

Concept Paper - Vision 2016 Awareness Month 2005

Back ground

The Vision 2016 Council has expressed satisfaction with the level of commitment and participation by stakeholders in the 2004 Vision 2016 Month Awareness commemorations. The Council believes this positive national response will go a long way in enhancing knowledge and understanding of Vision 2016 in the nation. In addition, the response demonstrated an improvement in the buy-in and ownership of Vision 2016 by most stakeholders. However, Vision 2016 implementation challenges us to go beyond increasing the level of Vision 2016 awareness and understanding. We need to be action oriented and address the challenges espoused in the Vision. The Vision Council has identified poverty as one of the major challenges that must be addressed if the Vision goals and aspirations of our national vision are to be achieved. One of the Vision 2016 aspirations is that, Botswana should have eradicated absolute poverty by the year 2016, so that no part of the country will have people living with incomes below the national poverty datum line.

Vision 2016 envisages a nation which fully embraces and actively manages the process of change leading towards prosperity enjoyed by all its citizenry. The Vision 2016 has set a target for reducing poverty from 47 percent of the population living below the national poverty datum line in 1993/94 to about 23 percent by 2007. In 2003, the proportion of households living below the poverty datum line was 30.3 percent. The 2002/03 Household Income and Expenditure Survey shows that there is considerable variation in the poverty headcount rates across the regions with poverty rates of 10.1 percent, 24.6 percent and 45.1 percent for cities/towns, urban villages and rural areas, respectively. Poverty, therefore, has become one of the key challenges facing Botswana particularly in the rural areas.

The Vision Council is cognizant of the fact that Government as one of the key stakeholders in the implementation of Vision 2016, embarked on the formulation of National Strategy for Poverty Reduction in October 2001, in an attempt to alleviate poverty. Thus a multi-dimensional concept approach to poverty reduction has been adopted. Several poverty alleviation programmes provide assistance in the following spheres;- social protection, job creation, and safety net schemes. In addressing the problems of unemployment assistance was provided to address both the issues of business development (entrepreneurship) and creation of employment opportunities. Government provided basic services such as education and health care facilities which are essential for the provision of a work force which is skilled, knowledgeable and healthy. Social safety nets have been provided to the destitute persons, orphans and others who are genuinely unable to obtain a minimum standard of living through their own efforts. Programmes such as the Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency

have been established to assist in citizen economic empowerment as well as curbing the problem of unemployment.

These government initiatives benefit the different sectors of the population including children, orphans, destitute, senior citizens and those affected by drought or natural disasters. Although there is no empirical evidence to suggest that some of the poverty alleviation programmes are not achieving the desired goals, there are indications that some of the beneficiaries have taken these programmes as a permanent solution to their problems, rather than as programmes meant to assist them equip themselves to stand on their feet.

Some of these programmes are now creating a dependency syndrome amongst able bodied persons and thus undermining one of the fundamental principles of self-reliance. If this type of behavioral attitude continues, what kind of society are we going to have in year 2016? If the young people are presently dependent on hand outs how will they man the various positions which this country requires? What contribution can we as individuals, families, communities and the nation make in eradicating poverty? As Batswana what is our responsibility individually and collectively? This is not the time to point figures at the government but to ask ourselves of what we can do to make a difference? Are we effectively using the opportunities accorded to us? What impact are these opportunities yielding?

Vision 2016 Awareness Month Goal, Objectives and Theme

The goal for year 2005 awareness month is **to promote self reliance and accountability towards eradicating poverty**

The objectives are:

- To make the nation realize that striving for the achievement of Vision 2016 aspirations will lead to eradication of poverty
- To enhance the involvement of individuals, families, communities organizations, companies and government in eradicating poverty
- To mobilize and reaffirm sustained commitment in eradicating poverty and attaining prosperity for all by year 2016

The Theme

The theme for year 2005 awareness month is;

- ❖ **Vision 2016 with Productivity: the Key to Poverty Eradication**

The proposed Vision 2016 month activities;

The Vision month activities are not tailor made for the different communities. The different districts are encouraged to plan their own activities through the established Vision 2016 district committees and stagger such activities throughout the month of September. These activities and the names of identified focal persons are to be forwarded to the Vision 2016 secretariat for coordination and publicity of activities.

The Vision 2016 month official launch will be conducted on the 1st of September 2005. The following are to be considered for the vision month:-

1. Presentations, discussion, and debates centering around the topic of poverty alleviation by different stakeholders and an exhibition of poverty alleviation projects. These projects will show how the various stakeholders are addressing the issue of poverty under the seven pillars
2. The Vision 2016 Excellence Awards dinner will be held in Gaborone. These awards will again be issued to individuals or organizations/companies which show commitment and compliance to the aspirations of vision 2016. The criteria for nominations will be publicized in the media. Submissions will be sent to the various district for screening and recommendation before they are forwarded to Gaborone for the final assessment by a panel of judges.
3. Unlike last year, communities in the different districts will also be urged to make submissions on the different activities they are engaged in, in eradicating poverty and the level of progress they have attained. The biggest level of progress attained will be rewarded.
4. Youth activities throughout the nation
5. A music festival. The songs will centre around theme of the Vision month and the pillars
6. Identification of self reliance projects where individuals/companies will identify a project in the districts which they will contribute to both financially and physically. For example if a company/institution decides that they want to build a house for a destitute, people from that institution/company will actually go and contribute also their labour time in building that house and also pay for the cost of purchasing the required materials. If it is renovating a school, making a vegetable garden, etc
7. Radio and television talk shows on poverty alleviation
8. Sports activities

Management and Coordination

The overall management and coordination of activities will be conducted by the various districts led by the district commissioners/district officers/Chiefs. The leadership in these districts will work with the local Vision 2016 committees in their district to play an active role in the planning of the Vision 2016 activities.

The Vision 2016 Council members will participate in the activities conducted by the different districts throughout the nation.

Funding

The Vision Council will not be able to fund vision month activities due to budget constraints. Stakeholders are encouraged to seek their own funds to meet the cost of producing their own promotional material, (banners, t-shirts, posters, placards, etc) which is in line with the theme.

Conclusion

The different districts are requested to submit reports of their activities with pictures and evaluation reports conducted at the end of vision month. This information will be published in the Vision 2016 special edition newsletter and used also in the annual report. Those with electronic facilities are also requested to send the soft/electric copies to makhemam@bidpa.bw or seisamm@bidpa.bw