

## **Botswana Political Economy of Policy Reform**

Botswana is a small landlocked country located in Southern Africa with 1.8 million citizens, since their independence in 1966 they have had the fastest growing economy in the world (World Bank, 2006). Botswana is a peaceful country that has not seen a major crisis or war which has been strongly awarded to its tribal cultures and customs. Botswana's success has been seen by many as a condition of "luck", due to the discovery of diamonds in the 1970s; however others strongly contribute their success to "good governance". Governance defined by the Human Development Resource Center (UNDP) refers to:

“the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions, through which citizens and groups articulate the interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences”.

In highlighting this definition of governance one can only define the Government of Botswana as the organization that has led the countries transformation from an economy that had a per capita ppp income of US \$ 60 in 1966 and slated as one of the twenty five poorest countries in the world to one with a per capita ppp income of \$9,945 in 2005 and ranked as a middle income country (World Bank Data 2007). Botswana's Government took the dominate role in managing and implementing development and investments such as providing its citizens with access to basic need; health, education, water, sanitation, and infrastructures (roads, telecommunications, media, etc.). Botswana's poverty levels - utilizing a less than \$1 dollar a day definition, dropped from 59% of the population in 1966 to 23.5 % in 2004 (World Bank 2006, HDI 2006).

Botswana's Government has been recognized for providing strong macroeconomic policies enabling its economy to maintain a stable and strong currency (Pula) with a real GDP growth rate that has averaged 9.8% between 1966 and 2004 (State of the

Nation 2006). Today Botswana is achieving a steady 4% to 5% GDP growth rate with expectations that this trend will continue based on the recent discovery and development of a new diamond mine which has been forecasted to be one of the ten largest production facilities in the world, additionally Botswana has increased its other mineral production sites based on increased demands from China. Today, the two dominate sectors of their economy are mining (38%) and services (44%), with construction (7%), manufacturing (4%) and agriculture (2%) sectors making up the remaining percentages (World Bank 2006).

The country is financially regarded as one of the best in the world if not the strongest in Sub-Saharan Africa; they have the highest Moody rating and carry minimal external debt, while being one of two countries in Africa that contributes to the IDA. Moody however has warned Botswana's that its economy is volatility or at risk due to their lack of diversification which could be noted as a concern for long term growth and stability (Budget Speech 2007). Inflation has remained relatively stable ranging between 6% and 8.5% and unemployment is estimated to be 17.8 % however, others argue this may be substantially higher (Budget Speech 2007). The total labour force grew by 48 % from 1995 to 2005 while total employment rose by 59%. Furthermore Botswana's financial strength can be seen by the presence of thirteen companies placed on the top 50 list for best performing companies in Southern Africa (Standard Bank 2007). Additionally the World Economic Forum 2006 Global Competitiveness report, ranked Botswana third in Sub-Saharan Africa behind South Africa and Mauritius (Budget Speech 2007)

Botswana ability to continually create and renegotiate strong partnerships in the natural resource sector has allowed the country to continue on a steady growth path. The government has been able to successfully transform rents into long-term sustainable growth (IDR 2004). The government's ability to capitalize on the strategy to use public saving only to finance investments when a rate of return exceeded the critical threshold was due to their ability to perform strong initial project assessments (IDR 2004). This strategy created a huge cash surplus, which was then used to make

investments aboard, this allowed Botswana to become a 'rentier economy' enabling them to receive large incomes from their overseas portfolios. When comparing the failure of Sierra Leone natural resources sector and economy to Botswana's success the obvious differential was the influence and ability of Botswana's government to transform rents into savings (IDR 2004). Today Botswana is ranked as the least corrupt country in Africa by Transparency International and 37<sup>th</sup> in the world, which furthers its ability to negotiate strong partnerships with international corporations.

