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COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF DECENTRALIZATION IN AFRICA:

BOTSWANA IN-COUNTRY ASSESSMENT REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2010

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CONTENTS

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BALA	Botswana Association of Local Authorities
BAM	Botswana Alliance Movement
BCP	Botswana Congress Party
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
BMD	Botswana Movement for Democracy
BNF	Botswana National Front
BOCCIM	Botswana Confederation of Commerce, Industry, and Manpower
BOCOBONET	Botswana Community-Based Organization Network
BOCONGO	Botswana Council of Nongovernmental Organizations
BULGSA	Botswana Unified Local Government Service Association
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resource Management
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CEDA	Citizens Enterprise Development Agency
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CLGC	Commonwealth Local Government Forum
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DC	District Commissioner
DDP	District Development Plan
DLGSM	Department of Local Government Service Management
DPSM	Directorate of Public Sector Management
DTRP	Department of Town and Regional Planning
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HLCC	High-Level Consultative Council
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
LAPAC	Local Authorities Public Accounts Committee

LEA	Local Enterprise Authority
MISA	Media Institute of Southern Africa
MLG	Ministry of Local Government
MP	Member of Parliament
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NSP	National Settlement Policy
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
RSG	Revenue Support Grant
SDP	Social Democratic Programme
SHHA	Self-Help Housing Agency
ULGS	Unified Local Government Service
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAT	Value-Added Tax
VDC	Village Development Committee
VET	Village Extension Team
WUC	Water Utilities Corporation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Botswana recognizes four types of local authorities: local councils, land boards, tribal administration, and district administration. This report focuses on the councils and district administration. It is based on field research in Botswana between mid-July and early August 2010. Field research included interviews with officials in central government ministries and agencies, local-level politicians and staff, and representatives of nongovernmental and civil society organizations. The team conducted interviews in five of 10 districts (Central, Chobe, Kgatleng, Kweneng, and North West) and two of six urban centers (Gaborone and Francistown). Localities included the newly created Chobe district; large districts affected by the introduction of sub-councils, administrative authorities, and service centers (i.e., Central, Kweneng, and North West districts); and localities affected by urban and peri-urban development (i.e., Gaborone, Francistown, Kgatleng district, and Kweneng district). A variety of documents were also collected and/or reviewed.

Interviews produced numerous examples of the limited authority and autonomy of the councils. The consensus was that the councils oversee the implementation of centrally defined policies and depend heavily on the central government for financing. Elections and public meetings hold councilors accountable to their constituents to some extent, but the force of elections is reduced by the dominance of the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) and provisions for nominated as well as elected councilors. Poor attendance of public meetings is also a problem. Mechanisms for financial accountability limit the misappropriation of funds but do not ensure downward accountability to citizens. The administrative and political capacity of the councils has improved but is constrained by resources, vacancies, and centralized procedures.

Ongoing and proposed reforms involve deconcentration, the extension of local property rates to rural councils, longer terms for council chairs and mayors, and the empowerment of the Minister of Local Government to dissolve a dysfunctional council or declare a council seat vacant. Opposition parties and many councilors oppose the new ministerial powers and call for more radical changes to empower the councils. Creation of a new district council in Chobe is heralded as a success, but other structural changes have had a mixed record thus far. The recent *centralization* of several basic services and revenue sources increases the dependency of councils on the central government and complicates development of a decentralization policy.

New challenges influence the prospects for democratic decentralization. The international financial crisis led to a sharp contraction in diamond exports, the main source of both gross domestic product (GDP) and government revenues. After having dominated the political scene for more than 40 years, the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) is in the process of splitting. These developments encourage reforms that increase efficiency in service delivery, but increase the political risks of devolution. Advocates of deconcentration hope for cost savings and more efficient service delivery that might also generate political dividends. Continued centralization is rationalized as a response to limited local capacity, uneven development, and the risk of mobilizing identity-based politics. Turf battles further complicate prospects for reform.

I.0 BOTSWANA: COUNTRY CONTEXT

1.1 POLITICAL BACKGROUND AND STRUCTURE

Botswana gained independence from Britain in 1966 as a unitary state. Post-colonial districts, townships, and cities have very little autonomy. The desk study provides historical background on the transition from colonial rule to independence and underlines the centralizing effects of Botswana's formal political institutions, especially the concentration of power in the presidency (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010). This report examines non-institutional political and economic background conditions more closely, focusing on the post-colonial period, and argues that the political dominance of the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) and the government's dominance of the country's mineral-dependent economy reinforced the formal powers of the central government. The global financial crisis and important changes in the party system threaten the current political leadership and shape the prospects for democratic decentralization.

The mineral sector dominates Botswana's economy. Diamond mining began in Orapa in 1971, with additional mines opened in Letlhakane in 1977 and Jwaneng in 1982. The exploitation of other minerals is critical in certain localities, such as copper-nickel in Selebi-Phikwe and soda ash in Sowa Town, but diamonds drive the national economy. Mineral revenues represent the main source of GDP and government revenues. Since the early 1980s, diamond mining has accounted for one-third to one-half of GDP (Poteete, 2009b). Immediately before the global financial crisis in 2008-2009, fully half of government revenue derived from diamond production (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, n.d.).

Until the recent crisis, diamonds represented a relatively reliable source of government revenues. Compared to oil, other minerals, and many non-mineral commodities, international prices for diamonds have been relatively stable (Howie, 2001). Botswana pursued a cautious macroeconomic strategy, at least through the 1990s, that included the accumulation of substantial foreign reserves to cushion the effects of any declines in diamond earnings (Poteete, 2009b). The availability of mineral revenues reduced the fiscal pressure to generate alternative revenue sources and made increases in personal and consumer taxes politically difficult to justify. Revenues from non-mineral taxes are "neither high, nor low compared with international and regional standards" and the corporate tax rates are just below the global average (USAID, 2010, p. 1). The value-added tax (VAT) was introduced in 2000. Even after a recent increase from 10 percent to 12 percent, the VAT is considerably lower than the averages for sub-Saharan Africa (16.01 percent) and the world (15.77 percent) (USAID, 2010, p. 3). Rates for personal income taxes "are among the lowest in Sub-Saharan Africa and also well below world averages" (USAID, 2010, p. 1).

The Government of Botswana has won international praise for its relatively restrained expenditures compared with other mineral-dependent economies (Samatar, 1999; World Bank, 2002). The government's share of GDP has fluctuated between 15 and 17 percent since the mid-

1970s (Poteete, 2009b). During the 1990s, levels of public spending were high compared with Gabon, but lower than in Saudi Arabia (Auty, 2001), Indonesia, and Mexico (Usui, 1997).

There has been significant and sustained expansion of the private sector (Poteete, 2009b), which accounted for somewhat more than 50 percent of formal sector employment as of March 2009 (Matambo, 2010, p. 6). Nonetheless, the government remains the single most important economic actor. More than 30 percent of all formal sector jobs are in central government, with a further 13.4 percent in either local government or parastatals (Matambo, 2010, p. 6). In addition, government tenders represent an important source of business for many private companies. The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) estimates that 80 percent of contracts and tenders are linked directly or indirectly to government (MISA, 2010, p. 199).

To the extent that the government dominates the economy, it limits the emergence of a middle class with enough independence to support a vibrant democracy (Boone, 1990; Ross, 2001). Opposition politicians in Botswana attribute the reluctance of many businesses to support opposition parties and candidates to a fear of losing government tenders. The *Botswana Guardian* and the *Midweek Sun* newspapers barely survived the withdrawal of government advertising following publication of an article that painted the then-president in an unflattering light. The High Court declared that the advertising ban was unconstitutional in September 2001 (MISA, 2010, p. 201). Nonetheless, in 2009, the government allegedly considered an advertising ban against two newspapers (*Mmegi* and *Sunday Standard*) for their coverage of the killing of a civilian by security personnel under questionable circumstances (MISA, 2010, p. 202). Earlier this year, it was rumored that a private radio station had faced political pressure not to renew the probationary contracts of two announcers because they had given airtime to the founding members of the Botswana Movement for Democracy (BMD—see discussion below).

The global financial crisis that began in late 2008 led to a sharp contraction in luxury consumption, including diamonds. The crisis hit Botswana's economy immediately as diamond production came to a standstill until April 2009. As reported in the Budget speech in February 2010, the economy shrank by 6.3 percent in the fourth quarter of 2008, and by an additional 20.5 percent in the first quarter of 2009 (Matambo, 2010, p. 5). Although the diamond market is recovering, Botswana is still reeling. The government projected no real GDP growth for the 2009-2010 financial year, followed by 5 percent growth in 2010-2011 (Matambo, 2010, p. 5). The government anticipates that mineral revenues will be slightly lower than non-mineral revenues during 2010-2011 and will not recover to pre-recession levels until 2011-2012 (Matambo, 2010, p. 29).

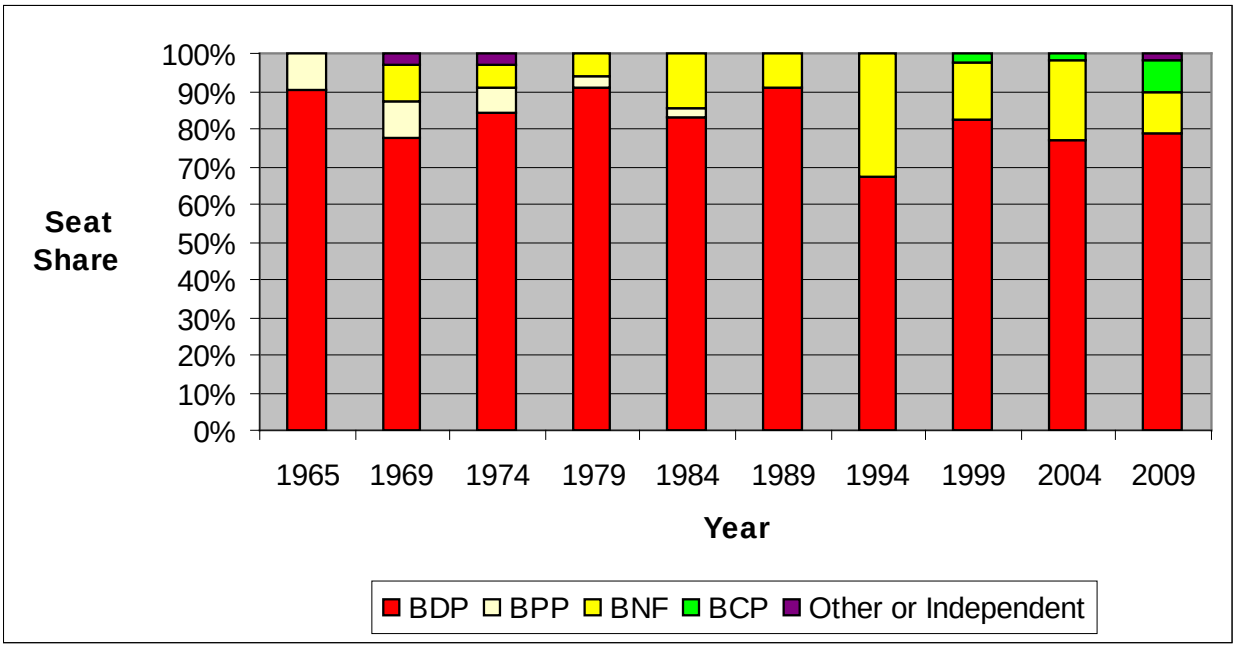
Despite several rounds of budget cuts, the collapse in mineral earnings resulted in a revised budget deficit of 15.1 percent of forecast GDP for the 2009-2010 financial year (Matambo, 2010, pp. 27-28). The government raised the VAT from 10 percent to 12 percent on 1 April 2010 and introduced a variety of other measures to increase revenues and lower costs. The government nonetheless projects a deficit of 12.2 percent of GDP for 2010-2011 (Matambo, 2010, p. 32). The government is aware of the economic risks associated with recurrent deficits but decided to run a deficit over the medium term "as a stimulus to mitigate the effects of the economic downturn on our development objectives" (Matambo, 2010, p. 27).

The government also has a strong political incentive to follow a counter-cyclical economic policy. The financial crisis presented serious political risks for the current leadership by reducing

the resources available for political patronage and campaign activities during the run up to elections in October 2009.

At least in terms of legislative representation, Botswana has had a dominant party system for more than 40 years. As shown in Figure 1, the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has won at least two-thirds of the seats in the legislature in every election to date. Presidential appointments of four "specially elected" members of parliament (MPs) further increase the government's majority.

FIGURE 1. SEAT SHARES IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BY POLITICAL PARTY 1965 – 2009[1]

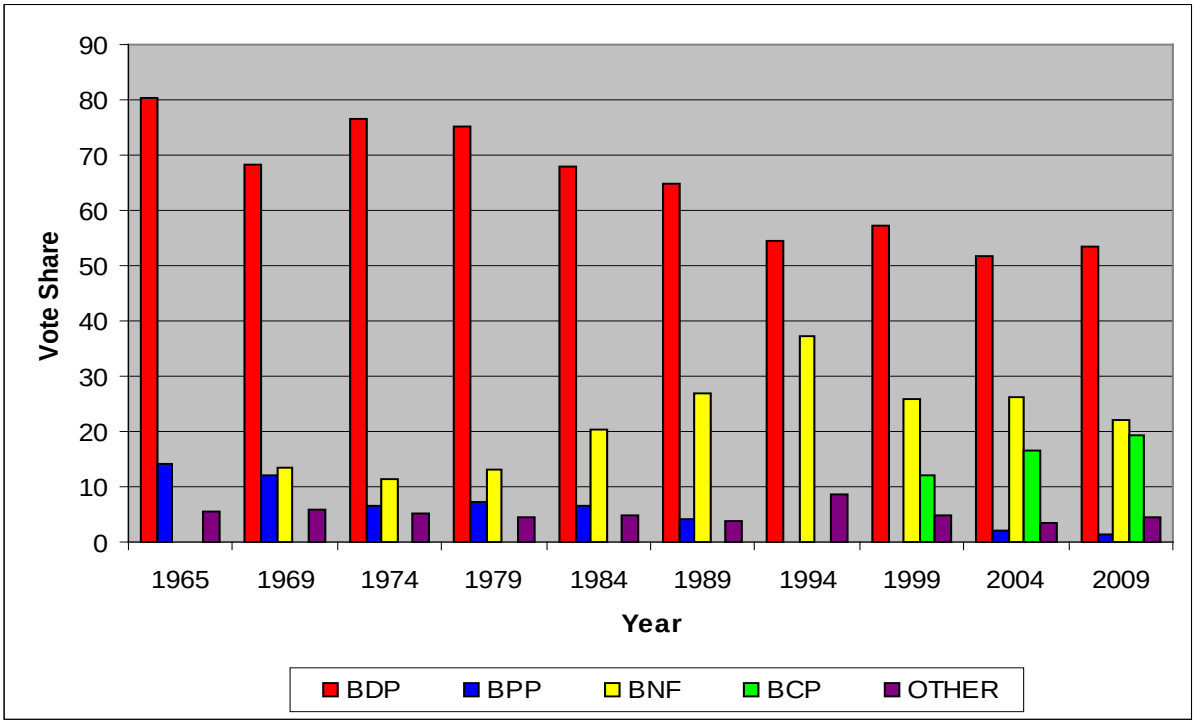


Key: BDP: Botswana Democratic Party; BPP: Botswana People's Party; BNF: Botswana National Front; BCP: Botswana Congress Party. Source: Poteete (2010).

The BDP's legislative dominance obscures its increasing vulnerability. Figure 2 reveals an erosion of electoral support for the BDP since the late 1980s. In three of the last four parliamentary elections, the BDP received less than 55 percent of the vote. The BDP continued to dominate the legislature throughout this period because the opposition has been divided. The opposition consolidated behind the Botswana National Front (BNF) in the 1980s and 1990s. Then, in 1998, the BNF experienced a split that led to the formation of the Botswana Congress Party (BCP). The opposition's share of the vote fell from 45.6 percent in 1994 to 42.8 percent in 1999, but then climbed back up to 48.3 percent in 2004. The first-past-the-post electoral system has punished the divided opposition severely and allowed the BDP to maintain a grip on the legislature despite tepid electoral support.

[1] The Botswana Alliance Movement is counted with the BCP in 2009 to reflect the fact that the two parties ran a single slate of candidates.

FIGURE 2. VOTE SHARES IN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, 1965 – 2009



Source: Poteete (2010).

After the 1994 elections, a consultant identified factionalism as an important threat to the BDP's continued hold on power and recommended a generational change and the recruitment of a charismatic leader who could reunite the party (Molomo, 2000). Constitutional amendments instituted a 10-year term limit on the presidency and the "automatic succession" of the vice president to the presidency, should the presidency become vacant in a non-election year. President Ketumile Masire retired in 1998 (a non-election year) and his then vice president, Festus Mogae, became the president. Mogae was a newcomer to politics, having been recruited from the civil service. Mogae chose Ian Khama as his vice president and Khama became president on 1 April 2008, after Mogae's term limit expired. Khama is the son of the first president, the hereditary chief of the largest *morafe*, and a respected military leader. He had not been actively involved in politics before his appointment as vice president. Both Mogae and Khama were brought in precisely because they were not affiliated with either faction. Neither Mogae nor Khama, however, could overcome the factional divide within the BDP. Instead, factionalism intensified. The conflict focused increasingly on the arrangements for presidential succession and the individuals selected for succession.

