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Fingile Makgalemele
Corporate
Communications
Manager

This edition of BEC's Maduo Newsletter is a very juicy read with a variation of news from the eventful season with the Council hosting the 13th Southern Africa Association for Educational Assessment (SAAEA) where the Chief Executive Officer of the BEC was conferred the new Chairpersonship of the Association. The conference attracted many educationist from all over the world.

The 10th BEC Annual Excellence Awards which was the highlight of the year was celebrated to award outstanding performers at all three levels of examinations (PSLE, JCE and BGCSE). This edition also features stakeholder engagements activities such as the Council's participation at the 10th Annual BHRDS Career Fair and Clinics and other national events like Ghanzi Agricultural Show in its quest to raise awareness on its mandate.

As Corporate Social Responsibility is part of good citizenship amongst organisations, BEC headed to Mantshwabisi Primary School's request for printing examinations papers, the Council assisted the school by printing 12 246 copies for all levels (standard one to seven) examinations papers. The Council also showed it cares for the needy communities in its jurisdiction using its value of being people focus by giving a helping hand to Nkange Junior Secondary School as they were celebrating their 30 years of existence.

BEC continues to be the trend setter in many aspects amongst other enterprises. The Council hosted the Maletle Landboard on its benchmarking mission to take a leaf on how to develop SMS service platform for their clients.

Please take pleasure in reading this interesting edition.

Please enjoy your read....

Mission

To Provide a credible and responsive assessment and examination system.

Mission Commentary

Credible: Trustworthy and Error free assessments and examinations that conform to both the local and international standards.

Responsive: Examination and Assessment system that is affiliated to the national curriculum, takes into cognisance candidates with special needs and is not detached from current issues in the environment, also relevant to the local market.

Vision

To be a provider of accessible and globally competitive qualifications.

Core Values

- Excellence
- Integrity
- Transparency
- People Focus

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BEC Successfully hosts the SAAEA Conference



SAAEA secretariat posing for a picture during the inauguration of Professor Mokopakgosi as the new SAAEA chairperson

By Otsile R. Tapson

Botswana Examinations Council (BEC) successfully hosted the 13th Southern Africa Association for Educational Assessment (SAAEA) conference which was held from the 19th to 22nd May 2019. The announcement to host the conference was made at the 11th SAAEA Conference hosted by Malawi National Examination Board (MANEB) in May 2017.

SAAEA was established primarily to provide a dialogue and debate among member states and institutions concerning educational assessment issues, promote cooperation among educational assessment agencies within the SADC sub-region and to provide a forum where examinations and assessment developers, curriculum specialists and researchers can exchange ideas and good practices on matters related to educational assessment. Member countries are Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa, Swaziland, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi and Tanzania.

The 13th SAAEA conference was held under the theme "QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN AN ERA OF EDUCATIONAL REFORMS;" and was officially opened by the then Assistant Minister of Basic Education, Honourable Thato Kwerepe. Delivering his speech, Kwerepe highlighted the importance of the chosen theme saying it was crucial especially in Africa as all countries are aspiring to transform their economies into knowledge based economies. "To attain their aspirations, countries would have to transform their education systems so that they equip their learners with 21st century skills," he asserted.

Delivering his keynote address, Professor Peter Rule, who made a presentation on Assessment and the Question of Quality; Towards Sustainable Assessment for Lifelong Learning and Systematic Learning, said it was paramount for assessment to be valid, reliable, sustainable, critical and fair. "If quality education was to be attained, educationists needed to appreciate that quality education

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BEC Board chairperson welcoming delegates



Outgoing SAAEA chairperson Dr. Mafu Rakometsi inaugurating Prof. Brian Mokopakgosi as the new SAAEA chairperson

SAAEA Conference

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depends on quality assessment even though quality assessment was not a sufficient condition for quality education," he added.

The conference also featured round table discussions on the topic of Cost Effective Assessment which were chaired by Professor John Volmink, Dr. Michael Chilala and Dr. Olefile Molwane. A total of sixty six (66) abstracts were accepted and scheduled for presentation at the conference but only forty five (45) were presented. The conference was attended by 198 delegates from over 14 countries. One of the notable achievements from the Conference was the publishing of a selection of articles from the 2019 SAAEA Conference. According to the Conference Research Work Stream Manager, Chawangwa Mudongo a total of eight (8) papers were taken through a peer-review process and have been published in the Special Issue of the online version of Mosenodi – A Peer Reviewed Journal of the Botswana Educational Research Association (BERA). Mudongo hailed this development saying it was historic achievement as it was the first time a selection of papers from the SAAEA Conference were published

in a peer reviewed journal. 'We hope other countries will emulate this move as it will enhance the submissions and also expose them to a wider audience,' she said.

The Conference Local Organising Committee (LOC) Chairperson, Dr. Moreetsi Thobega hailed the conference a success. He expressed his heartfelt appreciation to the LOC for their dedication in ensuring everything goes well. He also expressed his gratitude to stakeholders, presenters and authors who submitted abstracts saying without them there would have been no conference. 'We are also grateful to our local and international sponsors who made it possible for us to host the conference,' he said. The companies who made pledges towards the Conference included; RM Results (UK), DRS (UK), Benchmark (South Africa), Cambridge International Education (UK), Stephen Austin (UK), Botswana Educational Research Association (Botswana), CSX (South Africa), Smith and Ouzman (UK), and Botosoft (UK), Higer and Botswana Educational Research Association (Botswana).

The delegates were treated to an array of activities that included a reception cocktail, cultural night, Gala dinner and excursions which included a tour to Mokolodi Nature Reserve, Mogonye Gorges and Gaborone city.



Dr. Mafu Rakometsi giving the overview of SAAEA



BEC management during the opening ceremony



Hon. Thato Kwerepe giving keynote address

BEC Partakes On The 10th Annual BHRDS Career Fair And Clinics



BEC staff providing certification services during the BHRDS Fair

By Jacqueline Monei

Botswana Examinations Council partakes on the 10th Annual Botswana Human Resource Development Skills (BHRDS) Fair and Career Clinics. The fair was held in Francistown from 6-8 March 2019 and in Maun from the 12-13 March 2019 for the first time in Maun since its inception in 2009 and it was completed in the capital city Gaborone from the 25-29 March 2019.

In order to fulfil its mandate, BEC must disseminate information to students, parents and the general public on its services, assessment policies, procedures and regulations. The Corporate Communications Division (CCD) partakes in the BHRDS Fair and Career Clinics to fulfil this mandate. This career fair is a noble and strategic event that presents an opportunity for all key stakeholders to share

information and guide potential tertiary education students to make informed career decisions.

