

THE DFRC SME MENTORING PROGRAMME

The DFRC SME Business Mentoring Programme seeks to link small business owners (SMEs) across the SADC region to building profits, jobs and exports. It provides an opportunity for SMEs to acquire new skills and develop growth plans and strategies, to better equip the SMEs to face the many challenges that today's highly competitive and rapidly changing global marketplace presents.

The Mentoring Programme provides established SMEs committed to growing their businesses with access to experienced business persons, who assist to develop a profitable growth pathway for the business. The Programme recognises that after start-up, the next critical phase comes when a business owner has to decide how and when to commit resources to expansion. This is when a "voice of experience" can be invaluable, particularly a person with no conflict or vested interest.

The Programme has two core components:

1. *Orientation Workshops for Mentors*: Prospective mentors are taken through a specially designed workshop that orients the mentors to the SME Mentoring programme.
2. *Journey to Excellence (J2Ex) for SMEs*: Business owners (SMEs) who are accepted into the Programme will participate in a business development programme which is dubbed "*The Journey to Excellence*"- a Multi part workshop. The *Journey to Excellence* training is designed to help SMEs to chart and navigate a sustainable course for their businesses over time.

The Programme offers long-lasting skills, networking with other business owners and access to an experienced business person who will help the entrepreneur to focus on the issues and plans that will make a difference.

The DFRC Registered Business Mentors

The DFRC in partnership with its key stakeholders (DFIs in SADC member states) will match experienced business persons, the mentors, who would have been screened and assessed by the DFRC, to SMEs that have been assessed to need the services befitting the qualifications of the respective mentors. A mentor will be expected to be available to an SME for an agreed period over the course of the programme, to help the SME develop strategies to overcome a business hurdle or pursue an identified business opportunity or market.

The Business Mentor acts as a sounding board to test or bounce ideas off. A mentor can help the SME to focus on the "big picture" issues that an SME faces in business, a task which is difficult when the small entrepreneur is busy running their business.

What the mentor does not offer is professional advice or consulting services.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME A BUSINESS MENTOR?

Have you had valuable years of experience in business?

Valuable does not have to mean you have years of senior management experience in a corporate environment. It may be that you run your own small business and therefore can understand the challenges many small businesses face, or it may be that you are entering semi-retirement or retirement and want to give something back to the small business sector in your country or in Southern Africa- the SADC region in particular.

The main criteria for being a good mentor are that you can listen well, you have a good base of business experience in one area of expertise and that you enjoy helping other people.

If this sounds like you, we strongly encourage you to register with us as a Mentor, it is a most fulfilling experience.

Specifically our Business Mentors:

- Are experienced business people from either small or large business environments
- Have empathy for small business operators and entrepreneurs and would like to help
- Are available at least 4 hours per month for mentoring assignments
- Have the ability to communicate with, and win the confidence of, others

Mentoring has many benefits, such as:

- Enjoying the satisfaction of assisting small businesses to grow so that they contribute more to the national economy
- Harnessing existing skills and developing new skills and knowledge in a variety of real situations
- Widening networks of business contacts through the clients they visit and interactions with other mentors on the programme

Experience around the world tells us that Mentors learn something each time they do an assignment , so the DFRC is offering you that challenge to learn something.

Apply to become Business Mentor

The DFRC is looking for mentors who are passionate and committed individuals, mentors who are collectively focused on empowering the growth of SMEs within the economies of SADC member states - the benefits of which will flow through the entire region.

To become a business mentor, all you have to do is:

- Complete the online application.
- Read and accept the Mentor Commitment Contract
- Attend an interview with any of our local DFI Network member listed hereunder.

Following your interview you will be contacted in writing by the DFRC to advise you of the outcome of your application.

If you would like to become a business mentor through the DFRC Business Mentors service, [apply here](#) or contact the DFI Network member nearest to you.

DFI Network Members

BOTSWANA

1. Botswana Development Corporation
2. National Development Bank
3. Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency

LESOTHO

4. Basotho Enterprise Development Corporation.
5. Lesotho National Development Corporation

MAURITIUS

6. Development Bank of Mauritius

MOZAMBIQUE

7. GAPI

NAMIBIA

8. Agricultural Bank of Namibia
9. Development Bank of Namibia
10. National Housing Enterprise

SOUTH AFRICA

11. Development Bank of Southern Africa
12. Industrial Development Corporation
13. Land and Agricultural Bank

SWAZILAND

14. Swaziland Development and Savings Bank
15. Swaziland Development Finance Corporation
16. Swaziland Industrial Development Company

TANZANIA

17. National Development of Corporation
18. Small Industries Development Organization
19. Tanzania Investment Bank

ZAMBIA

20. Development Bank of Zambia

ZIMBABWE

21. Agricultural Bank of Zimbabwe
22. Industrial Development Corporation
23. Small Enterprises Development Corporation
24. Infrastructure Development Bank of Zimbabwe