



# Observatory PASCAL

*Place Management, Social Capital and Learning Regions*

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*PURE Regional Briefing Paper (RBP)*

*GABORONE, BOTSWANA*

*Part 1*

1. *Key Characteristics of the country- geography, demography, economy, social structure, trends and changes - how these changes/trends are affecting the development agenda for Botswana/UB.*

## *1.1 Background:*

**Botswana is a landlocked, semi-arid country with a total land area of 582,000 square kilometres. It is surrounded by South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Zambia. It is popularly acclaimed to have some of Africa's last great wildernesses including the famous Okavango Swamps and the Kalahari Desert.**

**Its total population is approximately 1.7 million people and it is estimated that 53 percent of the population live in urban areas. This implies that 47 percent of the population lives in the rural areas and still earns a living based predominantly on agriculture. In terms of age distribution, it is estimated that people aged 0–14 comprise 38 percent, 15–59 comprise 57 percent, 60+ constitutes 5 percent, which suggests that the majority of the population is still relatively young (Botswana Review, 2008).**

**A former colony of Britain, Botswana gained its independence in 1966. Since then, it has made rapid progress in political, social and economic gains. Botswana has continued to pursue a multi-party approach, resulting in about nine or so consecutive elections since Independence. The country features a growing economy and a stable political environment.**

**Education is considered to be an essential service, and is made available to all school going children who are within a reasonable walking distance to schools. Education is largely free to all citizens, but it is not compulsory. The literacy rate has been put at 81 per cent with 76 percent for males and 82 percent for females (Ministry of Education, 2003).**

## *1.2 Economic Situation*

**Botswana is said to be the largest exporter of gemstone diamonds in the world. It is also a large beef exporter to the European Union. In 1966, Botswana's per capita income (at current prices) was about P3, 000 (three thousand Pula-the national currency) compared to about P33, 000 the nation recorded in 2005/06. Between 1965/66 and 2005/06 Botswana's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth averaged 9 per cent. Government total expenditure was about P10 million in 1965/66, but this has since moved up to P22.4 billion by 2006/07. At the same time, the financing of government budget from foreign grants has since declined from 51 per cent to less than 2 per cent over the same period (Republic of Botswana Budget Speech, 2007).**

**The preliminary estimates of Botswana's Gross Domestic Product measured at constant prices in 2005/06 yielded the figure of 0.8 per cent. That figure revealed a contraction, which is a drop that followed the very rapid real growth of 9.2 per cent in 2004/05. The figure of 0.8 per cent was also well below the forecast of 4.2 per cent expansion for 2005/06 in the Mid-Term Review of NDP 9. That meant that the annual GDP growth rate for the first half of NDP 9 (2003/04-2005/06) was reduced to 3.8 per cent from the projected 4.7 per cent. The decline might have come from the contraction of the mining sector that**

declined by 4.4 per cent because of the uneven growth in diamond output. But the sector had begun to perform strongly between 2005 and 2006 just as the non-mining GDP began to grow by 2 per cent.

While the economy has made remarkable improvement in the last four decades or so, Botswana is faced with the challenge of how to sustain its high economic growth in the light of other issues that are competing for national attention. Consequently, Botswana has been exploring the prospects and strategies of diversifying its economy beyond the diamond mining sector. To guide its search for sustained growth, Botswana has been pursuing the objectives enunciated in the National Vision (*Vision 2016*) and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Botswana remains committed to achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and empowerment; reducing child mortality; improving maternal health; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and developing a global partnership by the year 2015. These are the same goals echoed in *Botswana's Vision 2016* document. One dominant goal that Botswana has remained committed to is how it can enshrine more openness in the economy and greater international competitiveness while at the same time trying very hard to attract foreign direct investment through a process of improving its investment climate (Ministry of Education and Skills Development, Botswana, 2008).

