



Republic of Botswana

BOTSWANA NATIONAL INFORMAL SECTOR RECOVERY PLAN

PART 2: The Action Plan

AUGUST 2020

The development of this recovery plan (Parts 1 & 2) was supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

| | |
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| ALMP | Active Labour Market Policy |
| BOISA | Botswana Informal Sector Association |
| CEDA | Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency |
| COVID-19 | Coronavirus disease 2019 |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GoB | Government of Botswana |
| ISP | Informal Sector Participant |
| ISB | Informal Sector Business |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| LEA | Local Enterprise Authority |
| MITI | Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry |
| NEP | National Employment Policy 2019 |
| PPE | Personal protective equipment |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goal |
| UB | University of Botswana |
| UNCDF | United Nations Capital Development Fund |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNECA | United Nations Economic Commission for Africa |
| WEIGO | Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing |
| WHO | World Health Organization |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) as a pandemic on 11th March 2020, countries around the world responded by implementing social distancing measures to slow the transmission of COVID-19, including the mandatory closing of businesses. The Government of Botswana introduced the Emergency (COVID-19) Regulations, 2020 which provided for, inter alia, the declaration of a lockdown, restriction of movement of people and the closure of facilities. These Regulations allowed for a national lockdown to be declared for 2nd April until 30th April 2020 and further extended until 21st May 2020. When the seven-week lockdown was lifted on 22nd May 2020, this intervention was considered a success since at that juncture, the country had recorded one COVID-19 fatality and 30 confirmed COVID-19 cases whereas neighbouring South Africa had already recorded as many as 339 fatalities and 18,000 cases.

The COVID-19 pandemic has spread around the world as a health crisis. However, it has also ushered in a global economic crisis with attendant effects on the informal sector. Botswana's seven-week period of national lockdown and closure of facilities resulted in the decreased domestic demand for goods and services. Revenue-generation activity within the informal sector was paused due to the inability of businesses to trade during this period. Affected sectors were widespread across Botswana's economy and included public transport, hawkers and street vendors, hair salons, liquor stores and restaurants. In particular, the informal sector bore the major brunt of the national lockdown as staying at home and social distancing are antithetical to the nature of the economic activity undertaken within this sector, and the means of livelihood for these participants in the national economy. The plight of the informal sector is expected to worsen. In its June 2020 World Economic Outlook, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecasted that the pandemic's continued rapid spread will lead to further depressed economic activity in the second half of 2020 and require social distancing measures to remain in place for a longer period of time.

While the primary strategy of COVID-19-affected countries remains to limit disease transmission and support health systems to manage the surge of patients, multi-pronged approaches that include preventing economic and social disruption are being advocated. The Government of Botswana's Economic Response of 1st April 2020 included the establishment of a Special Fund - the Botswana COVID-19 Pandemic Relief Fund - to cater for, inter alia, the relief of selected industries and sectors, an economic stimulus programme for the country to stabilise businesses, and the exploration of opportunities for economic diversification. The Economic Response recognised that many businesses would have short-term cash-flow problems, due to insufficient revenues to meet immediate commitments, that could lead to bankruptcy. It recognised that, at the household level, for people who lost income-earning opportunities (e.g. small-scale traders), action should be taken to soften the blow of this lost income and help them to meet financial commitments. However, given that widespread interventions could be unaffordable, the Government's *Guidelines for the Botswana COVID-19 Pandemic Relief Fund* states that immediate targets for assistance were those sectors, firms and households that had suffered the greatest adverse impact.

Beneficiaries of this response will likely be businesses in the formal sector. Directed support is therefore required for participants of the informal sector who may not all benefit from this intervention, in order to avert business failures and declines into poverty. Such support is especially needed for women entrepreneurs as one of the more vulnerable groups operating within the informal sector. It was in recognition of the importance of the informal sector to Botswana's socio-economic development and its

projected negative outcomes, that the Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI) commissioned an initial analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the informal sector and an Informal Sector Recovery Plan (ISRP), with the technical and financial assistance of the Botswana Country Office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Data from key reports, policy documents and the ongoing National SMME Registration exercise were analyzed, and interviews conducted with key stakeholders including informal sector participants, heads of informal sector workers' associations, and representatives of relevant Ministries and parastatals.

