

## **NDMO HOSTS NATIONAL CONSULTATION WORKSHOP**

The National Disaster Management Office under the Office of the President held a national consultation workshop on the 18- 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2009 in Gaborone. The three days were devoted to the adoption of the national disaster risk management and to discuss the preparedness measures on wild-land fire management strategies. The workshop was attended by representatives of District Disaster Management Committees, members of the National Disaster Management Technical Committee; SADC, UNDP volunteer unit, UNDP and Office for Coordination of Human Affairs; Non- Government Organizations, and the Botswana Red Cross Society. The National Committee on Disaster Management represented by two members, hence it was resolved to make submission to the National committee on Disaster Management to incorporate their inputs before it is submitted to Cabinet and finalized..

The draft DRMP required to be updated and stakeholders had to be consulted before it appears as a working document. Therefore, the workshop had to review and adopt the plan with understanding of the concepts of Disaster Risk Reduction, assess the disaster response capacity and commitment, develop strategies for wild land fire management.

### **Purpose**

- Adopt the National Disaster risk Reduction Management Plan
- Design a national level fire risk reduction and response strategic framework

### **Objectives**

- To review and adopt the national disaster management and response plan by all the government and non-governmental functionaries present.
- To discuss the country's disaster response capacity and commitments
- To develop response strategies for wild-land fires basing on past experiences
- To familiarize participants with disaster risk management concepts and terminologies

In his official opening remarks, Mr Montshiwa Montshiwa, National Governance Project Coordinator stated that the interaction between stakeholders helps in planning initiatives that answers to the needs on the ground. It brings diverse minds, that is, policy makers, implementers, academicians, NGOs and development agencies including international or regional institutions come on a common platform for rich discussions crystallisation of which gives social, economic and politically sound ideas.

On that note, the Government of Botswana through its National Governance Programme in 2006 defined its agenda on governance in terms of delivery of services to the citizenry. In addition to the traditional indicators of governance globally, participatory democracy, voice and accountability, rule of law, control of corruption and regulatory frameworks, are included. The National Disaster Management Office was included and altogether 22 projects were prioritised. The "disaster management project" focuses on the approach to manage disaster risks. The justification was based on the notion that disaster management is very important because of the effects on livelihoods of Batswana and its aim is to achieve

effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of services in a transparent, accountable and responsive way by improving human capabilities, processes and organisational structures.

He concluded that, disasters have increased in terms of the number of instances, intensity and magnitude with the continual emergence of political instabilities within some neighbouring countries. However, while responses to disasters have contributed to saving lives and mitigating the impact, the government believes much can be done. The biggest question was “How could we collectively work better towards preventing disasters and ameliorating their impact?” A number of activities have been identified to address the above challenges, namely finalisation of the disaster management plan, developing risk reduction and disaster management strategies, building capacity both in terms of human capabilities and intensifying volunteerism, and revamping institutional structures, and defining roles and responsibilities.