Botswana's government highlighted in 2007 that mining accounts for 75 % of export earnings, 50% of Government revenue and 37.5% of gross domestic product (GDP) with the majority attributed to diamond sales (State of Nation 2006). The government led by the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has successfully utilized these profits of diamonds to improve its citizens well being, President Fetus Mogae stated in an 2006 interview "they are supporting education, health care, clean water and orphans, people know that when they are buying diamonds, they are helping Africa fight poverty and disease" (Carter, 2006:1-2).

Furthermore, Botswana has aggressively pursued policies to improve their citizens well-being through highly promoted and marketed government strategies and ideals, starting in 1998 two years prior to the MDG, they targeted many of the now established Millennium beliefs in their comprehensive government strategy called Vision 2016 "Towards Prosperity for All" (BMDGR, 2004). To further clarify how Botswana has utilized its revenues to create and fund policies and programs for improving its citizens well-being the following list outlines some of the significant accomplishments made since their democracy in 1966; free universal healthcare with facilities within 15km of each village; 10000 km tarred roads from 11 km; education up to age 13 is at no cost with a minimal charge thereafter; 233 schools from 9; 6 colleges from 2; 6 vocational centers from 1; a literacy rate of 90 % from 10%, a world recognized AIDS program including free anti-retroviral medicine; executive leadership positions for women in government and religious groups; three women chiefs including majority tribe; and 95 % of the population has accessible clean water

(HDI, 2006, State of the Nation 2006). The government has additionally provided it citizens with incentives such as minimal taxes and grant programs during the transitions and development of its economy.

Botswana has grown to a medium income level country, defined by The World Bank as an economy with GPI per capita income greater than \$ 3466 US and less then \$10,725 US (World Bank 2006). Most recently The World Bank highlighted that medium income countries, are home to 70% of the world's poor (World Bank Development, 2006). Wolfowitz, President of the World Bank stated that "income levels do not measure accurately levels of development or reflect social or geographical inequalities" (Wolfowitz, 2006:1) The 2006 HDI Report outlines that even with significant increases in growth and investments in social programs, a corresponding reduction in poverty and equality has not been achieved in most of the medium and low income countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, significant inequalities in income distribution and employment opportunities remain high. In the last 25 years living conditions for many residing in Sub-Sahara Africa have improved dramatically based on investments put forth to improve practical needs; however during the same time period, poverty for the region – defined as living on less than a US \$1 a day, increased from 227 million in 1990 to over 313 million people in 2001 (MDG Report, 2005). Botswana achievement of dropping its poverty from 58% to 23 % over 40 years can not be dismissed; however it does reflect the challenge of increasing growth and reducing poverty in a continuum that is balanced. Botswana government additionally stated in their 2004 MDG Status Report that the country was on target to meet all of its goals by 2015, except for one, the eradication of poverty.

The recent 2006 HDI report ranked Botswana at 131 with a .570 rating, which was equivalent to their countries rating in the late 1970s. The significant contributor to this low HDI ranking is reflected in the fact that Botswana's life expectancy has reached a critical crisis rate of 35 years due to the massive HIV/AIDS epidemic that has plagued the country (HDI 2006). Botswana's 2004 AIDS survey estimated that 17.1 % of Batswana are now living with HIV and AIDS (UNBW2005.org). The government of

Botswana has emphasized that the move to being classified as a medium income country has ironically negatively impacted their international donors funding campaigns for HIV/AIDS programs and it has hindered their ability to received reduced rate financial packages from the IMF and World Bank due to the classification system defined principles (State of the Nation, 2006). It has been estimated that Botswana is spending over 90 million US dollars a year on the fight against AIDS. The interesting dynamic however, is that with one of the highest prevalence rates in the world for HIV/AIDS the corresponding impact on its economy has not been reflected, there is a growing debate of whether the statistics are accurate, if those becoming infected are in the unemployed population and / or HIV/AIDS does not impact economic growth as significantly as estimated in previous economic reports.

