

## **BHC hands over 36 housing units to BURS**

**By Refilwe Mogami**

Botswana Housing Corporation (BHC) on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2013, handed over 36 residential flat units to BURS at Ramokgwebana Border Post.

Giving an overview of the project, BHC Chief Executive Officer, Mr Reginald Motswaiso said his organisation had a long-standing relationship with BURS as evidenced by various projects they had done dating as far back as 2007 which entailed building of a guard house at Tlokweng Border at a cost of P1.2 million. In 2009, BHC constructed offices, staff houses and guardhouses at Matsiloje and Maitengwe Borders at a total cost of P23.1 million. This year sees the organisation completing and handing over 6 blocks of flats with a total of 36 units constructed at a total cost of P36.1 million.

'Despite the challenges we encountered such as water shortages and power outages, the project has finally been completed,' he pointed out. Completion of the project was initially slated for 30 April 2013.

In his remarks, Commissioner General (CG), Mr Ken Morris told the gathering that Government had vested border properties in BURS, and as a trustee the organisation also had the responsibility of sharing such facilities with other Government departments resident at borders such as Immigration, Botswana Police Service etc.

'However, this extension comes at a cost, and that is what we shall negotiate,' he said.

CG extended gratitude to the Office of the President (OP) for the support they had given resulting in the developments at Ramokgwebana Border Post. The decision to undertake the project came from OP having taken into consideration congestion at the border, border jumping amongst other concerns. Ministry of Finance and Development was also acknowledged for the financial support even though the country was in the middle of recession.

The development took place in three phases i.e.

1. Security around the perimeter of the border,
2. Refurbishment of the office, existing houses and other allied services
3. Construction of new flats

All this was done in collaboration with BHC. 'We have found a strategic partner in BHC, and will sustain this relationship going forward,' CG emphasised. CC Projects, a citizen owned construction company which contributed to the building of the units, was also recognised as BHC's strategic partner.

He further noted that the improvement of border facilities is one of the strategic initiatives of BURS as part of its programmes to address staff welfare, adding that the World Bank Doing Business report had ranked Botswana amongst the lowest out of 153 countries particularly in border facilitation. As such this development will help as it will now put in action plans to transform the border into a 24-hour point of entry.

Border staff who would soon occupy the flats were encouraged to take care of the facilities and surroundings as this development has enhanced the beauty and value of the village of

Jackalas. In closing Mr Morris thanked all who were involved in the project for delivering within cost and for the excellent workmanship.

Also at the handing over ceremony were Kgosi Tapson Bar Jackalas, Deputy PS-Land Management, Mr Maotoanong Sebina who also gave a keynote address, Councillor Joyce Mahube, Director Immigration and Citizenship, Mr Mahube Pule and other senior Government officials.



Kgosi Tapson Jackalas



BHC CEO Reginald Motswaiso



DPS (MLH) Maotoanong Sebina



Commissioner General Ken Morris



Mr Lesotlo of CC Projects



Councillor Joyce Mahube



Cutting the ribbon

The new housing units