This year's Fair was under the theme Career guidance; A gateway towards diversifying Botswana's Economy: Ten years and beyond. Speaking during the official opening in Gaborone, the Minister of Tertiary Education, Research, Science and Technology Honorable Thapelo Olopeng said, "This theme has come at an opportune time when we are repositioning Botswana to transform from a resource based to a knowledge based economy. Government is also in the process of announcing a team to drive the National Transformation Strategy, through which our National Development Agenda will be driven as espoused in our National Vision 2036"

Honorable Olopeng emphasised that in line with the Fair's theme, there is no doubt that information sharing

and career guidance are important in this era, where most economies are repositioning themselves to become knowledge based. The focus is now on training graduates who can export their skills into the global market. He said that he believes that prospective students have received important counsel on relevant programmes that can diversify the country's economy.

Addressing the multitudes that flocked the official opening in Gaborone the Chief Executive Officer of HRDC Dr. Raphel Dingalo said "By engaging Sector Committees in this Fair, and by brining all the stakeholders together, we are in a way driving the President's Agenda of transforming the Country from a middle income to a high income country.

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BEC Exhibits At Ghanzi Agric Show



BEC staff presenting to the judges at the Ghanzi Agric Show



The host of the Ghanzi Agric Show His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Botswana Dr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masi

By Jacqueline Monei

Botswana Examinations Council exhibited at the Ghanzi Agricultural Show that was held on the 22nd - 28th July 2019 to share information about BEC's mandate, products and services with the Ghanzi Community and rural areas surrounding Ghanzi as well as other stakeholders that flocked the Ghanzi Agricultural Show Grounds.

The Ghanzi show started as a small event and has over the years established itself as a premier event. Initially it was only showcasing agricultural activities. Today, it is an inclusive economic sector spectacle, as evidenced by the various activities that represent different sectors of the economy.

The Ghanzi Agricultural Show 45th year edition was held under the theme "Sustainable economic diversification beyond 50 years through Green Technology." The event was hosted by His Excellency Dr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masi and officially opened by the President of the Republic of Namibia, His Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob. When delivering the keynote address and

officially opening the event Dr. Geingob said that as a region, through the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap, all member states have embarked upon a drive to leverage the abundant and diverse resources, especially in agriculture and mining sectors, in order to accelerate industrialisation through beneficiation and value addition. "Industrial Shows have several economic spinoffs which contribute to the development of local economies within our countries", added Geingob.

This annual event provided a platform for organisations and businesses that do not have branches in and around Ghanzi like Botswana Examinations Council to promote their products and services as well as to strengthen their stakeholder engagements. The Fair gave BEC an opportunity for a face to face interaction with its stakeholders such as students, teachers, school heads, former students and the public at large.

Stakeholders that visited the BEC stall inquired about registration, online registration and payments, remarking, malpractice and the Annual Excellence Awards. Visitors also received brochures containing information about BEC's products and services.



Dr. Mokgweetsi Masi presenting a bull to Dr. Hage Geingob



A traditional dance troupe entertaining guests



Guests at the show

BHRDS Career Fair & Clinics

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We are pushing Vision 2036" Furthermore Dr. Dingalo underscored that they are happy as HRDC to bring all the critical stakeholders together and they are happy that gradually they are extending their reach to prospective Tertiary students beyond Gaborone. He assured the people that HRDC will continue in their efforts to take services to the people.

Not only did BEC participate in the fair but also offered advice to stakeholders about BEC services, and also provided certification services to learners certificates as some of the participating Education and Training Institutions were receiving application forms of prospective students during the fair.



Students visiting BEC stall during the BHRDS Fair



HRDC CEO giving opening remarks during the BHRDS Fair



BEC Assistant Communications Officer Mr. Mpho Moilwa ushering public education on BEC during the BHRDS Fair

BEC Wraps 2019 With An Aiding Hand To Mantshwabisi Primary School

By Keoitse P. Mogotsi

The Botswana Examinations Council reinforced its relationship with Mantshwabisi Primary School by donating photocopying services towards the end of year examinations.

Botswana Examinations Council received a request from Mantshwabisi Primary School with assistance to photocopy end of year examinations papers. The school turned to BEC after their photocopying equipment broke down during the hour of need and BEC did not turn a deaf ear, as it understands the importance of writing examinations on time as well as how end of school examinations prepare students for the final National examinations.

BEC assisted the school with a total of 12 246 copies for examinations papers for standard one to standard seven. Mantshwabisi Primary School pledged their own printing

paper towards this job and this made it easier for BEC to assist.

The relationship between BEC and Mantshwabisi dates back to 2014 when BEC came on board and assisted the school with proposals for various equipment needed by the school. The proposals were sent out to different companies some of which donated solar panels, Printers, internet services, school uniforms and sporting equipment.

In 2017, BEC donated sporting equipment to the school which included netball balls, volleyball balls, soccer balls, two volleyball nets, soccer post net, netball posts, volleyball kit set of twelve for boys, volleyball kit set of twelve for girls, netball kit set of ten, soccer kit set of fourteen jerseys and shorts and goalkeeper set, forty-nine volleyball, netball and soccer socks and set of seven netball bibs.

BEC Bids Farewell To Retiring Board Members



Outgoing BEC board members at their farewell dinner

By Jacqueline Monei

Section 4 of the Botswana Examinations Council Act, stipulates that BEC's governing body or Board will be appointed by the Minister of Basic Education. This unitary structure comprises of exclusively Non-Executive members with the exception of the Chief Executive Officer. In the execution of its duties the Council is guided by a Board Charter which sets out clearly the Board's roles, duties and responsibilities.

Thursday 23th January, 2020 will forever be highlight on the historical moments of the BEC, as on this day the Council bid farewell to seven (7) of its board members. In his welcome remarks the Chief Executive Officer, Professor Brian Mokopakgosi acknowledged everyone for taking time on their busy schedule to

recognise the outgoing board members for their contributions to the BEC family. Mokopakgosi expressed great gratitude to the outgoing board members for all that they have done to help BEC succeed. He said when he joined BEC as a caretaker in 2013, the organisation was going through some challenges and the Board was always there to assist, and this showed that they were fully committed to BEC.

Mokopakgosi emphasised that the board members helped BEC to be where it is today. "The council is now going through a transformation and parliament has since approved the new Bill, and we are grateful to your contribution," he applauded.

For his part, The Board Chairperson Dr. Joseph Tsonope on his farewell

remarks said to the outgoing board members that they have played a crucial role in shaping the future of BEC in guiding the Transformation project. He highlighted that their final accomplishment under this project was the approval of the BEC Amendment Bill, which instrument is critical to the transformation of BEC into a high-performance organisation with an expanded mandate that includes among others, the transfer of assessment and moderation of TVET to the Council.