Initial analysis of available data (i.e. from the National SMME Registration exercise) revealed that during the national lockdown in April 2020, over half of businesses in the informal sector recorded zero revenue for the month. One-quarter earned less than P1000 that month. Furthermore, the data revealed that most of the country's registered informal sector businesses are female-owned, in the services sector and earn less than P2000 per month. Most businesses do not have a bank account. The data indicated that the majority of these enterprises have not registered as companies with the Companies and Intellectual Property Authority (CIPA), for taxes with Botswana Unified Revenue Service (BURS), or as suppliers or service providers with the Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Board (PPADB).

The immediate post-lockdown profile indicated a vulnerable informal sector, one that is predominantly female and highly vulnerable to economic shocks. The profile also indicated that vulnerability has extended beyond the traditional youth entrepreneur to include older economic participants. The profile revealed that a significant percentage of registered SMME businesses experienced severe economic hardship during lockdown when business operations ceased temporarily.

Stakeholder interviews highlighted strong social and economic disruptive effects on the informal sector of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown. There was consensus among promoters of informal sector businesses and Government of Botswana policymakers that enterprise success, diversification, and profitability for informal sector businesses, along with increased buy-in to the national social contract, should be prioritised.

The Informal Sector Recovery Plan proposed in this document seeks to address the needs of informal sector businesses in the short- and medium-terms, ensure these needs are prioritised through the establishment of dedicated support structures, as well as delineate measures intended to build economic resilience among this group to cushion the sector against future shocks in the post-COVID-19 era. The Plan rests on two strategic goals: *Establishment of Informal Sector Facilitation Structures Within the First Year of the COVID-19 Pandemic* and *Economic Revitalization of the Informal Sector*. Proposed interventions provide for an investment in the future capability of this sector and closely align with the country's National Entrepreneurship Policy and Vision 2036.

Key to meeting these recovery objectives will be the establishment of an informal sector-focused, high-capacity unit – an Informal Sector Agency – with the mandate to engage with informal sector participants and their associations directly; develop, implement and manage all Government's interventions for the sector; and manage a sectoral business intelligence database providing the underpinning information required for vulnerability-reducing strategies that will shift the sector's focus from necessity-driven to innovative opportunity-driven entrepreneurship, and eliminate decent work deficits. The Recovery Plan recognises that moving forward, Botswana requires a modified definition of the informal sector; one that is broad, inclusive, and accommodative of current and future dynamic changes occurring within the macroenvironment and the sector itself in terms of the heterogeneous characteristic features of new participants, the incidence of participant registration with government agencies, etc., and one that

recognises decent work, formalisation, and the movement towards less vulnerable, more stable, more sustainable, more successful informal sector businesses as primary goals. The Informal Sector Plan proposes a definition of the informal sector based on the contents of the International Labour Organization's (ILO) *R204 - Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015*.

The economic revitalization of the informal sector is hinged on businesses being able to re-establish themselves in the short-term to avert economic failure. The Recovery Plan proposes an immediate dispensation of a P1000 per business recapitalisation or stimulus scheme to informal sector participants. Transfer technology innovation and investment clusters as a strategy for national competitive advantage, sectoral diversification and innovation are proposed for the mining, tourism, manufacturing, and retail sectors. Regional production and service centres are proposed to facilitate formal structuring within the informal sector, economies of scale, purchasing power, and sales channels. Regional market access centres, whether new-built or in existing malls, will capacitate informal sector businesses to grow and access vital marketing, financial, IT and other services, from in-house support.

This Informal Sector Recovery Plan emphasises the need for sector participants as cash-based vendors to embrace the digitalization of their activities through e-commerce platforms that permit contactless payments and purchases. The COVID-19 pandemic, the need for social distancing and the national lockdown have signalled that it is timely for the informal sector to ensure its business continuity by providing customers with 24-hour access to their products (whether goods or services) and payment options through business apps. Furthermore, social distancing has disrupted supply chains across all sectors. Small businesses should be utilising apps to process orders for their inputs. These apps will also enable sellers to source affordable inputs from suppliers and provide "last mile" delivery regardless of where consumers are in Botswana.

