

Press Release

World Productivity Day

GABORONE: June 20, 2022: Today marks an important day in the world of work globally as we reflect and recognise the significance of productivity in our social and economic endeavours. As we commemorate World Productivity Day, we need to be mindful of the benefits of the concept of productivity to Botswana and consider the costs that lack of prioritisation of productivity can have on our economy. This day is used to draw attention towards increasing quality, efficiency, and competitiveness in various sectors of the Botswana economy. This year, the day is commemorated a few days after the Institute for Management Development (IMD) launched its IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook 2022 in partnership with the Botswana National Productivity Centre (BNPC). The IMD assessment provides in-depth analysis which could help guide focused actions aimed at improving Botswana's overall competitiveness.

Productivity is defined as the efficiency of the production of goods and services and is a key driver of economic growth worldwide. Productivity growth worldwide has traditionally been a major driver of income growth, improved living standards, and declining poverty. Following H.E. President Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi's RESET Agenda, this day has become even more significant to Botswana as the country works towards re-engineering itself to transition from a middle-income to a high-income economy that is sustainable and inclusive to all. The RESET Agenda has identified mindset change in the workplace as a key priority area in the quest to drive productivity.

As the apex agency charged with leading and driving the productivity agenda in the country, contributing towards the national ease of doing business reforms, delivering impactful productivity improvement products and service solutions, and embracing, driving and leveraging the 4th Industrial Revolution, the Botswana National Productivity Centre (BNPC) takes pride in commemorating this day, and uses it as a springboard to conscientize Botswana about the importance of changing their mindset and work ethic to drive efficiency and competitiveness in the economy.

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BNPC is also charged with developing solutions to the many challenges that impede the local economy's ability to be competitive against sister economies. The Centre endeavours to make an impactful difference in the various sectors of the economy and, most importantly, in the lives of the many Batswana, through improved work ethic, enhanced national productivity and competitiveness, and the eventual resultant creation of the much-needed jobs and wealth.

World Productivity Day is being celebrated amidst challenging economic times after the devastating economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic which struck the globe and continues to ravage economies to date. The debilitating effects of the pandemic continue to reverberate around the world, and Botswana has not been spared of its consequences. One of the biggest casualties of the COVID-19 pandemic has been on productivity, because of lockdowns and the disruption of both local and global supply chains. Apart from the human costs due to pandemic related deaths, this has had a negative impact on economic growth and in other instances resulted in job losses.

This commemoration gives BNPC, labour organisations, employees, and the local economic actors the opportunity to think about strategies that need to be put in place as a response to the debilitating effects of the pandemic. Let us all understand that to build a productive and efficient economy, we all need to focus on ensuring efficiency, removing waste, and developing products and services that help us to streamline our processes.

I would like to assure you that BNPC stands ready to work with all sectors of the economy by providing research, training and consultancy in this quest to achieve high-income economic status. We have tailor-made products at our disposal which you can take advantage of, especially when you want to prepare your organisations for export development. In addition, we have specific programmes that speak to SMME development and growth. These are focused towards improving the efficiency and competitiveness of small businesses. We have products that are geared towards preparing employees to embrace working smart and productively. These include the mindset change training that the economy requires, especially under the President's RESET Agenda.

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World Productivity Day, therefore, is an important occasion for providers of productivity tools and training to celebrate their contributions and give something back to their stakeholders. Let me encourage stakeholders who provide productivity solutions to use this day to draw attention to their products and services in the context of contributing towards Botswana's productivity and competitiveness. Use this day to inform consumers about the benefits of your products in driving the productivity agenda.

For consumers of productivity products and services such as government departments and private organisations, this is an opportunity for you to testify on the productivity solutions that have made you productive and competitive. Self-employed people should also use this day to re-focus their efforts towards improving their product quality and services. This is also a day to recognise those employees who went the extra mile to drive productivity and competitiveness when things were tough. For the rest of us, World Productivity Day should be used as an opportunity to reflect on our processes and think about ways to improve productivity in our organisations. Let us use this day to come up with action plans that can contribute to making Botswana's economy productive, efficient, and competitive.

In conclusion, let us all use World Productivity Day to work towards eliminating barriers to productivity in our workplaces.

Thank you

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