The factions mobilized to contest the primary elections in 2008 and elections for party leadership positions in July 2009.[2] In the 2009 leadership contest, President Khama openly campaigned for one faction. The other faction, known as Barata-Phathi, won all contested leadership positions. In

[2] All of the main political parties (i.e., BCP, BDP, and BNF) hold primary elections to select candidates for the general elections. Individual political parties administer their own primary elections. To date, no party has been able to guarantee the integrity of the process, particularly when factional competition raises doubts about the neutrality of the party leadership.

the weeks after the party congress, Khama took several actions that indicated an unwillingness to work with the BDP's newly elected leadership. In August, the president suspended newly elected Secretary General Gomolemo Motswaledi for challenging his authority, and Motswaledi took the president to court. In September, the High Court ruled that Khama could not be sued because the Constitution grants the president immunity from prosecution for actions taken in his private capacity. In the view of the court, Khama had acted in his private capacity, as president of a voluntary association, when he suspended Motswaledi. Motswaledi's suspension meant that he could not contest the parliamentary elections under the BDP ticket.

The opposition was not well positioned to take advantage of the situation. The BNF had 12 incumbent MPs, but was embroiled in its own factional disputes. In the year prior to the elections, the party expelled two of its incumbent MPs and suspended a third. For several constituencies, the results of the primary elections had to be settled in the courts. By comparison, the BCP appeared cohesive and stable, and it was fortified by an electoral pact with the smaller Botswana Alliance Movement (BAM). With only one incumbent MP, however, the BCP was small and untested.

Analysis of constituency-level data shows that fully 40.3 percent of the constituencies either changed hands in the elections of October 2009 or could be considered marginal (Poteete, 2010).[3] The BDP lost five constituencies, but also won six new constituencies, for a net gain of one seat. The BDP even increased its vote share slightly, from 51.7 percent to 53.3 percent. The BDP actually benefitted from the factional conflict as the two sides competed for parliamentary representation (Poteete, 2010). The BDP won an overwhelming legislative majority, but the president only secured a clear-cut *factional* majority after he appointed four specially elected MPs and brought a few members of Barata-Phathi into his cabinet.

After the elections, the factional dispute simmered just below the surface. In parliament, BDP members associated with Barata-Phathi joined opposition MPs in calling for a constitutional review and criticizing a variety of government policies. Outside parliament, Khama's supporters in the BDP pursued disciplinary action against their rivals. Finally, on 20 March 2010, Barata-Phathi members convened a meeting and declared their intent to form a new political party.

The Botswana Movement for Democracy was formally registered and launched in May 2010. The public reception has been generally positive, especially among the urban youth. By the end of July, the BMD had become the official opposition with eight MPs (seven from the BDP and one independent). Defections to the BMD also threaten the BDP's majority in some localities. There has been no mass exodus from the BDP, however, and the BDP still has more than a two-thirds majority in the National Assembly. At least two MPs who joined the BMD in July had already returned to the BDP in early August. In the coming months, there is likely to be more movement in both directions.

Regardless of how many parliamentarians and councilors join the BMD, the split hurts the BDP. The BDP leadership appears divided on how best to respond to the situation. There is a lot of suspicion about the loyalty of members associated with Barata-Phathi and recurring calls for discipline. Yet the very existence of BMD creates more scope for criticism within the BDP by

[3] Poteete (2010) considers constituencies to be marginal if either (1) the margin between the winner and next closest candidate was less than 5% of the vote, or (2) the winner received less than 50% of the vote in a race involving three or more candidates.

undermining the effectiveness of disciplinary action. While it is too early to assess the likely electoral success of the BMD, there is little doubt that the government feels politically insecure.

1.2 STATUS OF DECENTRALIZATION REFORMS

Heightened financial pressure and political uncertainty affect both the substance of proposed decentralization reforms and their prospects. The desk study provides an overview of various local institutions, their legal basis, and their respective responsibilities (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010). This report focuses on proposed reforms related to the local councils and district administration.

The decentralization reforms currently under consideration flow from the Report on the Second Presidential Commission on the Local Government Structure in Botswana 2001, known as the Venson-Moitoi report. Tasked with reviewing all local authorities from the perspective of improving service delivery, the commission called for strengthening of the councils, for instance by entrenching them in the Constitution and providing greater financial resources to enable the councils to meet their responsibilities in the provision of primary health care and road maintenance. A number of recommendations involved greater devolution of authority. For instance, the report called for the introduction of executive mayors with the authority to implement council resolutions, elimination of the ministerial powers to appoint nominated councilors and to veto council by-laws, and more expansive responsibility for councils in specific areas, including primary education.

The government's formal response to the Venson-Moitoi report appeared in the Government Paper No. 1 of 2003. The government rejected almost all of the recommendations that would have enhanced the authority and autonomy of the councils. As summarized in Table 1, approved changes involve the rationalization of existing legislation and the development of new policies, a large number of reforms related to revenue generation and collection, a few measures to enhance the capacity of local councils, the creation of one new district council, the creation of new sub-districts and several new forms of deconcentration, and measures to enhance coordination across both central government ministries and local institutions. Overall, the accepted changes emphasize financial efficiency and deconcentration as a means of service delivery.

TABLE 1. KEY REFORMS APPROVED IN THE GOVERNMENT PAPER NO. 1 OF 2003

Legislative changes and policy development • Consolidate the Local Government (District Councils) Act and the Township Act; • Develop a cross-sectoral decentralization policy; • Amend the Local Police Act to include urban councils and make enforcement of council by-laws mandatory; and • Create a statutory basis for sub-districts and administrative authorities.
Economics, revenue-generation, and budgeting • Give councils responsibility for local economic promotion; • Review the need for economic regulation and licensing by councils; • Extend property rates to rural areas; • Allow councils to gazette by-laws without referring to the Minister when no rate increases are envisioned; • Set and adhere to a timetable for the Minister to gazette rate by-laws that involve rate increases; • Improve debt collection, billing systems, and procedures for revenue collection related to water utilities; • Intensify implementation of cost recovery measures; • Introduce penalties for local authorities that fail to meet accounting deadlines; • Reduce bureaucratic procedures associated with planning and budgeting; • Develop systems for more realistic cost estimates; and • Introduce a cross-billing system to facilitate resource sharing between central and local government.

Authority, resources, and functions • Continue the decentralization of primary health care from the Ministry of Health to councils; and • Transfer as many personnel functions as possible to the local level.
Structural changes • Establish Chobe District Council; • Implement the harmonization of administrative boundaries; • Appoint a sectoral coordinator from each ministry at the district level under the DC's office; • Appoint sub-council committees where sub-districts exist and provide them with adequate human and financial resources; • Expand the set of local structures to include administrative authorities and service centers; • Develop guidelines for the designation of areas as sub-districts, administrative authorities, or service centers; and • Support the development of peri-urban areas as "separate entities" designated as sub-districts, administrative authorities, or service centers.

Progress toward implementation has been uneven. The recommended creation of the Chobe District Council occurred in 2006. The Central District Council had introduced sub-councils on its own initiative several years ago (Meyer-Emerick, Mothusi & Molaodi, 2004). Sub-councils were established by a directive in all remaining districts with sub-districts earlier this year. In the past year, some district councils, including Kweneng, Central, and North West, have established administrative authorities. As discussed in this report, the councils are still figuring out how these new structures are supposed to work. In particular, both politicians and staff expressed a lack of clarity about the intended differences between sub-districts and administrative authorities.

Some of the approved changes related to revenue generation, collection, and budgeting have moved forward or will be addressed by proposed legislation, as discussed below. Other changes have been overtaken by events or stalled. For example, responsibility for water utilities is being transferred in phases to the Water Utilities Corporation (WUC). WUC will take over responsibility for the most profitable areas first, with the councils retaining responsibility for areas where billing systems are underdeveloped or water is provided as a social service. The North West district is one of the areas deemed less profitable, but the council is the process of introducing a pre-paid system for water in Maun that should enhance revenue collection. WUC is expected to take responsibility for water services in Maun once the pre-paid system is operational. Similar efforts to improve billing and collection are underway for other services, such as sewerage.

It seems that there has been little to no improvement in the transparency or efficiency of planning and budgeting. Discussions with council staff regarding fluctuations in projected budget items from year to year suggested that some figures are projected simply to make the budgets balance or to establish a claim to a particular revenue source, even where there is little expectation that the projections will be realized. In other cases, officials at the center revise district projections downward with little consideration of local conditions that informed the original estimates. Centralized approval procedures remain the norm, and continue to cause delays that give rise to cash flow problems and cost overruns. Even if some districts share resources across departments informally, no system of cross billing has been introduced.

Amendments of the Local Government (District Councils) Act and the Township Act in 2008 increased the term of office for mayors and deputy mayors to 2½ years and barred specially elected councilors from voting on the selection of the council leadership. The Ministry of Local Government (MLG) has drafted a Local Government Bill and plans to present it to the National Assembly in November 2010. If accepted, the new act will consolidate the Local Government

(District Councils) and Townships Acts, extend the terms of office for council chairs and mayors to five years, allow the introduction of property rates in rural areas, and define a formal role for the Botswana Association of Local Authorities (BALA).

In 2009, the government hired SKL International to draft a decentralization policy and a plan for its implementation. Whereas the proposed legislative changes only affect the councils, the decentralization policy will affect all ministries. The draft consultancy report was delivered in February 2010 and, at the time of writing, was under consideration by government.

There have been some changes, and attempted changes, related to district administration. Many ministries have appointed coordinating officials at the district level. Some have realigned their jurisdictions in response to a directive that called for the rationalization of administrative boundaries, although others have not. The new Public Service Act of 2008, which was enacted this year, vests responsibility for all personnel management in central and local government in the Department of Public Sector Management (DPSM). Previously, although personnel management had been centralized, local and central government employees were managed through two separate services. The past year has seen a centralization of procedures for hiring C-scale staff (entry-level professionals), but also a decentralization through delegation of the recruitment and hiring for D-scale positions (middle management).

Other recent changes involve recentralization. As such, they directly contradict the Venson-Moitoi report and complicate the development of a cross-sector decentralization plan. Centralizing reforms include the phased takeover of responsibility for water delivery by the WUC; the transfer of responsibility for primary health clinics from the councils to the Ministry of Health that is currently underway; the transfer of resource royalties related to tourism from the councils to the Ministry of the Environment, Wildlife, and Tourism in 2008-2009; and the planned transfer of responsibility for the education department to the Ministry of Education and Skills Development that was announced in May 2010.

None of the recent changes has involved the devolution of authority. Some changes, such as those related to the election of council chairs, enhance democratic accountability within the councils. Most, however, involve deconcentration.

The economic and political pressures confronting the government influence the pace and substance of proposals for decentralization reforms and their prospects. In the wake of the global financial crisis, the Government of Botswana faces unfamiliar financial constraints. The proposals to rationalize systems for billing and revenue collection and extend property rates to rural areas respond to the need to develop new sources of revenue. As the recent centralization of resource royalties related to tourism and the phased centralization of responsibility for water utilities make clear, the government is concerned with the generation of government revenues, but not with improvements in the financial autonomy of the councils. If anything, there is a tendency to centralize control over the most lucrative sources of revenue while leaving the councils with responsibility for the delivery of subsidized or free services.

The increasingly uncertain political situation reinforces a long-standing disinterest in devolution of authority while encouraging greater attention to service delivery. Although the BDP won a majority in most local councils in 2009, the opposition controls the Kgatleng district council and holds the balance of power on a few other councils. Defections to the BMD may hand a few

more councils to the opposition. Already, there is a BCP chair in Kgatleng district, a BMD mayor in Francistown, and a BCP deputy mayor in Selebi Phikwe.

Even if the councils have little formal power, councilors play a critical role in mobilizing political support for parliamentary elections. The monthly subscriptions paid by councilors represent an important source of financing for political parties, especially the BDP. The government may have an interest in keeping the councils dependent. It has no interest in devolution. Opposition parties in Botswana have long supported the devolution of power to the councils. They see the Local Government Bill as empowering the Minister of Local Government and are worried by the recent centralization of water, health, and other services. At its July congress, the BCP resolved to reject the Local Government Bill and develop alternative legislation that would restructure and empower the councils. Representatives of the BNF and the BMD have voiced similar views.

The political context makes it more difficult to achieve legislative reforms to improve revenue generation or service delivery without addressing the autonomy and authority of the councils. The BDP still has the ability to force its legislative agenda through parliament when the caucus votes in unison. Since the elections in October 2009, however, controversial proposals have prompted massive abstentions and defections on at least a couple of occasions. In sum, conditions are not favorable for legislative reforms. There is greater scope to pursue administrative reforms through directives. To the extent that administrative reforms improve revenue collection and service delivery, they may satisfy the government's immediate desire for decentralization.

2.0 INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

The desk study emphasizes the lack of devolution in Botswana and the government's preference for deconcentration and delegation (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010). Interviews with councilors, council staff, and officials in the district administration in five districts (Central, Chobe, Kgatleng, Kweneng, and North West) and two cities (Gaborone and Francistown) provided numerous examples that reinforce the conclusions of the desk study.

2.1 AUTHORITY

The central government, mostly through the MLG, provides policy direction to the councils on issues pertaining to governance, community development, social services, primary infrastructure provision, district development planning, coordination, policy formulation, and legislative reviews and development. Council decisions are subjected to both merit and legal reviews by the central ministries, particularly Local Government, Health, Education, Lands and Housing, and Finance and Development Planning. Council resolutions, for example, are subject to ministerial approval. All council by-laws are drafted by the Attorney General's Chambers and must be approved by the Minister of Local Government. A councilor from Gaborone complained that the by-laws governing food vendors can neither be enforced nor changed:

> A lot of Batswana are into food vending. The by-laws don't allow them to sell in the malls and open spaces. But, as politicians, people elect us. It is hard to enforce. … We can't change them. They are council by-laws, but to a certain extent they are national policies. Let me tell you how by-laws are developed. …. The Ministry of Local Government comes with by-laws. We are the implementers. (councilor, Gaborone City Council, July 2010).

Although the by-laws prescribe in clear terms the charges or fines that the councils can impose on people who contravene their by-laws, councils cannot set their own rates. Nor do the councils receive all of the money collected. Whenever people are charged or fined for contravening the by-laws, the money goes to the central government. This arrangement denies councils an opportunity to generate additional revenue. Thus, although councils can have stringent by-laws, they do not have the authority to collect money from people who contravene their by-laws.

Councils can propose development projects through the budget and planning processes, but the final decision regarding how much money can be allocated to them is made by the central government. The MLG mobilizes resources and transfers them to the local authorities (MLG, 2009b). Financial ceilings are set by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. Councilors find it frustrating to consult citizens and develop projects that address their needs only to be told that the projects cannot be implemented due to budgetary constraints.

Councils can decide on the best model to bring services closer to the people. For example, they can decide to divide their districts into sub-districts or establish administrative authorities and service centers. These structural changes are, however, subject to approval by the MLG.

Councilors, council officials, and district administration officials interviewed throughout the country see the councils as mainly implementing agencies of national policies and programs. Although some interviewees felt that local authorities are usually consulted when new initiatives are introduced, others contended that this was more a form of information dissemination, since what has already been determined by the center cannot be changed locally. Examples mentioned during interviews include changes to the food basket for the destitute, changes in the amount of money that councils must spend on each pupil at primary schools, and the introduction of constituency football (soccer) leagues and cultural competitions. The central government made these changes and councils were just instructed to implement them:

> We are an implementing organ. We are just delivering services. We are not anything like policy developers. We do not come up with regulations or anything like that. The fact is that we are not afforded the opportunity to develop policies, regulations, [or] laws. (councilor, Gaborone City Council, July 2010)

What is disconcerting for the councilors is that in most cases it takes the central government a long time after announcing a new program to release the funds needed to provide the new goods and services. In other cases, the resources provided are insufficient. When the programs fail to meet expectations, constituents do not understand why and tend to blame their councilors.

Councilors would like to adapt policies to local conditions:

> Policy should be by location. Policy should be guidelines, allowing for variation by location. We charge the same fees everywhere, but they should depend on the local economy (councilor, July 2010).

The councils cannot adapt national programs to local conditions, however, without approval from the center. In the case of social services, the Directorate of Social Services at the MLG is responsible for the development of policies for the social protection and empowerment of the destitute, orphans, elderly, and poor. Implementation of these policies is the direct responsibility of councils through lower structures such as village development committees (VDCs). The councils, however, have little or no authority to vary these policies to reflect local preferences. After Ipelegeng [a make-work program for the able-bodied poor] was extended to Gaborone, for example, the city council argued that the rates of pay were too low to cover the cost of living. Nothing was done until officials in the central government noticed that, despite significant unemployment in Gaborone, vacancies in the program were going unfilled. Pay rates and working hours have been increased in an effort to make the program more attractive, but these changes are subject to review after a trial period—by officials in the central government.

