

Importance it attaches to conservation, the country has by law reserved 17% of its territory for conservation. An additional 18% has been earmarked for wildlife management areas. This means a total of 35% of the land and water areas have been reserved for conservation. Some of these areas are the Chobe National Park, the Central Kgalagadi Game Reserve, Moremi game Reserve and the Okavango Delta. Botswana is actively involved in the establishment of Transfrontier parks and corridors which facilitate the smooth movement of wildlife across borders.

The Economy

Prior to independence, the economy of Botswana was dependent on exports of beef and migrant labour remittances from the mines in South Africa. In the years that followed independence up to 2007, the real growth of GDP averaged 8.7% per annum. This was a vital stage in the economic diversification of the economy away from dependence on beef and migrant labour. Botswana's output is currently estimated to have increased by 7.2% in 2010, following the 4.9% (revised from -3.7%) contraction in 2009. Mining GDP grew by 7% during 2010, after contracting by 21% in 2009 due to the global recession. For 2011, GDP is projected to grow by 6.8%. Output expansion in the non-mining private sector accelerated in 2010 to 9.6% compared to a revised 4.5% in 2009. Rapid growth was notable in agricultural (15.7%), construction (15.4%) and trade, hotels and restaurants (9%) sectors of the economy. Major contributors to Botswana's GDP by economic activity are: Mining (31%), Tourism (13%), Banks, Insurance and Business Services (11.5%), Manufacturing (3.8%) and Agriculture (2.3%). Botswana's major exports are diamonds, copper-nickel, beef, textiles and gold. As a leading producer of gem diamonds, Botswana intends to become a major world diamond centre for all aspects of the diamond industry such as cutting, polishing, jewellery, manufacturing and retail. The economy is projected to grow on average by 3.1% and non-mining sector by 5.6%.

Botswana's Development Agenda

The revenue from diamonds was and continues to be prudently invested in building infrastructure: roads, airports, schools, hospitals, clinics and telecommunications. Education receives and continues to be allocated the largest share of the national budget. An unprecedented number of schools from primary to secondary, technical and tertiary levels were built. A large number of young people were given and continue to be awarded government scholarships to study abroad. Many Batswana are for example on Government scholarships studying in Australia, Britain, the Czech Republic, Ghana, Jamaica, Malaysia, South Africa and Trinidad and Tobago. The current National Development Plan 10 (NDP10) places strong emphasis on creating a conducive environment for the private sector to play a major role in driving economic development. The basic strategy in NDP 10 is:

- Greater emphasis on the maintenance of productive infrastructure.
- Increased emphasis on providing for infrastructure needs of the private sector.
- Further improvement of the business climate for private sector investment.
- Continued investment in education and training.
- Additional support for service exports.

The people of Botswana are proud of their shared humanity with the nations of the world and are actively engaged in planning and constructing their future. They welcome visitors as tourists, students, researchers, workers and investors.



General Information on Botswana



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Visit Botswana

Botswana is a great place for investors, travellers, nature enthusiasts and tourists. It is a destination of choice. The country has successfully preserved its culture and habitat while building a vibrant economy amidst difficult economic circumstances but under a prolonged state of peace and democracy. Prudent management of natural resources has afforded Botswana consistent economic growth at a rate of about 5% in recent years.

The People

Human settlement in the territory now known as Botswana began approximately 3000 years ago. The earliest inhabitants are said to have been the livestock-keeping Khoi and the hunting and gathering San. The other inhabitants of Botswana are Tswana, Kalanga, Wayeyi, Hambukushu, Basubiya, Ovaherero, Ovambaderu, Afrikaaners, Asians and Europeans. Botswana is therefore a multi-ethnic, multicultural and multilingual society. There are more than 20 languages spoken in the country and 10 Khoisan languages. Setswana is the national language and English is the official language as well as the language of business and commerce. These communities have intermarried, traded and lived harmoniously over a long period of time. This was the basis and the granite rock on which the country's policy of building a non-racial society was built. Botswana demonstrated for several decades how it was possible to build a society in which people of different ethnicity can live together in peace and harmony. At independence the majority of Botswana lived in the rural areas. Over time the proportion of the population living in urban areas grew steadily from 9% in 1971 to 54.2% in 2001. In 2006 it had grown to 57.4%. It was projected to reach 65% in 2011. This is a result of economic development.

Geographical Location and Climate

Botswana is at the centre and cross-roads of Southern Africa. This land of 2 million people is about 582 000 square kilometres. It is situated between latitudes 18 degrees and 27 degrees South and longitudes 20 degrees and 29 degrees East. The country is about the size of France, Kenya or the State of Texas in the

United States. Botswana is sparsely populated. This is due in large measure to the climate and desert conditions that cover large tracks of land. The Kalahari desert constitutes a substantial part of the country. Botswana's immediate neighbours are Zambia to the North, Namibia to the South West, Zimbabwe to the North East and South Africa to the East and South. Botswana has responded to her landlocked situation by establishing and developing a Transport Hub with a goal of transforming the transport and logistics industry to serve the needs of the growing economies of the SADC region. The headquarters of SADC are located in Gaborone, the capital city of Botswana. The country has been at the centre of efforts to intensify economic cooperation and regional integration in Southern Africa on the basis of equity, balance and mutual benefit.



This is a region with a population of over 200 million people and an import bill of more than US\$200 billion. This is a huge market for goods and services and an excellent opportunity for investment.



Independence

Botswana became an independent and sovereign nation on 30 September 1966 after 81 years as a British Protectorate. The country was extremely poor. The situation was so bleak that some people thought that the founders of this young Republic, "were either too brave or too foolish" to think that the desolate desert could be a viable state. The reality was and is that they had a vision of a more just and prosperous future. But most importantly they believed in themselves and their people. The people of Botswana therefore started from day one of independence to prepare for and plan the future as demonstrated by the successes that followed. This was due to pragmatic policies, prudent management of resources and the implementation of policies and laws that are conducive to private sector investment. The first elections in Botswana were held in 1965 and opened the way for self-government, which led to independence a year later. Since then, the country held genuine, periodic multi-party elections every five years. The last elections were held in October 2009. Respect for the will of the people contributed in no small measure to peace, stability and orderly development. This has also made it possible for national institutions to grow and democracy to be consolidated. Respect for human rights, the independence of the judiciary, the rule of law and the sanctity of commercial contracts are concrete manifestations in the daily lives of the people. After forty-six years of independence, Botswana is a mature democracy that plays a role in promoting universal values.

Natural Beauty

The national beauty of Botswana is not only found in its friendly and peace-loving people, the cultural diversity but also in its wildlife and wilderness. This is a country that is at peace with itself, its neighbours and above all with nature or the environment. There are substantial species and populations of wildlife found in Botswana. For instance, there are over 150 000 heads of elephants, the highest concentration in the world! In recognition of the enormous