

OFFICIAL NAME: Republic of Botswana

CAPITAL: Gaborone

SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT: Multiparty Republic

AREA: 600,372 Sq Km (231,805 Sq Mi)

ESTIMATED 2000 POPULATION 1,693,500



LOCATION & GEOGRAPHY: Botswana is a landlocked country located in South Africa. It is bound by the Republic of South Africa to the south and southeast, Namibia to the west, Zambia to the north and Zimbabwe to the northeast. The country is a sand filled undulating plateau with an average altitude of 1,000 metres (3,280 feet) while south of the plateau the terrain consists of hilly bush and grasslands. The Kalahari Desert which is a sandy tract covered with thorn bush and grass, lies to the west of the plateau and in the extreme northwest lie the Makarikari Salt Pans as well as the Okavango Swamps which are a great inland delta while forests and dense bush surround the swamps. Around 50% of the delta is perennially flooded and the rest is seasonally flooded. The principal river is the Okavango which flows into and forms the Okavango Swamps. Major Cities (pop. est.); Gaborone 134,000, Francistown 65,000, Selebi-Pikwe 40,000 (1991). Land Use; forested 47%, pastures 45%, agricultural-cultivated 1%, other 7% (1993).

CLIMATE: Botswana has a subtropical climate, although the northern regions of the country lie within the tropics. Winters are cool with frost common in the desert and the prevailing dry winds come from the Atlantic Ocean while the winds also bring sand storms from the Kalahari. The summer season is from September to April with rain in the north and east falling almost totally between October to April. The country often suffers long periods of drought. Average annual precipitation in Francistown is 450 mm (18 inches) with average temperature ranges from 5 to 23 degrees Celsius (41 to 73 degrees Fahrenheit) in July to 18 to 31 degrees Celsius (64 to 88 degrees Fahrenheit) in December or January.

PEOPLE: The principal ethnic majority are the Tswana who account for 76% of the population and are divided into eight sub tribes, the Bakgatla, Bakwena, Bamalete, Bamangwato, Bangwaketsi, Batawana, Batalokwa and Barolong. There are also small minorities of Kalanga, Herero and Bushman also known as Sarwa who combined constitute around 5% of the population while Europeans only represent about 1%.

DEMOGRAPHIC/VITAL STATISTICS: Density; 2.3 persons per sq km (6 persons per sq mi) (1991). Urban-Rural; 21.6% urban, 78.4% rural (1991). Sex Distribution; 47.7% male, 52.3% female (1987). Life Expectancy at Birth; 52.7 years male, 59.3 years female (1989). Age Breakdown; 48% under 15, 26% 15 to 29, 13% 30 to 44, 7% 45 to 59, 4% 60 to 74, 2% 75 and over (1987). Birth Rate; 47.3 per 1,000 (1990). Death Rate; 11.7 per 1,000 (1990). Increase Rate; 35.6 per 1,000 (1990). Infant Mortality Rate; 67.0 per 1,000 live births (1990).

RELIGIONS: Around 49% of the population are Christians with the remainder following native local tribal beliefs with some combined Christian elements.

LANGUAGES: The official language is English, although Setswana or Tswana is the national language.

EDUCATION: Aged 25 or over and having attained: no formal schooling 54.7%, some primary 31.0%, primary 9.4%, some secondary 3.1%, secondary 1.3%, higher 0.5% (1981). Literacy; literate population aged 15 or over 486,500 or 73.6% (1990).