The Plan recognises opportunities for businesses to capitalize on the COVID-19 market for critical imports, services and manufactured goods such as masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE), hand washing stations, etc. Skills training is very important to support business continuity. For a landlocked nation with a relatively small population like Botswana which must import goods over land, export goods over land, and which have a limited population for domestic sales growth, improvements in programming capacity can make a difference for women and youth set to enter the informal sector. Furthermore, the skills acquired in programming can be utilised locally as innovation niches and by global businesses. Platforms for entrepreneurship training and cultural change are proposed through articulation frameworks and cooperation agreements with other Ministries and parastatals in the public sector that offer informal sector-relevant entrepreneurship training programmes, and the organization of training that facilitate innovation, cluster development, incubation, supply chain management, organizational management, marketing, financial management, and upscaling.

This Informal Sector Recovery Plan sets out an ambitious programme for the economic recovery of Botswana's Informal Sector. As Botswana finalises its Economic Recovery and Transformation Plan, subtitled "Sustainable and Resilient Recovery Towards High-Income Status", there is need to recognise that a sustainable and resilient recovery requires the involvement of all players, both micro- and macro-contributors, in its economic landscape. The recommendations presented for the Informal Sector Recovery Plan seek to ensure that the contributions to the national economy of informal sector participants are recognised and supported in these "new normal" times of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Action Plan

This Action Plan for the recovery of Botswana’s Informal Sector is based on two strategic goals:

- Strategic Goal 1:** Establishment of Informal Sector Facilitation Structures Within the First Year of the COVID-19 Pandemic.
Strategic Goal 2: Economic Revitalization of the Informal Sector.

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| VISION 2036 PILLAR | | PILLAR 1: SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | | |
| NDP THEMATIC AREA | | DEVELOPING DIVERSIFIED SOURCES OF ECONOMIC GROWTH | | |
| SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL (SDG): Sustainable Development Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. | | SDG Target: Target 8.3: Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services. Target 8.5: By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value. | | |
| STRATEGIC GOAL 1: ESTABLISHMENT OF INFORMAL SECTOR FACILITATION STRUCTURES WITHIN THE FIRST YEAR OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC | | | | |
| Outputs | Actions | Performance Indicators | Responsibility | Timeline |
| SO 1.1: Establishment of an Informal Sector Agency. | SA 1.1.1: Engage the Ministry of Investment & Trade and Industry and the Local Enterprise Authority on the establishment of the Informal Sector Agency. SA 1.1.2: Recruit or redeploy human resources to staff the Informal Sector Agency. SA 1.1.3: Develop engagement and sectoral revitalization strategies for the COVID-19 period and beyond. | PI 1.1.1: Informal Sector Agency established. PI 1.1.2: Communication channels established with informal sector participants, associations, relevant Ministries and parastatals, and other key stakeholders. PI 1.1.3: Revitalization strategies developed for the informal sector. | • Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry | • September- November 2020 |

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| <p>SO 1.2: Revised definition and reconceptualization of the Informal Sector.</p> | <p>SA 1.2.1: Engage relevant stakeholders (e.g. Local Enterprise Authority (LEA), Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA), Statistics Botswana, universities, informal sector associations, etc.) on the International Labour Organization’s Recommendation R204 and Decent Work Agenda, targets of current policy (e.g. the National Entrepreneurship Policy, NDP 11 and Vision 2036), and the current profile of the informal sector.</p> <p>SA 1.2.2: Broad-based dissemination of Botswana’s revised definition of the informal sector.</p> | <p>PI 1.2.1: Stakeholders Consultative Forum Report.</p> <p>PI 1.2.2: Official adoption of revised definition and reconceptualization of Botswana’s informal sector.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry • The Informal Sector Agency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September- November 2020 |
| <p>SO 1.3: Implementation of the Informal Sector Business Intelligence (BI) System.</p> | <p>SA 1.3.1: Procure appropriate business intelligence software for a data lake or warehouse design.</p> <p>SA 1.3.2: Recruit a Business Intelligence Analyst.</p> <p>SA 1.3.3: Utilise data from the National SMME Registration exercise as the foundation for the BI system.</p> <p>SA 1.3.4: Implement the BI system to communicate informal sector information and support decision-making needs.</p> | <p>PI 1.3.1: Business intelligence software procured.</p> <p>SA 1.3.2: Business Intelligence Analyst recruited.</p> <p>SA 1.3.3: Business Intelligence system operational.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Informal Sector Agency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September- December 2020 |