To continue their steady growth rate while providing the revenues to fund poverty reduction programs, AIDS, and social programs, Botswana government has invested heavily in funding additional projects in non-mineral sectors of their economy. The following table outlines some of the major projects and initiatives underway or budgeted by Botswana Government in 2006 (State of the Nation 2006, Budget Speech 2007).

<b>Development Projects</b>	<b>Programmes</b>
Privatization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Air Botswana</li> <li>• Botswana Telecommunications Corporation (BTC)</li> </ul>
Outsourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Security</li> <li>• Office Cleaning</li> <li>• Catering</li> <li>• Gardening</li> <li>• Landscaping</li> <li>• Facilities Management</li> </ul>
Public Private Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land and Housing</li> <li>• Environment Wildlife and Tourism</li> <li>• Office of the Ombudsman</li> <li>• Land Tribunal</li> </ul>
Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion Morupule Power Station</li> <li>• Mmanabula Export Power Station Generation</li> </ul>
Mineral Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copper exploration</li> <li>• Reopening of Leral Diamond Pipes</li> </ul>
Diamond Cutting and Polishing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional 11 factories (3400 new jobs)</li> </ul>
Water Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction of Ntimbale Dam</li> <li>• Four Additional Dams on plan to be completed by 2011</li> </ul>
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a University of Science and Technology</li> <li>• Establish Medical School – phase 2</li> <li>• Construction of a Teaching Hospital</li> </ul>
Agricultural Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agro Commercial Project</li> <li>• Develop Waste Water Ponds</li> <li>• Dibete Ostrich Multiplication Model Farm</li> <li>• Agricultural Subsidy Schemes</li> </ul>
Road Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Railway Bridges</li> </ul>

In summarizing Botswana's economy one can only recognize that the strong state led development plan has worked, producing strong and consistent growth over 40 years, however, many experts are still questioning how this exemplary case of a country growing its GDP through strong governance and reinvesting its profits into its citizen's well-being still is limited by its ability to effectively reduce poverty? This paradox of understanding why these investments in social transformation have not had a corresponding impact on poverty reduction, has led many to question the dominance of government in the social and economic structures of society, including the framework of Botswana's majority rule political electoral system which many define as a weakness of true democracy.

Before and proceeding the 2004 elections SADC, EISA, opposition parties, political analysts and women's feminist groups such as Emang Basadi campaigned for changing Botswana's first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral system to either the highly endorsed proportional representation (PR) system or to the Mixed Member Proportional System (MMP) system based on improving social inequalities and equitable representation (SADC 2004; EISA 2004; Waylen 1996; Molomo, 2004). It was argued that changing the electoral system to a more proportional electoral system would allow women and minority groups the opportunity to have a greater representation in politics and influence in policy decisions, after significant debates no changes were made and the system remains as FPTP. The next election is planned for 2008 at which time the current Vice President Quett Masire becomes the new President, based on President Mogae completion of the constitutional ten year term.

Today opposition parties remain weak in developing and formulating a valid platform or voice to compete or challenge the majority BDP views, even after the opposition took 48% of the popular vote in 2004 it has been argued that the opposition was too dispersed and their message too similar to those values and objectives put forth by BDP (EISA, 2004). The oppositions parties are hindered in many ways by the historical colonisation classification system for tribes which still recognises only eight principle ethnic groups as part of the Tswana nation, while all remaining groups are

classified as minor groups (Matemba, 2005; Sokhulu, 2004; Moloma, 2004). This classification system is part of the Botswana Constitution and is further emphasised in the House of Chiefs which is made up of 8 merafe chiefs (major ethnic groups) and 4 elected sub chiefs (minor group) (Matemba, 2005).

