

## Chapter 5 Botswana's Productivity Movement

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### 5-1. Introduction

Botswana is one of a very few countries in the contemporary era that has sustained rapid economic growth over an extended period. It is also a relatively small country (an area of 581,730km<sup>2</sup>), with its current population standing at 1.99 million people (2009 estimate), and is virtually the only African country, and one of the few small countries, to be listed among the rapid growers. Other indicators, such as primary school enrolment and accumulation of foreign exchange reserves, also point to a development success story.

The main objective of this chapter<sup>2</sup> is to review Botswana's experiences in productivity improvement and skills upgrading, in light of the following aspects.

- Setting up the Botswana National Productivity Center (BNPC).
- Lessons learned from Singapore's productivity movement (including the content and the methodology for Singapore's technical cooperation to Botswana in the area of productivity development).
- Initiating, scaling up and sustaining a productivity movement in Botswana (e.g., the role of government—the BNPC and related organizations, leadership, the role of educational institutions, private sectors, etc.).
- Nurturing private consulting business with productivity.

### 5-2. Botswana's Productivity Movement

#### 5-2-1. History of the Productivity Movement idea and Singapore's cooperation

In the four decades that followed independence in 1966, diamond-led growth coupled with sound macroeconomic policies and good governance helped Botswana move from being one of the poorest countries at independence to upper middle-income status. In the thirty years following independence,

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<sup>2</sup> This chapter is based on the findings of the mission to Gaborone from February 13–20, 2011, which was funded by the GRIPS Development Forum, Japan. The researcher visited the BNPC and related organizations (such as the National Strategy Office, Botswana Confederation Commerce, Industry, and Manpower, and others) and had fruitful discussions with many people including professionals at the BNPC, government officials, entrepreneurs, academics, employers, and labor union leaders.

Botswana was the fastest growing economy in the world, outperforming the Southeast Asian Tiger economies (Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea and Taiwan) with an average annual growth rate of over 10%. More recently however, real GDP growth has averaged around 5% over the past six years due to uneven growth in the diamond mining sector. Botswana's growth remains heavily dependent on the mining sector.

Due to this fact, the intention of the government, despite constraints, is that more growth will in the future have to come from the non-mining private sector, which is also more employment intensive and can therefore contribute towards the country fulfilling its objective of having decent work. Therefore, the government had decided to promote and increase productivity in all sectors of the economy.

The productivity movement in Botswana started in the early 1990's. The leadership of the country at that time had realized that the work culture in Botswana was not good and people needed to change their attitudes. The then President of the country, Sir Ketumile Masire, complained about "the culture of laxity" that prevailed in the civil service. Furthermore, murmurs by the public about non-delivery of services by ministries and departments of the government; perceived general waste of resources and inefficiency in managing these resources in ministries and departments; lack of proper planning and management of funds that have repeatedly resulted in non completion of key projects; and the fact that citizens are generally not involved in the decision making processes, particularly with regard to their demands and aspirations gave high priority to the agenda for productivity improvement.

Venson (1986) has observed, among other factors, that the Botswana civil service appears to have been unproductive for six reasons: (i) failure to meet public demand on time, (ii) top management and unit supervisors do not often seem to interpret or understand policies in the same way, (iii) policies and objectives are not clear to everyone, (iv) management does not seem to provide guidance, leadership, control or support required by their subordinates, (v) performance appraisal methods neither give adequate feedback to the subordinates nor are they used in management decisions, and (vi) there is very little participation by subordinates in decision making.

Hope (1999) referred to what he calls the productivity dilemma in Botswana's public sector. According to him, "[u]nreliable and observed work habits in the Botswana public sector strongly suggest a low and rapidly declining labor productivity" (Hope, 1999). This is due to the fact that most public goods and services are generally non-divisible and therefore no discrimination is possible in their distribution. Secondly, public sector outputs are consumed at the time they are produced. The other problem that affects productivity in Botswana identified by Siphambe and Bakwena-Thokweng (2001) is that when firms hire employees they do not know in advance the precise productivity and commitment of a particular worker.

It was against these backdrops that the government of Botswana launched a productivity movement to improve civil service performance in 1993. The movement had two features: (i) the introduction of Singapore-inspired Work Improvement Teams (WITs),<sup>3</sup> and (ii) the establishment of the National Productivity Center. The government of Botswana asked the government of Singapore to support it, which led to long-term bilateral cooperation from 1991 to 2000.

The Singapore government and the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation have provided numerous trainings for facilitators and team leaders of WITs. It was envisaged that there would be 1,150 teams encompassing about 15,000 civil servants by the end of 2001 (Modisi, 1997).

### 5-2-2. Setting up the BNPC

According to Thapisa (2000),<sup>4</sup> the President, Sir Ketumile Masire, in his address to the first meeting of the third session of the sixth Parliament in 1993, announced the setting up of a National Productivity Centre to advise on measures aimed at increasing productivity in all sectors of the economy.

