

PRESS RELEASE

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**ACCESS BANK AND DEBSWANA ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP TO
EMPOWER BOTSWANA BUSINESSES***...Alliance set to propel economic growth as it gears up local companies...*

Gaborone: Access Bank Botswana, the BSE-listed African bank for Africans, is delighted to announce its partnership with Debswana Diamond Company through the Citizen Economic Empowerment Programme (CEEP), which aims to empower and support Botswana's citizen entrepreneurs and companies. The partnership forms part of Access Bank's priority to ensure it accelerates growth in Africa through financial inclusion and assisting enterprises develop and thrive in their respective markets.

As one of the world's largest diamond producers by value and volume, Debswana is a crucial player in Botswana's economy, contributing significantly to the gross domestic products, foreign exchange earning and government revenue. Debswana directly employs more than 5527 people supported by more than 6600 contractors, making it one of Botswana's largest private-sector employers. Like Access Bank, Debswana places great value on creating a meaningful and sustainable impact on the communities it operates in and the nation at large.

With CEEP, citizen entrepreneurs and companies from different industries have the opportunity of participating in the Debswana value chain by supplying commodities, services, and locally manufactured products. Additionally, this programme is geared towards equipping smaller companies and entrepreneurs with the necessary tools to survive and thrive in a globally competitive landscape and achieve long-term growth.

"As a bank, we saw first-hand the devastating effects that Covid-19 had on businesses, specifically SMEs, which is why this initiative is particularly close to our hearts at Access Bank. We believe that supporting small businesses, which are the backbone of our economy as they drive job creation and eradicate poverty, will be crucial in accelerating the much-needed growth in Botswana and on the African continent. This partnership is testament to our commitment to sustainably improving the communities we operate in, and we are extremely proud to be part of such an impact," said Kgotsobannalotlhe, Access Bank Botswana Managing Director.

Since its independence in 1966, Botswana has rapidly become one of the world's success stories, given its growth, prudent economic management, and good governance. However, diversification, critical to Botswana growth, remains a challenge. With CEEP, Debswana aims to broaden and diversify its supply chain network and allow smaller players that were historically excluded to participate in its ecosystem to be enlisted to render their service and supply their products to the mining giant.

As a proudly African bank, Access Bank continues to identify ways to help African businesses succeed, making its involvement in this Initiative Imperative. Through the partnership, the Bank will provide financial aid to its citizen companies, support capacity building for the enlisted companies, and ensure clients and the public are aware and educated on the programme.

Commenting on the partnership, Andrew Motsomi, Debswana MD said, "Identifying a partner that places positive and sustainable impact at the forefront of all they do is crucial, and Access Bank meets all our requirements. Not only will the Bank provide us with access to enterprises through their client base that could greatly benefit from the programme, it will also issue funding and other offer empowering initiatives that will equip SME to thrive. We look forward to the partnership as we collectively make a meaningful impact on the various companies and the many lives they sustain."

The programme is aligned with Botswana Vision 2036, a transformational agenda that notes that sustainable economic development is underpinned by diversification and inclusivity.

Access Bank remains committed to providing funding to SMEs. The funding aims to create a platform to expand operations and increase economic participation for businesses and the individuals they employ in order to afford access to improved lives.

"We are excited about this partnership and look forward to working together with the enlisted citizen companies as they

take their businesses to greater heights”, concluded Mr. Bannalotlhe.

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Corporate Profile

About Access Bank Botswana

Access Bank Botswana is a leading full-service commercial bank operating through a network of 58 ATMs, 19 branches and Sales & Service Centres. The Bank employs over 470 people in its operations. As a trusted partner to Botswana’s retailers, we deployed over 900 Merchant POS devices at numerous merchant locations.

Listed on the Botswana Stock Exchange since 2021, Access Bank Botswana has a diverse offering of financial solutions which include robust retail customer franchise and digital platform, corporate banking expertise in addition to an established risk management and capital management capabilities. The Bank services its various markets through four business segments: Retail, Business, Commercial and Corporate & Investment Banking.

The Bank has a strong focus on partnerships and financial inclusion with a view to bring financial services to the wider economy. Testament to this is the bank’s introduction of *Access Closa*, an agency banking service with over 3000 agents across the country.

Access Bank Botswana has been accorded recognition by reputable domestic and global organisations. Some of these recognitions include Best Bank for Transaction Banking Services, Botswana, by global business intelligence company The Digital Banker and Outstanding New Acquiring Bank Award, Botswana, in the Africa Bank 4.0 Awards. The bank is proud to be recognised as the "Best Trade Finance Bank" in Botswana having played a leading role in supporting the government's school digitization initiative,

The Bank strives to deliver sustainable economic growth that is profitable, environmentally responsible, and socially relevant, helping customers to access more and achieve their dreams. For further information, please visit <https://www.accessbankplc.com/>

Access Bank Plc. Corporate Profile

Access Bank Plc. is a leading full-service commercial Bank operating through a network of more than 600 branches and service outlets, spanning three continents, 18 countries and 49+ million customers. The Bank employs 28,000 people in its operations in Nigeria and has subsidiaries in Sub-Saharan Africa and the United Kingdom (with a branch in Dubai, UAE) and representative offices in China, Lebanon and India.

Listed on the Nigerian Exchange Limited (formally Nigerian Stock Exchange) since 1998. It is currently admitted on the National Association of Securities Dealers (NASD). Access Bank is a diversified financial institution which combines a strong retail customer franchise and digital platform with deep corporate banking expertise and proven risk management and capital management capabilities. The Bank serves its various markets through four business segments: Retail, Business, Commercial and Corporate. The Bank has over 900,000 shareholders (including several Nigerian and International Institutional Investors) and has enjoyed what is arguably Africa's most successful banking growth trajectory in the last twelve years. Following its merger with Diamond Bank in March 2019, Access Bank became one of Africa’s largest retail banks by retail customer base and the largest bank by total assets.

As part of its continued growth strategy, Access Bank is focused on mainstreaming sustainable business practices into its operations. The Bank strives to deliver sustainable economic growth that is profitable, environmentally responsible and socially relevant, helping customers to access more and achieve their dreams.

In honour of its defining roles across the African continent, Access Bank has been accorded recognition by reputable domestic and global organisations. Some of these recognitions include: 2022 International Investors Award “Best Environmental and Social Performance Award”, 2022 Finance Derivative Award “Best Sustainable Bank Africa”, 2022 Euromoney Awards “Best Bank in Nigeria”, 2022 Global Sustainable Finance Awards “Outstanding Leadership in ESG-Related Loans, Africa” and “Financial Leadership in Sustaining Communities, Africa”, 2019 World Finance Award “Best Digital Bank in Nigeria”; 2019 World Finance Award “Best Mobile App in Nigeria”; 2019 Karlsruhe Sustainable Finance Awards; “Outstanding Business Sustainability Achievement”; 2018 Euromoney Private Banking Awards “Best Commercial Banking Capabilities”; 2018 Euromoney ‘Africa’s Best Bank for CSR’ Award; 2018 CBN ‘Sustainable Bank of the Year’; ‘Sustainable Transaction of the Year (Oil & Gas)’, ‘Sustainable Transaction of the Year (Power)’; 2018 Global Banking and Finance Review, “Best Investor Relations Bank in Nigeria”; 2018 SERAS ‘Most Sustainable Company in Africa’, 2019 CEO Awards Forum “Gender Leader of the Year” just to mention a few.