

EVENTS

BPN Rwanda celebrates 10 years of supporting dynamic entrepreneurs



Minister of Trade and industries Beata Habyarimana with other officials cut cake during the celebration of 10 years anniversary of BPN Rwanda on May 11, 2022. Dan Nsengiyumva



Patrick Nzabonimpa

Wednesday, May 11, 2022

Business Professionals Network (BPN), on May 11, celebrated its ten years of activities in Rwanda, supporting different entrepreneurs and helping them to create dignified jobs for Rwandans.

The BPN Rwanda program is seen by many as “unique” in that it focuses on mind-set change of entrepreneurs, rather than solely concentrating on technical training. The firm has consistently built a close relationship with business owners through mentorship and networking.

In her remarks during the celebration, Beata Habyarimana, Minister of Trade and Commerce stressed that BPN Rwanda has for over the decade overseen the support of over 5979 jobs and created 5889 jobs which she said is a testament to the hard work and determination of the initiative and capacity of businesses in the market.

She added: “BPN continues to play an instrumental role in fostering a business environment in Rwanda. It’s with partners like BPN that we continue to see a shift of mind-set towards innovative entrepreneurship.”



Minister for Trade and Industry Béata U. Habyarimana delivers remarks during the celebration of 10 years anniversary of BPN Rwanda in Kigali on May 11, 2022. Dan Nsengiyumva

BPN opened its doors in Rwanda in 2011 and has become a household name over the past ten years. As a critical partner for many businesses; they provide business development services to Rwandan entrepreneurs to help them grow.

According to Alice Nkurikiyinka, BPN Rwanda Country Director, they see themselves as a home for high potential entrepreneurs who are willing to grow and take a leap of faith to make a difference in their communities.

“One of our main achievements is being able to change people’s mind-sets so that entrepreneurs start taking responsibilities rather than being in a survival mode; not only making money for a living but also to transform the country, to contribute to the country and to take responsibilities in the country,” she said.



Some entrepreneurs who benefited from BPN Rwanda sponsorship showcase their products during the celebration of 10 years anniversary in Kigali .

She noted that BPN Rwanda has trained and supported over 5000 business owners and entrepreneurs, adding that they are coaching 290 business owners who are making an impact in the community.

“A vibrant Small and Medium Entrepreneurship (SME) sector is key to the country's development. Not only do SMEs create direct employment and improve standards in the country, but they also make the country more attractive for investors, further helping to grow the economy,” she said.

“We believe Rwanda needs this and we have gained a lot of experience on what really helps. We would like to have more than 290 companies accessing knowledge, information and transformation from BPN,” she added.

During the event, Magnet Institute, an initiative by Business Owners' Association which gathers 46 business owners who graduated from BPN Rwanda program, was launched with USD 110,000 from 29 of its members.

According to Jean Pierre Gashugi, Managing Director of Comright Ltd, who spoke on behalf of other members, they created the initiative to train middle and operation managers of their companies to have the same mind-set so that they can run businesses while they focus on strategic growth of their company.

He noted that it will elevate their businesses, adding that the members kept contributing the money that made it happen even during the pandemic, which he said shows how dedicated they are.

Lise Humura, Founder of Dove International Montessori School is one of the entrepreneurs who benefited from BPN Rwanda's program.

She said they gave her financial support and enrolled her in their 4 years' program, where she was coached on business principles including financial management, marketing, human resource management and project management.

"Currently, my business has grown and I have also grown," she said. "I have become more professional. When I joined BPN, we were just a small Day Care and we had only 23 students and 4 staff, but we've grown to 170 students and 32 staff. We had a day care only but now we have a nursery, primary and secondary school. We have grown in all aspects."

Vincent Mugisha, CEO of Digitec Studios also shared how he benefited from BPN.



Willi Helbling, CEO of BPN Global addresses the ceremony to celebrate 10 years anniversary of BPN Rwanda on May 11. Dan Nsengiyumva

"I just got to learn from BPN that the country depends on me as an entrepreneur. The more I create sustainable jobs, the more I build the country; the more I build people who don't have jobs, the more I build the company. I think the most important thing about being an entrepreneur is to know that you are making a difference in the community; you are adding value to yourself, adding value to your staff, adding value to the nation and adding value to different people who benefit from the business."

The celebration which took place at Park Inn by Radisson also included a high-level panel discussion on Digitalisation and Preparing Businesses for Vision 2050, and powerful speeches by entrepreneurs on their journeys towards growth.

The event was concluded by an exhibition highlighting the different businesses and sectors that BPN has supported over the years.



The ceremony was attended by different people