

Review

The impact of good governance on development and poverty in Africa: Botswana - A relatively successful African initiative

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Botswana was one of the poorest countries in Africa when it obtained independence in 1966. Owing to the desolation that prevailed at the time, Botswana was considered a hopeless case. This article seeks to show case how good governance impacted on development and poverty in Botswana. Botswana is one of the few African countries that have remained intact since independence, despite the challenges it faced, and at the same time was able to realize development and in turn reduced poverty by African standards. The paper argues that good governance in Botswana facilitated development and impacted positively on poverty and stability, to this extent, this has been a responsive democracy. The paper provides statistical evidence to support this claim.

Key words: Governance, poverty, development.

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this paper is to examine the impact of good governance on development and poverty using the case of Botswana. Underdevelopment and poverty are some of the major challenges that developing countries, including African countries, had been grappling with over the years. As a result, countries have made these challenges a matter of priority and also put in place measures to address them. Even the World Bank (2001) has made poverty reduction a matter of priority. Some countries have made relative success and others are still struggling to mitigate the effects of these problems on their citizenry. Botswana is one of the few African countries that have accomplished a lot in terms of realizing development and at the same time reduced poverty. Botswana's achievements are in part attributed to good governance (Tsie, 1996; Theobald and Williams, 1999; Holm, 2000). This is what makes Botswana interesting to study.

Botswana is a small country with around 1.8 million people. At independence, the country was underdeveloped with almost 90% of its people living in abject poverty (Molutsi, 2004) and its per capita income stood at

US\$ 60 (Edge, 1998). Owing to the desolation that prevailed at the time, Botswana were considered as 'very brave or very foolish' when they asked for independence (Masire, 2006). The picture is different today because Botswana has accomplished a lot in the last four decades. Poverty levels have dropped over the years from above 60% of the households in the 1970s to around 30% in 2005/6. Similarly, the unemployment rate has fallen to 17.6%, the lowest ever, of the labour force according to the latest estimates (Mogae, 2007). The literacy rate increased from below 25% at independence to over 90%. Equally, life expectancy increased to 65 in 1991 up from 48 at independence although it has been reduced to around 56 owing to HIV/AIDS. Even then the government has introduced measures to mitigate the scourge of HIV/AIDS (Sebudubudu and Molutsi, 2009). Unlike the 10 km of tarred road that the country had at independence, today it has around 10,000 of tarred road (Sebudubudu and Molutsi, 2009). The country's GDP per capita (PPP) stands at US\$ 13, 604 and its Human Development Index (HDI) increased between the years 1980 and 2007 by 0.94% annually from 0.539 to 0.694

(United Nations Development Programme, 2009). Thus, Botswana falls in the category of upper middle income countries (World Bank, 2008). All these show that Botswana used its natural resources prudently to transform lives - in this way avoiding a 'resource curse'. To this extent, Botswana is generally acclaimed as a model country on good governance in Africa. Almost all the past assessments at global and the country levels have shown that Botswana's democratic governance which involve transparency, accountability, low levels of corruption and a decentralised decision making structures and programmes has been a critical contributor to the country's development success to date (Tsie, 1996; Theobald and Williams, 1999; Holm, 2000). To this extent, Botswana has been exemplary.

Good governance is a critical policy requirement for a successful poverty reduction strategy and human development progress of any country. Where governance is poor it is difficult to imagine how equitable development can take place and where there is inequity the chances that some sections of the society will be left to live in poverty and misery are high. Indeed, evidence from the past three decades since the 1980s show that in exception of a few countries such as China, Malaysia and Singapore where some considerable economic progress was realized under autocratic or semi-dictatorial regimes, in the majority of countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America poor governance has been a cause of continuous poverty and underdevelopment. Many of these countries are endowed with rich resources yet the majority of their citizens live in conditions of squalor.

Poverty is defined as lack of capability to do things and development as 'freedom' (Sen, 1999). For the World Bank, three elements - deprivation, vulnerability and powerlessness - should be considered when defining poverty (Tostensen and Kessy, 2008). They noted "being poor means being deprived of basic needs such as food, shelter, education, and health. Living at the margin also makes the poor particularly vulnerable to adverse shocks, both natural disasters and human-made calamities. A third dimension of being poor is powerlessness: the poor are ill equipped to alter the social relations that made them poor in the first instance" (2008:1). In this way, development means empowerment of people individually and collectively, and thus helps to take them out of a poverty situation. Development that reduces poverty is likely to go along with a democratic government (Sen, 1999). It should be noted that in order to facilitate good governance - which is a long term goal - there is a need for a good government. This would result in a government that is responsive to the needs of the people.

Good governance is credited for responsiveness to the needs of the wider population especially the poor and vulnerable sections who normally benefit from pro-poor policies and programmes. Equity and social justice are

also critical tenets under a democratic/well governed government. These principles of good governance have been evident in Botswana as later discussed in this paper. However, Botswana has still a lot to do in the area of democracy and good governance so that the current relatively high levels of unemployment and poverty can be reduced to allow all citizens to enjoy a better quality of life.

The encouraging development in both Botswana and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region is the explicit commitment to improve governance and to reduce poverty. The resolutions of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and the African Union (AU) show the African region is committed to good governance as a key policy measure for their development success. The introduction in the early 2000s of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) for instance, with the peer review component where member states commit to critical review by their peers is just one of the many initiatives that show the continent's commitment to good governance. Of course policy decision is one important step and implementation of such policy a different matter. However, even here Africa shows practical effort to succeed. The existence of Poverty Reduction Programmes by almost all the countries of Africa and the commitment of resources to deal with this problem is evidence of a new resolve unknown before in many African countries.

This paper is divided into four sections. After the introduction the second part deals with the definition and origins of governance as a global policy consideration for development. Section three presents statistical evidence from different international reports on Botswana's impressive good governance record and its positive impact on the human development performance. The fourth section discusses the challenges and limitations which require that Botswana must continue to strive to reform its governance institutions and systems.