The BNPC was established as a parastatal with a tripartite board comprised of representatives from government, employers' and workers' organizations together with a few stakeholders. It was supported by the twinning arrangement between Singapore's National Productivity Board (NPB), the current Standards, Productivity and Innovation Board (SPRING), and the BNPC.

The BNPC Board reports to the Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration. The Board presents the annual report of the BNPC to the Minister for consideration and for discussion before parliament. According to the 2009/2010 BNPC annual report, the board of directors is chaired by Mrs. F. S. Bakwena. The board also has a deputy chairperson, an executive director, and six members. On the other hand, the executive committee comprises nine managers (Corporate Service, Finance, Enterprise Support Program (ESP), Human Resource, Marketing, Productivity and Quality (P&Q), Information and Research Services (IRS), Public Service Program (PSP), and Francistown Regional Office Managers).

The major objectives of the BNPC (BNPC Act, 1993) are to:

- Stimulate and generate productivity consciousness in Botswana;
- Promote increased productivity in all sectors of the economy;
- Improve and develop standards of business management in all aspects and at all levels;
- Promote and foster good labor-management relations generally and in the implementation of productivity schemes and programs;

<sup>3</sup> WITs are an adaptation of the Japanese Quality Control Circles, redesigned for the public sector and service industries.

<sup>4</sup> This reference has been taken from a report studied by Botswana Quality Workforce (BQW) in 2010.

- Promote and develop the concept of employer responsibility towards the welfare of employees;
- Promote and develop labor-management joint consultation schemes and worker participation, and labor-management cooperation;
- Establish links between the Centre and other productivity institutions, both in Africa and elsewhere;
- Introduce suitable management practices and techniques;
- Assist organizations in identifying areas where there is a deficiency in skills or where performance can be improved, and thereafter give advice on how to deal with these;
- Foster equitable sharing of productivity gains among management, workers and consumers; and
- Do such other things or acts as may appear necessary for or incidental to the discharge of its functions under this Act.

The Act further states that to help attain the above stated objectives, the Centre should:

- Develop and organize productivity improvement and management programs, conferences, workshops and seminars for personnel from all sectors of the economy;
- Provide advisory and consultancy services for all sectors of the economy with a view to raising levels of efficiency and productivity;
- Carry out productivity measurement exercises for the purpose of establishing and developing national performance standards;
- Carry out studies, enquiries and research in the fields of management, development and productivity in cooperation with industry, commerce and organizations with related interests;
- Serve as a base for collecting and disseminating information on productivity improvement and related techniques, and the publication of information in the form of books, periodicals, bulletins and bibliographies;
- Train workers' representatives and workers in measures designed to improve labor productivity, and to relate wages and productivity to competitiveness in world markets and to good industrial relations; and
- Take steps to promote good industrial relations by the formation of consultative councils.

### **5-2-3. The BNPC–awareness process**

The BNPC has been instrumental in stimulating and enhancing the level of productivity awareness as an advocate in Botswana, and has carried out the awareness campaign by dividing it into three sub processes of making people aware, enrolling stakeholders, and enabling individuals and institutions.

This, in short, is (i) making people aware of the benefits and challenges of productivity, Botswana's strategic imperatives, and global competitiveness; (ii) enrolling stakeholders in understanding, buy-in,

commitment, and proactive participation; and (iii) enabling individuals and institutions by empowering and supporting them with knowledge, skills, and competencies, and by creating working environments conducive (like incentive schemes, ergonomically designed workplace) to productivity.

One way the BNPC has been driving productivity in the districts has been through the creation of the District Productivity Improvement Forums (DPIFs). These are networks of change agents from government, private sector organizations, community and non-government organizations. In the year 2009/2010, four mini-district conventions were held in Mahalapye, Muchudi, Maun and Hukuntsi. The idea was to share productivity information with the tripartite productivity movement, namely the government, labor movement, and the business sector.

The major challenge faced by DPIFs has been their sustainability. The main reason for their dormancy is frequent staff movements and transfers, which take away active and passionate members of the structure. Furthermore, the other BNPC challenges have included the limited private sector involvement in productivity activities, non-availability of funding for some programs, and the inability to attract and retain qualified and experienced consultants.

The BNPC has dwelt too much on awareness and has achieved high levels of awareness (85%) at a national level, but without having many practical implementations. Furthermore, it has been involved in training the tools and techniques of productivity and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) certification among other activities.

The staffs of ESP and PSP mainly provide consultancy services. Many of these are people trained in Singapore and Japan. Recently, five BNPC consultants went on a study mission to Japan to improve their consulting skills in *kaizen* and 5S (5S stands for *Seiri* (Sort), *Seiton* (Straighten), *Seiso* (Shine), *Seiketsu* (Systematize) and *Shitsuke* (Standardize/Self-discipline)) productivity improvement techniques. In addition, ten consultants attended basic and advanced courses for productivity practitioners sponsored by the Asian Productivity Organization (APO) in South Africa. These BNPC consultants are engaged and involved in job training under Japan Productivity Center (JPC) mentors to roll out and support *kaizen* and 5S to the Gaborone City Council, Plascon, Babirwa Bricks and Lobatse Clay Works.