"ISO certification was obtained during your term. It is critical in the development of policies, processes and procedures associated with certification. How many parastatals have attained this feat? You are

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Retiring Board Members

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ambassadors and the mouth-piece of the BEC, and our success will depend on the messages you spread out there." added Dr.Tsonope.

The Board Chairperson applauded the outgoing board members for mentoring the Executive Management on many matters, particularly HR related ones. He said they have bequeathed upon the BEC a legacy of constructive disruption, and he underlined that it is not easy to objectively measure legacies, as it is this character that will see the BEC succeed with resilience in the midst of turbulent transformational changes. He said his wish is that this mettle could reverberate throughout our country, with themselves as torch bearers.

The outgoing Board members were, Dr. Gaelebale Nnunu Tsheko who served as the BEC Board Vice Chairperson, Dr. Tsheko was also the Deputy Chairperson for the Board Executive Committee and also served as Chairperson for the Research Committee. Dr.Tsheko chaired the Examinations Committee and was also a member of Final Awards Committee. Dr. Daniel

Tau belonged to Executive Committee and chaired the Human Resource Committee and Procurement Committee. Mrs. Daisy Molefhi served in Procurement Committee and Examinations Committee while Dr. Raphel Dingalo served on Human Resource Committee and Procurement Committee. Mr Simon Coles was a member of Research Committee and while Mr Nasim Miller was a member of Examinations Committee.

Dr. Daniel Tau as the longest serving member of the BEC board extended his gratitude towards the BEC board members and staff members for tolerating them for such a long time. He said some of them were there at the beginning so they are part of the foundation laying and it was an invaluable experience.

He highlighted that they went through turbulences such as the engagement of the first Chief Executive Officer and the engagement of the first chairperson and overseeing a bankrupt organisation and being able to keep it afloat for over five (5) years. He said all this have led to the BEC of today with the transformation that have commenced. Tau concluded by saying he is starting a University and he is using a lot of learnings he gathered whilst at BEC and for that he is grateful and wishes BEC nothing but the best.



Dr. Nnunu Tsheko pictured with her gift



Outgoing Board members posing in front of their braai gift



BEC management in attendance



Prof. B. Mokopakgosi wishing the outgoing Board members well

BEC Joins Nkange Jss As They Celebrates 30 Years Of Existence



Prof. Mokopakgosi unveiling the plaque to mark the 30th anniversary commemoration

By Otsile R. Tapson and
Lesego Ntuluki

The Botswana Examinations Council has once again shown commitment to its efforts to encourage excellence by awarding students who do well in their studies.

BEC joined Nkange JSS as it celebrated 30th Anniversary in a joint ceremony that also featured the school's prize giving, on the 6th of September 2019. The Chief Executive Officer Prof. Brian Mokopakgosi was honoured with the privilege of being the Guest Speaker at the event. Giving a keynote address Mokopakgosi congratulated Nkange JSS for achieving the 30th Anniversary milestone. "Celebrating 30 years provides a rare opportunity to seriously and honestly introspect about how the school has performed over this period and carefully identify

strategies to sustain and or improve such performance", he implored. He further said BEC's mandate was to develop and administer school examinations which are used to assess the achievement of learners against the curriculum.

The celebrations were held under the theme Stakeholder participation: Towards Delivering a 21st Century Learner and Mokopakgosi in his speech noted that this was in sync with the motto of the Ministry of Basic Education; 'Delivering the 21st Century Learner'. "The world has since come to the realisation that there is an important role stakeholder can play to produce the kind of learner that can help us realise the economic transformation we all so desire," emphasized Mokopakgosi. He added that BEC contributes directly to the National Human Resource Development Strategy and it will

continue to do so to help the nation to participate in the fourth Industrial Revolution in order to achieve the status of high-income economy by the year 2036.

Mokopakgosi also awarded the school's former student who was the school's best performer for JCE in 2018 Ndibo Zwebathu who obtained a merit pass. She was presented with a laptop and Mokopakgosi also donated P2,000.00 to the school and also unveiled the 30th Anniversary plaque in commemoration of the day.

One of the event organiser and Alumni, Mr. Cheneso Maphorisa thanked BEC for participating in their celebrations. He said BEC was an important stakeholder in the education system. He said apart from administering examinations, BEC also conduct valuable research which helps

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Nkange JSS celebrates 30 years

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schools to improve their performance. He added a lot has changed since they first attended school in Nkange. Being the first cohort, he said they hold precious memories of the school and they want to see it performing well and contributing to the National development. He added that together with others, they sponsor prize giving ceremonies as a way of giving back to the school which laid a firm foundation for their future. Maphorisa is currently employed by the Ministry of Basic Education as Deputy Manager, Employee Relations.

Giving his remarks, the School Head Mr. K.O. Mphuthe said the school was faced with a lot of challenges such as lack of teaching resources, unequipped library, dilapidated structures and hostels and appealed to the authorities to move swiftly to address the situation. He further appealed to parents to take an active role in their children's education, decrying that most parents have relegated the learning duties to teachers. He said there were battling with issues of indiscipline and substance abuse in schools.

"Today our schools are faced with challenges of substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, indiscipline and other social ills. It is important for parents, teachers, law enforcement agencies and the community to work hand in hand to arrest this situation before it spirals out of control," he pleaded. Mr. Mphuthe thanked his predecessors for their tireless efforts in shaping the school to what it is today and also praised Alumnus who continue to assist them in time of need.

The occasion was graced amongst others by Kgosi Toteng Ndzonga, Kgosi Wilson Mothowetsho, Director Regional Operations Mr. Sonny Mooketsi, Chief Education Officer Tutume Sub Region, Ms. Khumoyame Mosetlha, Former School Heads Mr. John Maphane, Mr. Oboletse Mbaakanyi and Mr Gaabadzo Mooketsi.



