



## Gov't looks for ways to curb unemployment

THE government is in the process of forming a 'smart partnership' with the private sector in the quest to create more sustainable employment opportunities, says the Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Mr Ponatshego Kedikilwe.

Delivering a keynote address at the launching of the 1997 Botswana Development Report at Gaborone Sun on Wednesday, Mr Kedikilwe said Botswana's estimated unemployment rate of 21 per cent was unacceptable

plement the efforts of the private sector.

Also, government continues to hold consultative meetings with the private sector through the High Level of Consultative Committee which is

chaired by the President, Mr Festus Mogae.

Botswana Human Development Report, which is set to be an annual publication, is the first such report to be prepared by the United Na-

tions Development Programme in Botswana. It replaces The Global Human Development Report which was first prepared by the UNDP in 1990.

The local Human

Development Reports are efforts by individual countries to assess their development performance in terms of human development, as well as facilitating cross-country comparisons.



Human Development Report of 1997 was launched by the Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Mr Ponatshego Kedikilwe this week at Gaborone Sun (read story on page 1). The picture shows Dr Grace Sunny, Senior Lecturer of Economics at the University of Botswana presenting a paper at the launching ceremony. Photo: Katso Mothubi

These entail combating the adverse impact of HIV/AIDS pandemic, reducing the degradation of the environment and improving the quality of health and education. But the major ones are poverty alleviation and reduction of unemployment.

To a large extent, Mr Kedikilwe, said the problems can be attributed to the fact that economic growth has been driven by the mining sector which is highly capital intensive with direct linkages with the rest of the economy.

"It is for this reason that the government is vigorously pursuing the strategy of economic diversification," he said.

Mr Kedikilwe said: "the major task before us is to address these challenges in order that we promote sustainable livelihoods. We need to enlarge our nation's development choices by

The Botswana report whose theme is: "Challenge for Sustainable Human Development - A Longer Term Perspective," contains information on all dimensions of human development in Botswana, among them gender, health and poverty.

It also provides information for assessing disparities in social provisions across the country, Mr Kedikilwe said, adding that it will be used as one of the yardsticks against which to measure our overall human development progress at any given time.

Despite the achievements that Botswana has made over the years, he said the country faces serious challenges to ensure that the benefits of economic growth are equitably distributed to the population at large.

placing Botswana at the helm of the development process."

However, he argued that there is a realisation that economic growth alone cannot bring about progress in human development which calls for a more equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth, gender equality, respect for human rights, and participation of people in the social, cultural and political progress. **BOPA**