These cultural factors appear to create an environment that hinders the ability of minorities groups to act on representation alone and furthermore to create a strong cohesive opposing party. Many have argued that the recent case of the San Tribe being removed from the Kalahari Desert exemplifies the Governments insensitivity to the minority tribes of Botswana. However in December 2006, after a two year battle, the High Court of Botswana ruled that the Government of Botswana had illegally removed the minority San population from the Kalahari Desert. The case was fought by the Human Rights NGO Survival International and supported by local activist groups (Carter, 2006). The San case may exemplify the Governments lack of respect for minority tribes; however it also can be argued that the outcome in favor of the San Tribe further demonstrates that Botswana is a democracy through allowing its Justice System to rule by Constitutional Law and not based on societal, financial and political pressures.

In 2003 Botswana was recognized as the world leader in gender equality by the UNDP, in 2006 they dropped to a 34th place ranking behind South Africa and Tanzania (Mmegi, 2006). In Botswana women are considered equal citizens to men and the constitution and law prohibits government from discriminating on the basis of ethnicity, race, nationality, creed, sex, or social status and these are predominately endorsed by government; however it should be noted that the laws do not prohibit discrimination by private persons or entities which has resulted in cultural and societal discrimination against women, minority groups, and people with disabilities, which weakens the governments position (USBRHR, 2006; BMDGR, 2004, EISA, 2005). In 2004, Botswana's government took one its most aggressive stances towards promoting gender equality when it endorsed and passed the law which abolished the marital powers of husbands ensuring that spouses have equal rights in the marriage,



the Marriage Act had previously allowed husbands the rights to sell cattle and houses without their wives consent (Botswana Daily News, 2005). Furthermore, the Marital Act abolished the common law rule that defined how the husband acquires power over the person and property of his wife (Matemba, 2005:11)

In relationship to gender inequalities the argument has been that “women enjoy the same civil rights as men in Botswana on a legal level, however in practice, political and societal prejudice persist” (EISA, 2005:15; USBRHR, 2006). This argument can be witnessed in some of the recent agendas put forth by Botswana’s women chiefs. In April 2005, the Customary Court Amendment Bill was approved by parliament overturning the previous Act which ruled women’s corporal punishment as illegal, however with the support of women chief’s the government passed the Act allowing chiefs to now sentence both men and women up to the age of 50 years to corporal punishment ranging from 4 to 6 strokes (Mmegi, 2005).

Further more under customary law it is common in rural practice for men to have the right to “chastise” their wives, which continues to be allowed and accepted (USBRHR, 2006). Seboko the majority women chief has further endorsed the use of corporal punishment on Botswana’s youths in hopes to modify their negative behaviors this position has not settled well with Human Rights Organizations (Matemba, 2005). President Mogae in his 2006 State of the Nation strongly addressed the concern of male deviant behaviour, he related the increased violence against women as a direct result of alcohol abuse, which has caused unnecessary rapes, passion killings and infections of HIV/AIDS, he argued strongly that this behaviour was harmful to society and needed to be stopped (BGSNA 2006). Lastly, one of the most controversial issues put forth by Chief Seboko is the wish to resurrect the traditional initiations ceremonies for boys and girls, which had been discontinued for over 20 years (Matemba, 2005). It appears that female chiefs are using old cultural practices and customs based on patriarchal traditions to address modern problems, which questions how effective the policies for transforming women’s rights and opportunities have been received (Matemba, 2005).

The Botswana MDG 2004 Status Report presents “that over the past two decades substantive areas of life, including control of productive resources have improved in Botswana, however even when legislation may be gender neutral, traditional and institutional culture perpetuate practices that disadvantage women and minority groups in relation to men” (BMDGR 2004:37). However, Botswana’s government publicly recognises that the “substantive challenge lies in bridging the gap between progressive policy and legislative reforms on the one hand and traditional and deep-seated institutional cultures that stand in the way of equal rights of citizenship for men and women on the other” (BMDGR 2004:40). The key challenge is therefore transformational; the ability to change culture, individuals, institutions, socio-economic disparities and society for the in betterment of all.