The BNPC was established to address the mindset issue, but it seemed it has played more and more the role of a consultant (with fees that are not affordable to small, micro and medium enterprises (SMMEs)) rather than the role of a national productivity promoter and a leader, as it had been envisaged. Thus, the BNPC found itself competing with the very people and consultancy firms it had established.

### 5-3. Institutional framework for the Productivity Movement

The BNPC has a tripartite structure: government (champion of reform and improved performance in public service), employers (driver of competitiveness in industry and services) and workers (key player in quality workforce agenda).

The BNPC board of directors is composed of members from government, employers, and workers. The executive committee is the next higher body of the BNPC and is led by an executive director.

The basic programs of the BNPC are stated briefly as follows.

**(1) Productivity and Quality (P&Q):** This is a frontline advocacy and mobilization arm of the BNPC that is responsible for inculcating productive behavior at all levels of Botswana's society by promoting public awareness, knowledge and utilization of P&Q tools and concepts.

The purpose of the P&Q program is to create awareness in Botswana's workforce on best practices in labor management relations with a view to creating a competitive workforce that can drive high productivity in all sectors of the economy. The program is used to develop and strengthen capacities of enterprises/organizations as well as to promote a conducive and transparent business environment for decent work for enterprise competitiveness and productivity.

**(2) Enterprise Support Program (ESP):** This program aims at facilitating the empowerment of Botswana's manufacturing and services enterprises to achieve sustainable world class performance through the application of P&Q best practices.

The major task of the ESP is to bring about a culture of excellence in the private sector. The strategy for delivering on the mandate was training and consulting in a number of focal areas including but not limited to the following.

- Quality management systems (QMS): The BNPC continues to play a pivotal role in providing research and advisory services for establishing quality management systems and standards for Botswana at the national level. Botswana continues to adopt new standards and update those previously adopted.
- Project management: Project delivery continues to be an area of concern in Botswana. The center offers a comprehensive program that is aimed at imparting project management skills to project officers. A significant percentage of the participants come from government departments even though parastatals and private organizations also participate.
- Service quality: There are two service quality institute training programs.

- SMME productivity: In the areas of SMME development, two new programs have been developed and are being implemented in various sectors. These programs are the productive enterprise program targeting SMMEs, and the employee financial wellness program targeting employee financial management. The productive enterprise program has been deployed for clusters of SMMEs working with a government ministry and for young people working in construction. The program has also been deployed on a trial basis for SMMEs working with a development financial institution with the objective of making it mandatory for SMMEs wishing to access funding at this institution to participate in this program.
- Supervisory development, personal mastery, and assessment for development and coaching are some of the consulting and training interventions.

**(3) Public Service Program (PSP):** This program aims to facilitate the creation of a culture of high performance through programs, which are aimed at improving the quality and performance in the public service.

The PSP is established by the BNPC to assist the public service sector with productivity and performance management tools to improve organizational performance. It facilitates the creation of a culture of high performance in the public service sector. In order to achieve this, the PSP uses various tools like the balanced scorecard / strategic management, team building, facilitation skills, 5S, change management, WITs, and performance-based reward system (PBRs).

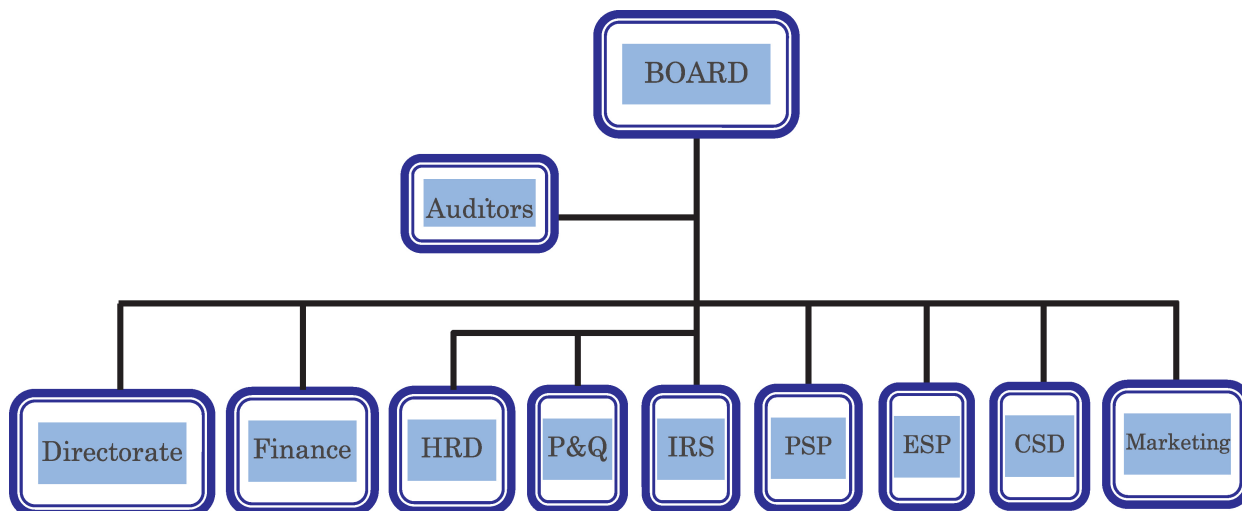
**(4) Information and Research Services (IRS):** The program's core purpose is to avail P&Q information to enable the BNPC stakeholders to manage by fact in the delivery of individual and national prosperity. The IRS conducts research on productivity and related areas.