GOOD GOVERNANCE DEFINED

The importance of good governance as a critical condition for human development can no longer be under estimated. Since the late 1980s, governance has been a subject of considerable debates and different interpretations by governments, international organizations and scholars. For example, Leftwich (1994: 372) defined good governance as "a clear and predictable legal framework, accountability, transparency and information on the management of national affairs". In the context of human development, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2002) defined good governance as "...democratic governance"; meaning respect for human rights, participation in decision making, accountability, poverty eradication, responsiveness,

equal treatment, inclusiveness, fairness, impartiality, absence of any discriminatory practices as well as taking into consideration the needs of future generations. The report of poverty task force on localizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Vietnam defined good governance as “the process of translating societal demands into choices, resulting in policy formulation and implementation”, and thus identifies four good governance principles/indicators that are key to poverty reduction as accountability, transparency, participation and predictability. More importantly, governance should not be understood as the end result but a means towards an end to promoting the quality of life for all.

This paper used the foregoing UNDP (2002) definition of good governance as our understanding of governance and its direct relationship with human development in Botswana. We shall therefore be focusing on the basic democratic and human rights processes such as respect for human rights, people’s participation in decision making, accountability, poverty reduction, responsiveness, equal treatment of citizens, impartiality, anti-corruption measures and distribution of resources and services to different sections of the population.

THE EVOLUTION OF GOVERNANCE AS A KEY POLICY TOOL

Good governance has been recognized over the past two decades as a major policy consideration that makes a difference to development. A democratic government is more responsive to the needs of the population such as in providing opportunities in education, health and social welfare, better housing, equitable distribution of development projects including roads and other infrastructural development. Such physical projects taken to local communities and different regions usually provide some employment opportunities even though some may be temporary and business opportunities which enhance people’s quality of life. Good governance is one of the essential preconditions for development and poverty reduction. For instance, countries such as Botswana, Mauritius and Namibia, which follow good governance will normally device pro-poor policies and programmes and target programmes to educate children of the poor and disadvantaged groups. Such policy measures tend to generally improve people’s capabilities as with better education and health they are often able to experience progression in the social structure better than was possible during their parents’ generation. Such beneficiaries then provide additional social safety nets (SSNs) to their families and siblings who might not had been able to make a break from the poverty cycle of the parents. The Botswana’s case is illustrative in this regard.

The first three decades of independence saw many

young educated people from extremely poor backgrounds making it to higher levels of the education ladder and subsequently making rapid occupational mobility and substantially higher incomes and social status than their parents. This “new middle class” has been a backbone to poverty reduction in their families and their relatives.

Consideration of governance as part of the top of the policy agenda in the last two decades of the twentieth century came from the experience of the crises that bedevilled many developing countries in general and particularly Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1980s. As Hyden writing in the early 1990s observed, Africa’s crisis was identified and perceived as “a governance crisis” (Hyden, 1992:5). In recognition of this, donor organizations and governments started to increasingly link economic aid to political reform, including the fight against corruption in pursuit of good governance, thus marking a fundamental departure in policy choices which used to consider governance as an unimportant political matter best left to internal affairs of individual governments.

Although governance and poverty received close attention in development circles for the past two decades or so, it was only in 2002 that the UNDP succinctly identified and recognized the centrality of politics to development. Yet, Leftwich (1996) emphasized the primacy of politics to development. Before then, the UNDP’s human development reports had more or less followed those of the World Bank and the International Money Fund (IMF) in overemphasizing economics, especially economic growth, and thus downplaying politics in promoting development. This has since changed. The emerging consensus is that politics, particularly governance (since its re-conceptualization), has an effect on poverty reduction - albeit not automatic. Thus, good governance has since been recognized as the “missing link” in promoting development and poverty reduction (UNDP, 2002).

Politics is defined as both a system that distribute power and allocate resources (Ball and Peters, 2000). Governance is politics and is, therefore, a crucial determinant of the allocation of resources, especially public goods, within a country. Good governance exists where there is responsiveness, equity and consistency in the way resources are allocated to the needs especially those of the poor people. It also affects the quality of decision-making more generally, for instance, those determining economic and social policy. If governance is weak and democratic accountability is poor, then resources are more likely to be appropriated by specific interest groups that may exclude the poor and the resulting policies would be unlikely to reflect the national interest or pro-poor imperatives. It is in this context that poverty reduction strategies identify and recognize good governance as one of the important pillars. This is not

only meant to introduce policies that are pro-poor but to promote transparency and accountability such that policies reflect the needs of the disadvantaged. More importantly, the new strategies do recognize that economic growth alone is not a sufficient condition to poverty reduction. There is a need to empower the poor with skills so that they can earn their living and move out of poverty reproducing situations such as food handouts.

KEY GOVERNANCE INDICATORS

Research has shown a positive correlation between governance and development hence the need for it and its application. Even the World Bank has come around to acknowledge this. Since the mid 1990s the World Bank has published several reports and developed sets of governance indicators all with the theme "governance matters" (World Bank, 2007). Amongst the key indicators of governance are; respect for human rights and basic freedoms, regular free and fair elections, the separation of powers as checks and balances; decentralised government structures, free political organizations, a free media, existence of civil society, and existence of watchdog institutions such as anti-corruption, auditor general, ombudsperson, civilian control of the armed forces, all emphasizing accountability and transparency and central values and standards of behaviour. The good performance on these indicators indicates that the citizens do participate in the affairs of their nation and in the process have trust in their leaders to protect their rights. A citizen who lives in a country where these indicators are observed and applied feels empowered. Such empowerment at a political level leads to self-realization and actualisation - capability development that reduces poverty and increases personal growth and responsibility. Through participation in local decision making institutions, grassroots or community based organizations (CBOs) including religious and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), trade unions and various political formations, citizens become the bedrock of good governance as they select and elect leaders and advocate for policy reforms. In Botswana, notwithstanding their limitations with regard to information and advocacy skills, the chiefs, private media, NGOs, CBOs and opposition parties have been key watchdogs of democratic governance and thereby helped to sustain Botswana's democratic record as well as regular reforms.