During the 2006 State of the Nation Address President Mogae, emphasized the need for its citizens to empower and transform themselves to be less dependent on the government and to become more self-reliant and accountable for the social challenges facing Botswana. He highlighted the need to address the increase in HIV/AIDS, Violence and Crime against Women, Alcohol Abuse, Corruption, Decline in Modesty and Values and lastly Low Productivity (State of the Nation 2006). President Mogae emphasized that a recent study performed by the National Productivity Centre ranked Botswana in the lower rankings of SADC countries in work productivity, he emphasized that a poor work ethic would hinder international corporations from wanting to invest in their country.

In summarizing where Botswana is today, the overall Governmental strategy for 2007 is focused on “Improved Productivity – The Key to Sustainable Economic Diversification and Global Competitiveness defined as producing more with less by utilizing the same or less inputs more efficiently to produce more outputs than before” (Budget Speech, 2007:2). Furthermore Botswana’s Government has place significant attention and awareness on creating and addressing poverty alleviation and the spread of HIV/AIDS recognizing that if they want to continue this remarkable track record of

economic and social growth and improvements they need to continually transform and improve their nation.

### **Botswana's Plans for the Future**

The outline presented above highlights the state of Botswana and their success in creating 40 years of consistent growth while reducing its poverty in half. In critiquing the policies for moving forward it is difficult to disagree with many of the plans put forth by the government of Botswana. Many of the arguments placed against the Government's strategies for development, are recognized and accepted by the leaders of Botswana and have been incorporated into concrete plans and investments strategies for the future, which continues to weaken the opposition's position for countering the BDP leadership. As highlighted previously, to date no major opposition party has been able to formulate enough criticisms or factual evidence that a change would result in a better lifestyle for a Botswana. In my opinion Botswana has had a strong state led plan which I believe has provided a strong economic and social framework for future growth and poverty reduction if transformation continues to take place. However, before addressing the recommendations for how Botswana can look to maintain growth while continuing to reduce poverty I would like to highlight what I consider is the most significant risk to Botswana's economy in the upcoming year.

In 2008 Botswana will have a change in political power, few can argue against the performance and strength of President's Mogae's leadership during his ten year term. The new President based on a succession clause in the Botswana Constitution will be the current Vice President, Quett Masire. Many have argued that the smooth transition to a chosen successor will reduce the risk to the country's stability versus the unknown of open elections, which could allow for a fragmented government and society. Based on the historical fight to change the existing electoral system, further possible instability could be caused if indeed the system was changed to a proportional form of election, many believe that this is the reason why the succession plan was put

in place originally, a tool to reduce the risk of having the electoral system and political power changed both during the end of a Presidential term. In my analysis I feel strongly that the government of Botswana has been successful due to its overwhelming BDP majority rule, it is impossible to know if a weaker state or party would or could produce such success, however based on the quantitative outcomes this government has produced it is hard to argue who could of done better.

The two challenges Botswana faces is maintaining growth and reducing poverty. The list is significant on what Botswana has done right in transforming its country to a strong economy. However, in looking to ensure the current growth can be sustained over time the majority of policies proposed and being implemented are based on diversifying is revenue base, strengthening its civil society and creating jobs. Based on the forecasted growth in the mining sector over the next twenty years Botswana has a significant opportunity to continue its investment in development outside of the mining industry. With many of the basic needs established Botswana can now look to direct a greater amount of resources on diversifying its economy. As the population has become more educated an additional focus has been placed on ensuring that there are adequate amount of highly skilled professions for those graduating from the medical school, technology institutions and other University professions. Botswana's investment in developing a technology and science center and a medical teaching hospital all demonstrate a commitment to diverse its economy and maximize its investment in education. Currently, the government is seeing a significant amount of graduates leave the country for work, which is a financial loss based on its current policy to fund higher education. Additionally, for those youths unable to leave the country for work opportunities its has resulted in a negative impact on society for many are blamed for the alcohol, drug and crime now seen in the youth, and education with no future, which results in deviant before. I would recommend the government continue to invest in partnerships locally and globally to leverage the significant skills that are being developed within the Botswana education system. Furthermore many of the modern services facilities are being equipped with the last

technology which will allow for additional opportunities for employment even in the manufacturing and civil sectors.

