



# Lobatse Clay Works

Standards creating process efficiencies

Lobatse Clay Works (LCW) began operating in 1992 as a joint venture between the Botswana Development Corporation (BDC) and an American company, Inter-Kiln. In 2004, Inter-Kiln diversified and BDC gained total ownership of LCW. The company produces mainly face bricks, but also window sills and pavers, which are categorized as special bricks. LCW boasts an output of over 30 million items per year and has been a major partner in building Botswana's infrastructure.

**Company name:** Lobatse Clay Works (PTY) Ltd. (LCW)

**Country:** Botswana

**Industry:** Construction and construction materials

**No. of employees:** 175

**Revenues/profits:**

BWP 64 million/BWP 34 million  
(USD 9.73 million/USD 4.6 million)  
(in 2010)\*

**Main products/services:**

Bricks (face bricks, pavers, window sills)

**Main use of standards:**

Standards were used extensively in production, the business function covered by the assessment.

**Most important standards used:**

- BOS 28, *Burnt clay masonry units* (based on South African national standard SANS 227), which defines requirements for product characteristics and test methods
- BOS ISO 9001, *Quality management systems*
- BOS OHSAS 18001, *Occupational health and safety management systems*  
(At the time of the assessment, LCW was preparing for ISO 9001 certification)



**Economic benefits generated by standards:** BWP 1 685 289 (USD 256 213) annually, corresponding to 2.63% of company sales revenue or 4.96% of company EBIT (in 2010).

**Key qualitative benefits:** The reduction in number of products bolstered efficiency; communication within the LCW production unit was made easier and the training of staff was improved by referring to standards.

## **What were the major benefits for LCW of using standards?**

Using standards allowed LCW to:

- Calibrate its equipment and keep it in good working order
- Increase the conformance rate of raw materials received from suppliers
- Improve the production process, minimizing product failures
- Reduce the number of incidents causing health and safety issues

## **How did standards lead to these benefits?**

Standards have helped LCW to focus its operations on a limited number of brick types, which it produces to a consistently high quality. Quality procedures defining its processes, from the excavation of clay soil to the production of the final bricks and their packaging, storage and delivery to customers, have helped the company streamline its production processes and optimize production runs with fixed settings of the equipment. Adherence to BOS 28, which defines specifications for different types of bricks, has been key to ensuring consistent quality.