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| <p>SO 1.4: Development of partnerships with Informal Sector Associations</p> | <p>SA 1.4.1: Utilize the Botswana Informal Sector Association (BOISA), Thusanang Bagwebi and other informal sector associations for informal sector engagement and development.</p> | <p>PI 1.4.1: The Botswana Informal Sector Association (BOISA), Thusanang Bagwebi and other informal sector associations routinely engaged and involved in informal sector decision-making and development.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Informal Sector Agency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing |
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| VISION 2036 PILLAR | | PILLAR 1: SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | | |
| NDP THEMATIC AREA | | DEVELOPING DIVERSIFIED SOURCES OF ECONOMIC GROWTH | | |
| SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL (SDG): Sustainable Development Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. | | SDG Target: Target 8.1: Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries. Target 8.2: Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors. Target 8.3: Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services. Target 8.5: By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value. Target 8.6: By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training. | | |
| STRATEGIC GOAL 2: ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION OF THE INFORMAL SECTOR | | | | |
| Outputs | Actions | Performance Indicators | Responsibility | Timeline |
| SO 2.1: Dispensation of COVID-19 Relief to the Informal Sector. | SA 2.1.1: Generate a 'List of COVID-19 Relief Fund Beneficiaries' utilizing the National SMME Registration database, and with assistance from the Botswana Informal Sector Association (BOISA), Thusanang Bagwebi, other informal sector associations, and other relevant sources. SA 2.1.2: | PI 2.1.1: Number of informal sector businesses assisted financially. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry • Ministry of Finance and Economic Development • The Informal Sector Agency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September-December 2020 |

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| | <p>Engage the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development to dispense P1000 COVID-19 Relief to each registered business in the Informal Sector</p> <p>SA 2.1.3: Develop Relief Fund procedures for fund disbursement.</p> <p>SA 2.1.4: Administer the COVID-19 Relief Fund to informal sector participants.</p> | | | |
| <p>SO 2.2: Establishment of Transfer Technology Innovation and Investment Clusters and Niches.</p> | <p>SA 2.2.1: Identify feasible informal sector clusters and niches yielding national competitive advantages through stakeholder consultative meetings and data mining.</p> <p>SA 2.2.2: Facilitate cluster and niche development through training, funding, supply chain management, marketing, and relevant local and international partnerships.</p> <p>SA 2.2.3: Expand existing Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) designed to support technology development, to women, youth and other COVID-19 vulnerable groups.</p> <p>SA 2.2.4: Purchase and deliver free Cloud Server Space to any informal sector participant interested in developing a new service or product web-based technology.</p> | <p>PI 2.2.1: Number of clusters and niches identified.</p> <p>PI 2.2.1: Number of clusters and niches developed.</p> <p>PI 2.2.3: Number of cluster and niche development partnerships supported.</p> <p>PI 2.2.4: Number of women, youth and other COVID-19 vulnerable groups supported in terms of technology development.</p> <p>PI 2.2.5: Cloud Service procured and shared with 'x' number of informal sector participants.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry • The Informal Sector Agency • Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) • Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) • National Development Bank • Botswana Investment and Trade Sector (BITC) • Botswana Innovation Hub (BIH) • Botswana Institute for Technology Research and Innovation (BITRI) • National Food Technology Research Centre (NFTRC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September-December 2020 |