Nkange JSS School Head Mr K. Mphuthe giving a historical background of the school



The local traditional dance group entertaining guests



Prof. Mokopagosi awarding a laptop to the JCE top achiever Ndibo Zwebathu

SAAEA Conference



Part of the delegation at the SAAEA conference



BEC choir entertaining guests at the SAAEA conference



Dr. Michael Chilala chairing the round table discussions



Delegates at cultural night having fun



Bridget John giving a vote of thanks



Local jazz maestro Lister Boleseng serenading guests at the Gala dinner



Part of the delegation at the SAAEA conference



Chairperson of the local organising team Dr. Moreetsi Thobega thanking his team



Part of the BEC staff members in attendance



Prof. Mokopakgosi delivering his speech



Dr. O. Molwane giving a vote of thanks at the opening ceremony

BEC Excellence Awards in Pictures



His Honour the Vice President of the Republic of Botswana Slumber-Tsogwane arriving at St. Joseph's College



The 2018 Golden Star Anthony Howard giving a speech at the awards ceremony



Dr. Raphael Dingalo presenting Best PTA PSLE top award to Livingstone Primary School



Parents and teachers celebrating with one of the top achievers



HR Director Emmanuel Maite with an opening prayer



Debswana General Manager Mr. Albert Milton presenting an award to one of the PSLE top achievers



BEC staff in attendance



MoBE Deputy Permanent Secretary Mr. Simon Coles giving a vote of thanks



His Honour the vice President Slumber Tsogwane giving a keynote address



Botswana Prison Band serenading guests at the awards ceremony



BEC choir showcasing some dance moves at the awards ceremony

BEC Brief The Media On The Pu



Product Development and Standards Director, Mrs Sheila Barongwi (left) and Examinations Administration and Certification Director Mrs Dorcas Morake during a media briefing



Prof. Brian Mokopakgosi briefing the media

By Pauline Mogotsi

BEC values the media as a critical stakeholder in disseminating information about examinations. Over the past three years, Botswana Examinations Council's media briefing on examinations results focused on the processes that were followed in producing the results. The main reason for repeatedly doing this was to make sure that BEC and the media are on the same page so that they can help to disseminate the message to the public. For the year under review BEC decided to focus mostly on the purposes of its three examinations.

On the first media briefing of the 2018 results Professor Brian Mokopakgosi, told media that he has realised that they now know the processes and

conduct of examinations so they are concerned, as their examinations are not used for the intended purposes they were designed for.

"This year we conducted three examinations as like in the past years, these examinations serve different purposes but as I said the way they are used is like they serve one purpose, said Prof. Mokopakgosi". He said The Primary Leaving Examinations (PSLE) is a diagnostic examination meant to provide feedback to the education system. The examination measures candidates' academic performance against curriculum standards. It is administered to all learners who have completed the Ministry of Basic Education (MoBE) Seven-year primary school programme. PSLE candidates

sit examinations in seven subjects. Performance at PSLE is reported on a five (5) point grade scale of A-E, showing levels of achievement.

Mokopakgosi explained that the Junior Secondary School Examinations (JCE), just like Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Examinations (BGCSE) is used for selection purposes. He said the JCE examinations should be able to assist in selecting candidates to proceed to post-secondary schools, tertiary institutions, vocational and technical colleges as well as work placement. He explained that Candidates are assessed on a total of nine or ten subjects or syllabus but grading is based on seven subjects

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Purposes Of National Examinations



Part of the journalists at the media briefing

Media Briefing

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selected through agreed and published criteria. He further said performance is reported at syllabus and overall level and grades available for this examinations are A,B,C,D and E being the lowest mark. He also said there is merit for outstanding performance and U for unsatisfactory results.

Mokopakgosi further explained that the BGCSE results are also used for selection purposes. These results are used to select candidates into tertiary institutions and work placement. He explained that unlike PSLE and JCE, BGCSE is a subject-based qualification. Results are reported at syllabus level and there is no aggregate. Performance

is reported against subjects where A+ symbol is the highest level of qualification and G being the lowest level of achievement. Mokopakgosi concluded by applauding teachers, examiners, invigilators, BEC staff for the dedication and ensuring that examinations are written on time and results released on time.

Candidates who fail to meet the requirement of the G end up with grade U that is unsatisfactory results. When concluding on the BGCSE, Professor said that Institutions have their own way of selecting candidates for tertiary education using their criteria. He explained that BEC record results using grades not points that are used by most tertiary institutions.

When concluding about purposes of BEC examinations, Professor Mokopakgosi applauded teachers, examiners, invigilators, BEC staff for the good cooperation they are showing to BEC in making sure that examinations are written on time and results released on time. "I hope the nation will use the results in way they were set and designed for", concluded Mokopakgosi who was accompanied by Examinations Administration and Certification Director Ms. Dorcus Morake, Product Development Services Director, Ms. Sheilah Barungwi, Information and Communications Technology Director, Mr. Ratio Balositse, Corporate Services Director, Mr. Letlhokwa Galekhutle and the Corporate Communications Manager Ms. Fingile Makgalemele.

BEC Donations Improves Results

BEC's as Develop

By Otsile R. Tapson



Mantshwabisi Primary School sports committee

Botswana Examinations Council (BEC), through its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative assisted Malete Land Board to roll out a Short Message Service (SMS) self-service platform. The objective of the SMS platform is to assist Malete Land Board with disseminating information to its stakeholders, reduce turnaround times and to facilitate the ease of doing business. BEC has through its Information Technology Directorate developed an SMS system that is used by students to access their results. The system is also being used by the parent Ministry of Basic Education to disseminate information on Form Four admissions.

Malete Land Board authorities visited Botswana Examinations Council on the 12th October 2019 to express gratitude at the help offered by BEC in helping them develop and roll out the SMS platform. The Land Board Secretary and the Head of Delegation Ms. Roselyn Sedimotse said the Ministry of Land Management, Water and Sanitation Services had called on them to enhance service delivery as part of its Strategic Objective of Innovative Ideas through the use of self-service Platform. She added that after doing a research, they found out that BEC was using a system that in their view would improve service delivery, hence they partnered with BEC. She further thanked BEC for availing a Technical Lead person who worked with them from the beginning to the end of the project. She said The ICT Coordinator Mr. Sedumedi Pule was very helpful in offering help from the development

By Keoitse P. Mogotsi

Botswana Examinations Council's made a follow up on the Corporate Social Responsibility Project that was initiated in 2014 and implemented in 2017 at the Mantshwabisi Primary School.

The BEC team met with the Sports Committee of Mantshwabisi Primary School that was led by the Committee Chairman Mr Kaelo Kgaswane. In his welcome remarks, Mr Kgaswane said they were gratified to see their donors checking on their project after three years of its implementation. Kgaswane said that through the donations from BEC, Mantshwabisi saw a massive improvement and development in sports especially in volleyball and football. He reported

that the major achievement in the school that they experienced in the past two years is a decline in dropouts, and they believe this is due to students being attracted to sports as teachers engage them even on weekends.