Centralized decision making slows local responses to critical situations. In response to natural disasters, for example, district commissioners (DCs) can only assist with the equipment that they have to save or assist affected citizens. The vote for national disaster funds is held and managed by the Office of the President. This arrangement makes it very difficult to respond promptly when nature strikes. As one official from Kgatleng explained,

> If there are floods within the district, for example, all that we can do is to erect tents for the affected people. The disaster fund is managed from the Office of the President and we can only be given money for food and other essential items after writing a savingram to request for its release. How can we respond promptly to the needs of people during a crisis when we are not in control of the much-needed financial resources? (official from Kgatleng district, personal communication).

Some of the people interviewed also indicated that the power of local authorities is determined by the president, permanent secretary to the president, ministers and their permanent secretaries. They argued that even though councils have always been important providers of essential services with very limited authority, the recent centralization of services such as water, health, and primary education indicates that the current administration intends to paralyze rather than to capacitate district and urban councils.

2.2 AUTONOMY

As stated in the desk study and elsewhere in this report, all four local authorities in Botswana, with the exception of district administration, have been created through Acts of Parliament rather than the country's Constitution (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010; see e.g., Hope, 2000). This basically means that they are mere appendages of the central government, as the Minister of Local Government and Minister of Lands and Housing can recommend to parliament to abolish them if the need arises. Their autonomy is limited due to heavy dependence on the central government for human and financial resources. This section illustrates the limited autonomy of the councils with examples drawn from field research.

2.2.1 AUTONOMY IN PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

The new Public Service Act, which came into effect on 1 May 2010, clearly demonstrates the councils' lack of administrative autonomy. Central and local government employees are now under one central government authority, the Directorate of Public Service Management (DPSM). Previously the Department of Local Government Service Management (DLGSM) oversaw recruitment, training, and transfer of all council officers. The DLGSM and now the DPSM has delegated some of these responsibilities to the councils. On the one hand, councils currently perform most aspects of human resource management (e.g., recruitment, promotions) except training. Earlier this year, councils were given the authority to recruit people up to the D2 salary scale (middle management positions). This change resulted in dramatic reductions in vacancy rates for these positions. On the other hand, the government centralized the recruitment of people for the C3 posts, which are usually held by new university graduates. The councils simply receive the officers that they are given. The government justified the centralized system on the grounds that it ensures that the councils do not give preference to the most recent graduates and leave behind individuals who had graduated and applied for positions earlier but have not yet been placed.

Despite the delegation of a number of human resource functions, autonomy of the councils is limited by their high fiscal dependence on central government for all programs, including the cost of capacity identification (the initial efforts to search for the right personnel, and once identified and in place, building their skills and techniques) and building and maintaining quality standards for the entire establishment within the councils. Every cost with respect to recruitment,

appointments, salaries, and staff welfare is paid for from deficit support grants from the central government. This means that councils do not control decisions on these matters. Thus, training plans, for example, may not match the desires and intentions of the councils. Some of the consequences of centralized decisions related to training are discussed in the capacity sub-section.

Personnel decisions that have been delegated to the councils are handled by council staff; the politicians are not involved. Even the council chairpersons and mayors do not have the authority to fire council staff. One council chair questioned the inability of the politicians to discipline council staff:

> I don't know why the chair can't say somebody is not performing and not renew their contract. Senior managers in parastatals can discipline the CEO without going to the Minister. It means the council can do it too. (council chair, July 2010)

All transfer-related issues are the prerogative of the DPSM, implying that it has the power to withdraw posts from one council and give them to other councils or other government departments without the consent of the affected agencies. In one particularly extreme example, an official was transferred from Chobe district after only a month, despite objections from the DC. Councils fear that centralization of personnel management will result in them losing some of their highly qualified staff to central government departments or to other councils. Such transfers definitely have a negative impact on performance when transferred officers are replaced by less qualified or less experienced officers.

In fact, centralization of the recruitment process is compromising the quality of services provided, particularly at sub-district level. In Letlhakane (Boteti sub-district), all of the departments are supposed to he headed by people on a D2 salary scale but are currently filled by divisional heads and field officers who are less qualified. In the absence of qualified department heads, the senior assistant council secretary must do some of the basic administrative duties that should be done at the departmental level. Even worse, the sub-district does not have a deputy assistant council secretary even though the post exists in the establishment. The current setup makes it impossible for the senior assistant council secretary to stay away from the duty station for a few days.

Similar situations occured in the newly established Maun administrative authority in North West district and in Chobe district when the new council was established in 2006. In Maun, district-level officials were instructed to reassign all of the junior staff to the Maun administrative authority while the senior staff is retained in the district headquarters. In this instance, the two sets of offices are separated by only a short stretch of road. There are morale problems, however, as junior staff feel that they have been demoted. The arrangement in Chobe posed more practical problems. The council was launched *before* new staff positions were fully established and filled. The council had filled some positions earlier this year, more than four years after it had become operational. As in Letlhakane, lack of staff—especially senior managers—limited the administrative capacity of the Chobe council.

All of the council officials interviewed about the new Public Service Act in Serowe (Central district), Letlhakane (Boteti sub-district), Maun (North West district) and Mochudi (Kgatleng district) were of the view that it will drain their coffers. First, it provides for the payment of overtime to all council employees irrespective of salary scale. Furthermore, the Act compels

councils to employ all of their casual laborers (who used to be paid a daily rate) on a permanent and pensionable basis. This means that councils must now pay terminal benefits, including leave days, to all of their employees. Elimination of the requirement for two years of work in order to qualify for maternity benefits also has serious cost implications. One personnel officer noted that the reduction of the probationary period is good for employees, but wondered whether industrial employees will complain when their working hours are extended to match those of other government employees.

2.2.2 FISCAL AUTONOMY

The history of decentralization in Botswana shows a consistent lack of fiscal autonomy for local authorities, councils included. The main problem faced by councils is lack of funds. Lack of funds impedes the establishment of new administrative structures (i.e., sub-districts, sub-councils, administrative authorities, service centers) and affects the operations of the councils negatively.

Local councils depend heavily on central government for both their capital (i.e., development) and recurrent budgets. As can be seen in Table 2, rural councils have well over 80 percent of their budgetary needs met from the grants from the central government. The urban councils, while slightly better, also receive around 70 percent of their development budget as grants from the central government.

TABLE 2. COUNCIL GENERATED REVENUE AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL REVENUE, 2005/2006–2009/2010

Council	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
RURAL COUNCILS					
Central	11.7	11.5	10.9	7.5	6.3
Chobe (MLG)	--	6.6	10.7	7.4	9.0
Chobe (DDP7)	--	*10.0*	*16.2*	*11.7*	--
Ghanzi	11.0	11.3	12.0	7.2	8.9
Kgalagadi	13.3	13.0	13.6	9.5	6.7
Kgatleng	11.8	10.4	10.9	11.3	8.7
Kweneng	12.4	12.0	10.5	6.1	6.8
North East	9.4	13.0	6.9	6.2	5.3
North West (MLG)	7.6	10.5	10.3	7.5	4.4
North West (DDP7)	*14.8*	*14.3*	*16.1*	*7.5*	--
South East	13.1	13.6	13.5	8.2	9.3
Southern	11.9	11.4	9.0	8.2	7.2
URBAN COUNCILS					
Francistown	27.6	25.3	26.4	18.7	18.5
Gaborone	36.1	39.9	37.2	25.6	26.8
Jwaneng	27.7	24.4	18.4	13.7	11.3
Lobatse	16.7	16.3	10.6	9.3	8.2
Selebi Phikwe	19.4	19.8	21.0	16.2	18.5
Sowa Township	14.1	13.7	14.2	6.6	14.5
TOTALS (LG data)					
Rural Councils	11.3	11.5	10.7	7.7	6.9
Urban Councils	28.1	28.9	26.4	18.1	19.1
All Councils	15.7	16.0	14.6	10.2	9.8

Sources:
Chobe (DD7): Republic of Botswana (2009, p. 204). Includes resource royalties from tourism for 2006/2007 – 2007/2008.

North West (DDP7): NWDC et al. (2009, p. 202). Includes resource royalties from tourism for 2005/2006 – 2007/2008.
Chobe (MLG), North West (MLG), and all other districts: Calculated from data provided by the Department of Local Government and Procurement, Ministry of Local Government.

The 2009-2010 Kweneng district council budget shows that the council was only able to raise a quarter of the service grants from the center. The council's development budget was more than P353,000,000, but the council could only raise around P22,000,000, leaving P330,000,000 to be covered by the central government. The Chobe district council had a development budget of P79,005,900. It raised only P5,799,460 million from its own sources and required revenue support of P73,205,440 to cover the deficit (Chobe district budget, 2009-2010). Heavy dependence on the center is common, especially among the rural councils, as seen in Table 2.

Councils in Botswana have a very thin revenue base. The main sources of council-generated revenues include property tax (rates) (urban councils only), interest on money deposited in bank accounts, rentals (e.g., staff housing), trade licenses, clinic fees, sewerage connection and service fees, abattoir fees, water charges, service levies (e.g., collection of garbage), trade licenses, and fines for by-law violations (Government of Botswana, 2001).

The underlying challenge for councils is the lack of viable sources of revenue that could improve their revenue-raising efforts. Charges for services have to be approved by the Minister of Local Government. Political expediency and the pursuit of equitable distribution of resources have resulted in a situation where councils charge fees which are far below the market rate. For example, all councils are compelled to charge a fee of P5.00 (about US $0.75) to provide medical assistance in clinics even though the cost of operating such facilities is very high. Councils are under instruction that no citizen should be denied access to medical assistance if they cannot pay the required amount. The determination of rates, taxes, and user fees is also subject to verification and approval by the ministry. Likewise, program and project ceilings for all budgetary items and the virement of funds across programs and projects all require ministerial approval (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010).

Some important potential or actual sources of revenues have been centralized. For example, whenever people damage council streetlights through careless or reckless driving, the money that they pay as admission of guilt goes to the central government coffers thus leaving the councils with no money to use to repair the damaged streetlight. The centralization of water and primary health care implies a loss of revenue sources, although these services have been heavily subsidized. The transfer of resource royalties paid by companies involved in the tourism industry from the councils to the Ministry of the Environment, Wildlife, and Tourism in 2008-2009 is a more serious blow.

Most of these revenue sources have a very low base. The Chobe district council's budget, for instance, shows that interest earned on investments has been the highest source of revenue. Even then, this particular source does not raise half of the entire revenue collected by the council (Chobe district budgets, 2009-2010, 2010-2011 & 2011-2012) and represents only 4.3 percent to 7.7 percent of total revenues (see Table 3). This situation is probably similar for most rural districts. In urban councils, tax and rates on Self-Help Housing Agency (SHHA) plots probably represent a higher portion of the total revenues.

As can be seen in Table 3, resource royalties from tourism was the single most important revenue source in the North West district council and has also been important in Chobe district.

Interestingly, the data on council revenues provided by the MLG do not include resource royalties as a source of self-generated revenue even though for years—according to respondents and data reported in the District Development Plans (DDPs)—the councils received it. This discrepancy in reporting makes it possible to compare the contribution of self-generated revenues to the total budget with and without tourism-related resource royalties for Chobe and North West districts for several years. Table 2 shows that, without resource royalties, the rural and underdeveloped North West district council looks like a particularly poor performer in local revenue generation. With resource royalties, however, the contribution of self-generated revenues to total revenues in the North West district council rivals that of the Lobatse Town council and Sowa Township. It is not obvious what alternative sources of revenue Chobe and—especially—North West districts can cultivate to compensate for the loss of resource revenues. Both councils still receive fees from domestic water users, and improvements in water billing are generating increased revenues, as seen in Table 3. When centralization of water utilities extends to these rural districts, however, they will lose this source of revenue as well.

TABLE 3. TOP THREE SOURCES OF SELF-GENERATED COUNCIL REVENUE AS PERCENT OF TOTAL REVENUES IN CHOBE AND NORTH WEST DISTRICTS, SELECTED YEARS

		Top revenue source		Second revenue source		Third revenue source		Top three sources
Council	Year	Source	%	Source	%	Source	%	%
Chobe	2008/2009	Interest	7.7	Staff housing	0.6	Water fees	0.4	8.7
Chobe	2009/2010	Interest	4.3	Staff housing	0.9	Resource royalties	0.5	5.7
North West	2005/2006	Interest	5.4	Resource royalties	5.2	Staff housing	1.6	12.2
North West	2006/2007	Resource royalties	5.9	Interest	3.9	Staff housing	2.0	11.8
North West	2007/2008	Resource royalties	8.9	Interest	4.6	Staff housing	1.4	14.9
North West	2008/2009	Interest	3.2	Water fees	1.5	Staff housing	0.8	5.5

Sources: Chobe: Actual income for 2008/10 and 2009/10 (Chobe District Budget, 2011/12).
North West: NWCD et al. (2009).

The shortfall is covered by the central government through the Revenue Support Grant (RSG), even though the funds are released in a piecemeal manner. In years when councils do make some savings, they are expected to deposit these into the General Fund. A council has discretionary use of up to 10 percent of its balance. The Chobe district council, for example, drew upon its General Fund to pursue infrastructure projects that would have stalled otherwise as a result of central government budget cuts. Expenditure of more than 10 percent of these funds requires permission from the MLG. Otherwise councils are also expected to use the General Fund to cover for any deficits they may incur in the years ahead.

The center has deprived the local councils of revenue sources, especially those that become valuable, and constrains the ability of the councils to increase the productivity of many of the remaining revenue sources. Even if it is true that local economies in most of Botswana would not support heavy taxation, it becomes difficult to accept central government claims about the limited capacity of the councils to generate their own revenues at face value.

2.3 ACCOUNTABILITY

The desk study identified several mechanisms of accountability (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010). Elections, public meetings, and the courts present potential mechanisms of downward accountability to voters. The party caucus system holds councilors upwardly accountable to the party leadership, while the nomination of councilors encourages upward accountability to the government. The desk study noted the existence of auditing procedures as mechanisms for financial accountability (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010). This report draws upon electoral data, interviews, and documents to elaborate on three points. The first presents an analysis of changes in the competitiveness of local elections and the implications for the effectiveness of elections as mechanisms of downward accountability, as well as comments on how the caucus system and nominations work to undermine the force of elections. Second, factors that influence the effectiveness of public meetings as a mechanism of accountability are considered. In the third, the arrangements that are in place to promote financial accountability are described.

2.3.1 POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH ELECTIONS

In theory, elections can enhance accountability by enabling citizens to reward councilors who represent them well, through reelection; and to punish poor representation at the polls. Realization of the theoretical benefits of elections depends upon (1) how free and fair elections are in practice, and (2) whether voters have a meaningful choice.

Even though general elections in Botswana are usually deemed to be free and fair, the playing field is not level. Limited circulation of the private media and pro-government bias of the state media makes it more difficult for the opposition parties to reach the electorate. They must rely on more costly forms of campaigning, such as door-to-door canvassing, outdoor advertising, and public rallies. The lack of public financing for political parties gives an advantage to the ruling BDP.

TABLE 4. UNCONTESTED COUNCIL SEATS AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ELECTED SEATS, 1966 – 2009

Council	1966	1969	1974	1979	1984	1989	1994	1999	2004	2009
RURAL COUNCILS										
Central	46.9	59.4	68.8	46.9	45.0	50.0	13.2	4.7	4.3	0.7
Chobe	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.0
Ghanzi	100.0	70.0	60.0	50.0	40.0	0.0	11.1	5.6	0.0	0.0
Kgalagadi	100.0	54.5	90.9	100.0	78.6	35.7	50.0	0.0	0.0	4.5
Kgatleng	14.3	7.1	0.0	0.0	6.3	6.3	4.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Kweneng	70.6	5.9	52.9	9.5	21.4	7.1	6.0	0.0	0.0	1.5
North East	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
North West	7.7	7.7	7.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
South East	38.5	7.7	30.8	7.7	14.3	7.1	0.0	5.6	0.0	0.0
Southern	72.0	40.0	16.7	8.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
URBAN COUNCILS										
Francistown	0.0	0.0	11.1	11.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Gaborone	75.0	0.0	12.5	0.0	7.7	0.0	4.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Jwaneng	--	--	--	--	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lobatse	37.5	0.0	25.0	12.5	11.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	0.0
Selebi Phikwe	--	--	66.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
AVERAGES										
Rural	50.0	28.0	36.4	24.7	22.8	6.8	4.7	1.8	0.4	0.7

Council	1966	1969	1974	1979	1984	1989	1994	1999	2004	2009
Councils										
Urban Councils	37.5	0.0	28.8	5.9	3.8	0.0	0.8	0.0	1.7	0.0
All Councils	46.9	21.0	34.0	18.9	16.0	4.4	3.3	1.1	0.8	0.4

NOTES: The data are based on the election reports following each election, 1969 – 2009, plus Gossett and Lotshwao (2008) for 1966. The Sowa Town Council is not included in this table because all members are appointed.