Further more it has been recognized that the majority of those remaining in poverty are from rural locations which offers minimal economic opportunities for employment outside of agriculture. The government's recognition that agriculture revenues and production needs to be restored if greater poverty reduction is to be achieved in rural areas is one of the strongest strategies put forth in targeting poverty. The investments in creating facilities that would allow agriculture to compete worldwide will further strengthen the sector and allow for sustainable employment. Furthermore the current build out of 5 additional dams will provide the agricultural industry with the security that water is available when the historical droughts plague the environment.

The governments policies towards privatization, partnering and outsourcing I believe are steps towards downsizing the governments role in society. However, significant evidence has been provided by Botswana Government that major investments have been lost due to mismanagement, lack of entrepreneur plans and corruption when helping to fund new businesses outside the Government. In addition to providing assets and opportunities I believe the government needs to provide or access the adequate skills required to manage the investments and monitor there success. In many ways the population of Botswana is to small to cater to other dominate players in the market; I feel this has been missed in the debates of growing and competing against the government. In reviewing the 2006/2007 consolidated cash flow statement it becomes evident that the income from mining is overwhelming and in my opinion unable to be matched by any private corporation at this time in Botswana's economic growth.

In many ways the size of Botswana limits other investors, for what the State can invest in can be seen as enhancing its people or utilized across sectors outside the primary investment however a private investor is faced with huge risks and minimal consumers which are dispersed over a significant arid region. Lets take healthcare as

an example, the government can improve its citizens lives and assist in the fight with AIDS, however few or no private corporations would take such a investment, and if they did they could not offer the solutions that are present now which help the poor the most. With that said I feel it is the role of the Government to create and continue to develop strong development plans that drive job employment and future growth. I would also argue that privatization will be difficult base again on the limited market and risk for a private company to incur, especially Air Botswana. I would find that private investors would rather absorb these companies into their own infrastructures versus having the company remain an independent Botswana firm, which seems difficult to justify financially.

I would recommend that based on the transformation of Botswana society that additional effort is made on empowerment and cultural transformation within its business sector. I would recommend policies that do not allow discrimination in all areas of society including private / civil organization and customarily law in cultural regions. In reviewing what has been presented thus far many of the future challenges facing Botswana are social and interpersonal in nature which takes time and a consistent message. To allow for women discrimination in tribal customs and not in State Court is confusing and ineffective in my opinion. Recognizing that in transformation one must be sensitive to cultures and change, however I believe that Botswana must change its Constitution so that all citizens are equal, and its Chief Court should reflect equal tribes and not minority and majority classification, these steps and policies changes will send a clear message that all citizens are equal which will in turn empower them to be better citizens.

With the increasing concern of HIV/AIDS and the rising number of people faced with poverty it can be argued that these casualties will continue to impact society as a whole if socio-economic environments and polices are not implemented to improve the well-being of those most vulnerable. It is becoming evident as rates of HIV/AIDS infections and poverty are increasing that a change is necessary if society as a whole is to remain productive. The financial and social cost of poverty and HIV/AIDS has

reached a critical mass in Botswana, there is a growing consensus that welfare programs and economic globalization will not cure the epidemic, now while never designed for such achievements much hope was placed on their ability to impact the crisis. Botswana is now faced with the challenge of controlling and stopping an epidemic which if it continues at the current rate will be costly and most definitely impacts the countries well-being and financial stability. If children die before they can use the education they have been granted, if youth's develop a view of fatalism the outcomes will result in lower productivity and increased crime and violence. HIV/AIDS could become the major crisis that Botswana has never had if additional efforts are not taken to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS. As outlined in the Presidents State of the Nation, alcoholism is growing based on the negative outlook on life, which in turn causes rapes, murders and crimes that would not have happened otherwise. The government needs to take strong action in creating policies that punish and control the sale of alcohol and provide consistent actions in regards to customary and civil laws.

