



For Immediate Release

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First Capital Bank Commemorates Breast Cancer Awareness Month

This October, to commemorate Breast Cancer Awareness Month, First Capital Bank Botswana donated P40,000 (forty thousand Pula) to the Journey of Hope Botswana – a breast cancer awareness NGO dedicated to taking breast cancer awareness throughout Botswana. Breast cancer is the second most common cause of cancer-related deaths among women in Botswana, largely due to late diagnosis.

Journey of Hope Botswana was started in 2009 by Bev Denbury, Rita Keevil and Marilyn Garcin in response to their realisation that many women were unaware of the signs of breast cancer, and that there was a lot of value in being able to detect the signs early to avoid unnecessary deaths. Their message is Touch. Look. Check (TLC) and Tshwara. Leba. Tlhatlhoba (TLT). Through this message they encourage men and women to self-screen at least once a month, so that they are quick to have any changes checked by their healthcare provider.

Hajra Mahomed-Tajbhai, First Capital Bank Chief of Staff and Head of Marketing and Communications, expressed that, “With our commitment to help the communities that we operate in, the Bank found it imperative to partner with Journey of Hope Botswana in their mandate to educate citizens about breast cancer and promote early detection. This partnership was very important since the COVID-19 challenges have hindered the usual awareness trips that the NGO undertakes each year to take awareness throughout Botswana. According to the statistics shared by Journey of Hope Botswana, in 2019 a total of 1401 breast examinations were performed during their 6 day visit to clinics in the Kgalagadi District, and this resulted in 106 patients requiring breast ultrasounds, fine needle aspirations and biopsies. This is compared to only 43 patients from the Kweneng District needing further examinations after the 2018 awareness drive. Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, breast cancer awareness remains a top priority for Journey of Hope Botswana.”

Accepting the donation on behalf of Journey of Hope Botswana, Onica Lekuntwane, Journey of Hope Coordinator, expressed that “it is always heart-warming to work with organisations that are willing to extend a helping hand and strive to better the communities in which they operate in. This donation will indeed go a long way in helping us as Journey of Hope achieve our mandate and potentially save lives.”

According to the World Health Organization International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), breast cancer and cervical cancer remain the leading causes of cancer deaths in Botswana. Breast cancer statistics in Botswana from 2009 to 2018 show a steady increase in annual cases. Since 2009 there have been approximately 1523 recorded cases of breast cancer in Botswana – 65 of which were men. Sadly, over 70 percent of patients seek medical attention when they are in the latter stages of the disease, which



commonly results in loss of lives. This is something that Journey of Hope Botswana intends to change, so that more cases are diagnosed earlier when they are cheaper and easier to treat.

Whilst genetics and age are known causes of breast cancer, it has now been classified as a non-communicable disease, because it can also be caused by our lifestyle choices.

“We all know someone who has been directly or indirectly impacted by this disease and we share a responsibility to increase awareness about the importance of early breast cancer detection and diagnosis,” said Mahomed-Tajbhai. “Through our budding relationship with Journey of Hope Botswana, we hope to make a difference in the communities we manage and encourage more people to support this critical cause, as together, we can Give Hope and Save Lives”.

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About First Capital Bank Botswana

First Capital Bank Botswana, is a subsidiary of FMBcapital Holdings Plc, which provides banking and financial solutions through its operating subsidiaries in five Southern African Development Community (SADC) markets – Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe. First Capital Bank Botswana employs over 215 staff and services the financial needs of over 18 000+ customers. For more information on First Capital Bank Botswana visit www.firstcapitalbank.co.bw.