The choices available to the electorate have been limited in terms of both the number of candidates and the competitiveness of the elections. Some opposition parties have failed to field candidates in certain areas owing to lack of funds. Voters in some parliamentary constituencies and wards have had no choice at all. Table 4 shows that uncontested council elections were quite common in the early years following independence, especially in Ghanzi, Kgalagadi, and Central districts. Urban voters have generally enjoyed more choice, as have voters in North East, North West, and Kgatleng districts. The proportion of uncontested seats countrywide dropped sharply in 1969, following the formation of the BNF, and continued to decrease in the 1980s, as the BNF became a national political party. Since the BCP broke away from the BNF in 1998, neither party has presented candidates in all council wards. Nonetheless, at least two candidates have contested nearly all council wards since the mid-1990s.

TABLE 5. BDP ELECTED SEATS AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ELECTED SEATS 1965 – 2010

Council	1966	1969	1974	1979	1984	1989	1994	1999	2004	2009	Aug. 2010
RURAL COUNCILS											
Central	96.9	96.9	100.0	100.0	95.0	98.3	94.3	98.1	90.7	76.4	75.2
Chobe	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	71.4	71.4
Ghanzi	100.0	80.0	100.0	90.0	100.0	90.0	55.6	83.3	65.0	75.0	75.0
Kgalagadi	100.0	90.9	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	80.0	65.0	59.1	59.1	59.1
Kgatleng	57.1	*50.0*	92.9	78.6	93.8	56.3	**28.6**	57.1	***43.5***	**30.4**	**13.0**
Kweneng	100.0	94.1	100.0	100.0	96.4	100.0	74.0	84.0	71.2	74.2	66.7
North East	**28.6**	**28.6**	**28.6**	57.1	**35.7**	**35.7**	41.2	82.4	84.2	84.2	79.0
North West	53.8	53.8	69.2	76.9	70.0	70.0	*50.0*	75.0	63.2	64.1	56.4
South East	84.6	61.5	84.6	84.6	92.9	85.7	72.2	72.2	60.0	55.0	***45.0***
Southern	100.0	52.0	58.3	58.3	58.6	74.2	61.4	59.1	*50.0*	65.4	65.4
URBAN COUNCILS											
Francistown	**25.0**	**25.0**	55.6	66.7	30.8	61.5	**37.5**	87.5	84.2	57.9	52.6
Gaborone	87.5	*50.0*	100.0	87.5	**23.1**	**7.7**	**4.0**	**28.0**	**36.7**	70.0	60.0
Jwaneng	--	--	--	--	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	***42.9***	***42.9***
Lobatse	75.0	*50.0*	87.5	62.5	55.6	***44.4***	**9.1**	**18.2**	**33.3**	66.7	66.7
Selebi Phikwe	--	--	100.0	100.0	100.0	60.0	**0.0**	84.6	64.3	*50.0*	*50.0*
AVERAGES											
Rural Councils	80.1	67.5	81.5	82.8	82.5	78.9	61.9	75.1	67.4	64.8	60.1
Urban Councils	62.5	**41.7**	85.8	79.2	**41.9**	**34.7**	**10.1**	**43.7**	**43.7**	57.5	54.4
All Councils	75.7	61.1	82.8	81.7	68.0	63.1	**43.4**	63.9	57.8	62.8	58.6

NOTES: The data are based on the election reports following each election, 1969–2009, plus Gossett and Lotshwao (2008) for 1966. The column for August 2010 reflects the councilors who have left the BDP for the BMD according to two or more media sources; it does *not* reflect plans to leave the BDP revealed by councilors in interviews. Some of these individuals may later decide to return to the BDP. **Bold** indicates an opposition majority of elected seats. *Italics* indicate that control of council is determined by nominated seats. Underlining indicates that control of the

council depends on the results for pending wards that do not appear in the election report plus nominated seats; note that the averages include partial data from these councils.

Even where multiple candidates contest, council elections are noncompetitive in much of the country. As shown in Tables 5 and 6, the BDP consistently wins comfortable majorities of the elected seats on almost all rural councils. Important exceptions include Kgatleng district, and at least in some years, North East and North West districts. Over the past decade, the BDP's grip has weakened somewhat in South East, Southern, and Kgalagadi districts. The BDP initially enjoyed comfortable majorities on some of the urban councils as well, but the cities became opposition strongholds. Beginning in the 1980s, the BNF was as dominant on urban councils as the BDP was in the districts. Persistent factionalism has weakened the BNF and created an opening for the BDP to reestablish itself in urban areas. The BCP has also become an important player in urban areas. Urban elections are now highly competitive.

TABLE 6. COMPOSITION OF LOCAL COUNCILS IN 2006 AND 2009

A) LOCAL COUNCIL COMPOSITION FOLLOWING THE 2009 GENERAL ELECTIONS

Council	BAM/BCP	BDP	BNF	Other	Total Elected	Nominate Number (%)	Total	
RURAL COUNCILS								
Central	14	107	13	6	140	34	(19.5)	174
Chobe	2	5	0	0	7	2	(22.2)	9
Ghanzi	1	15	4	0	20	4	(16.7)	24
Kgalagadi	0	13	9	0	22	4	(15.4)	26
Kgatleng*	7	7	8	1	23	4	(14.8)	27
Kweneng	9	49	8	0	66	16	(19.5)	82
North East	0	16	0	3	19	4	(17.4)	23
North West	11	25	3	0	39	8	(17.0)	47
South East	7	11	2	0	20	4	(16.7)	24
Southern	1	34	17	0	52	12	(18.9)	64
URBAN COUNCILS								
Francistown	7	11	0	1	19	3	(13.6)	22
Gaborone	8	21	1	0	30	5	(14.2)	35
Jwaneng	0	3	4	0	7	2	(22.2)	9
Lobatse	0	8	4	0	12	2	(14.3)	14
Selebi Phikwe *	7	7	0	0	14	2	(12.5)	16
Sowa	0	0	0	0	0	7	(100.0)	7
TOTAL	74	332	73	11	490	113	(18.7)	603

KEY:

BAM/BCP	Botswana Alliance Movement/Botswana Congress Party. Formed an electoral pact in 2009 and merged under the BCP label in May 2010
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
BNF	Botswana National Front
Other	Botswana People's Party in North East. Independents in Central, Kgatleng, and Francistown.
*	Opposition mayor or deputy elected in 2009

B) LOCAL COUNCIL COMPOSITION FOLLOWING CREATION OF CHOBE COUNCIL IN 2006

Council	BCP	BDP	BNF	Other	Total Elected	Nominated Number (%)	Total	
RURAL COUNCILS								
Central	6	127	4	3	140	32	(18.6)	172
Chobe	0	7	0	0	7	1	(12.5)	8
Ghanzi	0	13	7	0	20	4	(16.7)	24
Kgalagadi	0	13	9	0	22	4	(15.4)	26
Kgatleng*	5	19	8	0	23	4	(14.8)	27
Kweneng	2	47	17	0	66	12	(15.4)	78
North East	0	16	0	3	19	4	(17.4)	23
North West	5	24	1	8	39	8	(17.0)	47
South East	3	12	5	0	20	2	(9.1)	22
Southern	1	26	23	2	52	10	(16.1)	62
URBAN COUNCILS								
Francistown	2	16	0	1	19	3	(13.6)	22
Gaborone*	3	11	16	0	30	5	(14.2)	35
Jwaneng *	0	0	7	0	7	1	(12.5)	8
Lobatse	0	4	8	0	12	2	(14.3)	14
Selebi Phikwe	5	9	0	0	14	2	(12.5)	16
Sowa	0	0	0	0	0	7	(100.0)	7
TOTAL	32	335	105	18	490	101	(17.1)	591

KEY:

BCP	Botswana Congress Party
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
BNF	Botswana National Front
Other	Botswana People's Party in North East. Botswana Alliance Movement (8) and an independent in North West. Independents in Central and Southern. One pending ward each in Central, Francistown, and Southern.
*	Opposition mayor or deputy elected in 2009

The dominance of the ruling party at the national and local levels since independence has enabled it to determine the pace and direction of development. However, the formation of the BMD has changed the political landscape in the sense that the number of opposition MPs and councilors has increased. The last column of Table 5 reflects changes in party affiliation by councilors that had been formally announced and confirmed in two or more media sources as of mid-August 2010. Additional defections are widely anticipated. During interviews, some BDP councilors revealed (in confidence) plans to switch affiliation in the near future.[4] As more of the councils become competitive, the value of elections as a mechanism for holding councilors accountable to the electorate *should* increase. Issues are now debated more vigorously even though the ruling BDP is still using its numerical advantage to reject motions tabled by the opposition.

Provisions for specially elected (nominated) councilors reduce the force of elections. The government justifies the nomination of councilors (and MPs) as a way of increasing the representation of historically disadvantaged groups and bringing in people with important skills. In practice, the vast majority of the nominees are BDP members. Of 101 nominees in 2004, only three (3.0 percent) were drawn from the opposition: S. Makhura (BCP) and J. Rasetshwane

[4] Councilors and MPs prefer to coordinate decisions and announcements regarding any changes in their party affiliation. In addition, the BMD is managing announcements of its recruits for strategic effect.

(BNF) in Kgatleng, and H. Mothei (BNF) in Gaborone (Nkala, 2004). Although the opposition's share increased to eight of the 113 nominees or 7.1 percent in 2009, it is still far below the opposition's share of the elected seats (32.2 percent). The government regularly nominates people who have been rejected at the polls, further reducing the effectiveness of elections as a mechanism for accountability (e.g., BOPA, 2004; Nkala, 2004).

Nominated members sometimes determine partisan control of the council, as indicated with italics in Table 5. Where the BDP has a majority, nominations can determine the factional balance of power. In 2004 and 2009, nominees were drawn disproportionately from the president's faction (Nkala, 2004; personal communications, July 2010). This factional bias dampens the effect of the current BDP split by making it more difficult to reverse the BDP's majority. Opposition councilors noted in interviews that, because councilors pay monthly subscriptions to their political party, the BDP also benefits financially from this arrangement.[5] By reinforcing the BDP's financial dominance, nominations indirectly reduce the competitiveness of elections, further constraining their effectiveness as mechanisms of accountability.

The council and parliamentary caucuses provide political parties with a platform where they can agree on strategies on how issues can be best debated and handled, but the caucuses have also been used to stifle democracy, as discussed in the desk study (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010). One councilor indicated that he had resigned from the ruling BDP because he did not like the manner in which things are done within his former party. As he stated,

> The interests of the people that I represent come before my personal interests. I consulted them before resigning from the party because they are the ones who make the final decision regarding who should represent them in council and in parliament. They are our bosses and we have to respect them (councilor, personal communication, 23 July 2010).

2.3.2 POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH PUBLIC MEETINGS

As representatives of the people, councilors are expected to call regular nonpartisan public meetings at the *kgotla* (the traditional meeting space) to appraise their constituents on issues discussed at council or parliament, progress made in terms of developmental projects, newly proposed government policies or programs, and other matters of public interest. The effectiveness of *kgotla* meetings as a mechanism of accountability is limited by low attendance. At least some elected officials are developing alternative ways of consulting with their constituents:

> If you call a *kgotla* meeting nowadays, 15–20 people—if there is good attendance—will show up. That's not good attendance! My MP [D. Saleshando, BCP] has devised a way of consulting and giving feedback. He visits institutions: the Gaborone Secondary School, the Princess Marina Hospital … That's the best way to reach people. (E. Mabengano, person communication, 13 July 2010).

Members of the VDCs, village extension teams (VETs), and the citizens at large usually liaise with councilors to ensure the implementation of development projects in their localities.

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[5] It is impossible to evaluate the significance of subscriptions from elected officials relative to other sources of financing. The law does not require political parties to disclose their financial sources and most donors prefer to remain anonymous.

Members of these two committees should be in constant contact with each other and the electorate. The chair of the VDC in Kasane Central (Chobe district), for example, reported that they work with the headman, the headman of arbitration, PTA, community home-based care committees, community-based organizations (CBOs), churches, and a variety of other organizations. They are an important link between citizens and councilors and provide a forum where the councilors can be asked to account for or explain any issue that affects citizens. Significant problems arise if either committee is not operational. In Kasane Central, for example, the VDC chair complained that the VET was not functional, and as a result, they sometimes were not informed about government plans and programs. Because the effectiveness of the VDC as an agent of the citizenry depends on the ability of the VDC members to understand the information presented to it, basic literacy levels can also be a problem.

2.3.3 FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

A number of processes/mechanisms have been put in place for the councils to effectively account for the grants they receive from central government. Each council has a treasury department that is the overall financial and budgetary unit. In addition, two central government bodies monitor local government accounts and ensure that councils' financial transactions meet central government requirements: the Local Authorities Public Accounts Committee (LAPAC), which is housed at the MLG headquarters, and the Auditor General's Office.

LAPAC, through a cadre of finance officers in the ministry, is responsible for council financing as well as their financial reporting to the center. LAPAC constantly reviews items that cut across ministries and ensures that the necessary consultations are done in accordance with central government financial regulations and ministerial guidelines (e.g., for the Ministries of Health and Education). Among other things, the unit is currently involved in transforming processes of how to transmit audit reports from the local authorities. It also ensures overall proper accounting by local authorities and acts as a support team for audit teams within local authorities.

The view of LAPAC is that there is need for central government controls since some local authorities receive almost 90 percent of their grants from government and most still fail to meet the deadline for financial reporting. Delays arise mainly as a result of the lack of skilled personnel in the relevant areas. As put by the Chief Finance Officer in MLG:

> When central government continues to provide this high percentage of funds to local governments, controls and regulation is not only inevitable but necessary … These are public funds and require strict adherence to government financial regulations (K. Moilwe, personal communication, 29 July 2010).

Audit committees at the local level assist management to put in place proper control measures on financial accountability, but so far are limited when it comes to enforcing compliance. As of the beginning of 2010, the chairpersons of local audit teams sit in LAPAC meetings as a way of upgrading and raising their appreciation of what is required. The stated intention is to have them ultimately replicate their experiences at the local level.

The Office of Auditor General has overall responsibility for government's financial accounting procedures, systems, and enforcement. In their dealing with councils, the office has identified a number of problems that necessitate continued central control. These include personnel who are not adequately trained, lack of specialized training for council treasury employees, and poorly

harmonized training (even though training is centralized, as discussed above). (The severity of these and other capacity issues are assessed in next section). The result has been weaknesses in keeping up-to-date records in the treasuries and failure to meet deadlines for submission of annual financial returns to the Office of Auditor General. Auditing councils is a challenge because of lack of data or delayed data which may affect budgetary planning.

Despite the above problems, the audited finances show that the majority of the councils get minor qualifications on their accounts, and that only occasionally a few may get serious qualifications or adverse opinions. Qualifications and adverse opinions are often a result of general misuse of transport in particular, although there are other forms of misappropriation as well. The accounts for most of the councils include incidents of unauthorized trips, disappearance of some items including borehole engines, tractors, and related machine equipment. The Office of the Auditor General points to these incidents to justify continued monitoring and auditing of the councils. The fact that most councils get only minor qualifications on their accounts, however, suggests that they are generally following financial regulations.

There is general consensus within both LAPAC and the Office of the Auditor General that the future requires more independent councils, which would generate enough of their revenues and have fully fledged treasuries with qualified staff that could perform duties currently undertaken by these two organs of central government. The key is for government to embark on a deliberate strategy of generating income for councils such as traffic levies, parking fees, and others. These could in turn influence the configuration of other sources such as income tax, in a way that balances both revenue collection by local councils and citizen's ability to pay across taxes.

Auditing of local councils is critical in providing data for budgetary and planning purposes and to that end, both the Office of the Auditor General and LAPAC continue to assist in the areas of appropriate training, and creation of viable revenue sources for councils. The intention is to ultimately have local councils account to their political organs at the local level in a more broad-based decentralization process, but then is that the intention of government?

2.4 CAPACITY

The desk study focuses on the limited fiscal capacity of the councils and issues related to training (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010). It notes that Botswana's councils are regularly characterized as having limited capacity, but that these claims are not backed up with up-to-date data. The early periods after independence were characterized by a high rate of illiteracy in the general population, which was reflected among the councilors, as well as acute shortages of trained and skilled personnel, particularly at the local level. Field research sought to gauge the extent to which problems of capacity persist. The qualifications of the councilors and council staff are evaluated first, and then the administrative capacity of the councils.

2.4.1 COUNCILORS

Although the caliber of councilors has improved on average with education levels in the general population, there is a lot of variation. The statutes do not define minimum qualifications and council candidates are recruited through their party structures, where qualifications for standing are neither standard nor strictly regulated. Consequently, in any council there is often a diverse mix of councilors in terms of educational background, age, experience, expertise, and skills. Among councilors are former drivers (sometimes from the councils themselves), brick layers,

farmers, teachers, accountants, sales managers, and business executives. There are primary school leavers, graduates, and degree holders. The diversity is endless.

After every election, the councils should mount seminars and workshops (as part of their permissive functions) to orient newly elected councilors on council operations and the role they are expected to play as elected representatives. This, however, is not a standing budget item and therefore councils offer such seminars/workshops only if they can source funding for them from somewhere. Councilors had mixed reactions to the training they had received. One appreciated the advice offered on how to manage public meetings. Another, however, wished that more time had been devoted to council standing orders and other procedural matters. BALA has produced a new handbook for councilors that covers procedural matters in great detail and should help address these sorts of needs (BALA, 2010). Training programs and reference materials, however, cannot address issues of basic literacy.

