The People’s Ministry held its inaugural PITSO on the 31st August 2011 in Tonota. The premise of the PITSO was to provide a platform for robust debates, introspection and networking on various issues relating to Community Development.

This auspicious event attracted Dikgosi, Members of Parliament, Council Chairpersons and Mayors, Councillors, Non-Governmental Organizations, community leaders and stakeholders to look into activities and most importantly to facilitate a forum for feedback on the performance of the Ministry.

During Hon. Minister Lebon-aamang Mokalake’s keynote address at the PITSO, he noted that “our gathering here today is in line with the principle of (consultation) therisanyo, which will provide us with the opportunity to devise strategies and provoke our thoughts on the way forward for socioeconomic development in our country”.

The PITSO came amid increasing concerns from all quarters that poverty remains widespread in the country despite significant economic progress made over the years. It must be noted their is still an over-dependence amongst the citizenry on government social safety nets.

Furthermore, Hon. Mokalake noted that, “community development is a participatory grass roots process that promotes dialogue between community members and development authorities in addressing community developmental issues, hence we are gathered here today”.

In this context, The People’s Ministry plays a key role in the betterment of lives of citizens adopted the community resilience concept, on the backdrop of the waning self-help spirit, high levels of poverty and over-dependence on government for sustainable living. It must also be noted that, urgent and concrete actions are needed realize Vision 2016, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and the Government’s Poverty Eradication Initiative.

Hon. Mokalake pointed out that communities are the foundation of our society, and therefore community development cannot be fully achieved without their participation. The People’s Ministry thus recognizes the essence of consultation (therisanyo) in carrying out its objectives. Hon. Mokalake went on to encourage communities to be the drivers of their own socioeconomic development while the ministry facilitates and assist them to unleash their potential.

Members of the public had the chance to voice their opinions on various issues of community development and how they can mobilize and ready their communities for socioeconomic development.

Moatlhodi Rampoka
His Excellency, President Seretse Khama Ian Khama has stressed the importance of his and Cabinet addresses and interaction with Local Authorities. He cited that this interaction provides a platform for exchange of ideas and discussion of key issues between the national leadership and them when addressing the Ghanzi District Council.

“These interactions with Councils will continue because my government recognizes the important role of Local Authorities in this country as a cornerstone of our democratic system of governance and a critical interface between Central Government and Batswana”, said His Excellency.

He also said that it is important that users of Council services should contribute to the cost of providing such services as funds will be inadequate for investment in infrastructure provision and upgrading, extension and service provision. This is in view of current state of our economy in terms of its revenues and spending priorities.

Furthermore he challenged the Council to step revenue collection efforts to complement grants from government and explore various alternatives for cost saving and cost recovery to ensure sustainability of service provision to Batswana. Therefore Councils should seriously consider privatization of some non-core functions such as cleaning, security, refuse collection and gardening services.

“This will enable you to concentrate more on programme and policy planning, implementation and management, and further serve to stimulate private sector investment in the provision of goods and services traditionally provided by government agencies. This will not only enhance efficiency, but will also generate sustainable rural employment and alleviate poverty”, he emphasized.

On sustainable rural livelihoods, he said that this must be based on the economic realities of the rural situation. “We therefore need to recognize the varying potentials of the different districts and focus on issues of comparative advantage and market access. There is a lot of potential in areas such as the livestock subsector, cultural villages, game viewing and the hospitality industry just to mention the key ones. These are some of the economic activities that Gantsi District can leverage on using government assistance programmes”, he advised.

In conclusion, he indicated that as government, their allegiance and commitment must be anchored on people’s aspirations, concerns and needs. As a key service provider in the district, they can only be justified by the quality of service they offer to the district community and the impact of their strategies and interventions on the lives of Batswana.

Makarov Abotseng
Star Qualities

Recently came across an article by Rachel Farrell (City Press, Careers24) which detailed opinions by global business leaders on what they deem star qualities in employees. Needless to say the qualities mentioned were varied, but nevertheless, pointed to the fact that it takes more than being first in office or the best hair cut. This is what they had to say, in a nutshell.