"At the National Mini Volleyball competitions, which were held in Selibe Phikwe in 2017, the boys' volleyball team reached semi-finals and finished in position four out of six schools", reported Kgaswane. He continued by saying that in 2018 Mantshwabisi Primary School participated in Botswana Primary School Sports Association (BOPSSA) up to Nationals where three football players were selected to contest

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Assists Malete Land Board to SMS Self Service Platform



BEC ICT Coordinator Mr. Sedumedi Pule demonstrating the SMS features



Malete Land Board officers who visited BEC to express appreciation of the services done by BEC

of the system to helping them to draft contracts with cellular providers which they use to disseminate the information. Sedimotse said prior to launching the SMS service, the Land Board was always inundated with long queues of customers who wanted to inquire about their land applications. She added that the system has improved their work dramatically as their customers can now use the SMS platform to update their information such as addresses, check their application status on the waiting list, inquire on the rates payment amongst others.

For his part, The Principal Administration Officer at Malete Land Board Mr. Gaongalelwe Ditau, expressed gratitude towards BEC, saying the Land Board has received a lot of positive feedback since rolling out its self-help service. He said for BEC to assist them to develop the system was a commendable gesture, as it saved them costs which they could have incurred had they engaged a private company to develop their system.

The Work Improvement Team Leader - Ms Goitsewang Dibuile also expressed delight at the help offered by BEC

toward this project. 'The project has alleviated the staff workload at Malete Land Board, as more time can be allocated to other duties other than responding to general land application queries', she added. She also added that the project earned them an Award for 'Best Innovative Theme' under their Ministry's awards as well as the Public Service Convention Awards. She added that as voted the Best Land Board in the country, they wanted to continue to come up with innovative solutions that will better the lives of those they serve. She also said the project was a success as it was also entered in the African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) as well as the United Nation Innovative Ideas Awards. 'Even though we did not win at international level, it was huge milestone for our entry to be accepted, as it goes to show that own project was considered to be amongst the best in the world', reiterated Dibuile.

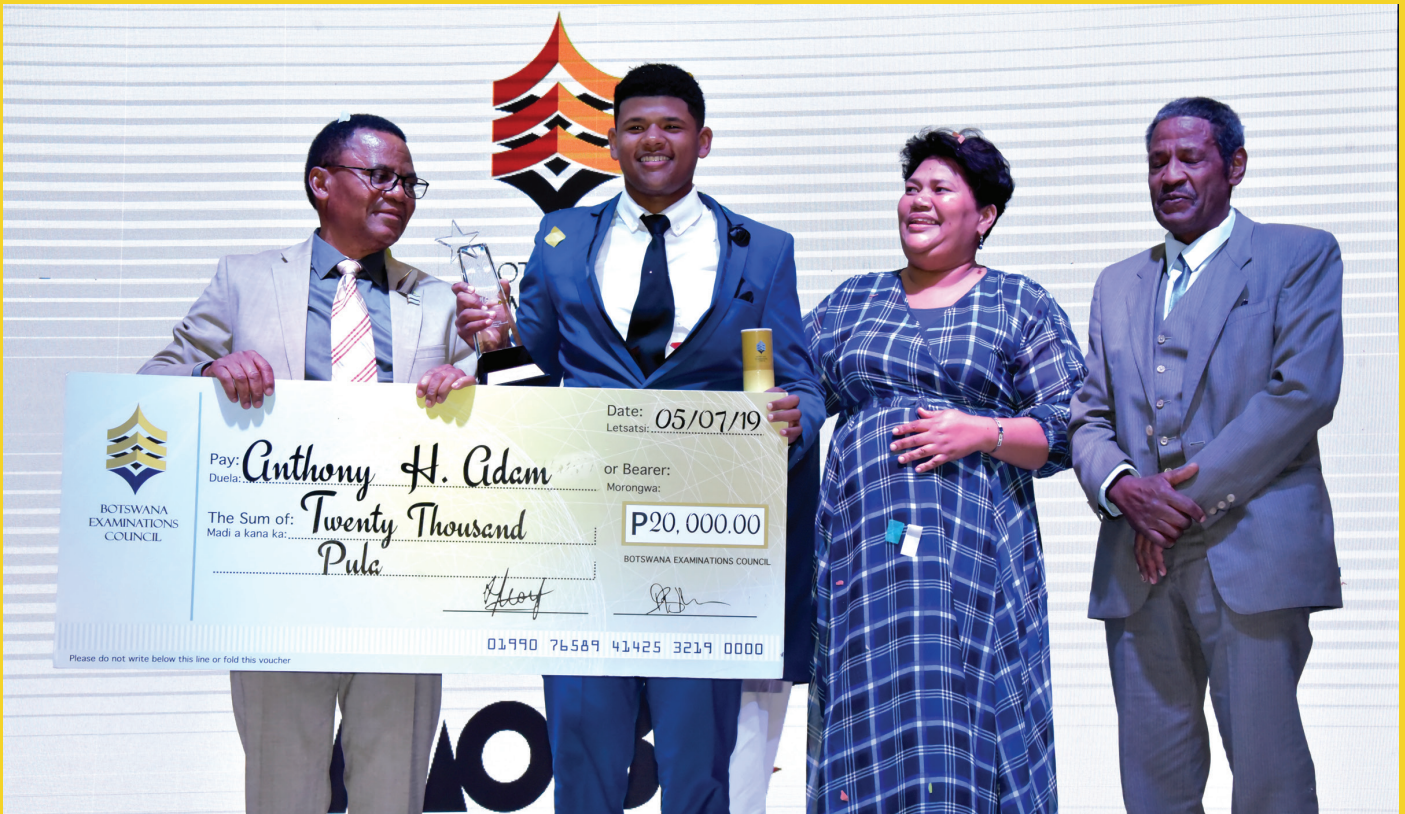
Chief Executive Officer, Brian Mokopakgosi expressed honour on behalf of the Management and staff for BEC to have played a very crucial role in assisting the Malete Land Board with development of the self-service

system. He further said BEC has an obligation under its Corporate Social Responsibility to assist communities in which BEC operates in ways that will contribute toward national development outside of the core mandate of BEC.

"BEC strives to be an asset to the community by supporting the social, cultural and economic development in Botswana to align itself with Vision 2036 Pillar Two (2) of Human Social Development which focuses on moral, tolerant and inclusive society that provides opportunities for all", he emphasised. Mokopakgosi assured the Malete Land Board that BEC will always be available to offer them technical support for this project and thanked them for having trust in BEC to help them execute this project.

The Malete delegate comprised of Roselyn Sedimotse as the Head of the Delegation, Warona Leburu – Attorney, Gorata Ntekola – Performance Improvement Coordinator, Siphon Ndikindela – Systems Analyst, Gaongalelwe Ditau – Principal Administration Officer and Goitsewang Dibuile – Public Relations Officer.