The IRS mandate is to provide up-to-date productivity information to facilitate informed decision making. This is done through three departments: research and measurement, information resource center, and editorial and publications.

As a commitment to continuous improvement and a fulfillment of the QMS requirement, the center continues to collect and analyze customer feedback. Following the introduction of a holistic feedback system, it is now possible to obtain data on the various services offered by the center.

**(5) Directorate:** The directorate is the overseer of corporate and strategic matters. The BNPC has developed a strategic plan covering the period 2009/2010 to 2016. Unlike previous strategies, which had five-year lifespan, this one spans a seven-year period as it has been aligned to a national development program, which is also aligned to the government's national vision 2016.

**Figure 5-1. BNPC Organizational Structure**



**(6) Finance:** The core functions of the finance department are to provide relevant, accurate, and timely financial information to the respective stakeholders for facilitating effective and timely decision making; to promote greater cost effectiveness and productivity in the use of the center's resources; to optimize return on its investments and deposits; and to ensure the safety of the BNPC assets. In general, it deals with all financial matters of the BNPC.

**(7) Corporate Services:** This department provides general support services to other departments. The records management unit is a new section in corporate services and is used to develop and manage a reputable record management system for the BNPC.

**(8) Human Resources Department:** The human resources function, which previously existed as a section under the corporate services department, was created as a stand-alone human resources department during 2009/2010. The department deals with the sourcing and provision of human capital to enable these departments and programs to deliver on their mandates. It deals with all human resources issues.

**(9) Marketing Department:** To meet the new challenges of the ever-changing work landscape, the BNPC transferred marketing from the directorate to be a standalone department. The marketing department is embarking on selling the benefits of P&Q in the transformation of the economy. The marketing department deals with all marketing-related issues about the BNPC and its products.

#### **5-4. Lessons from Singapore's Productivity Movement**

Average annual GDP growth in Singapore (1981–2001) was about 7.2%, and the average annual



productivity growth (1981–2001) was about 3.8%. The per capita income has grown from USD11,000 to 37,100; home ownership has increased from about 20% to 93%; and life expectancy has gone from 73 years to 78 years of age. Recently, productivity improvement has been resurrected as a high-priority national agenda item in Singapore. As the Singaporean economy came out of the global recession, the government sees an opportunity to restructure the economy and maximize growth capability in the post-crisis era characterized by rising China and India. Singapore has achieved higher economic growth in 2001 as compared to 1981. According to the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) 2010/2011 Report, Singapore ranked third and in 2011/2012 it ranked 2nd among 139 countries. This is mainly due to the effectiveness of productivity improvement programs at the national level.

Botswana's economy, on the other hand, is heavily dependent on the diamond mining sector. There has been uneven GDP growth over the past six years due to irregular growth in the diamond mining sector. According to the GCI 2009/2010 Report, Botswana ranked 66th, in the 2010/2011 GCI Report, it ranked 76th, and in 2011/2012 GCI Report, it has gone down to 80th among 139 countries worldwide. The productivity improvement program started some twenty years ago, but its impact has not been as high as expected.

#### **5-4-1. Phases of the Productivity Movement**

The Productivity Movement in Singapore went through three stages: awareness (1981–85), action (1986–88), and ownership (1989–90s). (For details, see Chapter 3)

