

Climate Action

DIGEST

ISSUE 23 / JANUARY 2023



UNEP representative Dr. Richard Munang planting a tree at Ba Isago University to mark the launch of the Climate entrepreneurship centre at the institution with support from other industry players.

INTEGRATING CLIMATE ACTION SOLUTIONS INTO FOOD SYSTEMS IN BOTSWANA TO INFORM ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

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INTEGRATING CLIMATE ACTION+ SOLUTIONS IN BOTSWANA TO INFORM ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS & DEVELOPMENT AGENDA



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The Botswana minister of Natural Resources, Environment, Conservation & Tourism Hon. Philda Nani Kereng making her speech on leveraging multi-stakeholder engagement during the launch of the Climate Change Entrepreneurship centre at Ba Isago University.

The normative role of the UNEP in influencing pro-environment actions by state and non-state actors towards the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was highlighted as a critical strength that the Botswana UN Country Teams (UNCT) will tap into and complement. Among key normative areas that UNCT will take up and expand further with UNEP is going beyond the traditional approach to finance, but also unlock human capital through inspiring and structurally guiding young people to engage in climate action enterprise by collaborating with Ba Isago University climate action entrepreneurship centre. This will also drive Stakeholder engagement in the launch of the Ba Isago University climate action entrepreneurship centre, technically backstopped by UNEP and leverage this to drive skills retooling of youth to drive the implementation of the triple planetary crisis.

World Health Organization (WHO) was also involved and took note of the environmental dimension of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and welcomed UNEP participation in the quadripartite. Lessons from the environmental dimension of

solutions will be deliberated at quadripartite to be taken up by WHO Botswana. The aspect of exploring regional power pools as a conduit for attracting investment for Botswana's solar industry, in line with its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) prioritization was also deliberated. It was observed that Botswana is a high solar potential country, with up to 5000times more solar potential than it needs to satisfy its population. It was agreed that an incentive to attract investment in solar would be to develop solar for trade in the regional power pools. This was agreed as an aspect around which more intelligence will be gathered with United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs).

In bridging the Nationally Determined Contributions NDCs finance gap, it was agreed that UNEP share lessons from ongoing work in Ghana and Uganda that is supporting these countries to translate their NDCs into investment tools capable of attracting implementation capacity from both the formal and informal sector players. To bring impact to scale, it was agreed that the youth are a critical constituency to leverage on. To achieve this, it was agreed that the UN needs

Ba Isago Entrepreneurship centre is looking to precise branding of climate action entrepreneurship within its broader courses to drive climate action in Botswana

to engage willing young people with normative guidance so that early adopters can take up new knowledge on environmental action and formulate it into enterprises, generate data on successes and gaps, so they can be targeted by policy/legislation to bridge gaps and enable expansion of successes. Such successes will also attract more youth to engage and bring the impact of environmental solutions to scale. It was agreed that working with the Ba Isago climate action entrepreneurship centre will be critical to operationalizing this dimension.

Botswana's energy is majority coal-powered, while the country's NDCs prioritize solar. It was agreed that to enhance the expansion of solar, the key would be to project the socio-economic benefits of solar and how it can play a critical role in driving diversification. Examples include powering informal sector value-added actions in agriculture, including livestock and the uptake of cassava as a climate-resilient alternative to wheat that fits Botswana's climate profile

Engagement with the Minister of Environment and Tourism

Discussions with the minister overarchingly focused on how Botswana can unlock solutions from opportunities for environment and development that build on the country's already ongoing. These yielded the following key takeaways;

- Implementation of Botswana's development agenda is contextualized within the framework of achieving the socio-economic development blueprint – the vision 2036 – towards unlocking multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The government has put forward an economic recovery, transformation, and growth agenda focused on implementing through the lens of diversifying the economy. The NDCs are to be implemented in this strategic direction of diversification.



An attentive audience listening to speeches during the launch of Ba Isago Climate Change & Entrepreneurship Centre

“ Exploring regional power pools as a conduit for attracting investment . for Botswana's solar industry, in line with its NDCs prioritization ”



Addressing the triple planetary crises, unlocking opportunities to implement the corporation framework and actualise multiple SDGs. Collaboration of UNEP & UN Botswana



Experts and UN team taking a picture after meeting to deliberate on support and structures of how to support the Climate Change and Entrepreneurship Centre using multi-stakeholder engagement approach .

Environment actions in implementing NDCs need to align with achieving the country's 5-point economic growth objectives per the president's "reset agenda and the reclaim the future agenda". These are: saving lives; ensuring that every action taken within government initiative aligns towards creating opportunities, enhancing livelihoods, and creating jobs; expanding innovations that can help government development agenda, especially targeting youth who can engage in developing ICT and other innovations to create livelihoods and drive economic diversification. The government has set up the research and innovation fund to capitalize on innovative youth ideas to this end; value addition / sustainable value addition across diverse sectors, especially minerals and agriculture, among others, to enhance diversification; inculcate a mindset change to tap citizenry and especially youth as the critical constituencies of implementers to make delivery nimble.

Financing of NDCs was brought up, and it was agreed that the country needs to explore innovative options, building on progress already made. Specifically, it was agreed that the country would need to leverage more on public-private partnerships; leverage youth innovations and enterprising solutions driven from a market dimension that invest in aspects that address different aspects of NDCs. The minister also noted that a sum to the tune of \$3 million drawn from the fuel and plastics levies is to be set aside to finance the

implementation of NDCs. The key would be to frame NDCs implementation from an enterprising lens.

