

BOTSWANA FROM INDEPENDENCE TO VISION 2016

Botswana prepared this Millennium Development Goals Report (MDGR) for a number of reasons. One is to discharge a sovereign responsibility as a member of the United Nations and as a signatory to the Millennium Declaration. The other is to accord Botswana an opportunity to engage in dialogue on their future, based on an understanding of developments since Independence in 1966 and the challenges Botswana will face in the future.

“...Botswana was one of those territories in Southern Africa, which had been intended for incorporation in what is today the Republic of South Africa. Although it never became necessary for us to take up arms to liberate ourselves, our people had to employ all the means of their command to resist being passed from the British to South African colonialism. In the uncertainty of who the colonial master would be, our country was left to stagnate, undeveloped. At independence therefore we had to start everything from scratch. Whilst other developing countries inherited a modicum of development infrastructure and social services we can categorically say that every facet of development in our country has been planned or produced by ourselves. We are proud of our modest achievements.”

Extracted from the speech of the Former President of Botswana Dr. Q.K.J. Masire at the state dinner hosted by HE the President of Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on 12 September 1983.

This report is therefore about Botswana’s experience with development and what Botswana hope to achieve in the context of their own development priorities and the global consensus priorities that constitute the MDGs. How has the country fared and with what strategies? What does the future hold for Botswana? Are there any special imperatives for the future? Can Botswana meet them?

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

When Botswana gained independence from Britain in 1966, it was amongst the poorest of the world’s least developed countries. It had a poor resource base: cattle, the main resource; a small rural based and overwhelmingly illiterate population of about 500,000; a relatively vast expanse (about 582,000 km²) of semi-arid land; and wildlife.

Its prospects for development were widely considered bleak. Whereas better-endowed British colonies attracted significant development resources from the colonial power, resulting in the development of physical and institutional infrastructure, Botswana did not. Thus, as a colony, Botswana suffered serious development neglect.

Progress made since independence has, contrary to early prognoses, been remarkable, thanks to the discovery and effective management of mineral wealth, good policies and accelerated investment in the provision of basic services.

By the beginning of the 1990s, a favourable development climate had emerged and good results had been realised in a number of dimensions of human wellbeing. For instance, life expectancy, health, mortality rates, literacy, nutrition, personal incomes, and infrastructure, all improved considerably. Annual per capita GDP, expressed in 1994 prices, increased six-fold from P1, 682 at independence to P9, 793 in 2000.

The development process in Botswana is guided by six-year National Development Plans (NDPs). All NDPs published after 1997 are themselves guided by Botswana’s “*Long Term Vision for Botswana: Towards Prosperity for All*”.

This vision, popularly referred to as *Vision 2016*, articulates Botswana’s long-term development aspirations and provides a broad framework for development. Direct goal-to-goal comparison between Vision 2016 and the MDGs may suggest the two are different. But they have great similarities, as shown on page 15.

Matching Vision 2016 Goals with the MDGs

Vision 2016 Pillars/ Goals	Millennium Development Goals
1. An educated, Informed Nation	MDG # 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education With a primary school enrolment rate of 106%, Botswana has achieved this goal. Vision 2016 thus sets higher priorities in the dimensions of quality, relevance and access (10 years of basic education).
2. A prosperous, Productive and Innovative Nation:	MDG # 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger MDG # 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability The key elements of this Vision Pillar are sustainable growth and diversification; employment creation; access to shelter; and environmental sustainability.
3. A compassionate, Just and Caring Nation	MDG # 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger MDG # 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria & Other Diseases This Vision pillar's main priorities are poverty, inequality and social safety nets; and Health and HIV/AIDS..
4. A Safe and Secure Nation	MDG # 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger MDG # 3: Promote Gender Equality & Empower women This pillar addresses some broader issues of human security, e.g. disaster preparedness, to deal with amongst others, drought, animal diseases and floods; national defence; and crime (including violence against women and children.
5. An Open, Democratic and Accountable Nation	MDG # 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development The fifth pillar focuses on leadership, which is the main prerequisite for international development cooperation, especially FDI, and to a lesser extent aid and trade.
6. A Moral and Tolerant Nation	MDG # 3: Promote Gender Equality & Empower women The key elements of this pillar are values – morality and tolerance. Under tolerance, the Vision gives priority to elimination of discrimination against women, children, the aged and the disabled and speaks against sexual harassment.
7. A proud and United Nation	MDG # 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development Promotes nationhood based on shared values and shared aspirations. An important element of this Vision pillar, which is also essential to MDG # 8, is good governance and participation.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

