

NBFIRA EMBARKS ON FINANCIAL LITERACY CAMPAIGN WEEK



Consumer Watchdog: Richard Harriman



Premier Wealth Martin Hoko



Tshepiso Letsholo

NBFIRA

Non-Bank Financial
Institutions Regulatory
Authority

THE NON-BANK Financial Institutions Regulatory Authority (NBFIRA) held Financial Literacy Campaign Week from the 14th-22nd March 2014 in Francistown and Gaborone under the Theme "Financial Responsibility Today for Financial Stability Tomorrow".

The Financial Literacy Week is an initiative central to helping consumers make better decisions about management of their money conversely avoiding over indebtedness. Botswana, as part of the global village is not immune to the above situation as the larger proportion of the population is not knowledgeable about the financial products and services and the existing financial services law. There is therefore a need to develop a financially literate community which will in turn assist to ensure fairness, efficiency and orderliness of the non-bank financial sector. A financially literate community can in addition identify

financial scams and swindlers as these thrive in communities which are poor and financially illiterate.

The Botswana Public Officers Pension Fund, Botswana Stock Exchange, Consumer Affairs department, Consumer Watchdog and Premier Wealth took part in the Financial Literacy Week. The event was marked with entertainment by Maruapula Money Matters Play and Storms road show group which demonstrated financial educational plays and songs aimed at teaching the public on reckless borrowing and the importance of proper financial planning.

The authority also noted that there had been a shift from investing in non-formal financial assets such as property and cattle to investing in complex financial products in a quest to improve long term returns and diversify their investment portfolios and have deliberatively included the Retirement and Investment Institutions department to

educate consumers on the importance of understanding these complex investment instruments and regulatory frameworks governing them to help them make informed decisions conversely avoid investing in Ponzi Schemes.

Richard Harriman from Consumer Watchdog emphasized the need to always avoid buying on credit unnecessarily which results many a times in consumers paying more. On his part the Managing Director of Premier Wealth Mr Martin Hoko stated in his presentation that only if people accept how they look, are content with what they have, they will find themselves in less debt due to proper management of their finances.

"As a Regulatory Authority with a mandate to supervise and regulate non-bank financial institutions for the purpose of contributing towards financial stability it is our believe that the current situation calls for appropriate interventions aimed

at improving financial literacy which will in turn improve consumer knowledge of the financial markets and offer protection to the consumers." We strongly believe that Consumer education has a dual role to play; to educate those using financial products and services to make informed decisions, and to promote the use of financial services to those who are financially excluded.

NBFIRA is of the view that consumer education on financial literacy is a shared responsibility hence the reason for targeting Malls, Botho College students, Institute of Health Sciences, University of Botswana among many stakeholders all of which have a powerful and legitimate role to play: government, schools, youth, financial institutions, employers, trade unions, community organizations, and NGOs.



Storms in action



Interactive Educational Drama by Maitisong Group



Game City: Shoppers learn about NBFIRA



Bosa Hirschfeldt with a customer