Embrace continuous learning - Mohwasa

Phodiso Rankwe
TLOKWENG

Education must be regarded as a comprehensive preparation for life rather than a narrow guarantee of immediate employment.

Speaking at the 20th Institute of Development Management (IDM) joint graduation ceremony held at Royal Aria conference facility on Friday, Minister for State President, Defence and Security, Mr Moeti Mohwasa urged over 1 400 graduates from Botswana, Lesotho, and eSwatini to maintain resilience, humility and adaptability as they entered the professional sphere.

Held under the theme: Thriving as a Continuous Learner in an Ever-Changing Environment, the milestone event celebrated two decades of regional cooperation and family reunion in human capital development across the three partner nations.

The success of IDM's regional model was underscored by the robust synergies between key regulatory bodies including the Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA), Lesotho's Council of Higher Education, and the Eswatini Higher Education Council which ensured the comparability and high standard of qualifications offered across the region.

"Preliminary results from Statistics Botswana's 2024/25 Multi-Topic Household Survey place overall national unemployment at 21.0 per cent, while youth unemployment stands at 28.9 per cent. We must never become so accustomed to discussing unemployment in statistics that we forget the human beings represented by those numbers," said Mr Mohwasa.

He emphasised that a qualification equip individuals with critical cognitive tools to navigate difficult circumstances, question assumptions and recognise unseen opportunities even when the job market delayed initial entry. To counter structural employment hurdles, Mr Mohwasa said government was actively driving economic transformation through the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme (BETP) and the Twelfth National Development Plan. He said the transformation programme had identified 186 high-impact projects, targeting the mobilisation of P514 billion in cumulative investment and the generation of increased employment by 2036. Beyond macroeconomic strategy, Minister Mohwasa challenged graduates to cultivate deep professional humility and integrity, warning against self-importance and professional arrogance. He advised graduates to remove the blinders and avoid confining themselves to narrow disciplinary boundaries, noting that modern careers required cross-functional competence, such as project managers understanding technology or public health professionals mastering data and community development.

Furthermore, he paid glowing tribute to parents and guardians who endured sleepless nights and heavy financial sacrifices to support the graduates.

Tracing the historical roots of the institution, Minister Mohwasa recalled that IDM was established in 1974 through the visionary foresight of Sir Seretse Khama, King Sobhuza II and King Moshoeshoe II. As Botswana and Lesotho mark 60 years of independence this year, Minister Mohwasa noted that the joint graduation served as a testament to enduring cross-border solidarity. Although this marks the final joint graduation ceremony to be hosted by Botswana with the baton officially passing to the Kingdom of eSwatini for October 2027 leaders emphasised that regional institutional bonds and human capital partnerships remain unshakable. ***BOPA***



Minister for State President, Defence and Security Mr Moeti Mohwasa

EU forges partnership with Africa Geological surveys

Calviniah Kgautlhe
LOBATSE

Seventeen young Geoscientists from across Africa have completed a two-week European Union (EU), Pan African Geoscience programme on Geoscientific Information Management.

Officially closing the programme at Botswana Geoscience Institute (BGI), that commenced October 12 and ended on Friday, European Union delegation to Botswana and SADC ambassador, Ms Belén Uyarra, said the development was a strategic partnership between the EU and Organisation of African Geological Surveys, aimed at strengthening and capacitating geologists across the African continent including Botswana.

It focused on training, knowledge exchange, and fostering long-term geological institutional collaboration, to empower national geological services to work independently and more efficiently. The training provided targeted investments in human capital, geological surveys tools, and infrastructure aimed at creating a lasting impact on Africa's geological sector, forging partnerships, and collectively making a lasting impact for sustainable development.

Ms Uyarra said minerals discovered by geologists provided critical raw materials to economic prosperity of countries hence geoscientific cooperation was important.

"We promote sustainable investment opportunities about critical raw materials and that is the work that we do through geoscientists. As geologists, you provide scientific evidence on what minerals are available to attract investment into your countries. I urge you to use the knowledge and skills you gained to facilitate dialogue on investment and to enhance geoscientific collaboration," she said.

BGI acting chief executive officer, Mr Puso Akanyang, appreciated that PanAfGeo+ programme would help transform geological delivery as Africa needed the new set of skills. The cohort, he said had mastered the Geoscientific Information Management, the digital workflows, and spatial analysis.