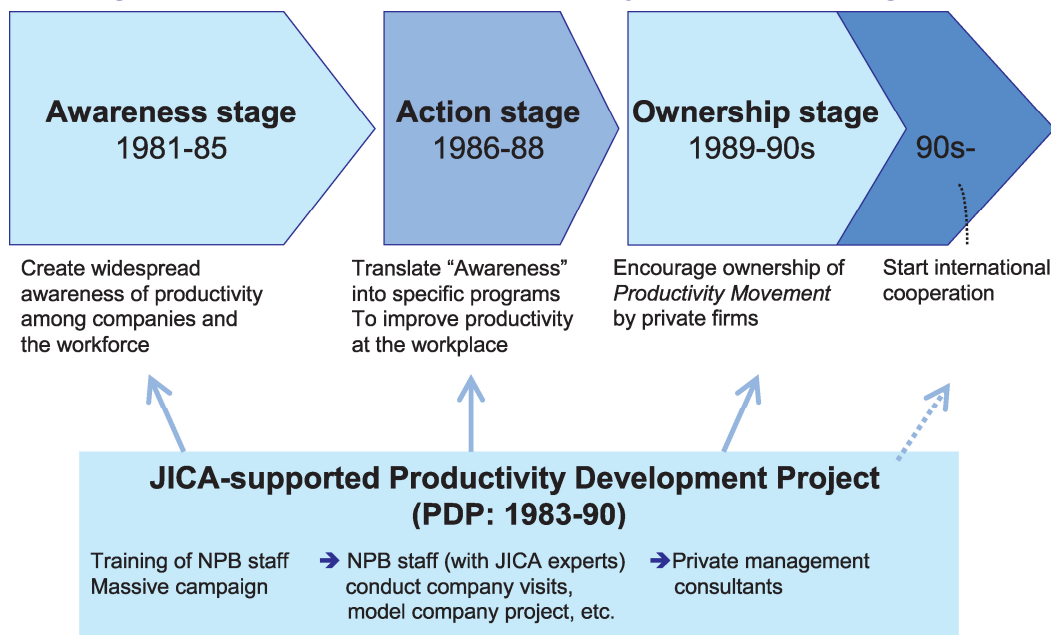
##### **(1) Awareness stage**

The awareness stage focused on positive work attitude, teamwork, and recognition for companies and individuals. The measures taken in the awareness stage included but were not limited to education of the public; information dissemination and training; strengthening company identification; promotion of labor-management joint consultation; promotion of productivity in the public sector; and formation of the National Productivity Council (NPC).

##### **(2) Action stage**

The objective of the action stage was to translate “awareness” into specific programs to improve productivity at the workplace and the focuses were on skills upgrading of management and workers, upgrading of companies' operational efficiency, management consultancy referral schemes, associate consultants' schemes, the model company project, industry-based consultancy assistance scheme, training of the workforce (like the skills development fund), collaboration on national training programs (such as Singapore airline: SQ Center, Philips Singapore: industrial engineering training center, Seiko instruments: on-the-job training project).

**Figure 5-2. Evolution of the Productivity Movement in Singapore**



Source: Elaborated by the author, based on the information provided by Mr. Lo Hock Meng, Executive Director of Singapore Productivity Association (SPA) to the GRIPS mission on Sept. 2, 2010.  
 Note: Reprinted from Figure 1-2.

**(3) Ownership stage**

The objective of the ownership stage is to encourage ownership of the productivity movement and focus on making the productivity movement self-sustaining. At the ownership stage, productivity activity schemes like development of a core of productivity “champions” in companies are launched. The private sector leads the annual productivity campaign and employer groups chair the campaign steering committee.

**5-4-2. Phases of the Productivity Movement in Botswana**

The productivity movement in Singapore evolved in three stages, as explained above. Singapore had achieved the three stages of the productivity movement in about ten years (1981–1990s). However, after about twenty years (1991–2011), Botswana is still in the awareness stage, an early stage of implementing its productivity improvement program.

The BNPC is trying to enable organizations to enroll in three interrelated interventions: (i) empowering selected sectors by raising the level of productivity awareness; (ii) ensuring that the sectors are guided to adopt ‘best practices’; and (iii) encouraging enterprises to adopt an excellence framework as a guide to continuous improvement.

Sectoral performance and productivity levels are higher in the government and allied sectors than the private sector, with electricity and water, community and personal services as well as general government (before the global financial crisis) recording slightly higher levels of productivity than finance and business services, which accounted for the highest labor productivity levels in the private sector. Although this should be interpreted with caution, this pattern seems to suggest that the performance improvement schemes that have been adopted by the government and allied sectors in recent years have had a slightly positive effect on productivity levels. This may partly be explained by the fact that the government and allied sectors seem to use the BNPC services more than the private sector. However, the BNPC still faces the following challenges.

- Awareness and enrolment gap
- Tripartite partnership too weak
- Limited impact on the private sector
- Limited research/measurement capability
- Low skills attraction and retention

#### **5-4-3. Current industrial policy measures and organizations**

After independence the focus of attention of the government was on education, as the skill base was very low. Botswana was in the bottom twenty five poor countries of the world. In the four decades that followed independence in 1966, diamond-led growth coupled with sound macroeconomic policies and good governance helped Botswana move from being one of the poorest at independence to one of upper middle income status. In the thirty years following independence, Botswana was the fastest growing economy in the world, outperforming the Southeast Asian Tiger economies (Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea and Taiwan) with an average annual growth rate of over 10%. More recently however, real GDP growth has averaged around 5% over the past six years due to uneven growth in the diamond mining sector. Botswana's growth remains heavily dependent on the mining sector.

Due to this fact, the intention of the government despite the constraints is that more growth in the future will have to come from the non-mining private sector, which is also more employment-intensive and can therefore contribute towards the country fulfilling its objective of having decent work. Therefore, the government decided to promote and increase productivity in all sectors of the economy through the BNPC.

