



Republic of Botswana

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY SPEECH

BY

MINISTER OF SPORT AND ARTS

HON. JACOB KELEBENG

ORGANISATION 3400

12th March 2026

I. INTRODUCTION

1. **Mr. Chairman**, it is my pleasure to present our Ministry's Recurrent and Development Budget Proposals for the 2026/27 Financial Year under **Organisation 3400** for consideration and approval by this Honourable House.
2. The Ministry of Sport and Arts' effort to develop the Sport and Creative Industries Sector is anchored on shaping Botswana into a global hub where talent thrives for individual and sustainable economic prosperity. The Sector presents a viable and strategic opportunity for economic diversification, inclusive growth and job creation, particularly for young people, which is consistent with the aspirations of the National Development Plan 12 (NDP 12) Theme of **"Building a Diversified and Inclusive Deep Economy for Sustainable Jobs"** and the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme (BETP) True North of a **"A high-income Botswana that is digitally-enabled, export-driven and economically diversified – where every citizen is employed, empowered and fulfilled"**.
3. **Mr. Chairman**, with deliberate policy interventions, adequate investment and institutional support, the Sport and Creative Industries Sector can evolve into a sustainable contributor to national development. The True North for the Sport and Creative Industries Sector for this transformation to be realised is: **"Botswana will be a global hub for sports, culture and creative industries,**

where talent thrives for individual and sustainable economic prosperity”. For this to be achieved, emphasis will be placed on: sector sustainability; stakeholder partnerships; cultural heritage, creative industries and sport tourism.

II. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

4. **Mr. Chairman**, there is need for robust institutional, legal and regulatory framework to support the growth of the sport and creative industries. To this end, reviewing and formulation of several legislations is currently on-going to provide a conducive environment for the Sector to thrive.

Anti-Doping Bill

5. **Mr. Chairman**, in its endeavour to advocate for clean sport in the country, Government continues to embrace the integrity of sport by spearheading numerous legislative initiatives. This Honourable House approved an Anti-Doping Bill during the 12th Session of Parliament in July 2025, an achievement that will strengthen our national anti-doping efforts, ensure compliance with World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) international statutory instruments, and establish a mandated institutional structure to lead, coordinate and regulate the fight against doping in the country and to promote clean sport.

Botswana National Sport Commission Act

6. **Mr. Chairman**, in an endeavour to promote commercialisation, integrity, professionalism, inclusivity, diversity, governance and to correct imbalances in sport development, and align with international current trends, the Ministry is reviewing the Botswana National Sport Commission Act of 2014.

Cinematography Act

7. As part of a broader Government initiative to modernise Botswana's creative sector, the review of the Cinematography Act (1970) is nearing completion. The revised Cinematography Bill (2025) is scheduled for its second reading in Parliament in the February 2026 Sitting. Upon the re-enactment of the proposed legislation, a National Film Commission will be established. The Commission will foster a culture of filmmaking in Botswana to build a sustainable film industry ecosystem. This will enable the regulation, professionalisation and commercialisation of film productions, distribution and exhibition, thereby stimulating economic activity and enhancing employment opportunities for filmmakers, content producers and other stakeholders across the creative sector value chain.

III. INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

Implementation of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

8. **Mr. Chairman**, Botswana continues to implement UNESCO-ratified conventions, including the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). As a State Party, the country is obligated to submit periodic reports on the implementation of the Convention and on the status of elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List. In this regard, the Second Periodic Report on the Status of Dikopelo Folk Music of Bakgatla Ba Kgafela was submitted on the 15th December 2025.

2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Cultural Expression

9. **Mr. Chairman**, one of the recommendations of the Quadrennial Periodic Report (QPR) is to strengthen and raise awareness of the 2005 Convention among all stakeholders within the cultural and creative industries. To this end, Botswana received funding amounting to **\$14,038.00** (equivalent to **P187,175.30**) to conduct awareness-raising workshops on the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Cultural Expression. These workshops were conducted in **seven (7)** Districts, with participation of approximately **thirty-five (35)** participants per District.