### 1.3 *Employment and Unemployment in Botswana*

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Botswana is gradually picking up, and with the new launch of the diamond processing facility in 2008, it is anticipated that the country is well on the way to becoming one of the most rapidly growing economies of the world. This is so because the public and private sectors continue to engage in large investments and considerable confidence is being restored in the economy. Even so, employment in the formal sector was estimated to have declined by 3,800 jobs (1.3 per cent) between March 2005 and 2006 following a rise of 8, 000 jobs (2.8%) the previous year (Botswana Review, 2007). The drop in the formal sector employment may have been accounted for by the reported loss of 10, 000 jobs (10.5 per cent) in central government.

On the other hand, employment in the private and parastatal sectors grew by 3.3 per cent in 2006/07 compared to only 0.2 per cent in the fiscal year ending March, 2005. That increase was reported to have been led by the increase of 13.3 per cent witnessed in the mining and quarrying jobs in addition to the inputs made by transport and communication, finance and business services (Bank of Botswana, 2006). Botswana Review (2007) has drawn attention to the fact that initial results of the 2005/06 Labour Force Survey show an increase from 1995/96 to 2005/06 when the total labour force grew by 48 per cent to 651, 465. The total number of jobs created between 1995/96 and 2005/06 was 203, 189, representing an annual average employment growth rate of 4.7 per cent. It also observed that recently, the Diamond Mining Company has established a facility that has created 3,000 job places in 2008.

Government is still tackling the challenge of unemployment, which has increased steadily from 10.2 percent in 1981, 13.3 per cent in 1991, to 19.6 in 2001. However, the 2005/06 Labour Force Survey showed a lower rate of unemployment at 17.6 per cent (Bank of Botswana, 2006). The trend shows that in spite of the drop in the unemployment rate in the 2006 estimates, there has been a consistent increase in the levels of unemployment over the past two decades. This could be a result the fact that more and more 'unemployed' people are on longer actively looking for jobs and are now discouraged job seekers. In

terms of location, more people in urban areas were actively looking for jobs. For example, 30 percent of the people in urban areas during the 2002/03 Household Income and Expenditure Survey were actively looking for job placements compared to 23 percent in rural areas. The statistics implies that people migrated to the urban centres to look for jobs and fewer numbers of people are actively looking for jobs in rural areas.

Botswana's CONFITEA VI report has observed that one of the most critical aspects of this situation is that while unemployment is declining in relative terms, the desired respite is not yet here (Ministry of Education and Skills Development, 2008). Unemployment is still affecting many youth aged between 15-19 years. The Bank of Botswana notes that "at the other extreme, 77.5 percent of those aged between 15-19 years with secondary school as their highest level of education were reportedly unemployed" (2006, p. 89). This challenging level of unemployment points to a need to rethink educational delivery and to improve the chances of this vulnerable group to find viable employment. Government has since put in place innovative programmes and initiatives such as the Citizens Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) among others to enhance the capacity and capability of youths to create employment avenues for themselves and others. The Bank of Botswana Report (2006) has made recommendations on how Government can promote the acquisition of essential skills and knowledge and motivate citizens to improve their own lives as a significant effort towards empowerment. It also recommended that training skills should embrace the principle of lifelong learning.

#### *1.4 Poverty in Botswana*

Despite the remarkable economic achievement and world ratings, poverty, unemployment and literacy continue to be major challenges that Government confronts with great determination. The current situation in Botswana suggests that a substantial proportion of the population, who live in the rural and remote areas are very poor. They have survived on different types of subsistence agricultural activities. Unemployment and illiteracy are also rural phenomena.

The Mid-Term Review of the National Development Plan 9 (NDP 9) revealed that as a result of poverty alleviation projects, poverty has declined to 23 percent, safety nets have considerably reduce abject poverty with under six malnutrition being brought down to 6 percent (Botswana Review, 2008). State approach to poverty reduction was articulated in the 2003 Poverty Reduction Strategy, which emphasized the need to reduce poverty and create employment opportunities while the Revised National Policy for Rural Development focuses on ways to improve rural livelihoods through proving infrastructure and social services. To this extent, 44.4 percent of the development budget has been allocated to various aspects of rural development (Botswana Review, 2008).

