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Country programme document for Botswana (2022–2026)

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I. UNDP within the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

1. Botswana has made impressive gains in its economic growth, in line with its ambition to become a high-income country with an export-led and knowledge-based economy, as espoused by its Vision 2036 and National Development Plan 11 (NDP11). Public expenditure, however, accounts for 35.7 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP)¹ and attempts to diversify the economy have shown moderate results. The private sector has yet to take its rightful place as the engine of growth.² The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has presented a serious blow to the economy and induced a contraction in domestic output of 8.9 per cent in 2020.³ The informal sector, primarily women-owned businesses, was particularly hard-hit, yet remains the ‘missing middle’ in the policy space.⁴

2. Botswana continues to struggle with high levels of poverty and inequality. The top 1 per cent of earners account for 22.6 per cent of gross national income (GNI),⁵ making Botswana the seventh most unequal country in the world according to the *Human Development Report 2019*.⁶ Significant geographic variations are evident, with rural districts (Kweneng West, Ghanzi and Ngamiland West) left behind.^{7,8} Comprising 70 per cent of the population, youth offer a real opportunity. However, their lack of skills, experience and limited job opportunities contribute to high unemployment (32.4 per cent)⁹ and further loss of potential.¹⁰

3. While Botswana has earned a reputation as a beacon of good governance, the global rankings mask underlying issues, with a year-on-year deterioration since 2012.¹¹ The most significant warning signals relate to indicators of safety and rule of law, participation and human rights. Botswana lags on gender equality and ranks 163 out of 188 countries in *Inter-Parliamentary Union* ratings, with only 10.8 per cent female parliamentarians.^{12,13}

4. The downward trend in safety and rule of law became apparent during the COVID-19 crisis as gender-based violence emerged as a second pandemic ravaging the nation with 272 women seeking refuge in emergency shelters during the three-month lockdown in 2020.¹⁴ Representing 4.2 per cent of the population, people with disabilities are 50 per cent more likely to experience violence (including gender-based violence).¹⁵ Inequalities in physical and legal security are driven mainly by differences in exposure to violence, inadequate protection, inequalities in access to justice, and lack of recognition and awareness of human rights.

5. While individuals are free to form civil society organizations, Botswana does not have a vibrant civic space. Access to data and information remains a significant challenge, with limited uptake of open data platforms or digital tools. Only 88 out of the country’s 209 national Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) indicators have baselines, making it impossible to monitor progress or uphold accountability.

¹ Available at Statista (<https://www.statista.com/statistics>).

² International Trade Centre, 2019.

³ Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, 2020.

⁴ Available at UNDP (bw.undp.org).

⁵ Available at United Nations University UNU-WIDER (www.wider.unu.edu).

⁶ *Human Development Report 2019* (<http://hdr.undp.org>).

⁷ Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, 2020.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Statistics Botswana, 2020.

¹⁰ Nthomang, K., and Diraditsile, K., 2016.

¹¹ Available at the Mo Ibrahim Foundation (<https://mo.ibrahim.foundation>).

¹² Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis (available at <https://media.africaportal.org>).

¹³ Inter-Parliamentary Union (available at data.ipu.org).

¹⁴ Ministry of Defence, Justice and Security, 2021.

¹⁵ ALIGHT, 2018.

6. Climate change, drought, land degradation and habitat loss all pose a significant risk to the country's resilience and have a compounding effect on inequality as rural populations and women are harder hit. Heavily reliant on fuel and coal-based energy, the country is exploring options for competitive and sustainable energy. By deploying solar technology, Botswana could meet its current electricity demand using less than 1 per cent of its land area.¹⁶

7. Vision 2036 "Achieving Prosperity for All", its NDP11 and now, COVID-19 economic recovery and transformation plan and digital transformation strategy, supported by UNDP, uniquely position the country office as a key partner to support the transformation agenda.