IV. SECTOR PERFORMANCE

10. **Mr. Chairman**, please allow me to apprise this Honourable House on our Ministry's performance during the financial year 2025/26.

Sport and Recreation

11. **Mr. Chairman**, our country made significant strides in sport at both regional and international level during the year ending 2025/26. The Botswana Athletics Team made the country and the whole African continent proud by winning the first ever, Gold medal in the 400mx4 relay at the World Athletics Championships. Our athletes also won bronze medals at the World Relays and World Athletics Para Championships. The Athletics Junior team dominated the Under 18 & Under 20 Championship, winning **six (6)** medals composing of **three (3)** Gold, **three (3)** bronze at the Under 18/Under 20 Confederation of African Athletics (CAA) Championships.
12. Not only did the Athletics Team make us proud, but there is also significant growth in the racket sport as Lawn Tennis team made a significant impact in continental competitions with the men's team winning the Davis Cup Africa Group V gaining promotion to the Davis Cup Africa Group IV. The women's team also did well in the Billie Jean King Cup finishing 3rd after losing to Morocco and Kenya in the promotional playoffs.

13. **Mr. Chairman**, for the first time in the history of Botswana, a Motswana tennis player by the name of **Ntungamili Raguin** at the age of 17 entered the global competition when he made it into the main draw of Grand Slam for boy's single event at the just ended 2026 Australian Open Junior Tennis Championship where our athlete reached top **sixteen (16)** from a draw of **sixty-four (64)** players and his performance at the tournament catapulted his international ranking into the world top **sixty (60)**, also raising the Botswana flag at the global stage.

14. **Mr. Chairman**, lets applaud both the Senior Men and Women National Football teams for making their second appearance at Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) and WAFCON respectively. Although the two teams were eliminated at the group stages, qualifying was a big achievement for the teams reflecting an improvement in the country's football development.

15. **Mr. Chairman**, youth teams' competitions are central to the sporting system and their continuous exposure and excellence at regional level gives hope as future feeder structures into Senior National level. Our youth teams competed at the 11th Edition of African Union Sports Council (AUSC) Region 5 Under 20 Multi-sport Games held in Namibia from 4th to 13th July 2025 and managed overall position **four (4)** out of **ten (10)** countries with **forty-five (45)** medals, thus **(17-Gold, 12-Silver and 16-Bronze)**. In addition, the youth teams scooped **twelve (12)** medals, **(1 Gold, 3 Silver, 8 Bronze)** at the African Youth Games (ANOCA) held in Angola in December 2025.

16. **Mr. Chairman**, with regard to sport grants, the Ministry administered **three million, six hundred and eighty-seven thousand Pula (P3,687,000.00)** during the 2025/26 Financial Year as assistance to Non-profit Governmental Sport Organisations for supporting the Ministry in the delivery of sport programmes and projects that are aligned to the Ministry's strategies to grow sport and stimulate recreation through community sport programmes. Out of **seventy-eight (78)** proposals received from different Organisations, **seventeen (17)** were approved.

Arts and Culture

17. **Mr. Chairman**, during the 2025/26 Financial Year, a number of initiatives aimed at creating an enabling environment for creatives to transition from informal activity to sustainable enterprises and compensation for their creativity in the creatives industry were undertaken. These were:

The National Arts Festival (NAF)

18. The 2025 National Arts Festival (NAF) had an added focus on grassroots participation and comprised of two levels; Competition Level (Constituency) and Celebration Level (Regional Festival and National Carnival). A total of **ten thousand, four hundred and seventy-two (10,472)** artists participated in the competitions and an amount of **seventeen million, six hundred and sixty-eight**

thousand, eight hundred and fifty-nine Pula (P17,668,859) was spent on the competition as prize money to artists, for engagement of creative practitioners, as well as service providers across all Constituencies. Regrettably, **Mr. Chairman**, due to the current financial constraints facing the country, National Arts Council of Botswana (NACB) was unable to hold the Regional Festival and National Carnival.