MODERN HISTORY - WWII TO 1993: In 1959 a constitutional committee of the Joint Advisory Council was set up giving Black Africans more influence and the ability to formulate proposals for the creation of a legislative council and other changes. In 1960 these changes were accepted by Britain. During the 1960's the Republic of South Africa asked Britain several times to transfer the protectorate to South Africa, although Britain refused. The country's first general elections were held in 1965 and on September 30, 1966 Botswana was proclaimed an independent republic within the Commonwealth. From 1972 to 1975 there were significant strikes among miners and in 1976 Botswana adopted its own currency the Pula. In 1984 tensions rose with South Africa believing Botswana was providing bases for African National Congress (ANC) political and military activity. In 1986 the South African military invaded Gaborone killing 13 people. Relations between Botswana and South Africa have improved with the present dismantling of apartheid and in Nov. 1990 Pres. Quett Masire announced the seventh development plan (1991-1997) which called for a greater role of private enterprise. In Dec. 1990 the government reached an agreement with a US firm to establish a diamond cutting and polishing plant in Botswana while the Sua Pan soda ash project was completed in early 1991. During 1991 Botswana implemented a favorable investment code that attracted foreign investment, particularly from South Africa while the government also sought to diversify its economy from the traditional mainstay of diamond exports. On Jan. 14, 1992 some 250 US troops arrived in Gaborone to initiate a two-week training exercise with the 4,500-strong Botswana Defense Force. In March 1992, a scandal developed after the vice president and minister of local government and lands, Peter Mmusi as well as the minister of agriculture, Daniel Kwelagobe resigned after it was found that Mmusi had used his authority to ensure that Kwelagobe land that the local authority wished to use for other purposes. Festus Mogae succeeded Mmusi as vice president while the opposition parties reacted to the scandal by calling for early elections. In 1992 Botswana recorded its first budget deficit since 1982 which resulted in the government not implementing its promised public-sector wage increases. In 1993 human rights abuse allegations were made against

the personnel of the Botswana Wildlife and National Parks Department over their handling of the Masarwa, a small nomadic group of the Kalahari. Since the mid-1980's they had been forcible relocated to "Remote Area Settlements" as a part of a plan to counteract the impact of drought conditions. Also during 1993, the economy again suffered a downturn in principal due to a drop in demand for export because of the worldwide recession.

CURRENCY: The official currency is the Pula (P) divided into 100 Thebe.

ECONOMY: Gross National Product; USD \$3,631,000,000 (1993). Public Debt; USD \$537,500,000 (1992). Imports; P 3,970,062,000 (1992). Exports; P 3,674,991,000 (1992). Tourism Receipts; USD \$79,000,000 (1991). Balance of Trade; P 526,700,000 (1993). Economically Active Population; 443,455 or 33.4% of total population (1991). Unemployed; 13.9% (1991).

MAIN TRADING PARTNERS: Its major trading partners are the USA, the UK, other EU countries and other African countries.

MAIN PRIMARY PRODUCTS: Asbestos, Beans, Cattle, Coal, Copper, Diamonds, Gold, Gypsum, Maize, Manganese, Meat Processing, Millet, Nickel, Salt, Sheep, Sorghum, Talc.

MAJOR INDUSTRIES: Cattle Rearing, Meat Processing, Mining, Tourism.

MAIN EXPORTS: Beef, Copper, Diamonds, Hides and Skins, Nickel.

TRANSPORT: Railroads; route length 714 km (444 mi) (1989), passenger-km 257,000,000 (160,000,000 passenger-mi) (1987), cargo ton-km 769,900 (527,305 short ton-mi) (1987). Roads; length 15,000

km (9,321 mi) (1989). Vehicles; cars 17,000 (1989), trucks and buses 28,000 (1989). Merchant Marine; nil. Air Transport; passenger-km 62,555,000 (38,870,000 passenger-mi) (1990), cargo ton-km 3,074,000 (2,105,000 short ton-mi) (1990).

COMMUNICATIONS: Daily Newspapers; total of 2 with a circulation of 49,700 (1993). Radio; receivers 1,400,000 (1994). Television; receivers 13,800 (1994). Telephones; units 43,500 (1993).

MILITARY: 7,500 (1994) total active duty personnel with 93.3% army, 0.0% navy and 6.7% air force while military expenditure accounts for 5.9% (1993) of the Gross National Product (GNP).