8. UNDP strategic engagement is an integral part of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), 2022-2026, developed in full alignment with the national development and transformation priorities. UNDP supported UNSDCF development through the common country analysis and its lead role and strategic foresight in co-creating outcomes in collaboration with a broad range of stakeholders. UNDP plays a leading role, in participation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank in transforming the national social protection system. Tackling gender-based violence and engaging youth and women in decision-making are cross-cutting priorities. UNDP will continue its leadership in this space and strengthen its collaboration with UNICEF and UNFPA, in particular. Similarly, UNDP leads engagement in the recovery and transformation of the informal and private sectors. With strengthened focus on climate change adaptation and mitigation, sustainable livelihoods and land management, FAO will continue to be a crucial partner. Therefore, given its strategic position and capacities in Botswana, UNDP will continue to deliver on its role as an integrator and convenor to facilitate joint programming and collaboration across the United Nations system and development partners.

9. The guiding principle and intent of the country programme document (CPD) theory of change is to achieve *transformational change* for a green, just, prosperous Botswana. The impact of COVID-19 has shown that twenty-first century challenges are increasingly complex, interconnected and unpredictable. People are engaging with information, institutions and society in new and increasingly digital ways, and institutions are having to adapt with increasing speed. The CPD has identified key domains of change around climate change and sustainable resource management; inequality, corruption and accountability; and unemployment, economic diversification and digital innovation. These domains are addressed through levers of change, such as women and youth as rights-holders; communities, the private sector and the informal sector as transformational agents; and institutions as duty-bearers, each leveraging UNDP capacity to deliver through innovative and agile partnerships for a green, just, prosperous Botswana. The causes and effects within the theory of change are understood from a complex systems perspective and the outcomes of internal sensemaking, root cause analysis, and a series of external strategic foresight consultations.

10. The theory of change is based on the principle of 'punctuated equilibrium',¹⁷ within which a number of capabilities are required: developing new anticipatory systems approaches, becoming designers and facilitators of system transformation, which involves expanding spheres of collaboration and partnership, and moving past siloed, linear problem-solving approaches.

11. UNDP has strong comparative and collaborative advantages to complement United Nations development system efforts. *First*, its value proposition is anchored in its mandate as a lead development organization globally through its signature and innovative development solutions and through its repositioned offer for Africa. *Second*, UNDP builds on its achievements from the past CPD, notably strong leadership in economic diversification and inclusive growth, environment and climate change, and the protection of human rights, rule of law and empowerment of women and youth. Through the COVID-19 response, opportunities to expand

¹⁶ Botswana's Third National Communication to the United Nations Framework on Climate Change, October 2019.

¹⁷ Punctuated equilibrium in social theory.

the support to the private sector and entrepreneurship, institutional transformation and digital solutions have come to the fore. *Third*, UNDP leverages its corporate global policy network to provide technical and innovation expertise. *Fourth*, UNDP will continue to be the support platform, convenor and integrator of partners across United Nations system, government, the private sector, academia and civil society in pursuit of the national transformation agenda.

12. UNDP will continue building on its support to the national digital strategy, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development transformation strategy and decentralization policy, the South-South and triangular cooperation strategy, the Supplier Development Programme, the revised economic diversification drive strategy, the climate change policy, the national human rights strategy, the national youth policy revision, the ongoing support to the COVID-19 private sector and informal sector recovery plans, the reform of the social protection system, and the empowerment of youth and citizens.

13. Building on the recommendations of the midterm review and independent country programme review, the programme will emphasize more downstream engagement to strengthen development outcomes, bolster its gender and human rights responsiveness, and broaden its partnerships and innovation to achieve impact at scale. The country office will establish regular forums for stakeholders and influencers to solicit feedback on CPD implementation, approach and priorities to facilitate anticipatory and agile decision-making, ensuring its investments are directed at core development challenges with transformational outcomes as envisaged.

II. Programme priorities and partnerships

14. Building on the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, and partnership strategy of the Regional Bureau for Africa, UNDP will establish a vibrant network of influencers to shape programming and apply human rights-based approaches, digitalization, innovation, anticipatory decision-making, and flexible risk management. UNDP will leverage three key enablers: (a) the UNDP Global Policy Network and the Strategy and Innovation (SIU) to build capacities for innovative solutions; (b) the UNDP Digital Team to support digitalization and the digital strategy; and (c) establishment of collaborative platforms across government, the private sector and civil society to deploy portfolio approaches, including leveraging the Joint SDG Fund and programme to support the national monitoring and evaluation system. In this way it becomes possible to deliver and leverage innovative and agile partnerships, and to implement the overall vision for Botswana to be a green, just and prosperous country.