Arts and Culture Grant Administration

19. **Mr. Chairman**, NACB offers grants to support the arts and culture sector in Botswana aimed at empowering artists, cultural practitioners and organisations to contribute to economic diversification through the creative industries. During the 2025 NACB Grants Cycle, **four hundred and seventy-nine (479)** applications for grants were received and only **fifty-seven (57)** were funded at a total amount of **four million Pula (P4,000,000)**. Of the funded projects, **thirty-five (35)** or **(61%)** have been successfully implemented while **twenty-two (22)** are still on-going.

District Film Development and Mentorship Programme

20. **Mr. Chairman**, this Programme aims to decentralise the industry and strengthen the production value chain. It is aimed at imparting the required skills, particularly to our youth, to produce films and documentaries that can compete in international film festivals and available platforms. A total of **eight (8)** full-length feature films have

been commissioned to District-based production teams at a total investment of **two million, nine hundred and sixteen thousand, two hundred Pula (P2,916,200)**.

NOW! Channel Content Acquisition

21. **Mr. Chairman**, currently the NOW! Channel is accessed by **three thousand, one hundred and two (3,102)** registered channel users in **eighty-four (84)** selected WI-FI Public hotspots and users from **fifty-three (53)** countries. Our Ministry plans to expand accessibility of the Channel by relaunching it on the Digital Terrestrial Transmission (DTT) and satellite platforms through local and regional carriers. We therefore, endeavour to increase access to **ten thousand (10,000)** more viewers after incorporation of new content. This initiative will significantly broaden the Channel's footprint and enhance its reach to Batswana audiences across multiple platforms.

22. **Mr. Chairman**, a total of **thirty-four (34)** companies have been recommended for award to license **three hundred and sixty-nine (369)** episodes across **seven (7)** diverse genres. The total cost for this activity is **twenty-three million, eight hundred and thirty-one thousand, six hundred and fifty-four Pula (P23,831,654)**, which is earmarked for the 2025/26 Financial Year. These efforts are intended to directly foster local talent, enhance the national narrative and create sustainable employment opportunities for youth within the Creative Sector.

Exhibitions

23. **Mr. Chairman**, our Ministry continues to host art exhibitions for visual artists, corporate and diplomatic organisations for the development and promotion of the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs). Recently, we hosted a photographic exhibition and launch of a book titled **“That’s My Boy”**. The exhibition captured an illustrative historic journey of the current President of Botswana, **Advocate Duma Gideon Boko** from 2012 to ascending to Presidency.

V. CHALLENGES

24. **Mr. Chairman**, the Sport and Creative Industries Sector continues to face several challenges, including; limited access to sustainable financing and investment; inadequate technical and business skills; weak market access and limited export readiness; insufficient infrastructure and production facilities; gaps in policy coordination, data and regulation. These challenges constrain the Sector’s ability to scale up operations, compete effectively and contribute meaningfully to the growth of the economy. As such, our Ministry continues to develop initiatives and strategies aimed at strengthening and expanding the Sector.
25. **Mr. Chairman**, our Ministry is in custody of the National Permanent Art Collection spanning from independence era to date, with a total of over **five thousand (5,000)** artworks. The collection includes a

wide variety of artworks ranging from two-dimensional works such as paintings and photography, to three-dimensional pieces such as sculptures and fashion garments. This collection is currently housed under a small space at the Department of National Museum and Monuments but more suitable storage space and a climate-controlled environment is needed to avoid its deterioration.

26. **Mr. Chairman**, decline in women's representation at both national and international level is a concern. Despite overall improvement in sport performance, there has been a noticeable decline in the representation of women particularly in elite competitions, as witnessed at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. Women remain under-represented in decision-making positions within sports organisations, leading to a lack of gender-sensitive governance, policies and programmes. There is, also inadequate support structures for women, as well as lack of targeted programmes and resources to support the development of female athletes, coaches and administrators, contributing to their under-representation in these areas.