#### *1.5 Language policy in Botswana*

The population constitutes of various ethnic groups who speak 27 different languages other than Setswana, which is the national language. Both English and Setswana are the official medium of communication and instruction in all educational and official communication (Ministry of Education, 1994). Efforts are being made towards the development of a language policy that seeks to encourage recognition of other languages for instructional purposes. The use of multiple languages seems to be a pedagogical reality and the nation is already embracing that need as a signatory to UN convention on the use of mother tongue language.

The Ministry of Education and Skills Development has undertaken a study to identify the languages in the country and assess their level of lexicon development. The country acknowledges the participation and contribution of the NGO sector in the promotion and development of lexicon of other languages.

## 1.6 Gender and Learning

It has been observed in Botswana that girls tend to outnumber and outperform boys in primary school leaving examinations over the years. According to the Ministry of Education (2006, p 2), “a total of 42 532 candidates sat for the 2006 Primary school Leaving Examinations (PSLE). Of this number, 21, 822 were females while 20 710 were males.” The report further stated that, “as in previous years girls performed better than boys across the five subjects namely; *Setswana, English, Mathematics, Science & Social Studies*. They obtained an overall pass of 84.8 percent at Grades A-C compared to 74.2 percent for the boys 13.3 percent of the girls were awarded overall Grade A compared to 9.7percent for the boys”. There are clear variations with respect to the representation of both boys and girls at the different levels of the education system. For example, enrolment data for 2005 indicate that more boys than girls enrol at lower classes. Whereas the system is able to retain girls at primary school level, the opposite happens at higher levels. In the process, this trend upsets the gains attained at primary school levels in terms of gender equity. In spite of the commendable efforts to meet gender parity, the number of boys in the upper primary school classes declines as the pupils’ progress with their education. There are more boys dropping out of the primary school system in Botswana than girls. In 2003, 62 percent of the pupils who dropped out at primary school level were boys. One of the reasons for this phenomenon is the practice of child labour taking place in some cattle posts and farms. In terms of repetition, there were still more boys (63 percent) who repeated a class than girls. Girls seem to be making more progress than boys in terms of completion rates at primary school level. There is still nonetheless a need to undertake detailed investigations to determine the factors that have influenced this trend (Ministry of Education and Skills Development, 2008).

At secondary school level, girls experience a different trend in terms of drop out rates. At this level, there are more female students dropping out from school than boys. In 2005, 63.1 percent of the students who dropped out at the secondary school level were girls. Pregnancy remains the main contributory factor. The high drop out rate for girls experienced at secondary school level reflects a reversal of the gains made at primary school level. At the moment, government has put in place a policy that allows girls to re-enter the school system after giving birth, though they are expected to go to a different school. What is still lacking is the effort to address the problem of boys who drop out of schools in order to attain balanced gender equity in the education system (Ministry of Education and Skills Development, 2008).

## 2. Gaborone Region: Key Facts

### 2.1 Population

According to the last Census of 2001, Gaborone City had a population of 186, 000. The population density of Gaborone is 1,000 persons per kilometre. It is worth noting that the population of villages in the periphery of Gaborone have experienced rapid growth (i.e. more than doubled). This development has important policy implications for the city, such as being evidence of deprivation and poor housing affordability. Thus, this trend creates additional pressure on the provision and distribution of goods and services such as water, food, electricity, sewage, employment, education, health and housing.



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## 2.2 *Unemployment*

While there has been a remarkable increase in educational levels as attested by an increase and diversity in tertiary education in Gaborone, the city has higher proportions of unemployment, especially for the graduates. So there is need to attract sustainable inward investment.

## 2.3 *Poverty*

Poverty also remains one of the major development challenges of Gaborone city which is mainly an administrative rather than an industrial city. Agricultural production is limited

## 2.4 *Social Issues*

Include HIV/AIDS which if not addressed can undermine all development efforts and current achievements. One impact of HIV/AIDS in the city is the ever increasing number of orphans, increased resources on health, negative impacts on the workforce, etc.