Some feel that the councils can be handicapped in having productive discussions and making informed decisions, depending on the makeup of any council at the time. On the other hand, several respondents observed that the less educated actually understand local concerns better and often deal with them more efficiently than some councilors with better formal qualifications. Formal qualifications are an especially poor indicator of effectiveness when comparing those serving for the second, third, or even fourth term with councilors who may be more educated but have just retired from jobs in the urban areas and lack local experience.

Some argue that the councils should not be granted greater financial or administrative authority as long as they include people who have limited formal qualifications or lack the managerial experience. Some advocate the introduction of minimum qualifications, such as the ability to read and write and communicate in English. Improving the conditions of service for councilors would attract better-qualified people. Councilors do not have a salary. Each month, they receive a base allowance of P4000 (roughly US $580) and a ward allowance of P2700 (roughly US $392), for a total of P6700 (US $972). Councilors also receive a sitting allowance of P179 ($26 per day). Councilors have been calling for a pension, but currently receive only limited terminal benefits. Even people who had been drivers complained that being a councilor “is not a well-paying job” (councilor, personal communication, July 2010). In principle, council meetings and constituency service leave time enough for other income-earning activities. In practice, most councilors had to give up their jobs and many had no other source of income. The Public Service Act of 2008 bars public servants from holding full-time political positions; this affects government drivers, parastatal employees, and teachers as well as officials working for central or local government departments. Private sector employees may also face a choice between their job and political office. A councilor from Gaborone observed that: “If you look at the financial incentives, you don’t want to be a councilor. It is something you do one time and then you go on” (personal communication, July 2010). The councils already attract many highly competent people despite the poor remuneration. Improvements in the conditions of service—better pay, but also office space for meetings with constituents—would attract more qualified individuals to serve as councilors.

2.4.2 COUNCIL STAFF

The Unified Local Government Service (ULGS) pursued a concerted program beginning in the late 1970s and early 1980s that has gradually improved the caliber and quality of employees of

local councils. The program included training; upgrading of most positions at councils; and improvements in the salary structures, employment conditions, and staff welfare. The program has had a stabilizing effect in terms of reducing staff turnover within key positions.

Most of the councils are content with the caliber of their staff. Many councils are now headed by highly qualified and experienced officers at the level of chief executive officers and heads of departments. The majority of the D-level officers (i.e., middle management) are degree holders, and some have graduate degrees as well. Most of the staff in C-scale positions have an associate or bachelors degree. There has also been tremendous improvement in specialized areas like accounting, civil and mechanical engineering, medicine, economic planning, and many others. Consequently, councils have greater capacity, not only to shoulder the responsibilities assigned to them by central government, but also to be proactive in their planning and budgeting.

Training remains a sore area for councils. Although generally satisfied with the content of the training programs, officials complained about their inability to set their own priorities. One personnel officer complained that "they take people with long experience, even those with two years from retirement, not somebody who can grow in the organization over time" (personal communication, July 2010). Some long-serving officers need to be retrained and absorbed into new positions. Councils were asked to absorb the old cadre of typists into new positions—especially in the secretarial positions, for example, but were not given the financial backing to retrain these officers or the latitude to design the type of training the councils felt was necessary. The result was that councils ended up with typists occupying secretarial positions who lack training in customer care and relations; members of the public complain about their attitudes toward clients.

2.4.3 ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY

Given the qualifications of local government officers, the interviewed officers in Kweneng district and Francistown are convinced that the councils are actually ready for a more devolved decentralization. They believe that they have the capacity to handle the associated responsibilities and make key decisions on financial, planning, and human resources matters. They point out that councils have already decentralized to the newly created sub-districts, administrative centers, and service centers. In their view, devolution will enhance the capacity of the newly created substructures.

Problems of administrative capacity arise in some districts and sub-districts because of vacancies. Among the councils visited by the research team, vacancies were particularly problematic in the Chobe, and especially, North West districts. The personnel officer in Chobe had recently been transferred from the Francistown city council and observed that, at 4.9 percent of the entire establishment (26 of 536 total established posts), vacancies rates in Chobe district were more than twice as high as in Francistown (estimated at 2 percent). The personnel officer for the North West district council did not have the vacancy rate for the entire establishment readily available, but underlined the severe shortage of technical officers. Only one of four established posts for engineers, for example, had been filled. Other officials noted that the shortage of engineers and other technical staff hampers project planning and implementation, contributing to delays and cost overruns. Respondents from other councils did not mention vacancies as a problem. Surprisingly, however, Gaborone had a vacancy rate of 13.1 percent in 2002 (Gaborone City Council et al., 2002, p. 184); it is not known whether the vacancy rate in

Gaborone has declined. Officials in Chobe and the North West districts argued that they have more difficulty attracting and retaining staff because there is no salary adjustment to compensate for less attractive conditions.

The central government ministries are still convinced that the current supervisory controls are necessary and should be maintained, particularly because government continues to be the main provider of funds to local authorities. Contrary to the assertions from the council staff, central government officers are convinced that local governments still lack the capacity to adequately handle their responsibilities, particularly when it comes to financial management and accounting. The Office of the Auditor General and the LAPAC secretariat are of the view that they are currently better resourced to control the management and accounting demands expected of councils. They believe that in this particular area, councils have neither the capacity nor the expertise that is available at the center, and that fiscal decentralization is still farfetched.

3.0 POLITICAL ECONOMY

3.1 POLITICAL INCENTIVES AND CONSTRAINTS: PROPONENTS AND OPPONENTS

The desk study identifies service delivery as the government's most important motivation in pursuing decentralization and argues that there is little evidence that the government has any interest in devolution (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010). The government and members of the BDP justify centralization as an appropriate response to the uneven distribution of economic opportunities. In their view, Botswana enjoys relatively strong national cohesion because it is highly centralized. The desk study also notes that bureaucratic turf battles present an obstacle to any reform of local government structures or decentralization more generally. Balancing the emphasis on the position of the government and the BDP in the desk study, this section elaborates on the opposition's support for decentralization. Arguments related to turf battles are addressed in the next subsection, to illustrate their role in the development of the planned decentralization policy. A return to the theme of decentralization as a source of national cohesion is presented in the conclusion.

All of the main opposition parties, including the newly formed BMD, support democratic decentralization. Their commitment to greater devolution of authority appears in party manifestoes, resolutions of party congresses, and public statements. Decentralization was not a prominent issue during the 2009 election campaign. In response to recent centralization of basic services and the draft Local Government Bill, the opposition's calls for greater devolution and structural reforms have become more insistent.

Even before its breakthrough in the 1994 parliamentary elections, the BNF controlled several urban councils (see Table 5) and was well aware of both the possibilities for empowerment through local government and the limitations arising from Botswana's system of local government and administration. In its *Social Democratic Programme* (SDP) of 1995, the BNF identifies devolution of power and decentralization of resources to local councils as one of 11 central components of the party's political vision (BNF, 1995, p. 8). In the SDP, the BNF promises to rationalize local government structures so that there would be a single elected local authority, eliminate the position of the DC and transfer responsibility for administrative coordination to the council secretary, enhance the financial and administrative capacity of the local authorities, and expand their political and financial autonomy (BNF, 1995, p. 17 - 18). The BNF's 1999 election manifesto also pledged to break up some of the district councils (BNF, 1999, p. 8). Although decentralization was not featured in its 2009 election manifesto (BNF, 2009b), BNF MPs introduced parliamentary motions calling for the elimination of specially elected councilors and the devolution of administrative and financial authority to the councils shortly before the elections (Botswana National Assembly, 2009). The party also reiterated these strategies in a revised version of the SDP prepared during the campaign (BNF, 2009a). In various documents, the BNF argues that empowering local governments would improve service delivery and strengthen democracy at the local level.

The BCP was established in 1998 following a split in the BNF and shares that party's commitment to democratic decentralization. In the opening paragraphs of its *Democratic and Development Programme (DDP) and Programme and Statement of Principles*, the BCP promises to "abolish the concentration of power in the presidency and devolve power to parliament and local government structures" (BCP, 1999b, p. 7). The DDP and the 1999 election manifesto express a general commitment to decentralization as part of a package of democratizing reforms (BCP, 1999a, 1999b). In subsequent manifestos, the BCP promises to entrench local governments in the Constitution (BCP, 2004, 2009); adhere to "the principle of 'subsidiarity'" (BCP, 2004, p. 45); review the system of districts "to make them more efficient and tribally neutral" (BCP, 2004, p. 45); introduce direct elections for council chairs and mayors (BAM & BCP, 2009); "clearly define the powers and responsibilities of Council Chairpersons and Mayors" (BAM & BCP, 2009, p. 30); and give councils financial autonomy (BAM & BCP, 2009, p. 30). At its party congress in July 2010, the BCP resolved to develop its own policy on decentralization that reflects the need to empower local authorities through devolution. In addition to constitutional and structural reforms identified in previous election manifestoes, it called for the elimination of specially elected councilors and the transformation of existing sub-districts into fully fledged districts. The evolution of the BCP's position suggests it is motivated primarily by a commitment to participatory democracy and secondarily by expected improvements in service delivery.

The BMD was formally registered as a political party in May 2010. A draft of the party's platform is circulating among BMD activists but has not been finalized or formally adopted. In other words, the BMD does not yet have official policy positions or priorities. Its membership is also fluid, which means that its ideological identity is in flux. Both the draft BMD platform and public statements by members of the BMD executive committee, however, call for further decentralization. The draft platform discusses local government reforms as part of a comprehensive restructuring of state institutions to promote service delivery (BMD, 2010, p. 16). It joins the established opposition parties in calling for directly elected executive mayors or chairs and more resources for local governments (BMD, 2010, p. 16). It also suggests structural reforms to improve coordination between various state institutions, including local and central government, and the inclusion of the mayors and premiers as ex officio members of parliament (BMD, 2010, p. 17). Even if the BMD abandons some of these specific proposals, the leadership appears committed to decentralization as a general goal. The BMD has an incentive to support decentralization in that it can expect to benefit from any empowerment of the councils. Already, the mayor of Francistown has joined the BMD. Depending on the number of councilors who switch parties, the BMD—either on its own or in coalition with other opposition parties—could gain control of other councils (see Table 5).

In the past, the political dominance of the BDP has been so complete that the other political parties did not have to worry about having to act on their promises. With the heightened competitiveness of the 2009 elections and the ongoing split of the BDP, the political situation is highly fluid. A change of government in 2014 (or 2019) is not inevitable; it is possible under the first-past-the-post electoral system for the BDP to retain a legislative majority even if its share of the vote falls below 50 percent. On the other hand, a change of government can no longer be ruled out. Already, some opposition leaders are at pains to present themselves as preparing to govern. It is possible that, once a party (or coalition of parties) moves out of the opposition and takes control of the central government, past support for decentralization will wane. There are

ambiguities and contradictions in the public positions adopted by the various opposition parties. The relative emphasis that each party gives to democratization versus service delivery as the motivation for decentralization suggests varying degrees of commitment to devolution as opposed to deconcentration. In addition, as discussed in the conclusion, support for some degree of centralization to ameliorate regional inequalities cuts across party lines.

Based on experiences in Latin America, O'Neill (2003) argues that decentralization in presidential systems is more likely to occur when the president (1) cares about the future political success of the party, (2) is uncertain about the party's future electoral prospects nationally, and (3) is confident about the party's future electoral prospects at the sub-national level. Despite some questions about past leaders of the BNF, all of the current leaders seem committed to developing their political parties. Even if the BDP loses power, it has many fervent supporters; it seems more likely to respond to defeat by reforming itself than to collapse altogether. Consequently, whenever a change in government occurs, the next party in power will probably be more confident that it will maintain or expand the number of local councils that it controls than that it will be to achieve long-term control over the central government.[6]

3.2 THE DECENTRALIZATION SEQUENCE

The desk study notes that administrative decentralization preceded fiscal decentralization and that there has been no meaningful political decentralization (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010). The incomplete sequencing of the different dimensions of decentralization has strengthened the central government and prevented the emergence of localities as rival poles of political authority (compare Falleti, 2005). The desk study also discusses the decentralization sequence in terms of the policy development process and highlights the many steps at which decentralization may stall, both during policy development and during implementation. Below, the sequencing of different forms of decentralization and centralization over the past two years, since Ian Khama ascended to the presidency are outlined and analyzed, followed by an illustration of the obstacles to democratic decentralization during the process of policy development with reference to the planned cross-sector decentralization policy.

3.2.1 A CONTINUING EMPHASIS ON ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

Since Ian Khama became president in April 2008, the government has embarked on a wide variety of reforms to government structures and processes. Several of these reforms have involved mostly administrative and fiscal *centralization*. The centralization of water, clinics, and some aspects of primary education are discussed in the desk study (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010) and elsewhere in this report. During research in the North West and Chobe districts, the assessment team learned that the resource royalties from tourism have been taken away from the councils and are now paid to the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife, and Tourism. These administrative reforms have financial implications in that the councils will no longer receive water levies or clinic fees, and have already been deprived of resource royalties.

Over the past year, sub-councils were extended to all sub-districts and administrative authorities and service centers were introduced. These administrative reforms involve administrative and

[6] Currently, the BDP is still more confident of its control over the central government and more threatened at the local level. The BDP may become more supportive of decentralization if this assessment changes.

financial decentralization in the sense of deconcentration. The establishment of the Chobe district council in 2006 (before Khama become president) could be considered political decentralization, although the Chobe area already had elected representation on the North West district council and the new Chobe district councils has no greater political authority. Consequently, even this structural change involved mostly administrative deconcentration. The very process of introducing these reforms was highly centralized as directives from the executive initiated the changes. Although the use of directives to introduce administrative changes is not inherently noteworthy, there was unusually little advance consultation. In interviews, councilors and representatives of civil society complained that they had learned of some of these changes via the media.

There has been considerable talk of decentralization but little movement. Although the government has not yet circulated the draft decentralization policy, the priority given to improving coordination and service delivery (see next sub-section) suggests that it will involve a mix of deconcentration and further centralization. The Local Government Bill is not a decentralizing reform, as discussed below.

Overall, the sequencing of these various reforms might be characterized as simultaneous administrative and fiscal centralization, followed by limited forms of administrative and fiscal deconcentration. Botswana shows no signs of deviating from its past trajectory during Khama's administration.

3.2.2 POOR INTER-MINISTERIAL COORDINATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE DECENTRALIZATION POLICY

Interviews suggest that progress toward a cross-sector decentralization policy has been slowed by poor coordination at the ministerial level. The Venson-Moitoi commission in 2001 recommended development of a cross-sector decentralization policy and the government endorsed it in the 2003 white paper. The stated goal is to improve coordination across local institutions and central government departments, in part by clarifying the respective roles of the various local institutions and their relationship to each other. The Venson-Moitoi commission recommended:

(1) Designation of the Ministry of Local Government as the lead ministry responsible for the implementation of development activities at the local level (Government of Botswana, 2001, p. 151),
(2) Elevation of council chairs and mayors to the status of executive mayors with the authority to implement council resolutions (Government of Botswana, 2001, p. 35),
(3) Operation of land boards "under the guidance of" the councils (Government of Botswana, 2001, p. 78), and
(4) Restructuring of district administration to strengthen the coordinating authority of the DC, to be renamed as the Secretary for District Administration (Government of Botswana, 2001, pp. 108-109).

The government rejected the recommendations concerning executive mayors and the relationship of the land boards relative to the councils, but agreed to develop a cross-sector decentralization policy and strengthen the coordinating authority of the DC (albeit with no change in name) (Government of Botswana, 2003). Thus, the decentralization policy is unlikely to empower local

authorities, but may raise the stature of the MLG. Other ministries can be expected to resist any effort to enhance the authority of the DC or the MLG.

The government contracted a Swedish consulting firm, SKL International, to develop a comprehensive decentralization policy that cuts across all government ministries. The National Reference Group, an inter-ministerial steering committee chaired by the Deputy Permanent Secretary of Local Government, oversees development of the policy. The National Reference Group rejected the initial inception report on the grounds that it was improperly formatted; a revised version was accepted in 2009. SKL International submitted its final draft report in February 2010. The National Reference Group asked to provide additional comments to the consultant, and as of early June 2010, was awaiting their response.

As described in the desk study, it is not unusual for policy development in Botswana to unfold over a period of several years (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010). The slow process poses problems, however, because "other ministries are not waiting for the [decentralization] policy" (senior official in the MLG, confidential personal communication, June 2010). In fact, as described in the context section, several ministries have introduced recent centralizing reforms that run counter to the goals of the decentralization policy and complicate its development. Judging from the minutes of its recent meetings, the National Reference Group includes representatives from the MLG; the Office of the President; BALA; the Ministry of Agriculture; the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning; the Ministry of Information, Science, and Technology; and the DPSM. The National Reference Group does not include several important stakeholders within government, including ministries that have recently introduced centralizing reforms, but also the ministry responsible for the land boards. The minutes also reveal that some ministries and departments are formally part of the board but fail to attend regularly or send junior officers who lack the authority to make binding decisions for their units. It is not known whether the National Reference Group is flawed because of a lack of foresight or reflects the refusal of other ministries to cooperate with a policy that threatens their authority *within* the central government. In any case, progress on the decentralization policy is not likely unless and until a broader array of stakeholders within the central government is brought on board.