- Best team members are always striving for improvement and take personal pride in their work. They go the extra mile, volunteering, picking up extra responsibilities and find ways to leverage systems to become more efficient.

- Best employees are eager to be successful, professional and consistent. They can work independently and serve as resources to others. They also take initiative.

- Star employees are always prepared and ready, whether it is for a planned meeting or a question that pops up about a pending project.

- Best employees impress with three facets: attitude, effort and ability. He may not be the most able in the team, but multiply the effort and the positive effort and the positive attitude combined with solid ability, then you have a star performer.

- Great employees ask a very simple question; “What else can I do”. There is always something to be done, and with an employee like that you have an asset.

- The most valuable attribute of an employee is to become an astute problem solver. Any employee, using their resourcefulness to solve problems on their own is a truly valuable asset and will always impress the boss.

- An asset is an employee who anticipates the need for something to be done. If you ask someone to do something and they say they have already taken care of that, you know you can count on that person.

- It does no good to be able to tell your boss what they can do once entrusted with a job. What impresses though is that they not only talk the talk, but also walk the walk.
The People’s Ministry

With Makarov Abotseng

The Values above we swear by, they are our mantra, our guiding light or our blueprint insofar as our Vision of excellence in local governance and social service provision. Deeper than that we see our Mission as to deliver effective local governance, social services, social protection and basic infrastructure by creating an enabling environment for improvement of the quality of lives of Batswana. Question is do we really live up to these, or put another way, do we honour our commitment?

I believe that we don’t just put those vision and pillars on posters and banners for fun. We should actually live by them. So much of our credibility as an organization comes from how we honour and live by our mantras.

The conscious practice of Honouring Commitments provides the foundation for us to be the best at being an organization of our word. The good thing about this practice is that it carries over to the marketplace and a level of credible trust is built with customers that provides for long lasting relationships.

We limit our ability to provide the highest level of customer satisfaction when we mishandle our commitments to our customers. Our mishandling contributes to an environment of blame and finger pointing that distracts us from our customers: We often get defensive when a commitment breaks down instead of looking to its source, which could be as simple as a miscommunication about the commitment’s details.

Unfulfilled commitments also contribute to a loss of morale and an increase in cynicism: We start to lose our passion for participating in the success of the organization and resignation often sets in when organization-wide commitments are made, not followed through on, and then ignored. The practice of Honouring Commitments eliminates these unproductive effects and provides a framework for working together towards the realization of a company’s vision.

The practice of Honouring Commitments provides a powerful tool for accomplishing our goals. But it’s a tool that requires a high level of rigor, extending from a commitment’s conception to its realization, including dealing with any of its breakdowns. Once we have made the practice of Honouring Commitments a way of relating, we are: Ensuring that only clearly defined commitments are made; immediately communicating when a commitment is at risk of not being kept; quickly and effectively addressing commitments that are not kept and effectively supporting each other in fulfilling our commitments.
What is Dehydration
Dehydration (hypohydration) is defined as excessive loss of body fluid. It entails a deficiency of fluids from the body.

Effects of Dehydration
Tiredness  Migraine  Constipation  Muscle cramps  Irregular blood pressure  Kidney problems  Dry skin  20% dehydrated - Risk of death.

Signs & Symptoms Of Dehydration

- Dark Urine/Dark Yellow/Orange in Color
Urine is generally pale yellow to clear when you have sufficient water intake. Dark color or smell strong indicates that you need to drink more water.

- Dry Skin
Skin is the largest body organ and it requires its share of water.

- Thirst
Thirst is the most obvious sign that you’re already dehydrated. It is always a good practice to drink more water when you are not thirsty, don’t wait until you are thirsty.

- Hunger
Most people mistaken hunger as an indication to eat more, whereas in actual fact, you may be dehydrated. So, before you have your meal, grab a glass of water.

- Fatigue
Water is a source of energy; it gives you a boost in energy.

Action
Take as much fluids as you can or drink enough water. (at least 8 glasses per day i.e 2 before and 2 after breakfast and 2 before and 2 after dinner.

source: http://kidshealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/food/water.html
The Batho Pele Team would like to thank all those who made the Ministry’s inaugural Pitso a success.