's execution of its mandate. The presentation delved on the importance of moving knowledge from minds to files and ensuring that critical information is captured, stored, and accessible. This approach not only improves decision-making and fosters innovation but also safeguards the organization's continuity despite personnel changes.

Customer service: Recognizing the significance of soft skills, the presentation highlights their crucial role in customer service. Skills such as communication, empathy, conflict resolution, and time management are emphasized as essential for providing positive customer experiences.

The capacity building initiative for the Department of Business Services is a testament to the organisation's dedication to excellence, good governance and service. By focusing on executive communication, collaboration, knowledge management, and soft skills, DBS is setting a standard for public administration in Botswana.

Economic intelligence masterclass: a tool to improve organizations' decision-making



These sessions provided the participants with essential tools and knowledge, aligning with the EU's objectives of fostering informed governance and promoting sustainable economic practices.

The event also navigated the challenges of virtual learning, with some technical difficulties reported. The constructive feedback emphasized the need for robust technical support and improved infrastructure to enhance the effectiveness of future digital training sessions. This aligns with the European Union's emphasis on leveraging digital transformation for educational excellence.

Furthermore, the Masterclass reinforced the value of collaborative learning. Participants appreciated the dynamic interactions and the sense of community fostered among diverse economic sectors.

Armed with new methodologies and insights, attendees are now poised to integrate EI principles into their respective domains. They anticipate challenges such as shifting organizational mindsets, allocating resources efficiently, and accessing data effectively. These are critical for the practical application of EI in policy and decision-making processes.

This Economic Intelligence Masterclass marks a significant step towards empowering Botswana's economic leaders with the tools necessary for strategic planning and informed decision-making.

Botswana has recently showcased its commitment to advancing economic governance and sustainable development through a significant initiative supported by the European Union. Over two days' training sessions held in December 2023, MTI-Department of Services hosted an Economic Intelligence (EI) Masterclass, aimed at bolstering the capabilities of senior-level government officials and key economic stakeholders.

The Masterclass focused on a wide array of crucial topics, including methodologies for information search, market and competition intelligence, and the integral role of EI in informed decision-making.

Upgrading Botswana's Law for attracting investors

In an effort to refine judicial processes, JCIC has supported the Government of Botswana to prioritise the improvement of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms and establish Commercial Dispute Resolution courts.

High level international and local expertise, specialised on commercial dispute resolution law have been engaged to work with the Administration of Justice on these two aspects.

Regarding the Commercial Dispute Resolution (CDR), the program will propose a detailed assessment and benchmarking of Botswana's current judicial capacities in handling commercial disputes. Key activities include the analysis of past reform efforts, review of relevant World Bank reports, and preparation of feasibility studies for the potential establishment of a dedicated commercial court.



Regarding the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) the objective is to align Botswana's framework with international standards. This involves comprehensive reviews and upgrades of the existing arbitration laws, potentially repositioning Botswana as a regional hub for arbitration.

The reforms are expected to significantly reduce the time and complexity involved in resolving commercial disputes, thereby enhancing investor confidence and facilitating smoother business operations.

The initiative not only aims to upgrade judicial processes but also to facilitate business in the country. The outcomes of this project are eagerly awaited by the Botswana public and private organisations involved in private sector development and investment attraction.



(Left - Right) Katlego Makiwa, Gaogaufi Mako, Hairson Guibert JCIC Expert, Conny Nkabela MTI - Department of Business Services.

Reducing the duration and cost of starting a business through the digitalization of Botswana One Stop Shop Service (BOSSC)

In an ambitious move to redefine its business and investment ecosystem, Botswana, is steering towards the digitalisation of the Botswana One Stop Services Center (BOSSC). This initiative, aims to streamline business-to-government interactions, making them more efficient, user-friendly, and conducive to potential national and foreign investors.

This initiative aims to simplify and expedite processes for obtaining business approvals, licenses, permits, and clearances. By moving away from traditional manual processes to a more integrated digital platform, the project intends to reduce administrative delays and associated costs, thus fostering a more attractive investment landscape.

Central to the digitalisation effort is the adoption of a user-centric design approach. This methodology emphasizes understanding the needs, preferences, and experiences of users – both businesses and investors – to develop digital solutions that are efficient, and accessible. Through comprehensive stakeholder engagement, including with key institutions such as the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), the Digital Transformation Coordination Office (DTCO), the Botswana Investment and Trade Centre (BITC), and the Hospitality and Tourism Association of Botswana (HATAB) the project aims to co-create digital services that genuinely address user needs.

DTCO played an active role in the design and development of Botswana One Stop Shop Centre (BOSSC) digitalisation prototype, making an application available for use by the hospitality sector. This prototype will benefit BITC and HATAB.

The BOSSC digitalisation project is expected to deliver significant improvements in investment attraction in Botswana. By offering a one-entry digital portal and other business processes, the initiative aims to enhance predictability, accountability, and transparency in government services.

Botswana's MICE strategy: unlocking economic potential through Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions



In response to a request from the Botswana Tourism Organisation, the JCIC project undertook a comprehensive study on the National MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) Strategy. The primary objective was to enhance the MICE sector as a catalyst for economic growth, and thereby fostering increased employment opportunities.