3.3 INSTITUTIONAL ARENAS: THE NATIONAL ARENA

The desk study discusses the implications of the financial crisis and electoral politics in motivating the government to pursue further deconcentration and delegation to improve service delivery while avoiding devolution out of a fear of losing power (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010). The country context section of the current report provides more background information about the global financial crisis and important recent changes to the political landscape. Here, we look more closely at the debate surrounding the proposed Local Government Bill.

One of the recommendations of the Venson-Moitoi commission was that the Local Government (District Councils) Act and Town Councils Act should be consolidated into a single Local Government Act. The MLG has now proposed a Local Government Bill that seeks among other things to consolidate the two parliamentary acts. The bill also seeks to extend the tenure of council chairpersons and mayors to five years and giving them one name; empower the Minister of Local Government to declare any council seat vacant on account of either repeated absenteeism or prolonged illness that renders the councilor "ineffective"; give the minister power

to dissolve any council under specified circumstances; and allow rural as well as urban councils to collect property taxes.

The debates surrounding this bill go beyond the actual proposed changes. Numerous respondents felt that stakeholders (particularly local councils) were not sufficiently consulted. At the central government level, the draft bill was presented to department directors in the absence of their juniors, whose input would have been invaluable. The ministry first involved the councils by calling the political and administrative heads to Gaborone and presenting them with a draft of the bill in almost a complete form. The council leadership had no time to consult with their colleagues for deliberation and establishment of consensus on what issues to review and include in the new bill. Likewise, the political representatives could not consult with their constituents or other stakeholders such as civic organizations. Shortly before the field research for this report, the cabinet toured the councils to present the bill. Interviewed councilors representing the BDP, BNF, and BCP in all districts questioned the consultation process. One councilor recalled the meeting: "[The assistant minister] said he had fought for these things to be changed even when he was a councilor. He was very determined" (BDP councilor, personal communication, July 2010). Another observed that, "the minister, when he came to consult … someone can deduce this is a finished product" (BCP councilor, personal communication, July 2010).

With the exception of BALA, civil society was not involved in the Bill's development and has not been involved in the consultation process in a formal manner. The program manager for the Botswana Council of Nongovernmental Organizations (BOCONGO), for example, learned about the bill from a televised debate. (Civil society's role is discussed in more detail below).

The limited nature of consultation is seen as perpetuating the dominance of the central government in setting the agenda and direction of the decentralization process. This confirms the view held by some that decentralization in Botswana has always been driven from the center, with little regard for the concerns, views, or expectations of the local authorities.

On the substantive aspects of the bill, there is general discomfort among councils, particularly the politicians. Almost all of the councilors interviewed strongly oppose the proposed powers for the minister and the five-year term of office for chairs and mayors, whereas the extension of property rates to rural areas is welcomed.

The current term of two and a half years was introduced by the Local Government (Amendment Act) of 2008 and only went into effect after the 2009 elections. Those who welcome lengthening the term to five years argue that it would align the term of office to the cycle for development plans and strategies, and would give the local political leaders ample time to plan and implement their visions for the development of their areas. Councilors from Central and North West districts, however, contend that the five-year period should not be rigid. The councilors prefer to decide, based on the strengths and weaknesses of the available candidates, the number of years that they can serve. Proponents of the change see it as well intended and point out that the bill provides for a recall of the elected leader in the event he/she falls out of favor with his/her colleagues. However, the provision for a recall requires the support of a two-thirds majority vote of the council. As one BDP councilor pointed out, it would be much more demanding to organize such a broad coalition to oust a sitting chair. Opponents worry that in practice it will be impossible to remove an incompetent mayor or council chairperson.

Concern about aligning the planning cycle with the term of office is more prevalent among the administrative personnel of councils and in the central ministries, although it was also expressed by the president of BALA. Some councilors appreciate that a five-year term offers more time to "acquaint oneself with the office" (E. Magengano, personal communication, 13 July 2010). Some councilors support the longer term, but only if the mayor or chair is directly elected and empowered:

> I am not comfortable with the five-year term for mayors. The mayor is elected by councilors. The mayor is not powerful. Why? I would be comfortable with five years if the mayor were directly elected. (BDP councilor, personal communication, July 2010).

Another debate is with respect to the powers vested in the minister to declare a council seat vacant based on extended illness or non-performance. A couple of councilors agreed that councilors should be removed under the stipulated conditions and expressed no problem with empowering the minister to do so:

> I agree with that because, without any push from any politicians, from somebody who is not there, it is not good. … A decision should be taken to find somebody who can take up the position and push things (councilor, Chobe district council, personal communication, 27 July 2010).

The president of BALA expressed similar sentiments and added that the proposal does not deviate much from provisions in the existing legislation:

> It is controversial because people don't understand what is in the Act already. .. Now, if a councilor misses three meetings, he can be dismissed, although it has never been done. (M. Moruakgomo, personal communication, 16 July 2010).

Most councilors, however, view this provision as cynical and open to abuse. They argue that councilors are elected representatives, and if anyone is to recall them, then that should be the electorate and not another politician (see also Molaodi, 2010). As a councilor from Gaborone asked, "How can the government pass a motion of no confidence against a mayor that it did not elect?" (councilor, Gaborone City Council, personal communication, July 2010). Several councilors found the proposal offensive in light of constitutional arrangements that allow specially elected MPs to become cabinet members without any mandate from the electorate. Some argued that, in a political landscape such as Botswana's, where political patronage seems to be taking root, it is dangerous to have a minister yield those powers as he/she could use them to destabilize opposition-held councils.

Others add that performance should not be evaluated solely with reference to attendance at council meetings: "Sometimes they may not attend meetings, but they are very near. They are available at the ward. People see them on a daily basis and meet their needs" (councilor, Gaborone City Council, personal communication, July 2010).

There are also concerns that declaring a councilor's seat vacant on the basis of illness after only six months is inhumane, especially compared to the current arrangement whereby one would have to miss three consecutive meetings, which spans a period of nine months, to have one's seat declared vacant.

Most councilors had similar objections to another provision of the bill, which empowers the minister to dissolve dysfunctional councils. Councilors across the political spectrum called instead for councils to be entrenched in the Constitution. Those who acknowledged that dissolution might be required, perhaps in response to serious maladministration, felt that such decisions should be made by the electorate.

The introduction of property tax for rural councils has received a positive response from politicians and administrators alike. This is seen as a long overdue move that would help councils augment their revenues. The only concern with respect to this aspect of the bill is that, to broaden the tax base and possibly increase in the revenue accrued, there should be more variations of the tax with respect to categorization of the types of property and appropriate tax rates for each. Others wondered whether the government would be willing to risk the electoral fallout of introducing property rates in rural areas even if formally empowered to do so.

The general feeling is that the bill represents a missed opportunity for more far-reaching reforms or even a step backward. If the councils had more input, the result would be a broader and more radical bill. The councilors would like to see local governments entrenched in the Constitution and the introduction of executive mayors, as has been propounded by the local authorities through BALA. This thinking runs across the main political parties.

3.4 INSTITUTIONAL ARENAS: THE SUBNATIONAL ARENA

The desk study underlines obstacles to decentralization arising from the sub-national level, including the loss of sitting allowances for councilors, the risks of being blamed for poor service delivery, and turf battles (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010). Some of the sub-national responses to decentralization reforms are discussed in this section.

The creation of lower levels, such as sub-districts, administrative centers and service centers has had a number of implications and effects. The first is somewhat self-defeating in the form of loss of allowances for councilors. While most councilors yearn for more decentralization to these lower-level units, they may have not been ready for the associated changes in so far as allowances are concerned. Council sittings at district headquarters have been longer and therefore yield substantial benefits in councilors' allowances. Decentralizing further is expected to reduce the duration of meetings, and thus the sitting allowance for councilors (but see discussion below). They treat it as loss of income. As compensation, some councilors argued for increasing their allowances.

The power to make decisions at lower levels also entails greater accountability. Deconcentration diverts the blame associated with poor service delivery from the district headquarters to individual councilors and sub-district staff. Some councilors welcome this decentralization and embrace all the responsibilities that come with it, arguing that they want to account directly to their electorates and prove their leadership mettle (Kweneng & Francistown councilors). However, concern was also raised by central government officers that some politicians seem to misunderstand this devolution for total autonomy from the district headquarters. Some officials in central government even suggested that it might be sources for ethnic-based conflicts if not carefully implemented. It was also suggested that in areas where the concentration of councilors is along party lines, this may increase polarization within the same district if the district council chairperson is of a different political party from sub-districts and service centers that might be controlled by other political parties. Currently, patronage and polarization of political parties

seem to be gaining ground. Some worry that, if people wrongly associate decentralization with the bad aspects of the current political developments, it may jeopardize the decentralization reforms.

Most respondents in the districts, however, generally accepted that councils should have more sub-districts and administrative authorities and increase their functionality to ease the load on district headquarters. Furthermore, the establishment of these lower levels should be done by the councils themselves as they are capable of deciding on the most effective and efficient ways of service delivery in their localities.

3.5 INSTITUTIONAL ARENAS: THE CIVIL SOCIETY ARENA

The desk study discusses the general expansion of the nongovernmental organization (NGO) sector over the past two decades (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010; see also Carroll & Carroll, 2004), identifies national-level organizations with an interest in decentralization, and comments on the role of traditional authorities. It also notes the lack of information about the involvement of local-level civil society in debates regarding decentralization.

The Venson-Moitoi commission consulted with both national- and local-level civil society. During its preliminary investigations, the commission met with experts from academic and professional institutions: the University of Botswana, the Botswana Institute of Administration and Commerce, and the Botswana National Productivity Center. It conducted a tour of the country that included the *kgotla* meetings with the general public; meetings with local authorities; and meetings with VDCs, VETs, and, in a few locations, other village-based institutions. In Gaborone, the commission consulted with the Botswana Confederation of Commerce, Industry, and Manpower (BOCCIM), the Botswana Community-Based Organization Network (BOCOBONET), BOCONGO, BALA, the Botswana Women Coalition of Nongovernment Organizations, the Botswana Youth Council, the Botswana Manual Workers Union, Botswana Unified Local Government Service Association (BULGSA), and representatives of political parties.

To get a better sense of civil society's involvement in the current debates surrounding the Local Government Bill and development of the decentralization policy, we interviewed representatives of BOCCIM, BOCONGO, BALA, Kasane Central VDC, and a cultural organization from the North West district. Three general observations emerged from our interviews.

First, there are important differences in the involvement of civil society in the development of the Local Government Bill and the decentralization policy. It appears that the consultation with civil society during the development of the Local Government Bill was unusually limited. By comparison, although development of the decentralization policy has not progressed very far, organized civil society is already involved.

Second, there are significant differences in the involvement and influence of different forms of civil society. Of the organizations covered by our study, BOCCIM clearly had the best access to government decision makers and exercised the most influence over policy. BALA also has very good access and appears to exercise wield some influence over a more narrow range of concerns. The government works with the other organizations, but their influence appears to be more limited.

Third, despite these differences, the overall sense is that civil society has a very limited role in the debates surrounding decentralization and local government structures. Most NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs) are not very well informed about issues of local government structures. For the most part, issues related to decentralization are not on the agenda of these organizations. As the program manager for BOCONGO admitted, "Even on our side, we have not done enough to demand that consultation. It is something we need to work on. Nobody stopped us from getting that information" (N. Kalake, personal communication, 15 July 2010).

These three themes can be seen in a comparison of the roles played by BOCCIM, BOCONGO, and BALA:

- BOCCIM represents the interests of the business sector and has influenced numerous public policies. BOCCIM conducts research on issues that affect their members and make submissions to the government on how things can be done without jeopardizing the activities and interests of the business sector. The discussion of topical issues starts at the ministerial level and any issue that cannot be resolved is taken to the biannual High-Level Consultative Council (HLCC) for further discussion. The HLCC is chaired by the President, which gives it credibility and legitimacy. The influential role played by BOCCIM can be seen in the government's positive responses to its advocacy for the establishment of the Local Enterprise Authority (LEA), the drafting and adoption of the country's Vision 2016, the sale of halaal foodstuffs in grocery stores, and the setting of the alcohol levy at 30 percent instead of 70 percent as initially suggested by President Khama. To date, however, decentralization has not been a priority for BOCCIM. If BOCCIM should develop an interest in decentralization, its point of view would reach the upper levels of the government.

- Other NGOs are less influential. It is standard practice in Botswana to organize workshops and seminars to consult with civil society as part of the policy development process. The government works with established national-level NGOs and umbrella organizations to organize these events and identify relevant stakeholders who can participate. For example, BOCONGO worked with the MLG to organize a stakeholder workshop in May 2010 on decentralization as a way to improve service delivery. Despite being policy advocates, most of the NGOs—even with BOCONGO as the umbrella body—have not been able to influence public policies in a significant manner. In most cases, the proposals that they make to the government are not taken into consideration when new public policies are formulated and implemented. Just like local authorities, NGOs are usually informed about what the government intends to do. Respondents complained that what the government calls consultation rarely involves more than the communication of information. Civil society demands consultation in the sense of complaining about the failure to consult, both as organizations and as individuals calling in to radio shows or writing to the papers. Even as a strategy for communication, there is a sense that the current system of consultation needs to be improved.

- Unlike other NGOs, BALA has taken a keen interest in local government reforms and is very much involved. BALA is an association of local governments and local government professionals. Its membership includes the councils, as corporate bodies represented by the council chairs/mayors and secretaries, as well as individual councilors. BALA does not have the autonomy from government normally associated with civil society. BALA depends heavily on the government for financing. Its current and former presidents were nominated

councilors. It works as a partner with the central government, for example, in the development of training materials (BALA, 2010) and programs for councilors.

Despite its dependence on the central government, BALA has been a vocal advocate for local government reforms that would empower local governments, including the inclusion of councils in the Constitution and the introduction of executive mayors. It is a member of the United Cities and Local Governments in Africa, the global United Cities and Local Governments association, and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGC). BALA appeals to international best practices and protocols, such as the CLGC's Aberdeen Agenda of 2005, Auckland Accord of 2007, and Freeport Agenda of 2009 to push for greater devolution and more financial support for local councils.

BALA is very involved in the current decentralization reforms and appears to have significant influence. The Assistant Minister of Local Government, Kenntse Rammidi, a former president of BALA, led the tour of councils to explain the Local Government Bill and was accompanied by the current BALA president. The draft Local Government Bill formalizes some aspects of BALA's role vis-à-vis the central government. BALA also has representation in the National Reference Group that is overseeing the development of the decentralization policy.

In many respects, however, BALA's role seems more like that of a corporative body engaged in partnership with the central government than an independent body that is lobbying government. Neither does BALA represent civil society: "BALA is not a BOCONGO member. It has a separate constituency and mandate" (N. Kalake, personal communication, 15 July 2010).

4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The desk study discusses two forms of variation: (1) spatial variation in the size of the districts and structural changes introduced to ease management of the largest districts; and (2) sectoral variations in the extent of decentralization, as illustrated through a comparison of wildlife management and water delivery (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010). It also identified several negative lessons from Botswana: the recentralization of essential services, the practice of justifying recentralization in the name of better management and capacity building, and problems associated with overlapping jurisdictions.

The team organized its research activities in-country to enable assessments of three issues: the creation of the Chobe district council, the creation of sub-councils and other new forms of deconcentration, and responses to the challenges of urban and peri-urban development. First, the challenges associated with urban and peri-urban development are discussed. Then, in the following sub-section, comparative lessons are drawn from the field research regarding (1) the challenges of uneven development between eastern and western Botswana, and (2) the implications of differences in district size for service delivery and political representation. The chapter concludes with reflections on (1) interactions between decentralization and national cohesion, and (2) deconcentration as a constraint on devolution.

4.1 CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH URBAN AND PERI-URBAN GROWTH

The desk study noted that urban and peri-urban growth has given rise to a variety challenges that are found in metropolitan areas around the world, but are relatively new for Botswana (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010). To get a better sense of how these challenges are being met, in-country research included two urban councils (Francistown and Gaborone) and district councils with significant peri-urban development (Kgatleng and Kweneng). Respondents from Gaborone confirmed that they are struggling with a mismatch between demand for urban services that extends beyond their jurisdiction and resources—whether self-generated or allocated by the center—that are based on the population within the city boundaries. This section draws attention to differences between the urban and rural councils, suggesting the limitations of a standardized approach to local government. It then highlights some of the challenges arising from the interaction of centralized urban and peri-urban planning with local government structures.

