

The PSLO Tribune



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Building Bridges to the Private Sector in Africa

April 18, 2006 - "You name it, we have it — even the sky is not the limit in Mozambique. But we need to raise the awareness of business opportunities in this country — let investors know that Mozambique means business," said Rafique Jusob, Director of the Mozambique Investment Promotion Center at the Private Sector Liaison Officer (PSLO) retreat in South Africa and Mozambique in March 2006.

Cattle farming, fisheries, energy, water management, port development, agro-industry, tourism, and information technology were just some of the sectors identified as areas of mutual interest for the liaison officers and the private sector representatives they met with in Maputo.



The PSLO Network visits a banana plantation outside of Maputo, Mozambique



Tunde Onitiri, IFC Country Manager for Mozambique and Angola, with Alan Ng, PSLO for Singapore and Bruno Emwanu, PSLO for Uganda.

"Hydropower and fisheries are the two main areas where Icelandic companies could be interested in investing or providing technical assistance," said Berglind Simarsdottir, Liaison Officer from the Icelandic Overseas Business Services. "Following this meeting, I hope to bring a delegation of Icelandic companies focused on these sectors to Mozambique. I would also invite Mr. Jusob to come to Iceland and speak directly with our member companies on the business opportunities here which have enormous potential."

The PSLO Network, a Bank Group program to strengthen communications with the private sector, is composed of representatives of leading business organizations worldwide. The recent retreat was an opportunity for officers from Asia, Europe, and Africa to learn about business opportunities for their member companies in South Africa and Mozambique with the support of the Bank Group's products and services.

The retreat's program included presentations from ten [World Bank, IFC, and MIGA](#) staff in both Johannesburg and Maputo, focusing on areas where the network could work more closely with the Bank Group to promote its private sector development activities in both developed and developing countries. "I was pleased to learn more about IFC's activities aimed at fostering small and medium enterprise development in Africa, such as the Private Enterprise Partnership program," said Bilha Maina, Liaison Officer from the



The PSLO Network visits the Mozal aluminum smelter in Mozambique

Kenya Association of Manufacturers, "I think that IFC needs to communicate more with small and medium enterprises in Africa, and this is where my role...for Kenya can come into play—I can disseminate information to my small and medium enterprise members and act as the link between them and IFC." She continued, "The Mozambique Special Initiative pilot to invest and provide technical assistance to selected enterprises is a very interesting program, which I hope will be initiated in Kenya as well, soon."



Bruno Emwanu, PSLO for Uganda and Bilha Maina, PSLO for Kenya meet with staff at the Mozal aluminum smelter in Mozambique

The liaison officers had the opportunity to visit small and medium enterprises in both countries, including Wandi's restaurant and craft shop in Soweto, South Africa, and Citrum citrus plant and a banana plantation in Mozambique. For many participants, these visits were highlights of the retreat. "This retreat has allowed us to meet face to face with the people doing business in Africa," commented Maria Claudia Pignata from the Milan Chamber of Commerce. "We can understand their constraints and needs better and look for ways our countries can bring support—either through investment or through knowledge sharing. In Italy, for example, we have extensive experience with small and medium enterprise development, and this is experience we can share with our PSLO colleagues from Africa."

The group also toured the Mozal aluminum smelter, IFC's largest project in Mozambique, to learn in particular about the IFC structured small and medium enterprise linkages program to expand Mozal's sourcing to local firms. A representative of the Mozal Community Development Trust, a Mozal-funded organization to empower local communities, described Mozal's community programs in the education, training, health, environment, sports, culture, and community infrastructure areas. "The Mozal project is an interesting example of why large corporations should be motivated to help build the capacity of local enterprises...in terms of the business benefits—the reduced costs and productivity gains from outsourcing non-core activities to qualified local enterprises" explained Alan Ng, of International Enterprise Singapore.



Wilfried Maus, PSLO for Germany, Rafique Jusob, Director of the Mozambique Promotion Center, and Johan Malin, PSLO for Belgium

The PSLO retreats, held once a year to update members on World Bank Group private sector initiatives, also allow for sharing of best practices among the participants. “As a new member of the Network,” said Bruno Emwanu, of the Uganda Manufacturers Association, “it was extremely beneficial to meet for the first time with some of my PSLO colleagues at this retreat. I have received many good ideas for events that I can organize in my country and we have even come up with some proposals for joint initiatives, such as joining with another liaison officer to bring a business delegation to WBG headquarters in Washington.”



Wilfried Maus, PSLO for Germany, and Norman Moleele, PSLO for Botswana

Created in 1999 to strengthen the World Bank Group's outreach to the private sector in Europe, the PSLO Network today includes some 56 PSLOs in 42 countries (26 in Europe, 10 in Africa, 12 in South & East Asia, and 8 in North & South America). The PSLOs are private sector communications professionals— appointed, based in, and financed by their respective business intermediary organizations. The officers facilitate local companies' access to Bank Group business opportunities, services, and knowledge and act as the voice of their national private sector in advising the Bank Group on how to better engage companies on development issues. All of the PSLOs financed their own hotel and travel costs to participate in this retreat.

To read more about the Network and see the PSLO Directory, visit the website:

<http://www.worldbank.org/business-global>

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