

BAYPORT BOTSWANA MEDIA RELEASE

Bayport Botswana has become the first credit provider in Africa, and the first payroll lender in the world, to receive Client Protection Certification from the Smart Campaign. The certification means that Bayport Botswana's policies and practices uphold the Smart Campaign's seven Client Protection Principles. These principles cover such important areas as pricing, transparency, fair and respectful treatment and prevention of over-indebtedness.

The Smart Campaign is an international initiative that aims to unite microfinance institutions (MFIs) around a common goal, namely regarding customers as the driving force of the industry. Its Client Protection Certification programme provides a shared global standard for client protection and is a way of validating those institutions that are doing the right thing.

Certification is furthermore an independent, objective and therefore credible seal of confidence that an institution is investing in its relationship with its clients and doing its best to treat them fairly, protect them and inform them of their rights and responsibilities.

Having successfully completed the certification process, Bayport Botswana joins 29 other unsecured lenders from Latin America, Eastern Europe and South Asia that have been certified.

Gerald Mabureza, CEO of Bayport Botswana, couldn't be prouder of his team's achievement. "We have always been committed to protecting our customers, but this independent validation lends credibility to our efforts. It demonstrates to our community and our customers that we work every day to improve our own service and the micro-lending industry as a whole."

In extending the Smart Campaign's congratulations to Bayport Botswana, Isabelle Barrès, Director of the Smart Campaign, commended Gerald and his team for their "willingness to do the work it takes to prepare for and undergo the intensive process of evaluation. This is indicative of your deep commitment to your customers."

Over-indebtedness is a problem in Botswana with many consumers taking on more debt than they can afford. Bayport Botswana, which celebrates its fifth year in business in 2015, has been working with relevant stakeholders to address the issue and to help strengthen regulations to protect consumers against unscrupulous micro-lenders.

"Smart Campaign certification is also an achievement for Botswana as a country," says Mabureza. "Without the regulatory framework the government has put in place, Bayport Botswana could not have achieved certification. We are indeed proud to be on the same responsible-lending journey as our country."

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About the Smart Campaign

The Smart Campaign was formed in 2009 and aims to improve client protection in microfinance through better understanding and use of client protection principles by microfinance institutions (MFIs). Certification of MFIs is one of the primary activities of the Campaign. The Client Protection Certification programme, launched in January 2013, is possible because of partnerships with the MasterCard Foundation, Ford Foundation, the International Finance Corporation, the Multilateral Investment Fund (a member of the IDB group) and microfinance pioneer Accion. It has been shaped through cooperation with dozens of supporting organizations, notably the Smart Campaign's co-founder, the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP).

For further information, visit www.smartcampaign.org.

About Bayport Botswana

Bayport Botswana is one of Bayport Management Ltd's nine subsidiaries. It started trading in May 2010 on the strength of a partnership between Bayport, the Botswana government, parastatal organisations and trade unions. The partners shared a common goal of helping people achieve financial wellness through responsible access to credit.

Bayport's mobile agent distribution model, which takes its services directly to the customer, has been a major contributor to Bayport Botswana's success. The company currently has 14 branches, 74 employees and over 100 sales agents that service about 10 400 customers.

Bayport Botswana is actively involved in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives focused on education and housing in support of the government's call on poverty alleviation and dignified housing for all.