27. This decline necessitates intensity in our efforts to close the gap between men and women in sport, and bring back the glory days of the likes of **Amantle Montsho** and **Aratwa Kasemang** in athletics and boxing respectively. Our Ministry therefore proposed the long-term Elite Athlete Development Programme under the National Development Plan 12 which was approved by this Honourable House in December 2025. The Fund will enable the Ministry to implement

talent development programmes and policies to significantly increase the participation of women, people living with disabilities and people in rural areas in all sporting programmes.

28. **Mr. Chairman**, during the 2025/26 period alone, we recorded a total of **seven (7)** doping cases which is a cause for concern, considering that the significance of these cases extends beyond the individual athlete to the country's international standing, legal framework and the integrity of our country's entire sporting ecosystem.
29. **Mr. Chairman**, to this end, as Botswana prepares to host the 2026 World Athletics Relays, the need to demonstrate our commitment to clean sport is even more urgent. For these reasons, we developed the Anti-Doping Law as I mentioned earlier, to strengthen our anti-doping efforts.
30. **Mr. Chairman**, regrettably, this country has potentially lost prospective talent in the last **six (6)** years, as there has been zero activity in school sport which used to offer opportunities for identification and nurturing of talent for elite performance. The contribution of sporting activity to positive wellbeing and character development for school children has also been forgone.
31. **Mr. Chairman**, this situation has necessitated our Ministry in collaboration with the Ministries of Child Welfare and Basic Education, and Local Government and Traditional Affairs to resuscitate the Schools Sport Programme which will be done in a gradual approach.

Consultations on the full roll-out of school sport and arts in schools are currently on-going.

VI. STRATEGIES GOING FORWARD

32. **Mr. Chairman**, please allow me to highlight some of the initiatives our Ministry will explore to address some of these challenges:

Performance Rewards System

33. **Mr. Chairman**, sport is no longer considered a hobby but a livelihood where today's National Team athletes wish to be recognised and appreciated for their podium finishes. While the Government has an existing athletes' performance incentive Policy recognising all national teams' athletes in the form of allowances and housing for Olympic medallists', emphasis must be given to long-term sustainable involvement incentives. The Ministry will therefore review the Policy to address loopholes and bring long lasting benefits for our athletes.

Partnerships

34. **Mr. Chairman**, in an effort to promote excellence in sport, our Ministry will explore strengthening of strategic partnerships with entities and organisations which support sport development at grassroot level such as sport academies and high-performance centres. It is also important to develop alternative sport funding models leveraging on sport betting and multilateral international

agreements to develop sporting infrastructure, explore international training techniques and exchange programmes. The Ministry will engage prospective global and local partners for agreements/partnerships for construction of sporting infrastructure in the country which will provide alternative funding for Government. The Ministry will continue to work with other Sectors in the tourism space to promote sport tourism by bidding and hosting cost effective international sport events.

Community Sport and Recreation

35. **Mr. Chairman**, the recreational Constituency Sport Tournament Programme was introduced in 2008 with the intention amongst others to curb idleness of unemployed youth, drug abuse, crime, unplanned teenage pregnancies and other societal problems. One of the objectives was to provide sport platform for out-of-school persons to showcase their sporting skills and be absorbed into structured mainstream leagues. The Ministry has commenced the review and re-organisation of the Programme emphasising on strengthening youth participation and talent development. The Ministry will also collaborate with stakeholders to promote diverse recreational sporting activities at community level such as marathons, social football, community fitness centres which immensely contribute to the healthy lifestyles and wellbeing of individuals.

The Digital Content Creation Hub

36. **Mr. Chairman,** the Digital Content Creation Hub has recently been transferred from the Ministry of State President, Defense and Security to the Ministry of Sport and Arts to strengthen alignment with the Ministry's mandate of developing the arts, culture and creative industries. The Ministry has already commenced preliminary implementation work on the project. A suitable physical space has since been identified where the initial phase of the hub will be established. This facility will serve as a platform to support: digital media production; film and television content creation; animation and multimedia development; and Youth-driven digital entrepreneurship.
37. Further operational processes, including technical planning, equipment acquisition and programme design are currently underway to ensure the hub becomes a fully functional national resource for creative talent development and digital content production.