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| <p>SO 2.3: Construction and Commissioning of Regional Informal Sector Production and Service Centres to support the Manufacturing and Retail Hubs</p> | <p>SA 2.3.1: Identify regional locations based on set location evaluation criteria. SA 2.3.2: Develop a Centre Technical and Financial Feasibility Plan, including an Environmental Impact Assessment, for each location. SA 2.3.3: Engage LEA on use of existing Incubator facilities. SA 2.3.4: Engage the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development on the construction, equipping and staffing of Production and Service Centres. SA 2.3.5: Prepare and advertise tender documents and evaluate bids for the construction and equipping of Production and Service Centres. SA 2.3.6: Furnish, staff and commission Centres.</p> | <p>PI 2.3.1: Regional Production and Services Centre Feasibility Plans. PI 2.3.2: Number of LEA Incubation Sites identified for use. PI 2.3.3: Number of Production and Service Centres constructed, equipped, staffed and commissioned.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry • Ministry of Finance and Economic Development • The Informal Sector Agency • Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) • Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) • National Development Bank | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October-March 2020 |
| <p>SO 2.4: Construction and Commissioning of Informal Sector Market Access Centres.</p> | <p>SA 2.4.1: Identify regional locations based on set location evaluation criteria. SA 2.4.2: Develop a Centre Technical and Financial Feasibility Plan, including an Environmental Impact Assessment, for each location. SA 2.4.3: Engage current and proposed mall developers on spaces for informal sector businesses.</p> | <p>PI 2.4.1: Regional Market Access Centre Feasibility Plans. PI 2.4.2: Number of Market Access Centres constructed, equipped, staffed and commissioned. PI 2.4.3: Number of mall partnerships developed.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry • Ministry of Finance and Economic Development • The Informal Sector Agency • Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October-March 2020 |

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| | <p>SA 2.4.4: Engage the Ministry of Investment & Trade and Industry on the construction, equipping and staffing of Market Access Centres.</p> <p>SA 2.3.5: Prepare and advertise tender documents and evaluate bids for the construction and equipping of Market Access Centres.</p> <p>SA 2.4.6: Furnish, staff and commission Centres.</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) • National Development Bank • Botswana Investment and Trade Sector (BITC) | |
| <p>SO 2.5: Diversification to COVID-19-related Informal Sector Business Opportunities.</p> | <p>SA 2.5.1: Identify participating and interested informal sector services providers and importers.</p> <p>SA 2.5.2: Support informal sector services providers and importers with business plan preparation.</p> <p>SA 2.5.3: Engage the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, CEDA and other relevant stakeholders on funding arrangements.</p> <p>SA 2.5.4: Support informal sector services and importing businesses through training, funding, supply chain management, marketing, and relevant local and international partnerships.</p> <p>SA 2.5.5: Develop and implement informal sector COVID-19 pandemic training for importers.</p> <p>SA 2.5.6: Communicate import and distribution COVID-19</p> | <p>PI 2.5.1: Number of informal sector services providers and importers assisted.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry • The Informal Sector Agency • Ministry of Finance and Economic Development • Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) • National Development Bank • Botswana Investment and Trade Sector (BITC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September-November 2020 |

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| | <p>pandemic health and safety protocols using social media (e.g. Whatsapp) and informal sector associations.</p> | | | |
| <p>SO 2.6: Platforms established for Informal Sector Entrepreneurship Training and Cultural Change.</p> | <p>SA 2.6.1: Develop articulation frameworks and cooperation agreements for informal sector-relevant entrepreneurship training programmes offered across the different Ministries and parastatals in the public sector.</p> <p>SA 2.6.2: Organize training that facilitates innovation, cluster development, incubation, supply chain management, organizational management, marketing, financial management, and upscaling.</p> <p>SA 2.6.3: Organize training in programming and app development for women, youth and other COVID-19 vulnerable groups.</p> <p>SA 2.6.4: Organise training on e-commerce and digital solutions for marketing, and cashless supply chain management and sales.</p> | <p>PI 2.6.1: Articulation across the various entrepreneurship training programmes offered by Ministries and parastatals.</p> <p>PI 2.6.2: Memoranda of Understanding signed between the Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI) and the various Ministries and parastatals offering entrepreneurship training programmes.</p> <p>PI 2.6.3: Number of informal sector businesses enrolled in and graduated from entrepreneurship training programmes.</p> <p>PI 2.6.4: Number of vulnerable informal sector participants trained in programming.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry • The Informal Sector Agency • Botswana Institute for Technology Research and Innovation (BITRI) • National Food Technology Research Centre (NFTRC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September 2020 – ongoing |
| <p>SO 2.7: Informal Sector Social Insurance Plan on the National Agenda.</p> | <p>SA 2.7.1: Engage relevant stakeholders on a Social Insurance scheme for the informal sector.</p> <p>SA 2.7.2: Commission a Feasibility Study on a Social Insurance scheme for the informal sector.</p> | <p>PI 2.7.1: Stakeholders Consultative Forum Report.</p> <p>PI 2.7.2: Feasibility Study Report.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry • Ministry of Finance and Economic Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September- November 2020 |

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