THE BOTSWANA'S RECORD IN GOOD GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PERFORMANCE

The key governance indicators for Botswana show a

good record of an evolving democratic and well governed country since independence in 1966. A brief outline of the country's performance on some of the key governance indicators is thus explained.

Constitutional setting and separation of powers

Botswana has a comprehensive constitution which enshrines the bill of rights and freedoms. The constitution has been consistently applied and respected. Modifications on the constitution have been minimal and in almost all cases have been meant to extend rather than constrain citizens' democratic rights and freedoms. For instance, the major reforms were effected in 1997 and they successfully enabled the voting age to be lowered from 21 years to 18 years, allowed citizens residing outside the country at the time of elections to vote through the system of postal voting; limited the term of office of the president to two terms of five years and established an independent electoral commission thereby removed that office from the office of the president. The second significant constitutional reforms were in 2001 where Sections 77 and 78 of the constitution which referred to some ethnic groups as major and gave them preference in the membership of the second house of parliament - the house of chiefs, was changed after extensive consultation. The constitutional reforms so far have enhanced democratic governance.

There has also been increased citizen confidence in the precedence of the rule of law. Several citizens and organizations which have felt disadvantaged or discriminated against have taken the state to court and on a number of instances won their case. The one example is the famous Unity Dow case. Mrs Dow took the state to court in 1991 and won the case against the state on account of discrimination against her children's right to inherit Botswana citizenship through hers as opposed to through her American husband. A number of organizations including political parties and media houses have also taken the state to court and won their cases. One example is the Botswana National Front's (BNF) case against the state on the "Tshiamo Box" during the 1984 election. The BNF logged a case claiming electoral fraud in 1984 which was upheld by the court. The resulting bye-election was won by the leader of opposition the late Dr. Kenneth Koma. In 2005 the Guardian Newspaper won a case against government's decision not to place advertisements in their newspaper. Similarly, the Basarwa versus the state case on re-settlement of Basarwa from the Central Kalahari (CKGR) game reserve of 2006 was won by the former.

There have, of course, been a few cases where the state's actions against certain individuals were considered arbitrary. Such cases included deportation of

Table 1. Popular participation in elections in Botswana from 1965 - 2009.

Column	1	2	3
Year	Voting age Pop.	Total registered	Total voted
1965	202 800	188 950	140 858
1969	205 200	140 428	76 858
1974	244 200	205 050	64 011
1979	290 033	230 231	134 496
1984	420 400	293 571	227 756
1989	522 900	367 069	250 487
1994	634 920	361 915	277 454
1999	867 000	459 662	354 466
2004	920 000	552 849	421 272
2009	1 058816	725 817	555 308

Source: Election reports.

a number of journalists and lately Professor Kenneth Good of the University of Botswana in 2005. However, these have been few and far apart.

Regular free and fair elections - the basis of citizen empowerment

Botswana has been celebrated globally as a success story of good governance, democratic rule and successful development in the otherwise poorly governed and slow growth sub-saharan Africa. Indeed good governance has been an important factor in poverty reduction and development in Botswana. Regular free and fair elections have been the hallmark of the country's stability and peace since independence. The elections have been multiparty participation and with relatively high popular participation. Table 1 shows that over the years electoral participation has been fairly high by international standards. Only in a few instances did the percentage of those who voted fall below 50% of the registered voters. It happened only in 1974 and the allegation was that the concept of regular election had not yet taken root and many people thought they decided on the particular leadership for ever. However, with the exception of 2009 where 52% actually voted, the percentage of actual voters to the total population eligible to vote has been consistently below 50%. This means more potential voters are still not adequately mobilised to vote.

Given the ten successive peaceful elections between 1965 and 2009, Botswana boasts of an entrenched democratic electoral culture. The political party system has also formed over the years. As Table 2 shows, all the elections have involved not less than four political parties at any time. This means citizens have formed allegiance around specific political groupings which presented

themselves as political power contenders every time there is an election.

Key to good governance is the voters' freedom to choose who to vote for without fear or favour. Taking the historical look at the voting pattern, we see that Botswana voters have been free to vote for the opposition and gradually moved away from voting the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP). Hence between 1974 and 2004, the ruling BDP's percentage of the popular vote dropped from 77 to 51 and increased slightly to 53 in 2009. This means the combined opposition vote increased from 23 to 49 over the same period. Thus, popular participation in elections, multiparty character of the elections and above all voters' free will to vote the party of their choice have been clear indicators of Botswana's good governance and democracy. This democratic culture has in turn supported the country's human development record. The realisation by the voter that his/her vote matters has been an important lever that citizens used to put forward their demands for more schools, more health facilities and demand for constituency focused development and the politicians have responded positively to these demands.

Responding to the high demand for education, the Government adopted the country's first education strategy titled "Education for Kagisano" (Education for Social Harmony) in 1977. This involved extensive provision of education to all. Since then, Botswana spends on average 25% of her annual recurrent budget on education alone. The result has been substantial improvement in the level of adult literacy which has risen from below 25% in 1966 to around 90% in 2005. Some 100% of the primary school going age children attend school and 90% of those who finish primary proceed to a three year junior certificate programme. In other words Botswana has a ten year universal basic education programme. The participation rate of the basic education graduates who move on to senior secondary has also risen from around 30% at the end of the 1990s to 67% in 2008. Although low at 12.4% in 2005, tertiary education participation rate has seen rapid growth in the past three years (2005 -2007) as a result of building more tertiary level institutions and government's decision to sponsor students to do tertiary education at local private institutions.

Government's responsiveness to popular demand has also been evident in the area of health provision. Even before the outbreak of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the mid 1980s, the government had a comprehensive institutional framework for health care provision arranged in the hierarchical structure of mobile clinics, health-posts, clinics, primary hospitals, district and referral hospitals. These were widely provided resulting in the majority of the population (85%) to have a health facility within the World Health Organization (WHO) 15 km walking distance at the end of the 1990s. The outbreak of the HIV/AIDS pandemic saw increased budget to the health sector from around 5

Table 2. Political parties' participation and performance in elections (% of seats in council).