National Creative Industry Expansion Programme

38. **Mr Chairman,** the Government has also initiated the National Creative Industry Expansion Programme, which forms part of the **two hundred million Pula (P200,000,000)** allocation announced by the President, Advocate Duma Gideon Boko during the recent State of the Nation Address (SONA).

39. The Programme has been designed as a comprehensive national intervention to stimulate growth across the entire creative economy, including sectors such as:

- Film and television production
- Music and performing arts
- Visual arts and design
- Cultural heritage enterprises
- Digital and multimedia content creation
- Creative entrepreneurship and cultural tourism

The Programme aims to:

- Support creative enterprises and projects with growth potential
- Expand employment opportunities, particularly for young people
- Strengthen production capacity and market competitiveness
- Promote Botswana as a regional hub for creative and cultural industries.

40. **Mr Chairman**, the Ministry is currently following the established Government financial procedures to access the funds allocated for this Programme. Upon completion of this process, the Ministry will issue a national Call for Expressions of Interest to stakeholders across the various Sectors of the creative economy.

41. Given the prevailing economic conditions and the need to ensure responsible utilisation of public resources, the Programme will be implemented in a phased approach rather than as a single large rollout. This phased approach will allow Government to prioritise

high-impact projects, monitor outcomes and refine implementation and ensure sustainable use of the allocated resources.

42. **Mr. Chairman**, these initiatives represent a significant step toward unlocking the economic potential of Botswana's creative and sporting industries. The Ministry of Sport and Arts remains committed to ensuring that these programmes deliver tangible opportunities for Botswana and strengthen the Sport and Creative Industries Sector as a pillar of the country's future economy.

VII. BUDGET PROPOSALS

43. **Mr. Chairman**, it is now my pleasure to present the 2026/27 Recurrent and Development Budget requests for our Ministry.

RECURRENT BUDGET ESTIMATES

44. **Mr. Chairman**, I request the sum of **five hundred and ninety-five million, one hundred and seventy-three thousand, eight hundred and forty Pula (P595,173,840)** for the Recurrent Budget for **Organisation 3400**. The amount requested will be distributed as follows:

Organisation 3401: Ministry Headquarters – P301,028,650

45. **Mr. Chairman**, I request **three hundred and one million, twenty-eight thousand, six hundred and fifty Pula**

(P301,028,650) for Ministry Headquarters. The funds will cater for subventions to the Botswana National Sport Commission amounting to **one hundred and fifty-two million, four hundred and seventy-three thousand, three hundred and sixty Pula (P152,473,360) or 51%** and the National Arts Council of Botswana with an allocation of **thirty-three million, one hundred and thirty-nine thousand, five hundred and ten Pula (P33,139,510) or 11%**. The funds will be used for the operational expenses for the two State Owned Enterprises. The remaining balance of **one hundred and fifteen million, four hundred and fifteen thousand, seven hundred and eighty Pula (P115,415,780) or 38%** is for Ministry Headquarters. The funds will cover personnel emoluments such salaries, wages, allowances, including gratuities for contract officers as well as operational and running expenses of the Ministry Headquarters.

Organisation 3402: Department of Sport and Recreation – P181,070,220

46. **Mr. Chairman**, the sum of **one hundred and eighty-one million, seventy thousand, two hundred and twenty Pula (P181,070,220)** is requested for the Department of Sport and Recreation. The bulk of the budget will cater for National Sport Development Programmes with an allocation of **one hundred and thirty-eight million, eight hundred and seventy-five thousand, six hundred and eighty Pula (P138,875,680) or 77%**. An amount of **thirteen million, three hundred and**

eighty-six thousand, six hundred and twenty Pula (P13,386,620) or 7% will cover other programmes such as Constituency Sports Tournaments Incentives and Allowances, Constituency Sports Tournaments – Prize Money, including subscription to the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa and World Anti-Doping Agency. An amount of **twenty-one million, seven hundred and six thousand, three hundred and ten Pula (P21,706,310) or 12%** will cover personnel emoluments and the remaining **seven million, one hundred and one thousand, six hundred and ten Pula (P7,101,610) or 4%** will cater for the day-to-day operational expenses of the Department.