A green Botswana

15. The success of Vision 2036 and the 2030 Agenda is largely dependent on natural resources, and thereby robust environmental governance and management and enabling equal participation by women and men, young and old. Botswana is endowed with expansive wetlands, unspoilt wildernesses and an abundance of wildlife, all at risk if intentional efforts are not made to protect and sustainably utilize them.

16. To deliver on UNSDCF outcome 3, therefore, UNDP will strengthen collaborative partnerships with other United Nations organizations such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and FAO as well as civil society to invest in sustainable management and effective utilization of ecosystems and biodiversity with integrated management plans for protected areas and cross-border river basins that can leverage innovative financing and reduce human-wildlife conflicts. Improvements in the management of natural capital and communal lands will in turn increase their value and have a positive impact on the quality of life and resilience of affected communities.

17. UNDP will support local communities' capabilities to integrate permaculture and agroecology principles and practices as well as other research-based innovations to increase resilience and reverse trends in poor natural resource use, restoring ecosystem goods and services. UNDP will also partner with local communities, research institutions, government and civil

society to develop early warning systems, leveraging digital solutions and enabling real-time open access to information for improved risk management planning and adaptation.

18. UNDP will build on its current initiatives through several innovative strategies to restore and sustainably manage agricultural landscapes and rangelands to expand and scale up the diversity and volume of food production. Across its portfolios, UNDP will identify opportunities for climate finance and invest in a green economy, leveraging businesses and value chains with the potential to create jobs for women and youth and capitalizing on new technologies and opportunities for renewable energy, reduction in waste, greenhouse gas emissions and wastewater/effluent discharges. Working across the country office's portfolios will not only support a greener economy and job creation but also substantially improve quality of life and overall prosperity of the country and its people.

A just Botswana

19. Recognizing the complexity of the interconnected society that has emerged, the country's formal, procedural and linear mechanisms and governance institutions do not function well enough to support accountability, inclusion and responsiveness. To deliver on UNSDCF outcomes 1 and 5, UNDP will engage across the complexity of governance systems and support the actors and levers within those systems that can ultimately deliver on the future vision of Botswana in which tolerance, inclusion, equality, and accountability are at the core.

20. Access to information and a strong, independent civil society and media enable an educated and informed public as rights holders. An educated and informed public can participate civically and politically and hold those they voted for accountable. Therefore, UNDP will expand its current initiatives and focus on advocacy and building capacity to increase the participation of women, young people, people with disabilities and members of rural communities in decision making at all levels and ensure transparent and accountable leadership. UNDP will prioritize investing in digital platforms for women and youth to ideate, design and scale local solutions and enable access to finance for development, political and civic engagement.¹⁸

21. A particular focus will be on strengthening institutions to be more efficient and effective as duty bearers. Checks and balances of power are needed to reduce corruption and increase trust and confidence in public institutions. UNDP will support the state to build capacity, accountability and responsive leadership across integrity institutions, including the National Human Rights Institution, and will support the decentralization and public reform processes.

22. UNDP will also work to strengthen equal access to justice for all, building on gains made during the COVID-19 response. This work will include building the institutional capacity of courts and the justice sector and the human resource capacity of judicial officers. Leveraging digital solutions to enhance case management and enable virtual court hearings will be key. Legal rights and protections, especially of the most vulnerable members of society and victims of gender-based violence will be strengthened through legal reforms, outreach and access to information and strengthened enforcement.

23. Diverse partnerships, beyond government institutions, with civil society, media, research and development institutions, the Office for the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UNFPA, UNICEF, the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) will be critical to the success of a rights-based portfolio approach to strengthening state-society relations in delivering on UNSDCF outcomes 1 and 5 and the Vision 2036 goal to achieve prosperity for all based on a tolerant, inclusive society led by progressive governance.

¹⁸ Particularly the scaling up of #YouthConnekt.

