

Promoting sustainable agriculture and advancing female leadership in Botswana



Skills development is a national priority in Botswana, both as an enabler of economic growth and as a mechanism to address high unemployment and skills shortages. Our International Skills Partnerships are supporting Botswana's TVET sector to **respond to key challenges and drive skills development**. In the area of green skills, we have supported partners to **enhance and promote sustainable agricultural practices** to address the key impacts of climate change. In the area of leadership, we have supported partners to **address the barriers women face in attaining leadership positions**, supporting TVET transformation through more inclusive and effective leadership.



Strengthening agricultural skills

To strengthen the capacity of Botswana's TVET sector to adapt to the demands of a green economy, Duchy College and Outsourcery Services LLP, in the UK, partnered with four agricultural centres and brigades across Botswana – Barolong Vocational Training Centre, Shoshong Brigades, Serowe Brigades and Satariano Brigade – to **strengthen agricultural curricula, promote sustainable farming practices**, and equip students with the skills to support a green transition.

An initial baseline analysis to understand current curricula and identify needs across 19 brigades in Botswana revealed significant variation in the understanding of green skills and sustainability, and the diverse ambitions of individual brigades.

This led to partners deciding to take the project forward as four individual mentoring programmes, with tailored sessions and workshops focusing on sustainable agricultural practices and entrepreneurship. This could encourage thinking about how practices could be localised to each specific context.

Each brigade identified a lead champion from their teaching staff, who was tasked with developing individual action plans in relation to farm regeneration, resource efficiency, environmental protection and social measures.

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Farming is the backbone of Botswana's economy. Empowering agricultural colleges with the enhanced knowledge and understanding will help to improve sustainable agricultural practices and support the farmers and agricultural specialists of the future.

Dr Robin Jackson,
Director of The Rural Leadership School,
Duchy College

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Agriculture is essential for Botswana's national food security and economic stability. By learning more about sustainable practices and instilling this into our curriculum, we are building a future where agriculture can thrive sustainably.

Ministry of Education representative,
Botswana



Impact

Through the partnership, the four brigades successfully identified methods, priorities and opportunities for embedding green skills, contextualised to their geographical area and types of production. These included regenerative and conservation practices, to help make farmers and growers more resilient and profitable.

The workshops not only fostered professional growth and the exchange of creative ideas about environmentally friendly agricultural practices and improved food production, but encouraged the exchange of knowledge between participants. This laid the foundation for a peer group to share progress, celebrate achievements and work together to find solutions to challenges. This group will support continued contribution to the greening of the agricultural sector in response to the impacts of climate change.

For the UK partners, gaining new knowledge on tropical agricultural processes has strengthened their professional development, and they are keen to explore further collaboration opportunities in this area.



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From uncertain beginnings and numerous challenges, my new colleagues in Botswana have grown in confidence, developed a passion for change and created plans for implementation. I hope we can continue to support them on their journey and witness their achievements.

Dr Robin Jackson,
Director of The Rural Leadership School,
Duchy College

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The skills acquired by TVET lecturers in greening agriculture will go a long way to enhance and ensure best practices in colleges, which will eventually improve efficient food production for our economy and sustainable farming.

Mr Lesolame,
Ministry of Education and Skills Development

Empowering female leaders

To drive stronger, more inclusive leadership to support the continued transformation of Botswana's TVET sector, the Learning Curve Group, in the UK, partnered with Botswana's Department of Skills Development to enhance female TVET leadership. The partnership aimed to **empower female leaders with the skills to drive more innovative and responsive TVET**, especially in the context of the growing green economy.

After assessing the aspirations, qualifications, operating context and support requirements of female practitioners, the partnership supported 13 female candidates to work towards the Level 3 Diploma in Leadership and Management, aligned to the Institute of Leadership and Management standards.

Delivered through the Learning Curve Group's own e-learning platform, the course covered 12 units, focusing on key areas such as leadership, managing change, entrepreneurial skills and quality management. This was complemented by self-study and virtual masterclasses delivered by Learning Curve Group's female leaders on key leadership topics relevant to the TVET sector.

Impact

All 13 candidates successfully achieved their Level 3 Diploma in Leadership and Management, receiving their awards via a virtual graduation ceremony.

A visit to the UK by three of the candidates built on the knowledge they gained through the qualification by obtaining new insights into best leadership practices in the UK TVET sector. A highlight of the visit was a hybrid award ceremony held at the Learning Curve office and virtually, allowing representatives from the British Council, Learning Curve Group and the Ministry of Education in Botswana to gather in person and online to experience a student showcase and to hear testimonials and feedback on their learning experience from graduating participants, and to celebrate the success.