The Tenth Toast



His Honour the vice President of the Republic of Botswana Slumber Tsogwane presenting a cheque to the Golden Star Anthony Howard

By Lesego Ntuluki

The BEC Annual Excellence Awards reached a double figure as, the ceremony marked its 10th anniversary.

Having started as a relatively small event in 2009, it was not long before the event attracted recognition from the Ministry of Basic Education (MoBE), Office of the President and the private sector; a partnership that lasts to date. The Excellence Awards are meant to celebrate

excelling students and motivate their peers.

The historical event was held at St Joseph's College where recipients and guests were treated to some glitz and glamour deserving of a decade. The Chief Executive Officer of Botswana Examinations Council, Prof. Brian Mokopakgosi described the event as premier and applauded the tenth stars for their notable excellence. "You deserve recognition and congratulations for doing

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MoBE Assistant Minister Mr. Thato Kwerepe presenting an award to Pego Letebele

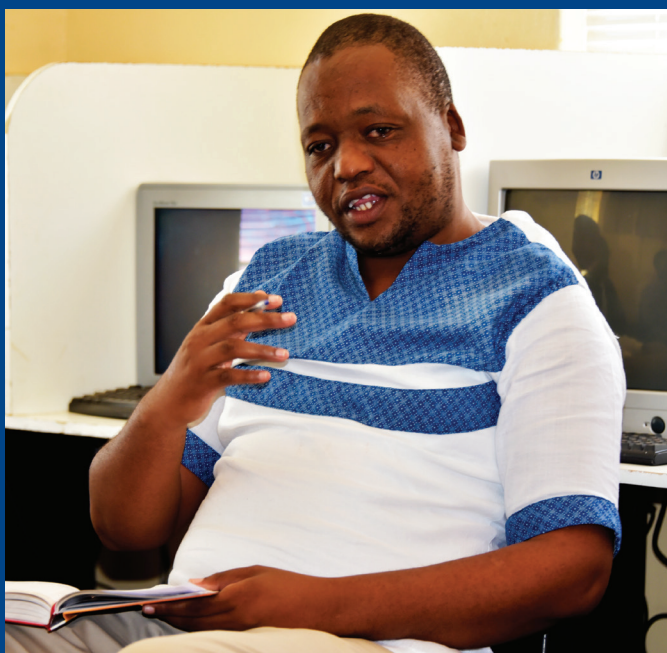


Stanbic Bank Managing Director Mr. Samuel Minta presenting an award to one of the BGCSE top achievers Hakim Abdul

at Nationals in Gaborone and they scooped position one and were awarded Gold medals. To add on to their accolades Mantshwabisi Primary School football coach, Mr Maruping was nominated for level one Development in Football Course that was conducted by Botswana Football Association (BFA). He further reported that in 2019 the volleyball team assembled a strong team that participated in the BOPSSA National Competitions. Three volleyball male players from Mantshwabisi were nominated for Nationals held in Maun and one volleyball female player also formed part of the regional team in Maun. The boys' volleyball team scooped position one.

They expressed gratitude to Botswana Examinations Council for their efforts and generosity. "Our school is outperforming many schools in sports thanks to the BEC's donation, and will always acknowledge them", applauded Mr. Sebobi.

Mantshwabisi Primary School sports Committee updated BEC on its new developments in sports and highlighted that they have introduced Lawn Tennis and Cricket and appealed to BEC to assist the school with Tennis and Cricket equipment. They also said that they wish all the classes at Mantshwabisi Primary School could have chess equipment, as chess mends learning, thinking, analytical power, and decision-making ability of a child and it can help students in mathematical resolutions.



Chairperson of Mantshwabisi Primary School sports committee Mr. Sebobi thanked BEC for its support

BEC key personnel undergo Invitation to Tender (ITT) and Evaluation Training

By Karabo Segobye

Upon realising the rising numbers of Instances of cancelled tenders due to insufficient specifications in the tender, Botswana Examinations Council's Procurement Manager Ms Kebatshabile Keloneilwe, then decided to organise an Invitation to Tender (IIT) and Evaluation Training for BEC key personnel. The training, which was held on the 19th and 20th February 2019, at Maharaja Conference Centre was aimed at polishing and aligning knowledge of tendering amongst BEC employees.

In his opening remarks, Director, Corporate Services, Mr. Lethokwa Galekhuthe mentioned that procurement is the fastest way to prison as well as an easy way to lose a good name when in fact you are a good person. He went on to encourage all those who were present to take the training seriously as well as take away from the training information and skills that will help them save money for the organisation as retendering and mistakes on tender documents can be very costly for the organisation.

Keloneilwe presented that BEC provides templates for ITT in the effort to simplify the preparation of a bidding document. In the templates, requirements differ due to the different procurement activities while general requirements are the same. She went on to say that there are five (5) different types of bidding documents being RFQ Supplies Tenders, RFQ Services Tenders, Open Domestic Tenders – one envelope, Open Domestic Tenders – two envelope and international Domestic Tenders – two envelope . Templates for these documents are being finalised and will be uploaded on the intranet for employees to access.

Delegates expressed the different challenges that they face during evaluation, giving the trainer an opportunity to impart information and solutions to those challenges. Keloneilwe encouraged divisions or directorates to commence by getting contributions from those involved in the process when developing an ITT so as to develop a solid ITT. Trainees were informed of the importance of

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BEC Hosts Korean Volunteer Teachers



Korean Volunteer teachers pictured with MoBE and BEC staff during their visit to BEC

By Karabo Morule-Segobye

Botswana Examinations Council BEC has earned the privilege of an annual visit by Korean volunteer teachers through the Ministry of Basic Education (MoBE). On the 7th of January, 2020 eight Koreans, five officers from MoBE and Kang Primary School Head visited BEC to present the 2020 cohort of volunteers as well as acquaint them with the BEC mandate.

The Corporate Communications Manager Ms. Fingile Makgalemele welcomed them and briefed them

on the BEC mandate. She reiterated that BEC's main purpose is to assess candidates as they go through their Primary and Secondary education as well as touched on the BEC structure. She went on to explain the different levels of examinations that BEC administers, starting with the Standard Four attainment tests to the BGCSE examinations.

The visitors were taken through the examinations cycle from registration to release of results. Projects such as BNEPS, Transformation and the National Assessment Programme were also presented so as to give the visitors

a bird's eye view of the organisation. The visitors were assured of the safety of examinations which is based on a memorandum of agreement with the Botswana Police Service and the Botswana Defence Force. This collaboration is intended to help BEC in providing efficient assessment and examinations services.