A prosperous Botswana

24. Across its portfolios, UNDP will accompany the national vision of economic recovery and transformation with a focus on promoting a strengthened, dynamic private sector composed of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). To achieve UNSDCF outcome 4, active leadership and participation of youth, women, people with disabilities and other marginalized groups will be key in creating socially inclusive, digitally enabled and environmentally sustainable MSMEs. Becoming drivers of the economy, the private sector, mainly in labour-intensive and green sectors, will increase domestically produced goods and services and diversify export products and services through expanded markets. Leveraging international trade agreements and opportunities for South-South and triangular cooperation, UNDP will continue supporting institutions to enhance the business, investment and trade-enabling environment. Youth and gender-responsive actions focused on skills through technical and vocational training, digital solutions and knowledge creation will further support the private sector, transforming Botswana into a diversified, export-led knowledge economy.

25. Building on its COVID-19 response, UNDP will expand its partnerships with private and informal sector actors, national and international banks and relevant state and regional institutions to deliver on the collective vision. Furthermore, UNDP will deepen partnerships with ILO, the International Trade Centre (ITC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Economic Forum (WEF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) to articulate robust frameworks for the entire ecosystem. Furthermore, principles of green growth, employment and decent work, gender equality and empowerment, digital economy and access to finance will inform the design of UNDP strategic interventions to address current risks of rising inequality, economic marginalization and environmental degradation that reduce the country's resilience to future shocks.

III. Programme and risk management

26. This CPD outlines UNDP contributions to national results and is the primary unit of accountability to the Executive Board for alignment of results and resources. The accountabilities of managers at the country office are prescribed in the UNDP programme and operations policies and procedures and the internal control framework.

27. The programme will be nationally executed and implemented through mutually agreed modalities based on the most efficient and cost-effective manner. High-level national ownership and participation in governance and coordination mechanisms will be ensured from the programme's inception. In cases where national execution is not possible, the modality may be replaced by direct execution to enable effective delivery of results and in response to force majeure. The harmonized approach to cash transfers will be used in a coordinated fashion with other United Nations organizations to manage financial risks. Cost definitions and classifications for programme and development effectiveness will be charged to the concerned projects.

28. The country programme will be coordinated and guided by the UNSDCF steering committee. Furthermore, programme steering committees will be established within UNDP with the participation of key government, civil society, private sector and other relevant partners.

29. The 'punctuated equilibrium' theory of change posits that slow or continuous change (such as climate change impacts) alternates in cycles with rapid, discontinuous or disruptive change (such as a pandemic and its outfall). To identify such risks and shocks and be better placed to address them, UNDP will invest in building capabilities for systems thinking and portfolio approaches, abstraction and ambiguity management, real-time qualitative and quantitative data analysis, horizon-scanning and pattern detection to anticipate shocks and address trends.

30. The following risks and mitigation measures are identified.

31. *Corruption.* UNDP will support digitalizing systems and processes to improve efficiency, transparency and accountability. Furthermore, UNDP will support public access to data and public education on the belief that empowered citizens can make informed decisions.

32. *Inequalities.* UNDP must apply an inequality lens to its analysis, design and interventions to reduce the risk of investments in transformational change inadvertently widening these inequalities. UNDP will draw on regional experts and its Global Policy Network for strategic and technical guidance. Consistent application of the UNDP gender marker and the social and environmental standards and accountability mechanism will be important.

33. *Mindset shift and cultural change sensitivities.* The transformative change outlined in this CPD is bold. UNDP must be sensitive and cognizant of this in its design and roll-out of its portfolio, ensuring the participation of all through co-creation, providing a platform for dialogue and local leadership and identifying and enabling the signals and levers of change.

34. *Complexity of system transformation.* To stay relevant, UNDP needs to build capabilities for system transformations, disruptions and institutional renewals, investing in partnerships and platforms that can yield data and insights which enable actors to explore the nature of future challenges and deliver collective solutions.

35. *COVID-19 pandemic.* UNDP has adopted a flexible and agile approach, leveraging digital solutions, ways of working and systems to deliver results. Anticipatory decision-making, regular reviews and broadened partnerships accompanied by capacity development will strengthen resilience within the programme and minimize negative shocks.