The policy process in Botswana is characterized by (i) tripartite cooperation among government, labor unions, and industry, and (ii) a multi-sectoral and multi-functional approach involving all relevant government ministries and agencies in good collaboration. The government of Botswana has a motto of 5D, i.e., democracy, development, dignity, discipline, and delivery. The current president of the

country complained about the culture of laxity in delivery and the dissatisfaction of the public about non-delivery of services by ministries and departments of government. The fifth D (delivery) is very close to the heart of the Office of the President.

To this effect, the government of Botswana has formed a national council, chaired by the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI) in order to support the activities and evaluate their deliverables of the following seven programs.

- Sectoral development
- Export development
- Finance and investment
- Quality and production
- Entrepreneurship development
- Research and development
- Technology development and transfer

## **5-5. Initiating and scaling up the Productivity Movement in Botswana**

### **5-5-1. Role of the government**

The government, business, and labor share the common interest of increasing productivity in order to promote and generate economic growth in Botswana, but the government has more emphasis on employment creation driven by private sector development, liberalization, and foreign direct investment. The labor movement agrees that productivity must increase in order to grow the overall economy, but this should not be at the expense of undermining decent work (labor rights, social dialogue, and safe and secure employment). For the business sector, though acknowledging workers' rights, productivity is focused on higher profitability based on efficient and effective use of resources (including human resources) in a competitive local, regional and global market place.

### **5-5-2. The BNPC and related organizations**

According to the 2009/2010 to 2015/2016 Strategic Plan, a synopsis of the organizational performance and the environmental scan observed that since the BNPC started operating, productivity awareness in Botswana has increased manifolds (questionnaire survey result), from 17% in 1997 to 42% in 2001, reaching 88% in 2010. It was also highlighted that training has been conducted in management supervision, QMS, PMS and strategic planning in the private sector, parastatals, labor organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and central as well as local government. With such a high level of awareness, the question is: Why are there still resounding concerns of low productivity and

poor work ethics in this country? Awareness alone is not a sufficient condition for productivity improvement. To this effect, the BNPC has employed Boitshepo Bolele, a consultant specializing in SMME training and consultancy. She focuses on training and mentoring of youth enterprises. However, the limitations of finance and the scarcity of SMME consultants hamper the BNPC from effectively implementing productivity improvements.

What is necessary is a translation of this awareness into behaviors that promote productivity. It is argued that poor parenting contributes to poor performance by school kids and poor work ethics by workers in all sectors of the economy.

Furthermore, the report also notes that despite this reported high level of productivity awareness, uptake of productivity improvement tools by enterprises remained low during the past strategic plan period. This was attributed to the fact that most SMMEs are not able to afford the consultancy fees charged by the BNPC for P&Q improvement tools facilitation while on the other hand, the BNPC needs to financially sustain itself.

The synopsis also notes that although the awareness levels generally gave indications of the extent of delivery on the statutory mandate, an evaluation of the achievements of the goals set over the past five years showed that the delivery generally fell short of the desired targets. The report summarizes the performance against each of the five goals:

**(1) Public Service Reform:** A nominated project to drive this objective was the installation of a performance management system within local authorities. Although the installation was successful, the centre was not able to strike any deal with the Government of Botswana for further reform interventions. Therefore, this project alone was not adequate to reform the public service in Botswana to where it is rated the best in Southern African Development Community (SADC).

**(2) Quality Workforce:** This goal was driven by the Botswana Quality Workforce (BQW) project, which could not take off due to both human and financial capacity challenges. However, by the end of the plan period, preparations were underway for a current reality study, which in turn will inform future directions of the project. Therefore the goal of improving the quality of Botswana's workforce to rank the best in the SADC region has not been realized.

**(3) Informed Decision-Making Enablement:** This goal is pursued through productivity- and quality-awareness programs, as well as production and dissemination of productivity statistics and information. The goal has largely been attained. What remains to be done in this area is targeted or segmented advocacy, as well as addressing paucity in the source data for productivity indicators.

**(4) Culture of Excellence:** A number of interventions involving SMMEs were made over the plan period. However, to the extent that many SMMEs are unable to meet consultancy fees for the suite of productivity-enhancing products, it was not possible to enable many local businesses to achieve a regionally (SADC) competitive rating on the business excellence model.

**(5) BNPC Excellence Rating:** Without a baseline study, the target rating of 400 on the Botswana Excellence Model by end of the plan period was simply far-fetched. Measurement conducted in 2008 using a relatively close business excellence model, the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), revealed that the BNPC is very far from the 400-point mark.

The BNPC has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the National Strategy Office (NSO), a directorate in the Office of the President. Through the MOU, the two institutions aim to work together and complement each other on matters relating to quality and productivity improvement in all sectors of the economy.