Party	1974	1979	1984	1989	1994	1999	2004	2009
BDP	88	83	74	76	61	75	69	68
BNF	7	8	16	18	32	20	21	15
BIP/IFP	2	2	1	1	3	-	-	-
BPU	-	-	1	-	1	0	-	-
BPP	2	7	-	5	4	0	1	0.6
BCP	-	-	-	-	-	3	7	14
BAM	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	1
NDF	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
% of BDP's popular vote	77	75	68	65	54	54	51	53

* Independent candidates won 1.6% of seats in council in 2009; Source: Election reports.

5 to 7% in the 1980s to about 15% in the 2000s. In particular, the responsiveness of government to HIV/AIDS has been the widespread provision of Anti-viral medication to the victims of the infection and the disease including pregnant mothers.

In agriculture and water provisions too, the government has come up with several policies, programmes and projects that have helped both the well to do farmers and the small and poor farmers. Programmes such as the Arable Lands Development Programme (ALDEP I, II, and III), the accelerated Rainfed Agricultural Programme (ARAP), Small livestock communal assistance programme (SLOCA) together with the now institutionalised regular drought relief programmes all provided to the rural people and those in the arable and livestock sectors of agriculture, though not very successful in reviving agriculture as a sector, with the much needed employment opportunities, sustenance of rural livelihoods, and therefore poverty reduction and human development progress in the countryside. Over the years, poverty levels have dropped from above 60% of the households in the 1970s to an estimated 30% of the households in 2005/6. The unemployment rate has also fallen to the lowest 17.6% of the labour force according to the latest Government estimates (Mogae, 2007).

Overall, looking at the political participation and the development programmes just outlined here, it is fair to say that the Botswana state has been generally responsive to the needs of the population. This is particularly so, when recognition is made of special programmes such as the self-help housing originally meant for the urban poor, but now being extended to the whole low income households or the remote area dwellers programme targeted in order to address the development needs of mainly the indigenous Basarwa/the San people. The highly subsidized programmes of education, health, water, electricity and postal services to the majority of the population have gone a long way in reducing poverty and improving the

human development performance. This then has been a responsive developmental state.

Poor political opposition

It will however, be a cross misrepresentation to assume that Botswana has on the basis of the foregoing discussion been without major political and social problems of her own. Politically, Botswana has since independence remained a one party dominant political system with a weak political opposition. The dominance of the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) is partly aided by the lack of a level playing field because political parties are privately funded. The BDP has also largely benefited from the electoral system in use - the first-pass-the-post. Moreover, it has benefited from incumbency advantage. Furthermore, the opposition is not only disorganized but it is fragmented.

A weak opposition could have a negative impact on development in the sense that it is not in a position to challenge the policies of the ruling party. If the opposition is weak in turn it may fail to act as a check and balance on the government. In this way, its capacity to demand good governance on government is constrained.

However, although an active opposition is an essential attribute in a democracy, a weak opposition could be a strength for the country because that allows a party that is doing well in delivering development an opportunity to continue to implement the policies that are beneficial to a country hence continue to contribute to poverty reduction and human development. Nevertheless, a weak opposition could have a negative impact on the youth, women and minority groups such as Basarwa/ the San especially if the party that is in power does not implement policies that advance the interest of these groups. Although a lot has been done to try to accommodate women and the youth, the inclusion of Basarwa/the San in the development process has been a topical issue in

Botswana following their relocation from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR). This resulted in a court case that was ruled in favour of the Basarwa/ the San.

A decentralised and consultative governance system

Botswana has an elaborate decentralised system of government. Four local institutions of local councils, district/town administration, tribal administration and land boards all enjoy delegated authority from central government. Of the four, the local councils are the directly elected representative local authority responsible for the provision of primary education, primary health care, local water supply and general development at local level. The other three local institutions play specialised functions such as customary and judicial function in the case of tribal administration, land allocation by the land boards and co-ordination of central government departments and representation of the latter at local level by the district administration. Below the four local institutions are a myriad of non-governmental organizations, village level committees and other community based organizations whose overall role is to promote local development.

Through the ministry of finance and development planning (MFDP) Botswana has developed a culture of participation, consultation and consensus building in the development of national development plans (NDP). The development of the plan involves consultation from the village level, district to national levels. It also involves consultations with the private sector, civil society and key international partners operating in the country. Similarly, members of parliament and ministers have established an elaborate culture of consultation and report back on proceedings of parliament, new legislative initiatives and other issues of national importance. Major political reforms that require constitutional amendment have been conducted through national referenda such as in 1997 when the independent electoral commission, the voting age and the term of office of the president were changed. In fact in 2002 the Speaker of Parliament started a programme known as "Bringing Parliament to the People" where he went around the country explaining what had been discussed in Parliament and how the parliament functions.

One of the structures that is by far one of the most important institutions in Botswana and supports its governance processes is the Kgotla. The Kgotla, is a traditional parliament presided over by a chief, which was traditionally used by members of the tribe to discuss tribal as well as developmental matters. Although this has continued to be the case, the Kgotla has since independence been largely used as a forum to publicise, share and explain government programmes and policies

to members of the public and also solicit public views and support. It is used to discuss developmental matters and not politics (Lekorwe, 1989; Sebudubudu and Osei-Hwedie, 2006). In this way, it can only be addressed by the state president, ministers, sitting parliamentarians and councillors as well as civil servants. To this extent, it is also a central link between the rulers and the ruled. It is through the kgotla that ordinary citizens can make their voice heard. However, the kgotla has often been over used and some say abused by politicians to drive through their agendas. Often the kgotla has become the forum of the few and simply a one way communication forum with little debate taking place. Hence the young and majority of the working population do not see the kgotla as an important forum where they can air their views. This has led to problems of poor attendance as apathy seems to be growing. The village development committees (VDCs) are also faced with challenges of partisan politics hence this at times derails development projects that are meant to contribute to poverty reduction. The result is that broad based participation is hampered and limited.