In closing, Dr Trust Masole presented the TIMSS study results showing the volunteer teachers how Botswana fared with other countries. The teachers were very grateful for the vast information that they received as well as the warm welcome from BEC.

Beam Projects

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and parents to explore associations of policy relevant factors of learning in primary school.

During the inception meeting, the Consortium and BEC discussed the proposed timeline for workshops and related study phases and tasks. General agreement was reached on most of the proposed workshop dates and the tasks to be achieved in preparation and conduct of the pilot study and the field test. However, during the discussions it became clear that the development of the envisaged number of achievement and questionnaire items would require extended preparatory work prior to the item development workshop.

and background data collected from pupils, teachers, school heads

The development of the assessment framework will be a collaborative process, involving key project staff and in-country experts familiar with the Botswana curriculum and assessment development. A key component of the work will be knowledge sharing and capacity building, so that future revisions of the framework can be undertaken locally.

The Consultants submitted an inception report and were scheduled to have been in the Country for a workshop on Assessment Frameworks from 30 March to 3 April 2020. The workshop did not materialise owing to the ban on travel due to the outbreak of Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19). Due to this challenge, where possible, some of the activities would be implemented through virtual platforms until the situation allows for physical interactions.



Professor Brian Mokopakgosi

Tenth Toast

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exceptionally well," Mokopakgosi emphasized. The CEO went on to express delight to the fact that there has been a slight improvement over the years, and credited the Top Achievers profiling for being a big motivating tool. "I urge you to read the fascinating stories about Top Achievers to learn what it takes to succeed," he advised.

His Honour the Vice President, Slumber Tsogwane who officiated the event on behalf of His Excellency commended BEC and MoBE for having successfully hosting the event annually without a gap year and said the event provides an opportunity to dialogue on all aspects of education. The Vice President went on to say the recipients are an example between hard work and reward. "My humble advice is that receive the honour with humility as you have achieved because of the many others around you," he commended.

Anthony Howard the recipient of the Golden Star award that was this time around presented by the Vice President standing in for the President the awards ceremony gives a student something to look forward to. "As soon as the results were released I was thinking of this moment," he said. Howard advised his peers to always aim for perfection so that if they fall short at least they are close to it.

The event was made possible by support from government departments and the private sector, amongst them Botswana Television (Btv) who provided live coverage of the event, Stanbic Bank, Debswana and Dimension Data.

Tender and Evaluation Training (IIT)

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using the relevant tender documents for their procurement so as to avoid delays and scenarios of retendering.

Specifications are not to be about the brand that is wanted but the functions that need to be performed or objectives achieved. Specifications must truly reflect the requirements of the contract or the procurement activity. Failure to do this can result in contracting the wrong supplier or the procurement activity not achieving the desired goals. Tenders are advertised for a minimum of four (4) weeks and a maximum of 6 weeks. Employees were encouraged to meet when developing a tender by convening a preparatory meeting where they will set their evaluation criteria so as to make it easier when they later evaluate.

The trainer discouraged Procuring Entities from comparing bidders against each other because they should compare with the ITT instead. She said evaluators should usually use the two envelopes system as it helps to avoid cases where evaluators are clouded by prices while still at the technical stage.



BEC Board chairperson Dr. Joseph Tsonope presenting the Chairperson's award to Pego Letebele

BEC continues to advance and certify learning



Corporate Communications Officer Ms. Karabo Morule-Segobye interacting with students at the Business Botswana Fair

Beam Projects

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goals and research questions, the key milestones, prerequisites, tasks and schedule of planned workshops.

The consultants interviewed the project team and all other interested groups within the education system. This was done in order for the consultant to confirm that the Client (BEC) and other stakeholders had a common understanding and desire for the BEAM to progress in its form and shape. Several decisions were reached during the inception meeting. This includes the following:

- It was noted that the BEAM programme would be cyclical following a four-year assessment cycle to allow for sufficient analysis and reporting time after each data collection cycle.
 - Using existing frameworks of large scale international studies like TIMSS and PIRLS as a starting point will help to define relevant content areas and cognitive domains to be investigated in the subject matter areas. However, the programme will fully based Botswana curriculum.
 - The area of Life Skills will be covered as part of the student questionnaire where a limited number of topics (e.g. health and hygiene, bullying, use of social media) will be developed based on the existing Life Skills curriculum.
- The consultants together with BEAM curriculum expert teams would define important policy relevant background variables to be collected from different respondents that determine students' learning in school. These variables will include but are not limited to questions regarding pre-school attendance, socio-economic status, family background and structure, school infrastructure and resources, school leadership, role of social media in school, teacher training and professional development, questions related to absenteeism of students and teachers and issues of bullying at schools.
- The goal is to establish links between student achievement data

By Karabo Morule-Segobye

The Annual Business Botswana Northern Trade Fair was held in Francistown from the 29th May to 2nd June 2019 under the theme “Innovate, Integrate, Industrialise,” where Botswana Examinations Council (BEC) exhibited. The fair was thronged by thousands who gained the opportunity to interact with BEC on a personal level through its staff who represented the organisation.

During the fair BEC disseminated information on its mandate, private candidate registration fees and dates, external examinations offered by BEC, replacement of lost or damaged certificates. Visitors to the stall were also educated on examinations malpractice as it is an area of zero tolerance for the Council.

During his welcome remarks at the official opening, the Business Botswana President, Mr. Gobusamang

Keebine said, “Globally, trade fairs are recognised as the pertinent medium for doing business and this fair has become an ideal platform to promote products and services to a wider range of audience. It is also a meeting place for industry professionals from different sectors to share their creative ideas and business initiatives for promoting creative content and services.” He went on in elation, pointing out that the Northern Trade Fair has been in existence for twenty-five years and Business Botswana together with the City of Francistown have been championing business development as well as promoting and facilitating trade and partnership between Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through the fair.

Although the judging of stalls process did not yield a prize for BEC the staff that had been manning the stall indicated that they will continue to increase awareness of the BEC services and mandate to stakeholders as often as possible.



Certification Assistant Mr. Thabo Mogodu explaining some of the BEC services to students

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Implementation Of The Development Phase Of Beam Project Commences



BEAM consultants pictured with MoBE and BEC representative



BEC staff interacting with IEA representatives

By Jacqueline Monei

The Ministry of Basic Education (MoBE) has taken decision to carry out the Botswana Educational Achievement Monitor (BEAM) project as large-scale survey to monitor quality of education in the country. The BEAM projects whose main aim is to monitor education at system level resemble the large-scale survey like TIMSS which is carried out across participating countries. The BEAM project provides local context and profile several performance indicators for Botswana education landscape. The current BEAM projects focussed on standard 4 level and monitor learners' ability on numeracy, literacy and life skills. It is anticipated that the BEAM programme would be applied at other levels when it is deemed required.