The MOU is premised on the BNPC and the NSO commitment to the achievement of the Botswana Excellence Strategy, which is aimed at diversifying the economy. Thus the collaboration provides an opportunity for improved efficiency and effectiveness for the BNPC and the NSO. Some of the areas of collaboration are:

- Economic diversification and sustainability: the BNPC and the NSO will work together to sensitize and promote a positive mindset on productivity, quality, economic diversification, and sustainability;
- Knowledge and information sharing: the two parties will second their personnel to each other's departments to work jointly on specific assignments for mutual learning and skills transfer; and
- Research: the participants will conduct joint research, publication and resource sharing to facilitate research in quality management, standardization, and policy evaluation.

### **5-5-3. District Productivity Improvement Forums (DPIFs)**

The DPIFs are networks of change agents from government as well as private sector, community, and NGOs. The forums serve as a network of people passionate about productivity issues in Botswana; provide opportunities to institutions and people willing to share information and knowledge about productivity with others; and provide the BNPC with organized networks, which can be used for the BNPC productivity advocacy program.

Francis town (regional office of the BNPC) has conducted advocacy campaigns at the rate of one per month. The aim for the advocacy campaign was three pronged: (i) promoting productivity consciousness at organizational and individual levels, (ii) marketing the BNPC interventions, (iii) for

enrolment as well as utilization of the P&Q solutions by both organizations and individuals.

The office has undertaken at least two advocacies of *kaizen* and 5S per quarter at different organizations. *Kaizen* focuses on improving positive attitudes and cultivating continuous improvement within organizations. 5S, on the other hand, aims at raising the level of alertness in organizations and the need to properly sort out equipment in readiness for production.

Poloko Leburu Thobega is employed by the BNPC as a consultant. His current focus is on continuous improvement of productivity systems. He is also a technical focal person among the BNPC, the JPC and the APO. Since the introduction of *kaizen*, the BNPC has worked with the Gaborone city council, Freeworld Plascon, Babirwa concrete products and Dimawe Textile among others. While the interventions are, unfortunately, still at the awareness level, organizations will now require intensive skills development interventions.

#### **5-5-4. Education and training of the labor force**

The survey (BQW Project, 2010) results of a sample of employees, employers and stakeholders indicate a number of issues with regard to the quality of labor in Botswana. Generally the labor force in Botswana has attained high levels of education with more than 76% of the sample having attained at least secondary education. This is a result of the big investments in education since independence; education has taken the largest share of both development and recurrent expenditures. For most of the financial years, education was allocated more than 25% of the budget, which has resulted in enrolments increasing over the years. Botswana has since 1989 had free access to ten years of basic education. Looking at the unemployment rate, which has been higher for secondary school graduates, it is quite indicative that the quality of education is becoming an issue, especially the relevance of the skills for the private sector. The results from the survey, however, indicate that the majority of the employees had received training that was relevant to their current job indicating some level of job match between education/training and job done. Therefore, there is a need to look at the quality of education/training to make it relevant for the world of work and reduce the mismatch.

#### **5-5-5. Private sector**

An ESP is one of the components in the BNPC, and its task is to develop a culture of excellence in the private sector. The BNPC continues to offer consulting and training interventions in the areas of quality management systems, project management, supervisory development, productivity improvement, etc. Participation of the private sector in consulting and training interventions increased from 20% in 2009 to 38.7% in 2010.

The survey (BQW project, 2010) reveals that most employers understand productivity in terms of its meaning, its benefits, and ways to improve it. Employers generally perceive the productivity of workers to be generally satisfactory for all categories of employees. Most organizations use a performance management system and production with targets to monitor productivity, and most of them monitor performance. Most organizations' view is that the majority of workers are motivated by salaries and bonuses. There is a general agreement among employers that financial incentives are the most important determinant of productivity. Other major motivating factors are employee promotion, skill enhancement, education, and recognition.

## **5-6. Botswana's international cooperation in the industry sector**

### **5-6-1. Collaboration of the BNPC and the JPC**

The BNPC, whose responsibility is to improve productivity in Botswana by, among others, improving standards of management and labor-management relations has been collaborating with the JPC in the areas of capacity building for almost five years.

The collaboration has seen the two productivity centers assist each in various areas of productivity improvement tools. The BNPC consultants have been to Japan to learn how the Japanese conduct productivity improvement in various institutions. The Japanese have been to Botswana to assist the BNPC in improving the productivity of organizations in Botswana and have recommended a number of tools that the BNPC could use to assist companies.

One of the simplest tools introduced by the JPC is a *kaizen*, a system of continuous improvement. *Kaizen* refers to a philosophy or practice that focuses on continuous improvement of processes in manufacturing, engineering, supporting business processes, and management. *Kaizen* involves providing the training, materials, and supervision needed for employees to achieve the higher standards and maintain their ability to meet those standards on an on-going basis.

Since the introduction of *kaizen*, the BNPC has worked with the Gaborone city council, free world Plascon, Babirwa Concrete Products, and Dimawe textiles among others. The benefits of *kaizen* include among others small continual improvements resulting in improved productivity, improved quality, better safety, faster delivery, lower costs, and greater customer satisfaction. Employees find work to be easier and much more enjoyable, resulting in higher employee morale and job satisfaction and lower turn-over.