CONTINUED DISEMPOWERMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In terms of generating their own revenue local government institutions are weak and disempowered in relation to central government. They have limited authority to impose tax or borrow money from commercial banks. This notwithstanding councils in particular command significant budgets from central government to fund development of infrastructure for primary education, health facilities, rural roads and water development in the districts. To this extent local government is dependent on central government for resources - human and fiscal. This is the case yet local government is important to poverty alleviation more so that the majority of the poor reside in the rural areas. The flow of resources from the centre to the local councils causes delay and uncertainty and undermine local democracy, and in turn efforts to reduce poverty and contribute to human development.

The continued dependence of local councils on central governments for financial and human resources means that they are not autonomous. As a result, local councils are faced with a problem of capacity and thus seen by the citizens as failing in many respects. Take the case of Gaborone City council (GCC) for example. According to Maundeni (2004: 20) "official records show extensive central government involvement in the running of the Gaborone City. Apart from central government grants, government ministries, departments and public corporations are heavily involved in the administration of the Gaborone City, crowding out the municipal authority". To this extent local councils are not in a position to devise

Table 3. Major hindrances to investment in Botswana.

Constraint	Out of 20 in 2003	Out of 20 in 2007
Bureaucracy	13.0	14.4
Educated Workforce	17.0	14.0
Work Ethic	18.0	13.0

Source: Kaufmann et al. (2007) * 1 is the best score and 20 the worst.

policies that are specific to their populations' needs. It is therefore important that local councils are given the autonomy they need if delivery is to be improved and in turn poverty reduction is achieved. While the involvement of central government has been pivotal in reducing high and persistent levels of corruption in local authorities, direct control of local councils is working against the very democratic policies meant to reduce poverty.

GROWING GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACY

Botswana's public service which was for many years considered one of the least corrupt public services in Africa and which was fairly efficient is no longer efficient. A recent World Bank Report (2007) lists a bureaucratic red tape as the first major weakness of the Botswana state that makes it less attractive as an investment destination. The report listed the three key negative factors in relation to investment climate as shown in Table 3.

Even though the scores of the other two variables of educated workforce and work ethic are still negatively high, they have reduced somehow between 2003 and 2007. With regard to education, Botswana's level of literacy, secondary school and tertiary participation rates have all improved significantly over the past five years. The adult literacy rate is currently estimated at 90% while senior secondary participation rate has risen from around 40% in the early 2000s to the current 67% (2008). Tertiary education participation rate for all post secondary education and training has risen above 12% in recent years. All these significant changes must have contributed to some observable reduction in the educated work force indicator. The impact of improvement in tertiary education levels has however been limited by poor planning where the link between training institutions and the labour market is weak. This has resulted in a mismatch between those graduating at tertiary level and the labour market needs of the economy. This has given rise to a new problem of graduate unemployment. Many young graduates find that they have to re-train themselves to meet the labour market needs or seek jobs outside the country; a very difficult challenge for them. The government has as a result of this problem among

others come up with a human resource development strategy and plan which will create a stronger link between training institutions and the employers (Tertiary Education Council, 2007).

There have also been a lot of effort through work based learning, productivity seminars and of course increased unionisation of the public service and the teaching force. All of these have constantly addressed Botswana's workers' attitudes towards work. All these combined with increased presence of more competent but desperate Zimbabwean workers must have contributed to observable change in the labour force work ethic in a positive way. However, the bureaucratic red tape has increased over this period. The inefficiencies of bureaucracy are also related to the increasing levels of corruption as thus explained.

Clearly strong democratic institutions at local level have the potential to reduce problems of bureaucracy, ensure real or perceived problems of unfairness and further ensure that projects are implemented timely to create more jobs, provide services they were meant to and thereby reduce poverty and unemployment especially in the rural areas. In this sense, their services will reach the target groups and ensure that empowerment and human development goals are achieved. However, key institutions such as the Auditor General, Ombudsman, Accountant General and the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) have expressed concerns on various issues of governance but the public did not pick them to press on the government. Similarly, most reports emanating from some of these institutions have very little public input. Access to information is also limited by the absence of freedom of information legislation leading to media speculation. Consultation, instead of being a two way process, seems to be largely a one way process which very often is simply information dissemination without much serious alternative views from the public in the light of the limitations faced by channels of communication in the country as previously noted.

Accountability, transparency and good governance: Impact on human development

Botswana has a broad framework of third generation or what has been dubbed "watchdog institutions" in the form of the anti-corruption body, the ombudsman, the independent electoral commission and the relatively elaborate and independent media. The constitution also empowers the auditor general, accountant general and the parliamentary committees to inspect and report on the state and use of public accounts in all government departments and parastatal organizations. Apart from ensuring the observance of all laws relating to the use of public funds, the Auditor General has the duty to ensure that all necessary precautions are put in place and any improprieties are reported to parliament. In addition to the