The overarching development priority of any society is to secure, for all, freedom from poverty and all other forms of deprivation; an expanded range of choices; and high standards of well-being and happiness. Thus, in addition to eradicating poverty, Botswana desires decent work, good health, literacy, knowledge and freedom of association, and of participation, for its people.

By most accounts, Botswana has to date acquitted itself very well in its pursuit of these goals. This is the story to be read from trends in aggregate indicators of development such as per capita income, literacy, and mortality rates. But Botswana now has a more complex economy and a more complex society, having successfully made the transition from least developed country to a middle-income country. Its development challenges are also considerably more complex. Four stand out as particularly important:

1. HALTING AND REVERSING THE SPREAD OF HIV/AIDS AND ROLLING BACK THE DAMAGE IT HAS DONE.

In just two decades, HIV/AIDS has emerged as a phenomenal threat to everything that Botswana have achieved since 1966 and to prospects for realising their future aspirations. It has eroded hard won gains in health. Prior to the advent of HIV/AIDS, Botswana was well on course towards eradicating tuberculosis and significantly reducing child and maternal mortality. Life expectancy would have broken the 70-year threshold but has instead dipped to independence levels.

HIV/AIDS is eroding the very viability of development strategies that Botswana has hitherto pinned its hopes on for sustainable human development. For instance, it starves education and skills development of resources even as it erodes the efficiency of investment in education. By attacking both labour supply and labour productivity, it makes it difficult for Botswana to attract FDI and develop industrial capability.

2. SECURING A FAIR SHARE OF THE BENEFITS OF GLOBAL PROSPERITY.

This challenge implies three interrelated imperatives: (i) managing trade and investment to meet Botswana's development needs and recognising that the development promise of trade and FDI is neither certain nor readily securable; (ii) building a national technological capability to enhance productivity and competitiveness; and (iii) raising productivity and competitiveness in the non-mining sector to levels that would allow Botswana to compete globally, diversify the economy and sustain growth into the future.

3. EMPOWERING BATSWANA EVERYWHERE TO BE VIABLE AGENTS OF THEIR OWN DEVELOPMENT.

Vision 2016 and the MDGs are not agendas for governments or development institutions. It is the people who desire development and it is the people who must own and drive the development process. True empowerment will require, amongst others:

- **SUCCESSFUL HUMAN CAPITAL FORMATION:** Not only are the people the purpose of development, they are also the main resource for development. So, Botswana's

education and skills development programmes must produce globally functional workers and citizens and secure global competitiveness for Botswana.

- **THE RETREAT OF STATE PATERNALISM:** Deliberate measures must be taken to create, in every Botswana, a strong sense of responsibility for own development, and reduce dependence on the state. Similarly, the manner

Botswana at Independence: Some Critical Facts

- National budget was less than \$US1.5 million.
- Over 80 percent of the population lived in rural areas, surviving on low yield arable farming and livestock.
- The main economic activity was cattle farming.
- Most of the country had no roads, electricity, safe drinking water or health facilities.
- Far less than half of all children attended primary school, and very few went on to enrol in the six missionary secondary schools that existed.
- Wage employment opportunities were very limited. South African mines were the main source of formal employment for men.

of delivery of development services should empower people to be part of the development process, and to demand accountability and transparency from their leaders and institutions, rather than encourage passive receipt of benefits and gratitude on the part of the people.