The main goal of BEAM is to regularly gauge the level of educational achievement against associated background factors that impact on the Country's education system. BEAM was proposed primarily to operationalise recommendation of the Revised National Policy on Education of 1994 which recommended that "periodic surveys should be undertaken to evaluate the extent to which the curriculum is meeting the objectives". The recommendation also suggested that the evaluation should take a more systematic approach in terms of data collection and analysis. The surveys should eventually turn into a systematic national assessment programme which would monitor the progress of education from pre-school to tertiary level. The BEAM project is implemented in two phases: pre-establishment phase and the development phase. The pre-establishment phase has been completed successfully.

BEAM project is implemented by the Botswana Examinations Council (BEC) on behalf of Ministry of Basic Education (MoBE) as a comprehensive framework for measuring and monitoring the quality of education at system level, taking into account new transformative programmes such

as the National Human Resources Development Strategy (NHRDS), National Credit & Qualifications Framework (NCQF), and the Education and Training Sector Strategic Plan (ETSSP) - 2015-2020 in Botswana.

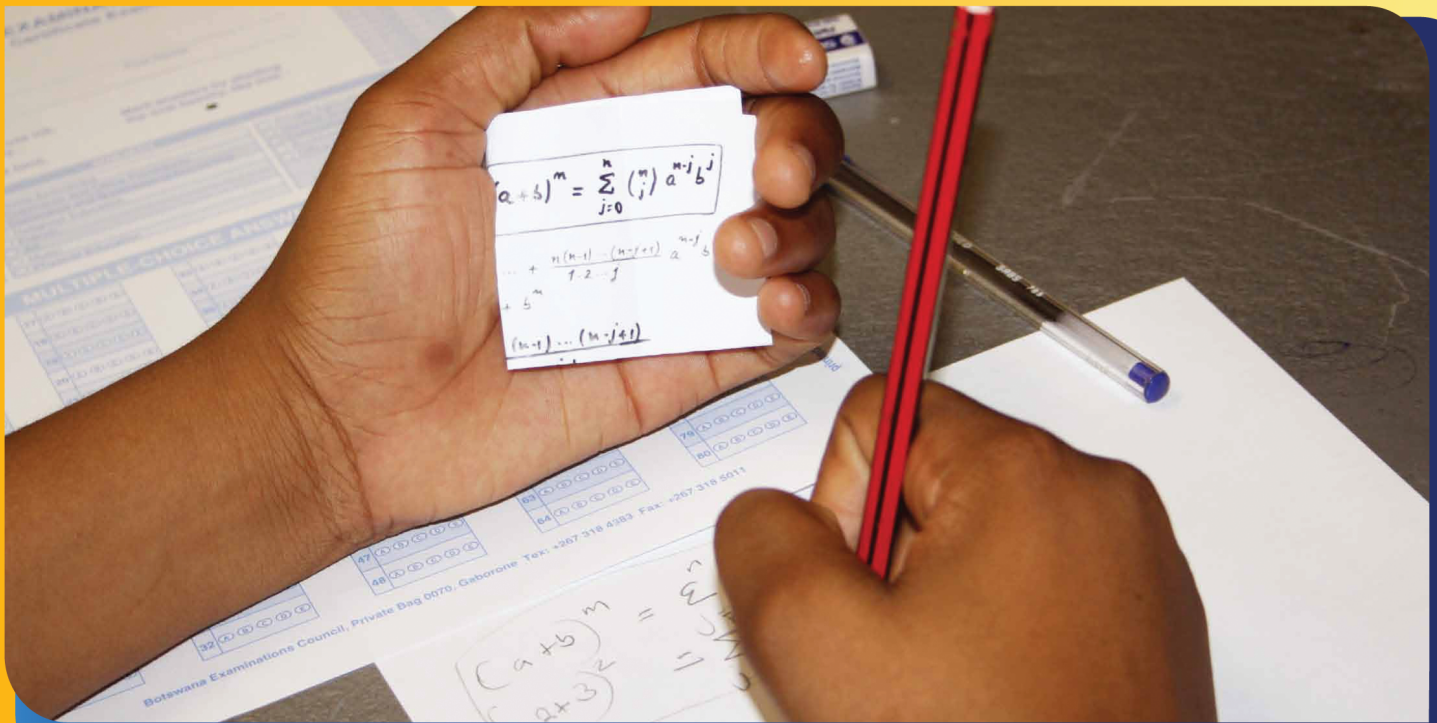
The Development phase is implemented by the help of the consultants: The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) and the National Foundation of Educational Research (NFER) partnership had successfully responded to the BEC Call for Tenders for implementing the development phase of BEAM.

The BEAM consultants visited BEC on the 24th- 26th of February, 2020 for the inception meeting with BEC management, BEAM team and MoBE representatives. The aim of the meeting was for the consultants to get clarity on the requirements of BEAM projects and to carry out the situational analysis for the anticipated projects. The consultants were expected to develop the methodology to carry out the successful BEAM projects and capacitate BEC staff in the process. This would be carried out in a series of workshops: framework development, item development, item piloting, field testing, scoring and data management.

The IEA, represented by BEAM Project Director Dr Steffen Knoll and the former IEA Executive Director Dr Hans Wagemaker in his role as initiator and senior advisor; and NFER, represented by Ms Angela Hopkins BEAM Project Manager at NFER, prepared and conducted an inception meeting. The three-day meeting included exchanging ideas with key players in the Botswana educational landscape. The team also met with the BEC CEO Prof Brian Mokopagosi and with the Directorate of Research and Policy Development represented by Dr Moreetsi Thobega. The main part of the meeting was dedicated to meeting the BEAM Project Manager Mr Tshepiso Masukusuku and his team of technical experts and to discuss the BEAM

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Stop Examinations Malpractice



Malpractice involves a deliberate act of wrongdoing, contrary to official examination rules, and is designed to place a candidate at an unfair advantage or disadvantage.

DETECTION OF MALPRACTICE

School heads, chief invigilators, invigilators, supervisors and Examination Council officials provide much of the evidence for malpractice. Evidence is also provided by candidates, parents and the public who witness malpractice, and from others disillusioned by the failure of bribed officials to deliver the expected level of support.

Examinations malpractice is a serious offence punishable by law. Any person who commits an offence shall be liable on conviction to a fine not less than P5 000.00 but not more than P8 000.00 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years, or to both such fine and imprisonment.

All enquiries and reports of examinations malpractice should be reported to the Executive Secretary Botswana Examinations Council either by form of writing or in person.

Corporate Communications Office

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