## 2.5 *Environmental issues*

Include lack of renewable energy targets, traffic congestion and refuse disposal challenges.

## 2.6 *Culture and social services*

Based on the mandate of the Ministry of Arts and Culture, the city of Gaborone has the responsibility of contributing to the development and promotion of national, regional as well as international cultural ties. This responsibility is critical because one of the major challenges of modernization elsewhere has been the fact that it impacts negatively on the traditional culture of the urbanites.

## 3. *Data Sources/Monitoring reports on Botswana in relation to the themes:*

### 3.1 *Publications:*

Bank of Botswana. (2006). *Bank of Botswana Annual Report* Gaborone: Bank of Botswana.  
Botswana Review.(2007). *Botswana Review of Commerce and Industry* (27<sup>th</sup> Edition).  
Gaborone: B&T Directories.  
Botswana Review.(2008) *Botswana Review of Commerce and Industry* (27<sup>th</sup> Edition).  
Gaborone: B&T Directories.  
Botswana National Commission for UNESCO. (1999). *National plan of action for adult learning*. Gaborone: Botswana National Commission for UNESCO.  
Botswana Training Authority (2006): *Learning in the workplace in Botswana: A baseline survey*. Gaborone: BOTA  
Botswana Training Authority (2006): *A baseline survey of the Vocational Training Sector in Botswana*. Gaborone: BOTA  
Central Statistics Office and Department of Non Formal Education. (1997). *Report on the first national literacy survey in Botswana*. Gaborone: Central Statistics Office.  
Central Statistics Office. (2003). *Education statistics bulletin*. Gaborone: Central Statistics Office.  
Centre for Continuing Education. (2002). *Annual report 2001/2002*. Gaborone: University of Botswana.





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- Government of Botswana and United Nations Development Programme.(2000). *Botswana human development report 2000*. Gaborone: United Nations Development Programme.
- Institute of Development Management. (2000). *Annual report, 1999/2000*. Gaborone: Institute of Development Management.
- Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (2003). *National Development Plan IX 2003/04-2008/09*. Gaborone: Government Printer.
- Ministry of Education and Skills Development. (2008). *CONFITEA VI Botswana Country Report*. Gaborone: Government Printer.
- Ministry of Education and Skills Development. (1994). *Revised National Policy on Education*. Gaborone: Government Printer.
- Ministry of Education and Skills Development. (2003). *National plan of action for education for all*. Paper presented at a national stakeholder forum. Held at Boipuso Hall, Gaborone, 08-10 April.
- Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (2003). *National Development Plan IX 2003/04-2008/09*. Gaborone: Government Printer.
- Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (2003). *National Development Plan IX 2003/04-2008/09*. Gaborone: Government Printer.
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- Presidential Task Group. (1997). *Vision 2016. Towards prosperity for all*. Gaborone: Presidential Task Group.
- Republic of Botswana (2007). *Botswana review of commerce and industry*. Gaborone: Ministry of Trade and Industry and B & T Directories (PTY) Ltd.
- Republic of Botswana (2007). *Budget speech 2007 and the National Development Plan 9*, presented by the Honourable B. Gaolathe, Minister of Finance and Development Planning.
- Republic of Botswana. (1998). *Consumer protection Act no.21 of 1998*. Gaborone: Government Printer.
- Republic of Botswana. (2000). *Education for all assessment 2000: Botswana country report*. Gaborone: Ministry of Education and Skills Development.
- UNESCO. (2000). *Dakar framework for action, education for all: Meeting our collective commitments World Education Forum*. Held in Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO.(1997). *Final Report: The fifth international conference on adult education*. Hamburg, Germany: UILL
- UNESCO. (2000). *Dakar framework for action, education for all: Meeting our collective commitments World Education Forum*. Held in Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April. Paris: UNESCO.