Acting Botswana Geoscience Institute (BGI) CEO, Mr Puso Akanyang (left), Ambassador of Delegation of EU to Botswana and SADC Ms Belén Uyarra (second left), PanAfGeo+ leader from France Geological Survey, Mr Marc Urvois (second right) and training leader from Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland, Mr Frands Schjøth (right) after presenting a training completion certificate to BGI senior data base geologist, Mr Valiant Mosokomani during the closing ceremony of the PanAFGeo+ programme in Lobatse recently.
Photo: Calviniah Kgautlhe

"You have gathered necessary skills to be able to analyse raw field data into actionable national progress," he said.

He stressed that geological decisions were economic, environmental, public decisions, that would be handy during delivery.

With the skills you have received and the computers that you have received, it is the decisions that you will make that will make a difference," said Mr Akanyang.

The PanAfGeo+ WP6 training leader, Dr Marc Urvois, of the French Geological Survey, emphasised that the programme had brought Europe and Africa together for the Pan African Support to Geological Sciences and Technology across the Africa.

The cohort, he said was drilled on new ways of collecting and managing geological data, geographic information systems, remote sensing, how to collect the data and bring the information from the field using new technology such as using mobile phones and integrating drones, analyse and disseminate data.

The programme was facilitated by the France Geological Survey and funded by the European Union, to advance the work of the Organisation of African Geological Surveys.

Speaking on behalf of the PanAfGeo+ WP6 trainees, Mr Takudzwa Muzopa, of Geological Survey of Zimbabwe, appreciated the programme for representing more than technical training, highlighting that it was an investment in strengthening Africa's geological institutions, advancing digital transformation and promoting international cooperation.

A participant from BGI, senior data base geologist, Mr Valiant Mosokomani, said he gained knowledge on managing geospatial data and related information to Geosciences as well as fresh knowledge on new tools used to improve efficiencies in managing data.

Mr Robert Kemokai of Liberia Geological Surveys regarded the training as beneficial and that he would apply the knowledge to his daily delivery, including in remote sensing, and mapping. ***BOPA***

Botswana reaffirms commitment to enhance ties with Nigeria

Ketshepile More
GABORONE

Botswana has reaffirmed commitment to enhancing bilateral ties with Nigeria as well as advancing the African Agenda 2063.

Speaking at a reception to celebrate Nigeria's 66th independence anniversary on October 30, Minister for International Relations, Dr Phenyo Butale said Botswana is dedicated to continue promoting democracy, peace and stability across the continent while expressing openness for further engagement on mutual interests.

Dr Butale said Botswana and Nigeria has endured friendship and cooperation and therefore commended Nigeria's commitment to democracy and socio-economic development since 1960.

"We commend President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for his exemplary leadership with the objective to advance socio-economic development in Nigeria.

It is also noteworthy that this is also an occasion for Nigeria to reflect on her developmental trajectory as well as an opportunity to renew commitment to a future of shared prosperity," Dr Butale said.

In addition, Dr Butale made a call to revitalise the Joint Permanent Commission on Cooperation between the two countries which was established in 2002, urging officials to set a date for the next JPCC meeting.

He said Botswana appreciates Nigeria's past assistance; particularly in human resource development, and looks forward to strengthening strategic economic partnerships.

Nigeria High Commissioner to Botswana Mr John Shama Shaga said this independence anniversary served as a moment to reflect on national progress and honour the sacrifices of the two countries' founding fathers who secured independence from Britain.

He said the two countries had fostered cooperation across various sectors including trade, education and culture and aimed to expand investment, and cultural relations with Botswana for mutual benefit.

"Nigeria remains committed to strengthening its partnership with Botswana through practical

cooperation, increased trade and investment, cultural exchange, educational collaboration and

closer engagement between our private sectors," Mr Shaga said. He said the recent initiatives such as Nigerian trade mission and strategic appointments of Nigerians in Botswana, highlighted cordial bilateral collaboration.

Furthermore, Mr Shaga said the two countries' cultural relations were equally vibrant. He said

Nigeria's creative industry, particularly its music and film sectors, remained a major source of African soft power.

"The maiden edition of Felabration in Gaborone recently was a remarkable celebration of the legendary Afrobeat pioneer, Fela Anikulapo Kuti.

The fusion of Nigerian and Botswana musicians at the event demonstrated how our shared cultural experiences can promote mutual understanding, creativity and people-to-people relations," Mr Shaga noted. ***BOPA***