4. ENSURING THAT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES ARE FULLY IMPLEMENTED.

Botswana has good development policies and programmes to support its development aspirations but often fails at the level of implementation, where personnel constraints and weaknesses in management processes frustrate coordination, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback processes.



Commitment to Vision 2016 and the MDGs provides new and needed impetus to development. Despite Botswana's achievements to date, Vision 2016 and the MDGs require the nation and its institutions to appraise the development process anew in order to improve performance and meet the targets both frameworks set.

Botswana's need to strengthen capacity to design, harmonise and implement laws, policies and programmes is urgent, and so is the need for Government departments to improve their business processes and culture.

Three of the questions that such a process should resolve are in fact already being debated and these are:

- ***Does Botswana have an adequate system in place to monitor performance against its development targets and evaluate its policies and programmes?***

To be managed effectively, development must be measured adequately. In this regard, Vision 2016 and the MDGs require monitoring and evaluation systems that are adequate in at least five dimensions: timeliness, adequacy, accuracy, relevance and accessibility of information needed by policymakers, implementers, civil society and the general public to engage meaningfully in the development process.

- ***Are there constituencies that are largely being bypassed by Botswana's prosperity?***

Aggregate measures of success sometimes mask significant inequalities – geographical, intergenerational, ethnic, gender based, etc. There is a fundamental discord between inequality and prosperity for all, and inequality and sustainable human development that cannot be captured by average measures of progress, and yet over the long-term, can undo hard earned gains. Lack of disaggregated indicators of development may mask significant differences among constituencies. It thus makes for inefficient policymaking and disempowers decentralised institutions of governance.

- ***What should Botswana do to ensure that the people see themselves as the primary drivers of their own development?***

The dependency syndrome is a potent threat to development, as is the paternalism that creates it and feeds off it. Whatever the magnitude of the problem,

Botswana need to take charge of their own development, as individuals and as communities. The Government and its development partners should thus act as, and be seen as, facilitators rather than benevolent providers of development services. Their proper role should be to nurture human agency and participation. And when they consult the people, it should be to engage rather than to inform them.

TRACKING PROGRESS TOWARDS THE GOALS

Monitoring and evaluating progress towards the Vision 2016 and MDG targets is key to achieving the goals themselves and informing national dialogue. While Botswana has a relatively good system for compiling national statistics, the system is not yet adequate. One urgent statistical challenge is to disaggregate data to meet the requirements of key constituencies, e.g. gender and the districts.

Second, the time series on far too many of the basic indicators of well-being, for instance, poverty and maternal mortality, are inadequate. This deficiency impairs meaningful monitoring and evaluation of progress and the effectiveness of the attendant policies and programmes. Thus, failing policies and programmes may be maintained for too long and successful policies not recognised early enough.



Third, there is need to strengthen national capacity to collect, process, analyse and disseminate data to inform policies and programmes and to meet the information needs of end-users i.e., policy makers, policy implementers, researchers, academics, advocacy groups and business. Improving user access to information, especially through information and technology mediums, should also be given priority.

The table on page 19 provides an overall assessment of monitoring and evaluation capacity in Botswana. The chapter on each goal will address monitoring and evaluation in more detail.

Assessment of Monitoring and Evaluation Capacities

Elements of Monitoring Environment	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4	Goal 5	Goal 6	Goal 7	Goal 8
Data gathering capacities	Strong	Strong	Fair	Strong	Fair	Strong	Weak	Strong
Quality of recent survey information	Strong	Strong	Fair	Strong	Fair	Strong	Weak	Strong
Statistical tracking capacities	Strong	Fair	Fair	Strong	Fair	Strong	Weak	Strong
Statistical analysis capacities	Fair	Fair	Weak	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair
Capacity to incorporate analysis into policy	Fair	Fair	Fair	Strong	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair
Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms	Fair	Fair	Weak	Strong	Fair	Strong	Weak	Fair