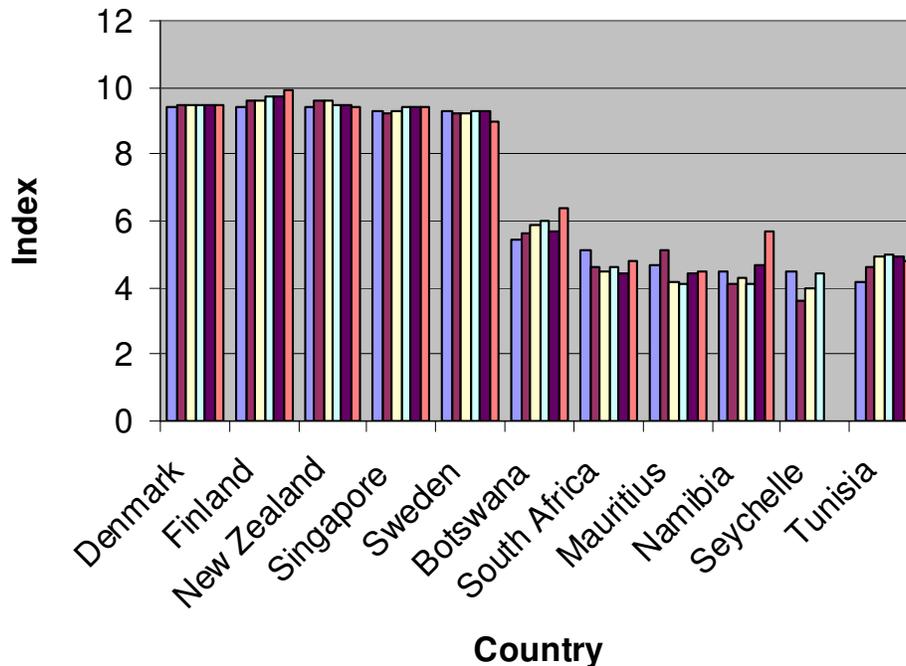


Figure 1. Worldwide CPI Ranking of countries by transparency international (2002 - 2007); Source: <http://www.transparency.org>.

office of the auditor general, there is the internal audit unit in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP). The unit which “is an integral part of the ministry’s management and control of the public finances acts to ensure that public finances are properly accounted for and utilised for the purposes authorised” (Republic of Botswana, 1991: 482).

Along with this reasonable level of stable democracy has come a low level of corruption. Since 1995, Transparency International (TI) has consistently considered and ranked Botswana to be the least corrupt country in Africa in its Corruption Perception Index (CPI) as shown in Figure 1 (Transparency International, 2007). The case of Botswana illustrates that there is a positive relationship between governance and corruption control hence the need for countries especially in Africa to embrace and apply it.

The CPI is a measure of corruption or lack therefore. The lowest score of 1 indicates the highest level of corruption while 10 indicates the lowest case of corruption. Globally the least corrupt countries are mainly the Scandinavian countries followed by a few in the developed countries. However as Figure 1 shows over the period 2002 and 2007 Botswana has not only consistently been above 5 points but it has also been among the best in Africa scoring better than her SADC middle income neighbours of South Africa, Mauritius, Namibia and Seychelles. Over the six-year period,

Botswana’s average CPI has been 6, thus showing one of the least corrupt countries in the world.

Thus, Botswana recognizes the importance of combating corruption for the country to continue to attract foreign direct investment and thus create jobs and in turn reduce poverty and improve people’s lives. And to this extent, the country has established its anti-corruption agency, the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC), and has declared zero tolerance to corruption. Corruption is perceived as a development issue that diverts resources from the good course to serve short term selfish interests of the corrupt person. In this way, combating corruption is essential to reduce poverty in that safety nets and other forms of assistance can reach the poor without being diverted to the non-poor.

Despite its constraints, the DCEC has, since its establishment, dealt with a number of cases a majority involving petty corruption. This has since given rise to the perception that the DCEC targets mainly petty corruption. Nevertheless, the DCEC has dealt with a few high profile cases. These include a former general manager of the Motor Vehicle Insurance Fund (MVIF), jailed for fraudulently obtaining money from the Fund and a former Director of Roads, who was convicted and jailed for corruption. Other high profile cases, including that of a former Managing Director of Debswana, are yet to be concluded by the courts. Despite these successes, there

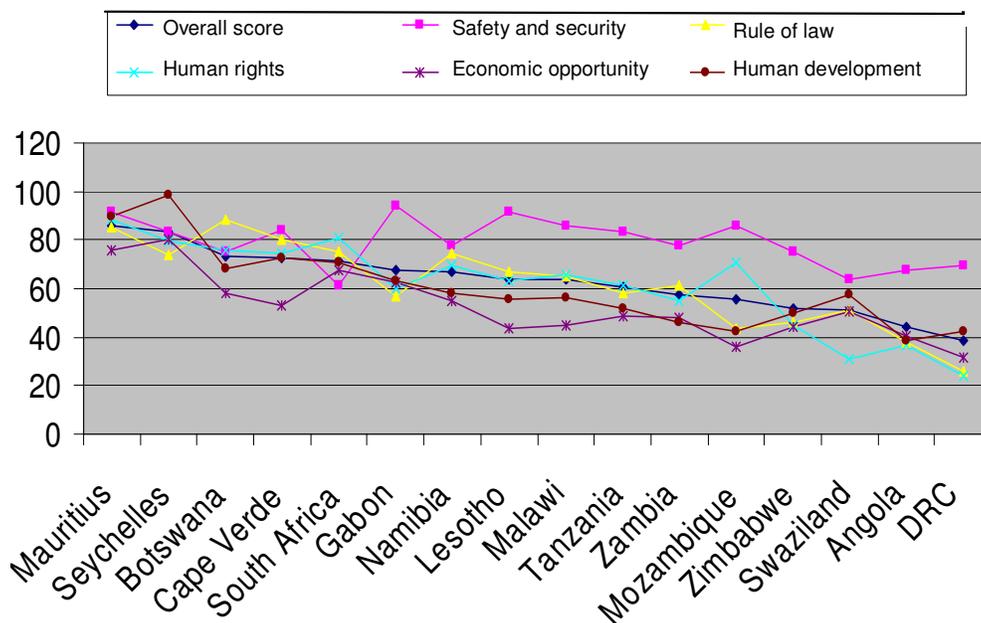


Figure 2. Ibrahim index of African governance. Source: <http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org/index/index2.asp>.

are concerns that corruption may be diverting resources away from the poor in rural areas and thus affecting efforts geared at reducing poverty and improving human development.

GOOD GOVERNANCE, SECURITY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

In September 2007, the Ibrahim **index** of African **governance** that measures the quality of governance in sub-Saharan Africa's 48 states - on the basis of safety and security, rule of law, transparency and corruption, participation and human rights, sustainable economic opportunity, and human development - ranked Botswana as the third best governed country, with an overall score of 73.0, after Mauritius and Seychelles which scored 86.2 and 83.1 respectively as shown in Figure 2. To this extent, Botswana is amongst the top performers on the African continent. The Ibrahim Index of African Governance is regarded as the world's most comprehensive ranking of African governance (<http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org/index/index2.asp>).