The overarching goal of the strategy is to elevate Botswana to a higher level of socio-economic development. Leveraging Botswana's strategic location presents opportunities to position the country as a prominent business hub in Southern Africa. The study highlights the potential for MICE to stimulate various economic sectors directly and indirectly, such as tourism and trade. Furthermore, the study emphasised the importance of unlocking opportunities in events, entertainment, arts, culture, and leisure activities to foster the emergence of "Bleisure" tourism in Botswana i.e. the blending of business and leisure experiences.

In close collaboration with the Department of Tourism and BTO, JCIC experts conducted consultations with national stakeholders, as well as field missions across the country to assess existing MICE infrastructure and identify prospects. Key findings from the study underscored the potential of MICE as a driver for economic diversification and transformation, offering significant employment prospects, including for Botswana women and youth. Following the completion of their missions, the experts put forth a series of recommendations including:

- The establishment of MICE Botswana as a regulatory body and governmental entity to spearhead MICE development in collaboration with the private sector and local communities.
- The launch of a National MICE Awareness Campaign to underscore the socio-economic significance, benefits, opportunities, and challenges associated with MICE development.
- The enhancement of MICE related business initiatives through a new development strategy focused on business-friendly policies and tangible actions.

- The improvement of air connectivity and expansion of air seat capacity to and from Botswana.
- The diversification of the local tourism product mix for a competitive advantage.
- The provision of incentives to hotels and restaurants for modernisation, innovation, and staff training to enhance service quality.
- The revitalisation of Botswana museums and support for local artists to enrich MICE development through cultural preservation and artistic endeavours.

These recommendations aim to lay a solid foundation for the sustainable growth and development of the MICE sector in Botswana. It fosters economic prosperity and enhances the country's global competitiveness in the tourism and business landscape.

Diversifying handicraft products for accessing new markets



This innovative design project is benefiting from a partnership with the Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Unit, financial support from the European Union and a strong collaboration with the Impact Fund. It focuses on traditional handicrafts crafted from natural veld materials, aiming to blend tradition with innovation.

A key feature of this initiative involved the engagement of two international experts on handicraft value chains. Their mission was to conduct a thorough analysis of the handicraft supply chain—from the procurement of raw materials to the distribution of the final products—and

to recommend strategies to enhance its sustainability and global competitiveness. The goal is to boost the tourism sector to align with the national and international market.

The project encompasses several critical activities, including the development of unique, marketable designs for handicrafts made from local resources, the organization of workshops and training sessions for artisans, and the compilation of a visual toolkit to display these innovative designs. This booklet, which will be distributed to handicraft communities around the country, aims to spotlight innovative handicraft products that are suitable for both domestic and international

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markets, thus showcasing Botswana's unique cultural and artistic legacy.

Through such targeted interventions, the JCIC programme seeks to empower Botswana's artisan community, ensuring their traditions thrive while contributing to the nation's economic diversification efforts.

New management plan unveiled for Makgadikgadi and Nxai Pan national parks



In close collaboration with the Department of Wildlife, a comprehensive study was conducted to address the unique challenges of managing one of the world's largest salt pan complexes, ensuring the conservation of its rich biodiversity, cultural heritage, and the enhancement of tourism opportunities while fostering community involvement and sustainable development.

The Makgadikgadi – Nxai Pan National Parks Management Plan, developed by a team of national and international experts, outlines a strategic approach to conservation, community engagement, and tourism management over the

next decade. It incorporates extensive research, stakeholder consultations, and innovative strategies to mitigate climate change impacts, promote sustainable tourism, and enhance community livelihoods surrounding the parks.

This plan represents a significant milestone in the commitment to preserving Botswana's natural resources.

It is through collaboration and sustainable management, that the unique landscape and biodiversity of Makgadikgadi Pans are preserved.

Key highlights of the plan include initiatives for biodiversity conservation,

the implementation of modern anti-poaching measures, and the establishment of wildlife corridors. The plan also emphasizes community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) programs to empower local communities through conservation efforts and sustainable tourism development.

The new management plan is a testament to Botswana's dedication to environmental stewardship, sustainable development, and the promotion of its natural wonders on the international stage.



(Left-Right) Nicholas Thomola, CBNRM Unit. Norbert Trehoux, JCIC Eco Tourism Expert and Botshabelo Othusitse, CBNRM Coordinator

CBNRM guidelines: a tool for Natural Resource Management

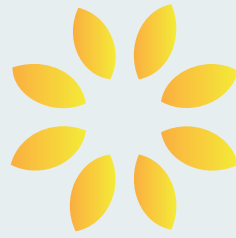
The guidelines developed are instrumental in providing an approach that encourages local communities' participation in the sustainable management of natural resources, and the development of the tourism value chain.

Implemented in Botswana in the early 1990s and updated in 2021, the CBNRM Guidelines provide guidance to Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) and other CBNRM stakeholders on best practices for sustainable community-based natural resource management projects.

The project produced an abridged version of the 2022 CBNRM Practitioners User's Manual, summarizing the principal activities to be performed by the practitioners.

The abridged CBNRM Guidelines are available in both English and Setswana, covering a step-by-step procedure for CBOs and CBNRM stakeholders to follow when mobilizing and implementing a CBNRM business enterprise project.

The guidelines will make the CBRNM approach more accessible and effective at the grassroots level, fostering conservation efforts and sustainable community-based management of natural resources.



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