The Local Government (District Councils) Act and the Town Councils Act provide for standard functional responsibilities for all councils irrespective of whether they are urban, rural or peri-urban. Urban councils have had additional functional responsibilities that required added management challenges. The urban councils, for example, were to implement the Self-Help Housing Agency (SHHA) program and allocate plots to the low-income earners in towns as well as managing a loan scheme designed to assist qualifying clients with construction of these houses in the designated low-income areas. This meant that there has to be an agency within the

councils dealing with this responsibility. For a long time, the scheme was only implemented in towns. Only recently has it been rolled out to the peri-urban areas and to larger rural villages like Maun (North West district). Responsibility for the administration of SHHA extended the human resource requirements for these councils as they needed to have rate collectors and plan assessors and inspectors for effective program monitoring.

Although the Local Government Bill, if approved, would allow the extension of property rates to rural councils, and thus to peri-urban areas, it is easier for urban councils to collect rates. Different land tenure systems operate in rural and urban areas. Restrictions on the type of land ownership and lease arrangements available in urban and rural jurisdictions have implications for the ability of councils to manage developments in these areas.[7] Difficulties arise, for example, in the evaluation of property and enforcement of payment. The next several paragraphs explain how centralized procedures for planning, the National Settlement Policy (NSP), the land tenure system, and local government structures interact and affect responses to urban and peri-urban growth.

The system for urban and peri-urban planning interacts with local government structures in various ways. The Town and Country Planning Act authorizes the Minister of Lands and Housing to designate planning areas to facilitate their development (Government of Botswana, 1980). The Act mandates the preparation of development plans for planning areas, as well as the regulation of development by the Town and Regional Planning Board. The Act requires different standards and regulations for management of land, developments and associated matters in urban and peri-urban areas. All urban areas have been designated as planning areas, and until 1989, planning for the urban councils was done directly by two central government departments: the Department of Town and Regional Planning (DTRP) and the Department of Survey, Lands and Mapping. The goal is to ensure well laid out infrastructural developments such as roads, sewage, landfills, water pipes, the electrical grid, and telecommunications lines, among others.

Implementation of the Town and Country Planning Act is framed by the NSP. The NSP was adopted in the mid-1980s in response to the growth of urban centers like Francistown and Gaborone and the associated need to acquire more land from neighboring tribal areas, especially around Gaborone; it was revised in 1998. The NSP categorized towns, cities and all settlements in Botswana and specified the kinds of services to be provided in the different types of settlements. Areas formally recognized as urban and peri-urban are entitled to more modernized facilities and services. This, of course, had the added impact of speeding up urbanization and exacerbating the challenges associated with high rates of rural-urban migration. The NSP also put in place necessary planning controls and standardized planning codes and regulations (Government of Botswana, 1986).

Some areas have been designated as urban or peri-urban areas in the settlement schemes or as urban planning areas despite being classified as tribal or communal land.[8] When communal and freehold land coexist in one area, as is the case in Mogoditshane, people sometimes try to take advantage of the two tenure systems. Although freehold land may be sold by the owners on the

[7] See Kalabamu (2000) for an overview of the land tenure regime that is unusually attentive to urban land tenure and management.

[8] We use the terms as equivalents.

open market, communal land cannot be sold legally and transfers are administered by the land boards. Land may shift from one tenure system to the other, but very strict controls are in place to govern such changes in designation. The high demand for land in peri-urban areas and impatience with the backlog of applications pending with the land boards have encouraged sales of tribal land and attempts to change from tribal to private ownership of land, resulting in serious land problems. Although a commission of inquiry was instituted in 1991 to curb illegal sale of land and associated corrupt practices in Mogoditshane, there have been recurring land scandals in urban and peri-uban areas.

Some planning areas cut across political and administrative boundaries. The Greater Gaborone Plan, for example, encompasses parts of Kgatleng, Kweneng and South East districts. Councilors within Gaborone support a more integrated approach to urban and peri-urban development and administration, although they preferred the incorporation of peri-urban areas into Gaborone. The Kgatleng district chairperson, however, complained that the Greater Gaborone Plan, which was prepared by the DTRP, infringes on the authority of the council. Furthermore, he felt that poor planning was giving rise to social problems that affected all of Kgatleng district. Underestimation of the growing demand for urban land on the part of the central government encourages land speculation in peri-urban areas, including southern Kgatleng.[9] District authorities—the council and the land board—have to deal with the inequitable land distribution and displacement caused by poor planning by the center.

Many respondents argued that the myriad problems faced by the urban and peri-urban councils could be addressed by developing rural areas so that they can become areas of choice for settling. Provision of basic services is key in this regard; roads, electricity, water and communication systems are critical. Stronger local government structures would provide a stronger foundation for accelerating rural development.

4.2 THE CHALLENGE OF UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT

Most of the infrastructure developments in Botswana are concentrated in the eastern part of the country. Good rainfalls and fertile soils have long attracted people to eastern Botswana. The railway line and the A1 highway which connects Botswana with South Africa and Zimbabwe has also attracted higher rates of settlement for decades. More recently, the rapid growth of Gaborone in the south east, Francistown in the north east, and major villages like Kanye, Molepolole, Mochudi, Mahalapye, Serowe, and Palapye have further increased the proportion of the population in the east. As noted above, the NSP has reinforced this process of rural-urban migration.

Unfortunately, the western part of the country is still lagging behind in terms of physical infrastructure even though the government is making a concerted effort to develop it, as discussed elsewhere in this report. A significant portion of western Botswana falls within the Central Kalahari Game Reserve and the Kalahari Desert. Very arid conditions support lower population densities, which makes it difficult to promote development. Wealth is concentrated in eastern Botswana, especially in Gaborone and the adjacent South East and Kgatleng districts; in Francistown and the adjacent North East district; and the wildlife-rich Chobe district (CSO,

[9] See Magang (2008) for an insider's account of the interaction between underestimation of urban growth and land speculation in the 1980s and 1990s.

2008). By contrast, in the rural sub-regions of western Botswana, poverty affects more than 40 percent of the population (CSO, 2008).

It is difficult to attract and retain personnel precisely because these districts are very rural, very poor, far from the more populated eastern part of the country, and lacking in many modern conveniences. Worried that they will be posted in a field office in a village with no electricity, many people reject postings in the Ghanzi, Kgalagadi, and North West districts. Others come but leave as quickly as they can. Of the districts visited by the research team, the North West had the highest vacancy rates. Of the staff with whom we spoke (including informal conversations), more than half had been in the district for less than a year. Respondents in Serowe (Central district) and Kasane (Chobe district) stated that the councils nearer to cities and towns are in a better position to attract qualified people. Therefore, despite the centralization of human resource management, the main challenge for the western districts is attracting and retaining qualified staff. One of the lessons that emerged from our research was that centralization of personnel management has failed to live up to the promise of ensuring adequate staffing in more remote and less well-resourced districts.

4.3 THE CHALLENGE OF LARGE DISTRICTS

Successive reviews of local government structures in Botswana, including the desk study (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010), have commented on the dramatic differences in the territorial expanse and population of the districts in Botswana. There is a broad consensus that the largest districts are unmanageable. Their vastness increases travel costs, impeding service delivery and political representation. The largest councils are also unwieldy. As seen in Table 7, three councils—Central, Kweneng, and Southern district council—have more elected representatives than the National Assembly. The sheer number of councilors and the diversity of conditions in the areas they represent present difficult choices between representation and efficiency.

TABLE 7. KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF LOCAL COUNCILS IN BOTSWANA

Council	Territory (km^2)	Population in 2001	Councilors (2009)
RURAL COUNCILS			
Central	142,093	510,532	174
Chobe	20800	18,258	9
Ghanzi	117,910	33,170	24
Kgalagadi	105,200	42,049	26
Kgatleng	7,960	73,507	27
Kweneng	31,100	230,335	82
North East	5,120	49,399	23
North West	109,130	124,712	47
South East	1,780	60,623	24
Southern	26,470	171,652	64
URBAN COUNCILS			
Francistown	79	83,023	22
Gaborone	169	186,007	35
Jwaneng	100	15,179	9
Lobatse	42	29,689	14
Selebi Phikwe	50	49,849	16
Sowa	159	2,879	7
TOTAL:	570,162	1,680,863	603

Sources: Area and population: CSO (2010); Number of councilors: IEC (2009) and MLG (2009a).

NOTES:

- The CSO data differ from other sources for some jurisdictions. CSO figures do not include the population and territory of the towns as part of the surrounding districts, whereas other sources sometimes do. This accounts results in the discrepancy for Central district, for example.
- There is a discrepancy of 1252 km^2 between the territory reported for Chobe by the CSO and other sources, including BALA brochures and the Chobe District Development Plans. We report the lower CSO figure. The discrepancy may reflect the overlap of administrative and political boundaries between Chobe and the North West.

Central district is the largest, both in terms of territory and population. Ghanzi, North West, and Kgalagadi districts also have quite large territories. On the other end of the spectrum, South East, North East, and Kgatleng districts are the most compact. The North East, South East, and Kgatleng are peri-urban districts with relatively high population densities, whereas Chobe is the least populous district. Due to differences in the sizes of the districts and their distance from the capital city, it follows that the demands made on the councils by citizens, their financial and personnel needs, as well as their ability to deliver services are not the same. We comment on the implications of differences in district size based on our observations in two of the largest districts (Central and North West) and one of the smallest districts (Kgatleng).

Although its territory pales in comparison to Central district, the North West district has very difficult terrain, characterized by deep sands and the Okavango delta. It is the only district where government officials have to use three modes of transportation – road, air, and water – to reach settlements. The North West deviates from the nucleated settlement pattern found in most of the country; fully 87 percent of the settlements have fewer than 250 residents (NWDC et al., 2009). As such, they fall below the threshold for official recognition as settlements and do not qualify for government services such as post offices, clinics, and schools. Consequently, much of the district is considered "remote." Access to government services and markets is limited, as is access to modern amenities such as electricity, flush toilets, or cell phone networks. Poverty is pervasive.

If the needs of the districts are immense, the conditions make them more difficult to meet. Holding council meetings and consulting with residents requires extended trips. Councilors complained about having to travel to Maun. Staff members strongly dislike the need to travel on boats and ferries to reach some settlements. Even if they recognize their importance, they try to limit their participation in such trips. Difficulties in attracting staff mean that the district does not have the full complement of engineers or planning officers. Vacancies and overstretched staff mean that project designs and implementation are regularly delayed. The officials in Gaborone who approve cost estimates do not seem to understand that distance from urban centers and the difficulty of the terrain raises the costs of everything. When the council tries to make allowances for higher cost of cement, for example, their estimates will be slashed in Gaborone. Not surprisingly, the North West has a poor record of project implementation. Perversely, because the formula for budget allocations takes past performance into account, the district is punished financially for delays that arise at least in part from inadequate staffing and the under-estimation of costs by officials in Gaborone.

Unlike the North West, the Central district council has neither a serious shortage of manpower nor serious problems in attracting and retaining staff. All of the sub-districts are closer to urban centers (compared with the North West), thus making it easier for them to get building materials, tools, etc. The main challenge is that of bringing services closer to the people given the vastness

of the district. For the central government, the problem is primarily one of costs associated with travel and sitting allowances. For citizens, the need to travel long distances to the administrative headquarters to apply for permits or deal with other administrative matters is both costly and a disruption. The deconcentration of many services, as discussed further below, has addressed these issues well and has been embraced by officials in Central districts. The council has also introduced mobile service centers where different stakeholders—such as insurance brokers, Local Enterprise Authority (LEA), Citizens Enterprise Development Agency (CEDA), commercial banks, central government departments and others—can interact with citizens and provide them with services.

Smaller districts are easier to manage. No part of Kgatleng district, for example, is more than 150 km from Mochudi, the administrative center, and most wards are within 30 minutes drive from Mochudi. Travel is much less of a hurdle, whether for citizens seeking services from the local authorities, councilors who have to attend meetings and consult with their constituents, or local government officers engaged in consultations or extension work. The Council Secretary and the District Commissioner are closer to the people and can respond promptly if the need arises. According to officials within LAPAC, the smaller size of the district has also contributed to prudent management of financial resources.

Our field research suggests that both district size and uneven development affect the relative difficulty of the administrative and developmental challenges of local government. The next two sub-sections examine two responses to the challenges of large districts: the establishment of a new district council in Chobe and of new deconcentrated structures in several districts.

4.4 LESSONS FROM THE CREATION OF THE CHOBE DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Chobe district council was officially established on 1 April 2006 by excising territory from the North West District Council (NWDC) and transferring seven elected councilors and one nominated councilor from NWDC to the new council. Its territory includes the Chobe National Park and forest reserves and its relatively small population is concentrated in eight villages. Thus, for purposes of service delivery, the district is quite compact. Commercial farming and tourism put Chobe among the districts with the least severe poverty (CSO, 2008).

The creation of the Chobe district council presents two key lessons. First, there is a consensus that the benefits of the new council far outweigh the costs. The overwhelmingly positive experience provides support for breaking up other large districts. Second, most of the transitional costs occurred because the council was established before expanded staffing and physical resources were in place. In principle at least, these sorts of costs could be reduced should additional councils be established elsewhere in the future.

Advocates for the creation of a separate Chobe district had long complained about the distance between the sub-district's headquarters (Kasane) and the NWDC headquarters (Maun). Maun is actually further away (about 600 km) than Francistown (about 500 km), and the quality of the road between Maun and Kasane is very poor. Councilors and staff in both Maun and Kasane observed that the creation of a separate council in Chobe had improved administrative efficiency and political representation by reducing the need for travel between the two villages.

Respondents also felt that the pace of development in Chobe had accelerated since the council had been established.

Respondents identified many benefits arising from the compact size of the district's territory and small number of councilors. Officials boasted that all of the roads between settlements are either paved and are in the process of being paved. The small size of the Chobe council and the relative homogeneity of conditions within the district's territory resulted in shorter and more focused council meetings. Council meetings in Chobe last no more than three days, compared with a week or longer in other districts.

Neither councilors nor staff in the North West district had any serious regrets about the loss of territory, population, or responsibility following the creation of the Chobe district council. One councilor noted that they had benefited from interactions with councilors from Chobe and would lose the opportunity to learn from them about different responses to similar challenges. Otherwise, the change was seen as highly beneficial for the residents of Chobe and having little to no effect on the NWDC. If anything, respondents felt that the creation of the Chobe district council had lightened the load slightly for the North West. Even so, the NWDC continues to struggle with the vastness of its territory. The NWDC is still the third largest district in terms of territory and the distance between Maun and some parts of the Okavango sub-district is comparable to the distance between Chobe and Maun. The most difficult terrain lies within the jurisdiction of the Okavango sub-district. Commenting on the difficulties arising from these conditions, some respondents expressed an interest in hiving off Okavango sub-district as a fully fledged district.

Although the establishment of the Chobe district council has had generally positive consequences, it did not solve all problems and there were noteworthy transitional problems. The council was established before a full complement of new staff positions had been established or the necessary supporting infrastructure was fully in place. Most of the new offices and staff houses were built *after* the council had been established. A similar sequencing affected the acquisition of equipment, such as vehicles. For years, the absence of senior staff handicapped the council's operations. Like other western districts, Chobe has had difficulty attracting and retaining staff.

The situation is improving with time. Most positions have been filled, new offices and staff houses have been constructed, and the council is gradually accumulating vehicles and other equipment. Even today, however, some positions remain vacant, in part because the district cannot provide housing. Construction of additional office blocks is still ongoing as well. While some of these transitional problems may be inevitable, it seems likely that their severity could be reduced. In particular, it would have been helpful to have more senior staff in place – and accommodated adequately—from the outset.

Some of the benefits flowing to Chobe are also transitional in nature. With the expansion of government offices and staff housing, Chobe is experiencing a construction boom. As the pace of construction slows, the flow of resources from the center will also diminish. That transition may give rise to new challenges, such as increased unemployment.

There is some confusion about the alignment of political and administrative boundaries between Chobe and North West districts. The Constitution of Botswana charges delimitation commissions with ensuring that constituency borders do not cut across district borders. In this case, however, a

new Chobe parliamentary constituency was created before the Chobe district council existed. Confusion arises because two wards within the Chobe parliamentary constituency—Khwai/Savuti and Mababe/Sankuyu—lie within the administrative territory of the NWDC. The arrangement generated tensions in 2007, when the chair of the NWDC addressed public meetings in the Khwai/Savuti ward (BOPA, 2007). An informal solution has been developed pending the next delimitation commission in 2011. Currently, the councilor for Mababe/Sankuyu sits on the NWDC, while the councilor for Khwai/Savuti attends sessions of both the NWDC and the Chobe District Council. The next delimitation commission should align Chobe's political and administrative borders. One lesson to be drawn, however, is that future delimitation commissions should consider the possibility of new districts based on current sub-districts as part of its decision-making process.

Overall, the creation of a new district council in Chobe has been well-received. Other sub-districts can be expected to point to Chobe's experience to justify their own conversion to full district councils. Some might argue against generalizing from Chobe's experience on the grounds that the area has a much lower incidence of poverty than any of the current sub-districts (CSO, 2008). Chobe's relative wealth might reduce the difficulty of recruiting staff. Even Chobe, however, depends mostly on the central government for funding. If anything, the creation of additional districts might facilitate the flow of resources to the least developed parts of the country.