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UNESCO. (2006). *EFA Global Monitoring Report: EFA Literacy for life*. Paris: UNESCO.  
UNESCO. (2008). *EFA Global Monitoring Report: EFA Literacy for life*. Paris: UNESCO.  
UNESCO/UIILL (2004). *Sharpening the focus: Evaluation of the Botswana National Literacy programme*. Hamburg: UNESCO Institute of Education  
University of Botswana. (2001) *Annual report*. Gaborone: University of Botswana.  
World Bank, (2000). *World Bank indicators 2000*. Retrieved on the 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2002 from the World Wide web: <http://www.worldbank.org/data/ind.2000/pfsd/ta1-1.pdf>.

## 3.2 *Unemployment*

Ntseane, P. (1999). *Botswana rural women's transitions to urban business success: Collective struggles, collective learning*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Georgia, Athens.  
Republic of Botswana. (2004). *Botswana: Millennium Development Goals Status Report*. Gaborone: Tiger Design and Graphics.

## 3.3 *Poverty*

Republic of Botswana (1997). *Vision 2016: Towards Prosperity for All*. Gaborone: Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.  
Raditloaneng, W.N. (2002). *Women, poverty and literacy in Botswana: A case study*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Pennsylvania State University.

## 3.4 *Limited Citizen Investment*

Ministry of Education and Skills Development. (1994). *Revised National Policy on Education*. Gaborone: Government Printer.  
Prinsen G. *et.al* (1996). *Contract and commitment to village development*. Gaborone: Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.  
Raditloaneng, W.N. (2002). *Women, poverty and literacy in Botswana: A case study*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Pennsylvania State University.

## 3.5 *HIV / AIDS*

Republic of Botswana. (2003). *Botswana National Strategic Framework on HIV/AIDS, 2003-2009*. Gaborone: National AIDS Coordinating Agency.

## 3.6 *Orphans*

Tsheko, G.N., Odirile, L.W. Segwabe, M, and Bainame, K (2004). *Census report of the socio-economic conditions of Orphans and vulnerable children in Palapye, Botswana*. Gaborone: The human Science Research council  
Social Welfare Division, Ministry of Local Government Lands and Housing (1999). *Short-term Plan of action on the care of Orphans in Botswana*. Gaborone: Government Printer.

## 4. *Examples of collaboration between UB and other stakeholders*

The UB is currently collaborating with a number of stakeholders through its community engagement strategy on a number of national programmes. For example, the UB is represented on the Rural Extension Coordinating Committee (RECC) and National AIDS Coordinating Agency (NACA), just to mention a few. Debates and strategic plans are at an advanced stage for UB to partner/collaborate with other stakeholders including, the Arts and Culture Engagement strategy,



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**UB and Botswana Innovation Hub, and the Environmental Charter. UB has also set up a business clinic that meets the needs of its community.**

5. *Main problems/challenges for the above themes and development aspirations by stakeholders in Botswana*

5.1 **The economic crunch that every nation is experiencing has negatively impacted the ability of UB to meet many of its obligations to its community in terms of rendering valuable services. In other words, we have financial limitations.**

5.2 **At the moment we do not have a well articulated community engagement framework that reflects PURE's existing model.**

6. *Impact of current global crises- global warming/financial crises on Botswana- have any plans changed as a result?*

**Botswana has been experiencing extensive drought periods that have negatively impacted food production. This is more so as the nation seems to be relying extensively on South Africa for much of its food needs.**

7. *What changes would you like PURE Consultancy to facilitate?*

- **We would like the PURE consultancy to help us facilitate a regional and international partnership for the development of a Botswana learning society based on a knowledge economy**
- **To effectively contribute to efforts to address unemployment, poverty and empowerment of citizens in different areas of our city, we need technical advice on a curriculum renewal that is characterized by employment-linked learning.**

8. *What key issues would you like to discuss with the consultancy team when it visits in March?*

**We would like the team to do the following:**

- **Explain the PASCAL and PURE project to our stakeholders.**
- **Help us come up with a firm structure for developing our regional partnerships and sourcing of funds for our projects.**