Botswana has been challenge by its reporting tools and measurement and has taken significant measures with the World Bank and UN's guidance to improve upon their accountability statistics. I would recommend that Botswana take strong steps in understanding its current HIV/AIDS crisis, through gaining more accurate measurement tools and policies that protect a citizens right to privacy and confidentially. Prevention is the cure however recent studies have placed much blame on the stigma and lack of education of rural tribal cultures in Botswana. Until the social structures can be transformed to reduce the stigma of AIDS little improvements will be made in my opinion.

Botswana has approximately 75% of the wealth carried by 20% of the population. Many would promote a policy to promote greater income distribution however in the case of Botswana I would not support such a policy based on the fact that many grants have been provided and most of them have been wasted or spent on luxury goods. Additionally the investment that is most commonly made by the poor when receiving

distributions is in agriculture, which in the case of Botswana would be risky and in most situations the investment would be lost to the severe droughts that have plagued the rural regions. Until Botswana can build out the infrastructures to enable rural agriculture I feel income distribution would not be effective in reducing long term poverty at this time.

Lastly, I would argue that Botswana Government has provided strong polices and rights for women, the obstacle is changing social and cultural norms so that in practice the rights are followed and supported by tribal customary courts and society collectively (BMDGR, 2004). During the 2004 elections women produced over 57% of the vote and took the following seats: 7 of 61 in Parliament; 5 of 20 in the Cabinet; 3 of 13 Justices in High Court; and 3 of 15 in the House of Chiefs, the overall representation of women decreased from the 1999 elections, however the level of senior executive positions increased (EISA, 2004). It has become expected to see that women are represented in many Sub-Saharan African governments, however their ability to act appears to be limited based on the historical power structures that persist in African cultures. I would argue that Botswana Women's demand for greater participation can be seen as a positive step towards gender equality in parliament; however the correlating impact it has had on improving inequalities and reducing poverty for women seems distant. The existing patriarchal cultures and structures that exist today in politics and society appear to limit a woman's ability to influence change. I believe the women who would be elected would be absorbed into the majority view and lose the political influence that got them into Parliament. I believe that a strong civil movement needs to be formed with the support of government, allowing voices to be viewed outside the political sphere and who can indeed influence and impact policy change. The recent San Tribe case hurt Botswana's image of working closely and supportively with NGO's, instead they created a hostile and superior view to the group that opposed their decision to remove the San Tribe. Botswana needs NGO's and has attributed many of its successes in women and child rights to those causes, however more importantly NGO's have played a significant



role in fighting the AIDS battle, thus I would recommend further efforts in smoothing relationships with organizations outside the direct political arm of government.

### **Conclusion**

Botswana is a country that has had significant success in building an economy that is regarded a developing world example of strong macroeconomic policies and governance. In many of the papers I reviewed for this essay there was an additional consensus that the majority of Botswana's felt they were living better than in the past. The negatively that is often passed on is why haven't they done better, why hasn't poverty been eradicated, it is an interesting position however I find it unfounded based on the literature surrounding Botswana. The government has taken an economy that was regarded as one of the worst in the world to now one of the most successful in the developing world for over 40 years all while reducing poverty by 50% since independence. I believe that if they continue with the same passion and desire to improve its citizen's well-being they will be successful for decades to come. With time I believe the cultural will transform to the level its economy has, however this will take patients and years of adjustments socially and politically. In the end I believe Botswana Government has a solid budget and strategy for the next 10 years, with adequate forecasted revenue to support and fund their program. The forecasted downside of diamond revenues is thirty years into the future, based on the foresight and planning that is occurring now in Botswana's economy I feel they will achieve diversity, less dependency, and greater equality before the resource revenues are depleted.

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