The Botswana case shows that there is a positive correlation between governance and human development. In fact, countries that perform better in governance tend to do well in human development. In this way, there is a need for good governance and its application. Performance in each indicator is measured out of 100 points. In all but economic opportunities and

human development Botswana scored above 70%. The latter two are related in that poverty and dependence on the state means that many people have no economic activities on which they can sustain their livelihoods and depend less on Social Safety Nets (SSNs). The Human Development Index (HDI) was negatively affected by the outbreak of HIV/AIDS which reduced the country's life expectancy from around 67 years to around 56 years in the 1990s. This is an impressive performance when compared to the majority of developing countries which scored below 50% on most indicators (see Zimbabwe, Swaziland and Angola for instance).

The roles of non-state actors

The existence of a free media and civil society are additional but key indicators of an open and democratic society. Although this is an area where many citizens may feel that state control has been rather strong as in limiting the operations of trade unions, private media and adopting a cynical attitude to civil society groups, the law nevertheless allowed these players to exist. In fact both the media and civil society groups have grown in strength and have successfully been able to advocate for better performance by the state in matters of human rights, anti-corruption, women and children's rights and media freedom. The fact that a number of individuals and organizations have over the years taken the state to court and won some such cases point to the trust that the civil

society has on the independence of the judiciary.

However, in other respects, the civil society remains weak and very dependent on the central government for many things including funding. This dependency has limited its ability to provide an alternative voice and debates on development discourse. To this extent its influence in advancing pro-poor policies is seriously constrained. However, the private media in recent years has played an important role in demanding transparency and accountability in government hence promoting good governance and in turn contributing to equitable development when it raised issues relating to women's lack of access to land or finance, conditions of persons with disability or those of the remote area dwellers.

On the whole, the aforementioned represent challenges which are associated with poor service delivery, poor implementation of projects and programmes, low productivity levels, poor performance and resource constraints which are yearly identified as major weaknesses of the public service in Botswana. Indeed recent surveys of citizen attitudes suggest that the population feel that government is insensitive to public demands, needs, aspirations and challenges of the Nation (Tsa Badiri Consultancy, 2007). Indeed even in cases where Government has provided impressive programmes of social safety nets (SSNs), including feed programmes for the old aged poor, sick and vulnerable, orphans and others such as clothing, etc for these groups, the major concerns of the target group is service delivery and fair treatment. According to Seleka et al. (2007) when beneficiaries of SSNs were asked if they were satisfied with SSNs delivery, less than half of the beneficiaries (48%) indicated that they were satisfied while 20% were neutral while 17% were not satisfied (Seleka et al., 2007:16). The drought relief programme (a labour intensive programme) which only runs when drought has been declared also provides short term non-gainful employment as a way of mitigating poverty during the drought year. However, the key problem here has been fairness in selection of people to participate in the drought relief programmes. Accusations have been made claiming that those at local councils and village leadership select the not so needy friends and relatives at the expense of the real poor.

THE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA - PERFORMANCE AND CHALLENGES

The link between good governance and development is best demonstrated in the development agenda and the performance against that agenda by a country. In summary, a number of critical policy instruments demonstrate the government of Botswana's commitment to both good governance and human resource development.

These are: The six year rolling National Development Plans (NDPs) - these focuses on poverty reduction, increased growth, economic diversification and sustainable development.

The formulation and adoption by the Nation of a long term vision for Botswana - vision 2016 in 1998 which seeks amongst others to maintain Botswana's democratic tradition, and to eradicate absolute poverty, continue to grow and diversify economically, to be peaceful and democratic, to create an educated and informed nation and above all to be a caring nation by the year 2016.

The embracing in 2000 of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 and the introduction of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) in 2003 was a significant political move which showed Botswana's commitment towards improving the quality of life of its poor and disadvantaged groups. By embracing the MDGs, the country renewed its commitment to eradicating extreme poverty. In this way, governance helped the country to work towards realizing its broader objectives of national development viz; sustained development, rapid economic growth, economic independence and social justice.

However, after ten years of MDGs and six years of PRS the most recent estimates put poverty at 30% while unemployment is estimated at around 17.6%. Two types of poverty can be identified in Botswana; the unemployed poor and the employed poor referring to generally low wages especially paid by the private sector. The majority of the urban low paid workers work for shop owners, sell food and are taxi and general transport providers. The central question is, although absolute (income and consumption) poverty has been seriously reduced through relatively free water provision and access to health facilities, etc, does the country have the necessary governance structures to ensure sustainable livelihoods. That is, are the current positive indicators of health and education assured into the future? These questions are relevant with the re-introduction of school fees, continued problems in the agricultural sector, by those dependent on subsistence agriculture, and questions over the effectiveness of government subsidy schemes such as Financial Assistance Policy (FAP) and Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA). The key problem in Botswana in so far as poverty reduction is concerned is that policies continue to largely subsidize the rich and thus are not reaching the target groups in terms of regional relevance and in helping the minorities. To this extent, such policies fail to address the needs of minority groups.

Assessing Botswana on the basis of the core indicators of health (reduced mortality), education (basic literacy rate) and economic performance (increased per capita income), the good governance policy environment has enabled the country to make impressive achievements. Botswana has since independence used

its mineral wealth to develop human lives. It invested a lot of resources in infrastructural development, provision of clean water, health, education, life expectancy, reduced child mortality and household incomes. Botswana boasts of around 10,000 km of tarred road from the six miles it inherited at independence; its literacy rate has increased from 10% at independence to 90%. Over 95% of the population live within 15km of a health facility. Life expectancy increased to 65 years in 1991 up from 48 at independence. This has been reversed to 56 with the advent of HIV/AIDS. However, the government has had to put in place measures to mitigate this. Domestic employment has increased from 14,000 at independence to 550,000 hence unemployment stands at 17.6% (Mogae, 2007; Sebudubudu and Molutsi, 2009). These are remarkable achievements which have contributed to poverty reduction and human development.

