

invest in development of African cities in a coordinated approach to make them attractive and livable taking into cognisance the increasing numbers in rural urban migration.

He added that it was time Africa invested heavily in its cities because they were the economic hub of nations with 80 per cent of economic activities taking place primarily in cities.

However, that, he said had since reduced over decades saying "capital investment in African cities has remained

reaching one billion people by 2040," said Mr Zeufack.

These numbers, he added, thus call for calculated action from policy standpoint to ensure they were adequately contained by the cities because these were locations where innovation happened, where people found jobs and grew their countries' economies.

The decline in oil and commodity prices had hit hard on resource rich countries hence the much needed economic diversification in Africa. **BOPA**

Business Botswana aids local investors

GABORONE - Business Botswana is developing a Market Intelligence Information System (MIIS) which will assist businesses by providing information on national, regional and international markets and on how to access them.

A press release from Business Botswana says the MIIS, developed within the framework of the private sector development programme, aims to provide effective and efficient online trade intelligence service reinforcing the value added offered by Business Botswana which could support efforts for economic diversification.

The release explains that the system will expose local businesses to international

markets, trends, opportunities and requirements geared towards private sector development.

The system, it says will also promote connectivity and linkages with retailers and wholesalers with priority sectors such as beef, tourism and crafts and jewellery with the view to facilitate accessibility to prices and price structures different markets to guide decision makers.

Further, it says a local company, E-tourism (Pty) Ltd/Simply Botswana, has been engaged to develop the MIIS for Business Botswana and will conduct workshops in various strategic areas in Botswana in order to develop an effective and useful system.

BOPA

MOROKA - Mr Tafilani Mudongo has been a landscaper since 2012 and says landscaping is his life and it keeps his pockets happy at all times.

The 35-year-old Mudongo says he started his landscaping business, later to be known as Malcons Greens Landscaping Company, in Moroka in 2013 following funding from government through the Poverty Eradication Programme.

"With the P7 500 capital I got from government, I managed to buy a hedge trimmer machine and a chain saw," he said.

He says ever since he started, he has been getting encouraging feedback from clients to also apply for Youth Development Fund in 2015 to expand his work base.

Because the two machines he already owned were not enough, he bought extra machines including a more proficient petrol-operated hedge trimmer.

with the Botswana College of Agriculture and Impala Tree Nursery for further training thanks to the Poverty Eradication Programme.

"There I learned a lot about trees in general, and I was lucky once again to train in bookkeeping thanks to the Department of Youth. Today, I am able to know if my business is growing or not," he says.

With time, the young landscaper registered a company and named it Malcons Greens Landscaping Company for him to be able to apply for government tenders, as well as brand himself for marketing purposes.

"The business is booming as of now, particularly because a lot of trees are lavishly green due to the ongoing heavy rains. You know I have huge affection for plants, including roses, fruit trees, shelter trees and lawn," he said contentedly.

around the North East district despite having to endure some hiccups as a result of insufficient or reliable transport at the moment.

"But I will soon be buying a company car from savings so that I am able to reach more and far places across the region and beyond," he said.

Currently operating from home, the young lad says he is in the process of acquiring a more spacious business plot to be able to produce more plants.

He encourages Batswana to plant and love trees because they may bring them happiness.

"Plants will give you that perfect and soothing feel. They also help in preventing soil erosion, beautify the country, and they are used as medicine," he says. Nonetheless, he regrets the fact that some important trees are so gradually diminishing and thus highlights the need to preserve them now. **BOPA**



Some of the artwork produced by Mr Mudongo. He started his landscaping business, later to be known as Malcons Greens Landscaping Company, in Moroka following a funding from government under the Poverty Eradication Programme. Photo: Kabelo Lesolebe