The central role of the Ba Isago University climate action entrepreneurship centre in driving NDCs implementation from an enterprising lens was highlighted. This includes: training and nurturing manpower to be "opportunity creators", not "opportunity seekers", who will help to accelerate the implementation of NDCs through opportunity and enterprise creation; generating knowledge to inform NDCs implementation and environmental solutions through an enterprising lens so more actors can take it up even outside the institution; synthesize knowledge on empirical aspects of NDCs implementing enterprises, and conveying the same to ministries to inform policy incentives.

Ministries will need to work with Ba Isago to create targeted incentives for enterprising young people who nurture other entrepreneurs. Interested youth with ongoing enterprises addressing NDCs in a manner that aligns with the development agenda, are supported to access capital from the different funds - be it the plastic levy, fuel levy, innovation fund, youth development fund, private sector sources etc., - but on condition that they must train other youth entrepreneurs to establish enterprises that address different aspects of NDCs. And as they continue to prove that they can train others who can create their own enterprises, they benefit from additional

incentives - tax breaks & other fiscal & non-fiscal incentives that help expand their enterprises.

It was agreed that Ba Isago University goes beyond training youth alone in these climate action enterprise dimensions. It also includes short certificate-level executive courses/programmes for people who might not necessarily have to go through full degree/diploma programmes. This can target executives, corporates, and experienced professionals who may not want to spend several semesters that it takes to complete a degree/diploma.

Engagement with the Ba Isago University to launch their Climate Action Entrepreneurship Centre

The launch of the Ba Isago University Climate Action Entrepreneurship Centre was initiated, this will be technically backstopped by UNEP and aimed at bringing the impact of climate action to scale. The launch was led by the Minister of Environment and Tourism, the UN in Botswana resident Coordinators' office, the UNDP Resident Rep, the Managing Director of the University, and several faculty, administrative staff, and students. The launch also included a dialogue with young people on mindset change and seizing opportunities to drive climate action enterprise, discussions with deans of different schools on establishing bridging programmes for climate action entrepreneurship and a visit to a class recycling enterprise to partner with the centre in driving this enterprise dimension.

In the discussions, it was noted that the critical building blocks of bringing impact to scale are: skills retooling to build on those already engaged in some level of activities that align with climate action entrepreneurship; data generation of successes and gaps from these already ongoing actions; and targeted policy incentives to address the gaps and opportunities towards expanding the successes.

The key takeaways in driving the centre based on the net effect of these launch activities were as follow;

The centre was agreed to be primely positioned to bring the impact of climate actions to scale through the entrepreneurship angle for Botswana and the entire continent. The close linkage to the Ministry of the Environment and Tourism was noted as key in providing the much-needed policy push. More specifically, the following action areas were highlighted as the approach to be applied by the centre.

a) Tap into those already engaging at some level in climate action entrepreneurship, establish their gaps, opportunities, and critical success factors, and link them to the government to facilitate their access to needed policy incentives that will be crucial to them towards expanding the enterprises that they are engaged in. The focus will be on areas prioritized in Botswana's climate commitments – the NDCs – i.e., energy –

including transport, agriculture, and waste – among others. The glass bottles recycler visited was cited as a prime example of an established successful actor with ongoing work to collaborate with.

b) These established successes will be partners with Ba Isago University in training / mentoring more young people who demonstrate passion and aptitude for climate action entrepreneurship in the prioritized areas so they, too, can grow their enterprises to become self-sustaining, profitable entities. This mentorship will be pegged on the support by Ba Isago that they get to engage with policy for targeted incentives that enhance their operations.

c) The mentored young climate action entrepreneurs will, over time, graduate to mentor additional young entrepreneurs in line with points “a” and “b” above towards creating a cyclic, self-reinforcing process of climate action entrepreneurship growth.

e) There are new course areas under consideration within the broader environmental entrepreneurship – including the MCom/PGD in environmental entrepreneurship, MCom in Environmental Economics, PhD programmes in these areas and additional offshoot disciplines. The key is to have these conceptualized as the “legs of the stool of Climate Action Entrepreneurship”. This would mean that those who enrol for these courses would also be taught elements of climate action entrepreneurship, and those who express interest in becoming climate action entrepreneurs would be allowed to bridge their courses into a climate entrepreneurship programme, so they get to become climate action entrepreneurs.

f) There is a need for “executive certificate” programmes in all the disciplines being offered. This will target professionals already accomplished in their fields who need short training to venture into climate action or environmental entrepreneurship and establish or grow their enterprises. This will open up the market to tap executives who may be interested in climate entrepreneurship but not have the time to go through a full degree or diploma programme.



Chitchat between UN Africa Office Deputy Director and Botswana UN country team



Considering that Botswana has several enabling policies that support enterprise including the different funds – be it the youth fund, innovation fund, plastics levy, petroleum levy – all which are critical to mobilize capital in supporting the above enterprising actions, it was noted that the suggested approaches could mean that Ba Isago Climate Entrepreneurship Centre becomes one of the partners of government and a major interlocutor of investing these capital opportunities into viable climate action enterprises to drive diversification of the Botswana economy.

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