### **5-6-2. The BNPC and the SADC**

The SADC is the regional productivity center, and its objective is to assist countries that do not have



national productivity organizations to establish them and also to capacitate existing national productivity organizations. The BNPC is considering expanding the marketing of its products into the SADC region in the next financial year (2010/2011). The marketing will also look at continental initiatives in concert with other governments, parastatal and private sector programs.

In addition to helping countries establish their own national productivity organizations, the BNPC was also mandated by the SADC Ministers responsible for employment and labor to host the Secretariat of the SADC Regional Productivity Organization (RPO). The BNPC in consultation with the SADC secretariat is working out the financial and legal framework or modalities of hosting the Secretariat.

### **5-6-3. The BNPC and the APO**

Currently, the APO imparts skills to African practitioners. In a similar way, the BNPC used to train its members through this organization. Five BNPC consultants recently attended an Advanced Training Course for Productivity Practitioners (ACPP) held in Johannesburg, South Africa. This course was organized by the APO for participants from African countries. The objective of this APO initiative was to develop productivity practitioners from national productivity organizations of Pan-African Productivity Association (PAPA) member countries. The PAPA member countries represented were Botswana, Kenya, Mauritius, and Nigeria.

In South Africa and Zambia, the APO formulated basic and advanced courses and provided in-depth knowledge on P&Q tools for promoting and conducting productivity improvement activities to strengthen the technical competencies of practitioners and the institutional capacity of their organizations.

### **5-7. Conclusion and recommendations**

According to the BQW 2010 survey report, productivity in Botswana is generally still lower than the required level, which is a reflection of inadequate leadership and management. Although the BNPC is mandated to promote increased productivity in all sectors of the economy, including both individuals and organizations, through training and consulting, its impact is not strong. Currently, a significant proportion of employers did not understand the BNPC's mandate and had not benefited from the BNPC activities. The BNPC is found to be generally good in terms of visibility of programs, promotion of good industrial relations productivity improvement, advisory and consultancy services and research and development. However, they are rated as low in productivity measurement efforts and training of workers. There is also a general perception among employers that the BNPC's contribution to productivity levels has not increased. For these groups, the major limitations are the BNPC's inability to cover all sectors and the BNPC not being available countrywide. Some

stakeholders felt that the minimum wage leads to low productivity as workers are guaranteed payment irrespective of productivity.

Singapore's experience in initiating a productivity movement and its success with economic development can be taken as a benchmark for Botswana's productivity development. Accordingly, the following are some of the lessons that the BNPC learned from Singapore's Productivity Movement.

**(1) Productivity is a question of paradigm**

Productivity is a question of paradigm shift, and it is a movement, not an event. Productivity is a mental attitude that leads to practical action resulting in real improvement for everyone. Hence, what is required is a new mindset of curiosity and concern with context, acceptance of complexity and its contradictions, diversity consciousness and sensitivity, seeking opportunity in surprises and uncertainties, faith in organizational processes, focus on continuous improvement, extended time perspective, and systems thinking.

**(2) Productivity needs strong and sustained commitment**

Productivity needs strong commitment from higher officials, organizations, and individuals. Key players in the movement have to be mature and concerned citizens and the BNPC has to be given due attention by the Office of the President.

**(3) Productivity supporters need to be conscious of three phases**

The productivity mindset is an attitude of mind that strives for and acquires the habit of continuous improvement. The three phases of the productivity movement (awareness, action, and ownership) need to be consciously followed for an effective and efficient output. Awareness is achieved through the stages of understanding, conviction, and action. However, the BNPC seems to have dwelt quite a lot (twenty years) on only the understanding part of the awareness creation.

**(4) Triple helix**

A productivity movement refers to the commitment and active involvement of government, private sector, and universities (triple helix) in activities to increase productivity. The concept of the triple helix is a missing element in Botswana. The proper functioning of the linkage includes (i) preparing suitably trained graduates to meet the manpower needs of industry; (ii) practice- and application-oriented training; (iii) "industry attachment" (internship) for students; and (iv) collaboration with industry and development agencies.

**(5) Productivity Promotion**

The BNPC's promotional work needs to be further strengthened. An annual productivity campaign is required to promote a theme (quality and productivity). High-level ministers should launch the

campaign to develop a nationwide program and to form Quality Circles at the workplace. Productivity promotion may be carried out through:

#### **Education, seminars and publications**

- Media support and involvement of artists
- Teaching quality and productivity at all levels of the education system of Botswana
- International adoption of Quality Circles
- Quality award conference
- National Quality Circles Conventions
- Publications and dissemination of Quality News

#### **Encouraging and establishment of national awards**

- Quality Award for Business Excellence in Botswana
- National Productivity Award
- National Training Award
- Excellent Service Award
- National Quality Circles Award

#### **Adoption of best practices**

- Japanese Productivity Movement (JPM)
- Asian Productivity Organization (APO)
- Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development (JPC-SED)
- Study missions to study other countries' productivity experiences

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