Organisation 3403: Department of Arts - P113,074,970

47. **Mr. Chairman**, further, I request for **one hundred and thirteen million, seventy-four thousand, nine hundred and seventy Pula (P113,074,970)** for Department of Arts. An amount of **fifty-one million, seven hundred and twenty-one thousand, five hundred and ten Pula (P51,721,510) or 45%** is to cater for grants and subventions as well as other payments for the National Day Celebrations, Constituency Arts Competitions, President Day Competitions and some prize money for competitions. The Programme Development and Purchases is allocated **twenty-two million, five hundred thousand Pula (P22,500,000) or 20%**. The personnel emoluments have been budgeted at **twenty-four million, six hundred and sixty-two thousand and fifty Pula (P24,662,050) or 22%**, while the remaining balance of **fourteen**

million, one hundred and ninety-one thousand, four hundred and ten Pula (P14,191,410) or 13% will cover the day-to-day operational expenses of the Department.

DEVELOPMENT BUDGET PROPOSALS

48. **Mr. Chairman,** for the development budget I request the sum of **one hundred and twenty-two million, three hundred and fifty thousand Pula (P122,350,000).**
49. The largest share of this budget amounting to **one hundred and four million, five hundred and fifty thousand Pula (P104,550,000) or 85.5%** is allocated to the Ministry's infrastructure Projects. These include the on-going construction of Community Sport Stadia with a budget of **ninety million Pula (P90,000,000).** The Goodhope, Rakops, Tsabong and Kasane Stadia are at various stages of construction and will be completed in the 2026/27 Financial Year. The funds will also cater for the re-conditioning of other sites in Mmadinare, Bobonong, Tonota and Tutume to improve access and utilisation. With a budget of **ten million, and fifty thousand Pula (P10,050,000),** the Ministry will also undertake the refurbishment of existing sport facilities such as the National Stadium and Molepolole Sports Complex. An amount of **Two million, five hundred thousand Pula (P2,500,000)** is earmarked for the refurbishment of Art and Cultural Centres in Tsabong, Gumare, Motlhabaneng, Francistown

and Lobatse, and the remaining **two million Pula (P2,000,000)** will be for the National Art Gallery Project.

50. **Mr. Chairman, ten million Pula (P10,000,000)** is allocated to MoSA Consultancies Programme for the establishment of a Film Commission and to develop a robust framework of financial incentives. These initiatives are aimed at transforming the film industry landscape and positioning Botswana as a premier global filming destination. The National Film Commission will serve as the cornerstone of the industry, with focus on key strategic pillars, including regulation and standardisation.

51. **Mr. Chairman,** the remaining **seven million, eight hundred thousand Pula (P7,800,000)** will cater for the completion of the on-going MoSA Information Management System at **three million, six hundred and fifteen thousand Pula (P3,615,000)** and procurement of ICT infrastructure for Headquarters and outstations at an amount of **four million, one hundred and eighty-five thousand Pula (P4,185,000)**.

VIII. CONCLUSION

52. **Mr. Chairman,** before I conclude, let me take this opportunity once again to honor and acknowledge our sport heroes and administrators who represented this country with pride at the international sport events, you are indeed valued country's assets. We acknowledge with

great pride the significant contribution, impact you have made to the sport and branding of the country colours at the global stage.

53. **Mr. Chairman**, this concludes my presentation on the 2026/27 Recurrent and Development Budget proposals for the Ministry of Sport and Arts. I therefore, request that the sum of **five hundred and ninety five million, one hundred and seventy three thousand, eight hundred and forty Pula (P595,173,840)** under the Recurrent Budget for **Organisation 3400** be approved and stand part of the **Schedule of the Appropriation (2026/27) Bill, 2026**; and that, the sum of **one hundred and twenty two million, three hundred and fifty thousand Pula (P122,350,000)** for the Development Budget for **Organisation 3400** be approved and stand part of those estimates for the financial year 2026/27. **I therefore, move accordingly.**

54. **I thank you, Mr. Chairman.**