IV. Monitoring and evaluation

36. Results and value for money are key aspects of UNDP support to the Government and other national partners. UNDP will pay particular attention to the monitoring and evaluation of this programme, in line with the UNSDCF, Vision 2036, NDP11 and the SDGs. High-level consultations and dialogues will be organized biannually as part of the UNSDCF process to review programme effectiveness and efficiency. The UNSDCF and UNDP results frameworks will serve as key measuring instruments to facilitate continuous tracking, assessment and reporting of results.

37. The country office will pursue a research agenda to ensure that information collected in the field is packaged into accessible, disaggregated and actionable data and knowledge resources. This includes conducting baseline studies to close data gaps and supporting open data portals and real-time data collection tools to strengthen accountability and transparency in the public domain. Jointly with other United Nations organizations, UNDP will support Statistics Botswana to establish a national, digital monitoring and evaluation system and at least three ministries with ministerial monitoring and evaluation systems to address identified weaknesses in the implementation of national policies and plans.

38. Performance indicators have been derived from the national performance measurement frameworks and SDG domesticated indicator framework to promote national ownership, coherence and synergies in reporting results. UNDP will use its gender marker to track programme contributions to specific gender and women's empowerment achievements.

39. At least 5 per cent of the programme budget will be allocated to the evaluation plan. At outcome level, monitoring and evaluation and joint reviews will be undertaken with other United Nations organizations and the Government through agreed accountability and coordination platforms. More frequent reviews will be done at programme level. As part of the evaluation plan, UNDP will conduct a midterm evaluation and a final review following the latest evaluation guidelines.

Annex. Results and resources framework for Botswana (2022-2026)

NATIONAL PRIORITY OR GOAL: Vision 2036 Pillar 2– Human and social development and Governance, peace and security.				
COOPERATION FRAMEWORK (OR EQUIVALENT) OUTCOME INVOLVING UNDP 1: By 2026, gender inequality is reduced, and women and girls are empowered to access their human rights and participate and benefit from inclusive development.				
RELATED STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOME: Outcome 2. Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development.				
COOPERATION FRAMEWORK OUTCOME INDICATOR(S), BASELINES, TARGET(S)	DATA SOURCE AND FREQUENCY OF DATA COLLECTION, AND RESPONSIBILITIES	INDICATIVE COUNTRY PROGRAMME OUTPUTS (including indicators, baselines targets)	MAJOR PARTNERS/PARTNERSHIPS FRAMEWORKS	ESTIMATED COST BY OUTCOME (United States dollars)
PEOPLE				
<p>Indicator 1.1. Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex. <i>Baseline:</i> No <i>Target:</i> Yes</p> <p>Indicator 1.2. Proportion of women in managerial positions (public sector). <i>Baseline</i> (2016): 34% <i>Target:</i> 50%</p>	<p>Data source: Ombudsman Office, Land Tribunal, Gender Affairs reports Frequency: Annual Responsibility: Courts of law, UNDP</p> <p>Data source: Labour Force Survey reports Frequency: Annual Responsibility: Directorate of Public Service Management Reports, Stats Botswana</p>	<p>Output 1.2. More responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making enabled at all levels (Goal 16.7)</p> <p><i>Indicator 1.2.1. (IRRF 2.2):</i> Proportion of seats held by women and youth in (a) national parliament; (b) local government</p> <p>(a) <i>Baseline</i> (2021): 11% (women), 1.6% (youth) <i>Target</i> (2026): (a) 30% (women), 10% (youth) <i>Data source:</i> Parliament, IEC <i>Frequency:</i> Every 5 years</p> <p>(b) <i>Baseline</i> (2021): 19% (women), 9.5% (youth) <i>Target</i> (2026): (b) 30% (women), 20% (youth) <i>Data source:</i> MLGRD, IEC</p>	<p>Government: Ministry of Presidential Affairs, Governance and Public Administration (MOPAGPA), Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD), Ministry of Youth (MYSC), Ministry of National Immigration and Gender Affairs (MNIGA), Independent Election Commission (IEC), #SmartBots</p> <p>Civil society organizations (CSOs): BOCONGO, BOCOBONET</p> <p>Private sector: Business Botswana</p> <p>United Nations and others: Resident Coordinator Office, OHCHR, UNICEF, UN-Women</p>	<p>Regular: \$73,000</p> <p>Other: \$1,927,000</p>

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