

# **BASA works with southern African arts bodies to build sustainability in the region**

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Business and Arts South Africa is expanding its sphere of activity by providing support and working relationships with the Botswana Society for the Arts (BSA) and the National Arts Council of Zambia.



November 2011 saw BASA CEO, Michelle Constant, deliver the keynote address at the BSA's Business and Arts Project Forum - a multipronged initiative that aims to, among others, introduce arts administration training and encourage long-term investments in the arts by the local business community.

In her address, Constant outlined BASA initiatives that have contributed to the sustainability of the arts in South Africa, including the BASA Mentorship Programme, in association with Etana; BASA Boardbank and BASA's Supporting Grants scheme, supported by the Department of Arts and Culture.

Germaine Gamiet, BASA Marketing and Operations Manager, represented the organization in Zambia in February, and also outlined BASA activities and projects.

Victor Makashi, CEO of the National Arts Council of Zambia, described Gamiet's presentation of BASA's model as a "boost and eye opener".

This was echoed by Mumba S Kapumpa, first Chairman of the National Arts Council who said the current financial mood in Zambia was conducive to business partnerships with the arts. "Many business houses are pursuing marketing and advertising strategies that need and use artistic productions," said Kapumpa. He urged Zambian businesses to start looking towards Zambian talent - not that of outsiders - to fulfill this, adding a "Zambian version of BASA would encourage and engage local business houses to explore and utilise the Zambian talent".

Business representatives who attended the presentation also committed to supporting the conversations forward with regard to a business and arts forum in Zambia. Sampa Chitah, of Konkola Copper Mines (KCM) said the impact of support to the arts in Zambia was limited because of being isolated and inconsistent. "KCM is ready to work with other business entities to change the current state of affairs," she said.

The response from businesses in Botswana was also encouraging.

Following Constant's presentation at the business breakfast, key corporate players such as Brand Botswana (tasked with selling the Botswana brand to local and international investors), First National Bank of Botswana, Debswana Diamond Company and many other companies expressed strong interest in becoming part of the Business and Arts Botswana programme.

"We hope that by establishing a strong link between the programmes in the two countries, Botswana will gain invaluable knowledge from BASA and will in turn be able to offer BASA the possibility of regional expansion and collaboration," says Thabo Makgato of BSA's Business and Arts Projects.

One of the co-sponsors (with the Human Resource Development Advisory Council) of the breakfast attended by BASA's Constant was Diamond Trading Company Botswana.

The company is currently sponsoring a pilot Business and Arts Botswana programme that seeks to engage the business community in a mutually beneficial and long-term relationship with the arts and artists. Mentorship training for the project manager for the programme has been provided by LEAD Botswana and by Native Impressions, a leading marketing and communications company, with the latter providing additional in kind support. Mentorship programmes, bursaries, and levies on own brand goods and services to raise money for the Botswana National Arts Institute (BNAI), are a few of the multitude of ways in which businesses can become partners in the programme.

Now 15 years in existence, the BSA is Botswana's first and only umbrella body for the visual and performing arts with much of its work focusing on all-important skills and entrepreneurship training.

## About Business and Arts South Africa NPC:

Business and Arts South Africa NPC is an internationally recognised South African development agency which incorporates the arts into, and contributes to, corporates' commercial success. With a suite of integrated programmes, Business and Arts South Africa NPC encourages mutually beneficial partnerships between business and the arts. Business and Arts South Africa NPC was founded in 1997 as a joint initiative of government and the business sector, to secure the future development of the arts industry in South Africa, through increased corporate sector involvement. Established as a Non Profit Company, Business and Arts South Africa NPC is accountable to both government and its business members.

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