The government has also used part of its wealth to advance welfare programmes for the poorer sections of the populations (Molutsi, 1989: 126). Government introduced policies/programmes such as the drought relief programme, remote area dwellers, the Accelerated Rural Development Programme (ARDP), Accelerated Rainfed Agricultural Programme (ARAP), Arable Lands Development Programme (ALDP) and the Financial Assistance Policy (FAP) as a way of mitigating and reducing poverty. More importantly “these programmes not only cushioned the poorer sections of the peasantry from proletarianisation and the effects of drought but also went a long way toward ‘demonstrating’ the concern of the government with ‘people’s welfare’. They also served to mystify and hide the crisis of social reproduction in that drought could be used as a scapegoat for growing inequalities and poverty in Botswana” (Tsie, 1996: 605). All these have not only contributed to poverty reduction but also demonstrate Botswana’s commitment to reducing poverty.

Nevertheless, there are still significant pockets of extreme poverty and relative poverty in Botswana. This is why many households continue to depend on government Social Safety Nets (SSNs) such as food subsidy and drought relief programmes for meeting their basic needs every year. Available evidence shows that some 580,000 individuals are on feeding programmes which is about a third of the country’s population (Seleka et al., 2007).

THE WEAK SMME AS A POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY

Botswana like many developing countries has no large private sector. The role of small and medium enterprises (SMMEs) is therefore critical to industrialisation and poverty reduction. As more rural and urban people go

into business they will employ themselves and others thereby contribute to poverty reduction. In recognition of this possibility and experience from elsewhere, the Government has over the past years introduced a series of policy measures and institutions to promote SMMEs. These include programmes / institutions such as the Financial Assistance Policy (FAP) and the citizen entrepreneurial development agency (CEDA). These are geared at reducing poverty and empowering the poor.

In 1982, the Botswana state introduced the Financial Assistance Policy (FAP) as a way of reducing over dependence on minerals. This was not only aimed at diversifying the economy but also to boost employment prospects (Republic of Botswana, 1985). This was possible, as the financial situation of government had improved because of an increase in mineral receipts. FAP provided “direct financial assistance to both existing and new enterprises” (Chipasula and Miti, 1989:77). Projects assisted under FAP fell under three categories: small, medium and large. In supporting both new and expanding projects, FAP had three major aspects to it. Firstly, government money was to go towards projects that demonstrated a realistic prospect of generating benefits that offset the expenses. Secondly, financial support was to be provisional, at most lasting five years. And lastly, government financial help was to go to ventures that were in keeping with its goals of promoting job creation and expanding the economic base (Republic of Botswana, 1985).

FAP had some successes. It was able to create “a large number of new and small enterprises, expanding established ones, increasing unskilled employment substantially, and expanding opportunities for women in these sectors” (Samatar, 1999:187). Notwithstanding their good intentions, these efforts or policies have greatly failed to encourage manufacturing and to diversify the Botswana economy (Edge, 1998; Taylor, 2003). Most FAP funded projects were not successful because of a number of factors: tough competition, limitations of the market, misuse of funds by beneficiaries, failure of potential beneficiaries to raise their contributions towards the project, lack of raw materials in the rural areas as well as their growing costs and the poor quality of the products (Chipasula and Miti, 1989:78/9). Perhaps one other reason why it has largely failed was that it lacked the institutional capacity to administer projects it supported.

Following the national conference on citizen economic empowerment in 1999 and the fourth evaluation of FAP in 2000, CEDA was established in 2001, and it took over the financial responsibilities of FAP as well as projects that were administered under FAP and the Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs). CEDA, which is an autonomous private organisation, is answerable to government through a Board of Directors. Unlike FAP,

CEDA provides loans (at subsidized interests) not grants to possible projects. CEDA also aims to expand the economic base (diversify the economy) and to promote employment and citizen entrepreneurship. It also supports businesses that have the reasonable prospect of being viable. Since its establishment “CEDA had approved 792 applications, amounting to P421.1 million, while disbursements for approved applications stood at P247.7 million” by the end of December 2002 (Republic of Botswana, 2003:4). Out of the approved projects, 45% are in the service sector, 25% in retail, 13% in agriculture, 10% in manufacturing and another 7% in property development. Once fully functional, these projects are likely to generate more than 7000 jobs. CEDA also engages private sector consultants to help to train, monitor and mentor those who have been assisted. It is thought that this will provide citizens with the required business skills to run businesses (Republic of Botswana, 2003). It is hoped that these will be able to help towards reducing poverty. However, it is too early to make a conclusive assessment of CEDA as it is still in its infancy.

As much as Botswana has made great strides in a number of areas, the advent of HIV/AIDS, the most recent and intense challenge, has since reversed some of the gains the country had made especially in health. Nevertheless, policy interventions have been put in place by the government and its development partners to mitigate the scourge of HIV/AIDS. Even then it is important that policies that are intended to reduce poverty are appropriately targeted in terms of regional relevance and in helping minorities and other vulnerable groups.

CONCLUSION

The objective of this paper was to show that good governance is central to a country's progress. Examining good governance in the context of Botswana, this paper has demonstrated an important link between good governance, human development and in turn poverty reduction. Over the past four decades Botswana has made progress in democratic governance and economic growth. In the context of democratic governance the government has been responsive to the needs of the whole population and has devised policies and programmes that were targeted to the poor and disadvantaged in society. The achievement record has been impressive. Botswana has moved from the least developed and one of the poorest countries in the 1960s to a high middle income country in the 2000s. Thus, the case of Botswana shows that with good governance natural resources, particularly diamonds, can have a positive impact on the country's development as well as help transform people's lives. To this extent, Botswana offers lessons to other African countries.

However, challenges and limitations remain. In both the area of governance and human development, Botswana needs to make significant reforms in order to attain particularly its noble aspirations enshrined in vision 2016. The economy must diversify and grow, service delivery must improve and democracy must be strengthened at central and local levels in order to increase accountability, reduce bureaucracy, corruption and high dependency on those who do not need to be subsidized.

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