4.5 LESSONS ABOUT SUB-COUNCILS AND ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITIES

Chobe is the only new district established since independence. The government has preferred to address the challenges presented by large districts through changes in administrative structures within the existing districts. Sub-districts were established in the 1980s and Central district introduced sub-councils within its sub-districts in 1998. Earlier this year, directives extended sub-councils to all of the other sub-districts and established administrative authorities and service centers throughout the country.

The sub-councils are essentially committees of the full councils, constituted by the councilors who represent wards within the sub-district. Councilors elect their Chairpersons for the sub-councils, who play a role similar to that of the Council Chairperson. There are also Chairpersons of the various sub-committees dealing with different issues such as education, health, community services and others. Administratively, the sub-councils are headed by Senior Assistant Council Secretaries.

According to official statements, the sub-councils and all of the sub-committees operating in the sub-districts may make decisions about how things can be done in villages or settlements that they serve. In other words, members may table and debate motions on different issues (be they developmental, social, cultural or otherwise) relating to the areas under their jurisdiction.

However, they cannot pronounce on policy issues as those are handled at the district headquarters. There is some uncertainty about the boundary between matters of policy and implementation and, as discussed below, respondents disagreed on the extent to which sub-council decisions are subject to review by the full council. All of the sub-committees report to

the main committees whose meetings are convened at the headquarters. Likewise, the full council meetings bring together all of the councilors from all of the sub-districts.

Central district has seven sub-districts and sub-councils. Kweneng has one functional sub-district and two which are being set up. Since the creation of the Chobe district council, there is only one sub-district and sub-council under the NWDC, but there are plans to establish a second sub-district and sub-council in Sehitwa. Even though a proposal to establish a sub-district at Mmathubudukwane in the Kgatleng district has already been approved, it has not been established owing to lack of funds. The current chair of the Kgatleng council opposes the planned sub-district and associated sub-council. In his view, Kgatleng is just too small to need a sub-council. If sub-councils are a response to the unmanageable scale of some districts, this condition does not hold in Kgatleng.

The existence of numerous sub-districts in Central district means that different budgets have to be prepared and then consolidated to come up with one budget for the entire district. After approval of funds by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, the MLG releases the same to the headquarters which will in turn pass it to the sub-districts. The sub-councils in Central have been given the mandate of handing projects worth P5 million and below. The ceiling has been attributed to lack of capacity as some of the senior positions in the sub-districts have been vacant for a long time as indicated with regard to Letlhakane (Boteti sub-district). Similar ceilings apply to sub-councils in other districts.

Administrative authorities operate in the same manner as sub-districts and sub-councils in terms of personnel, facilities, and responsibilities. They have been established in the administrative headquarters of the various districts, including Maun (NWDC), Molepolole (Kweneng district), and Serowe (Central district). Because of budget shortfalls, the establishment of more administrative authorities in places like Palapye (Central district) has been deferred. Respondents had difficulty explaining the difference between a sub-district/sub-council and an administrative authority. An official with the NWDC finally concluded that “maybe it is just the name” (personal communication, July 2010). Operationally, there is no obvious difference. As for service centers, they are established in villages to make it easy for citizens to access services as well as pay their bills without being forced to travel long distances. While still awaiting the approval of funds, the Kgatleng district council has decided to establish a service center in Mmathubudukwane and Artesia. Another is planned for Oodi. Funding has delayed the introduction of service centers in Central district as well.

Some of the people interviewed at the Central District Council and the NWDC viewed the establishment of sub-districts, administrative authorities and service centers as an important step in the right direction. A councilor from the Okavango sub-district was particularly enthusiastic. He only has to travel some 80 km to reach the sub-district headquarters (Gumare) as opposed to more than 300 km to attend meetings in Maun. Furthermore, the sub-council consists of only 10 councilors; “it is a good number for getting into discussions” (councilor, NWDC, personal communication, July 2010). Likewise, a councilor involved with the Maun administrative authority appreciated the ability to attend to local matters without having to wait for a meeting of the full council.

Many respondents, however, including some who appreciate the benefits of these structures, contend that they make the chain of command too long. Councilors and staff in the NWDC complained that they discussed the same matter twice. People unhappy with a decision at the

sub-council level are raising objections during the full council meetings. The central government expected the new arrangement to produce cost-savings by shortening the time spent in meetings and the associated travel and sitting allowances. Because of the repetition of material in council and sub-council meetings, however, several councilors and officials observed that there has been little to no reduction in costs. One council chair claimed that repetition is inherent in the structure, because only decisions of the full council have legal force. The Deputy Council Secretary for the NWDC, however, thought that the standing orders of the council could be amended to give legal force to decisions by the sub-councils and administrative authorities, as is already the case for substantive committees.

There has been some discontent regarding the designation of areas as administrative authorities. In Kweneng district, for example the MLG created an administrative center within the headquarters, Molepolole. In the view of officials in the district, it could have been established elsewhere as the residents of Molepolole can be serviced adequately from the main offices. This move has instead delayed the operations of other key sub-districts and sub-centers in the district, such as the Sojwe/Lephepe and Mogoditshane/Thamaga areas, all of which are currently serviced from Molepolole. Respondents in the NWDC expressed similar views regarding the Maun administrative authority.

The inclusion of additional structures, in the view of some respondents, may also result in the Council Secretaries being detached from issues that directly affect citizens as the day to day interactions will now be between the leaders at the service centers and the citizens as well as between the administrative authorities and citizens. This arrangement in their view is not good as the Council Secretaries are the ones held accountable for the performance of the entire district council.

In view of the foregoing, most respondents strongly feel that there should only be the council headquarters and different service centers focusing on service delivery. The sub-councils and administrative authorities are seen as an inadequate and costly response to the challenges of large districts. Furthermore, there was a suggestion that some of the existing sub-districts must be converted into fully fledged district councils supported by service centers so that the needs and demands of the citizens can be attended to promptly. They were mindful of the fact that calls for the conversion of sub-districts to fully fledged district councils in Central district is likely to be misconstrued as a division of the district into different tribal authorities headed by different Paramount Chiefs. We take up this concern below.

4.6 FINAL QUESTIONS AND ISSUES

Botswana's approach to local governance balances elected local institutions and deconcentration of administration with highly centralized financial management and political-administrative decision-making. From the perspective of the government and BDP activists, centralization has played a critical role in nation building. They argue that, if Botswana is relatively cohesive and ethnic tensions are relatively subdued, it is precisely because centralized management by successive BDP governments has prevented differences in resource endowments from becoming entrenched. We conclude this report with an assessment of this argument and with some reflections on the implications of financial decentralization for macro-economic performance and revenue generation and deconcentration as a constraint on devolution.

We argue that, given the entanglement of districts with traditional authority structures, Botswana's approach to local government does affect national cohesion. Centralization, however, has not prevented uneven development. We have seen that, even as urban Botswana has prospered, rural areas, particularly in western Botswana, have been left behind. National cohesion could be enhanced by developing more effective systems for redistributing resources. Redistribution of financial resources, however, need not preclude devolution of authority. We reflect briefly on the implications of financial decentralization for macro-economic performance and revenue generation. Redistribution and fears about ethnic mobilization justify a centralized system of government that has important political benefits for the government. We conclude with some reflections on these benefits, and particularly on the role of deconcentration in reinforcing central authority.

4.6.1 THE ENTANGLEMENT OF DISTRICTS AND TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY STRUCTURES

Various structures – sub-districts, sub-councils, administrative authorities, and service centers – have been established in the largest districts to reduce the number and length of meetings and lower costs while improving representation and service delivery. As discussed above, these structural changes have had some positive effects but do not fully resolve the problems confronted by the largest districts. The seemingly obvious solution of breaking up the largest districts has been avoided almost entirely. Only one new district has been established since independence. In this case, Chobe already had its own district administration, land board, and tribal administration; the council was only new structure. The idea of breaking up the largest districts has been mooted by opposition political parties, as well as some councilors and staff in large districts like the North West. The creation of further districts is not, however, on the government's agenda. Reconfiguration of Botswana's districts appears to be held hostage by the fear that doing so will threaten national cohesion by antagonizing traditional leaders and their supporters.

The local government structures adopted at independence may be seen as a compromise between the government's desire to supplant traditional authority structures as part of the process of consolidating state power and the realization that traditional authority structures could not be dismantled entirely given their broad popularity (personal communications, July 2010; see also Masire, 2006; Poteete, 2009a). At independence, the colonial-era tribal reserves were transformed into districts and a variety of legal changes reduced the formal power of *bogosi* (see Poteete & Mothusi, 2010; Poteete, 2009a). The councils included *dikgosi* as ex officio members and, in the early years, the *kgosi* often served as the council chair (BALA, 2009, p. 60). But, as documented in this report, the councils have very little authority. The strategy was one of usurpation (Boone, 2003). *Dikgosi* (and other local elites) had representation on deconcentrated structures for local administration, but authority was centralized.

In contemporary Botswana, the formal link between the districts and *bogosi* is more tenuous. The *kgosi* is welcome to attend the council, but many do not. A number of traditional leaders participate actively in contemporary politics, but do so either as a member of a national political party (e.g., President Khama and Maun West MP Tawana Moremi) or by reviving traditional structures and practices (e.g., Kgosi Kgafela II in Kgatleng district). Even if most traditional leaders are not actively involved in district-level institutions, the districts as territories are closely identified with the territories of the historical *merafe*. And, although legal and socio-economic

changes have decreased the influence of *bogosi*, traditional leaders still command respect. In the 2008 Afrobarometer survey, for example, 54 percent of the respondents in Botswana said that they trusted traditional leaders "a lot." Far fewer respondents indicted that they had "a lot" of trust in their local councilors (33 percent) or the national assembly (37 percent).

The BDP fears that any realignment of district boundaries will be seen as diminishing the status of the largest *merafe* and granting recognition to historically subordinate groups. A BDP councilor captures this sentiment:

> People confuse *bogosi* with service delivery in the districts and sub-districts. They don't want to break districts up because they see it as breaking up tribal areas. Sowa Township is the other new council since independence besides Chobe.[10] We tried to create a Palapye district. It was refused because of the *bogosi* issue. Some sub-districts are BIG and should be fully fledged districts. The Central District Council has so many councilors. It is huge. The problem is people confuse *bogosi* with the districts. We need a way to disentangle ourselves from this quagmire. It is very costly, because the arrangement is not an efficient use of resources (personal communication, July 2010).

The BDP's fear of ethno-territorial mobilization also obstructs financial decentralization. Botswana's first president, Seretse Khama, campaigned on a promise that natural resources, including minerals, would be centrally managed by the state and that the benefits would be shared throughout the country (Poteeete, 2009a, 2009b). After diamonds were discovered, the government used the revenues to develop roads, schools, and clinics throughout the country (Poteete, 2009b). The BDP sees the centralization of financial management as the source of Botswana's national cohesion. The fear that financial decentralization would threaten national unity was voiced during an informal discussion with a BDP activist:

> If government allowed councils to fund themselves … There are serious differences in the resource base. Some areas don't have anything. ... These differences [in the resource base] would create tensions between districts. It would become ethnic tensions (field notes, July 2010).

The BDP's view has been expressed most explicitly with reference to the management of natural resources. The government also justifies the centralization of personnel management as a way to ensure adequate staffing in the more remote areas. During his presidency, Festus Mogae argued forcefully that centralized management—of mineral revenues, land, electricity, water, wildlife, and local government personnel—has contributed to equitable development and national unity (Mogae, 2008). In his words,

> If we exploited our natural resources based on regionalism, it could seriously undermine national unity. …And of course, revenue accruing to the national fiscus would be reduced meaning that some programmes of high national importance might be compromised. It also stands to reason that regional disparities in terms of access to services and income levels would be more pronounced. … If our national development were based on separateness, the glue that binds us as a nation socially, culturally and politically would gradually give way (Mogae, 2008, p. 31).

[10] In fact, Jwaneng was also established after independence, first as a Township and later as a Town Council.

This concern about the potential interactions between decentralization, uneven spatial development, and ethno-territorial mobilization is by no means limited to the BDP. Similar concerns were raised in response to the Community Based Natural Resource Management Policy of 2007 by Botsalo Ntuane (Ntuane, 2007a, 2007b). Ntuane left the BDP earlier this year and became one of the founding members of the BMD. There is also a latent tension between the BNF's position on decentralization and its longstanding commitment to an active role for the state in economic management to promote more equitable development. Central government officers also warn about the potential for ethnic conflicts in response to decentralization.

Despite significant government investments in physical infrastructure throughout the country in the 1970s and 1980s (Poteete, 2009b), stark regional inequalities persist. The disparities are so great that, even with centralized personnel management, it is extremely difficult to fill vacancies and retain personnel in the western districts of Ghanzi, Kgalagadi, and North West. We have discussed the challenges associated with uneven development above. The point here is that, although the government and the BDP defend centralization by associating it with equitable development and national cohesion, the persistence and severity of uneven development raises questions about these relationships. It is true that regional inequity can strain national unity. But it is also true that other countries have combined significant financial redistribution with meaningful decentralization. Progress toward more democratic decentralization in Botswana, including the devolution of authority to local councils may hinge on the recognition by key political leaders that financial redistribution does not logically preclude devolution of authority.

Similarly, structural reconfiguration of the largest districts probably requires a concerted campaign to break the current association between the jurisdictions of the councils and the tribal authorities. From this perspective, efforts to increase the participation of *dikgosi* in the councils may be counter-productive if they reinforce the widespread association of the councils with the *merafe*. Politically, it may be easier to break the perceived link between redistribution and centralization than the one between the districts and the *merafe*. On the other hand, the establishment of the Chobe district council has set a powerful precedent which may make appeals to establish additional councils more difficult to deny.

4.6.2 FINANCIAL (DE)CENTRALIZATION, MACRO-ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT AND REVENUE GENERATION

Botswana's relative success in managing a resource-dependent economy has been associated with a highly centralized approach to macroeconomic policy. As noted in the introduction, the government depends very heavily on diamond revenues. Officials in the central government may worry about the consequences of financial decentralization for macro-economic performance and government revenues. But financial decentralization does not have a simple, linear relationship with macroeconomic management or revenue generation.

From a technical perspective, management of revenues generated from natural resources should reflect the nature of the natural resource (Poteete, 2009a). Economists argue that, given the vulnerability of mineral revenues (and some non-mineral commodities) to booms and busts, the flow of these revenues into the broader economy should be moderated, with healthy reserves set aside during boom years that can be drawn down when prices drop. Such arguments may seem to justify centralization of mineral revenues. Sub-national governments are also capable of setting

up rainy day funds, however, and have done so in some countries, including the USA and Canada.

Boom-bust patterns do not affect all local sources of revenue nor is the same approach recommended for all natural resources. In fact, centralized management of common-pool natural resources such as wildlife has been blamed for unsustainable resource use. International support for community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) is premised on the notion that local communities are more likely to protect wildlife, forests, and other common-pool natural resources when they receive tangible benefits that are clearly linked to the natural resource base. The resource royalties from tourism are not part of the CBNRM program discussed in the desk study (Poteete & Mothusi, 2010; Poteete, 2009a), but their payment to the local councils could be seen as complementing CBNRM. If Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) receive a share of revenues paid directly for access to wildlife areas and the councils receive resource royalties for tourism activities, then the benefits from wildlife-based tourism are shared by small local communities and the larger district. Since the local communities bear most of the costs of living with wildlife while the councils bear most of the responsibility for the infrastructure upon which the tourism industry depends (e.g., roads, water), such a division should reduce competition between the councils and CBOs (compare Ribot 2003) and encourage cooperation to manage wilderness areas. The centralization of tourism-related resource royalties contradicts international best practices in wildlife management and deprives local councils of revenues.

Until recently, debates about financial decentralization in Botswana generally concerned the allocation of existing revenue streams. Thus, councils in wildlife areas challenge the centralization of resource royalties and councilors in urban areas ask why fines for traffic violations are paid to the central government instead of the councils. From this perspective, financial centralization or decentralization appears to be revenue neutral. The central government may see financial decentralization as a zero-sum game, if revenues paid to the councils are viewed as losses. A new recognition that financial decentralization can lead to improvements in total revenue generation can be seen in efforts to improve the collection of water levies and the proposed extension of property rates to rural councils.

In theory, financial decentralization can improve total revenue generation if citizens are more willing to pay local taxes and levies. Willingness to pay might increase if, for example, citizens identify more with their local communities or see a closer link between local taxes and local services (compare Moore, 2004). But a wide variety of considerations influence tax compliance (Juul, 2006). Payment of the local poll tax in Tanzania, for example, corresponded with opportunities for tax evasion, including differences in exposure to coercive technologies for tax collection (e.g., deduction from the pay of public sector employees, checking for tax receipts at road blocks); the perceived likelihood that evasion will be detected; ability to pay; and satisfaction with the provision of local services (Fjeldstad and Semboja, 2001). Decentralization of taxing authority led to a complete collapse of tax compliance in rural Senegal, partly because the rural councils lacked the enforcement capacity of the central government and partly because local residents had *less* confidence that the council would manage their taxes well (Juul, 2006). The rejection of local taxes by rural Senegalese was not absolute; they were willing to pay "informal taxes" to other local bodies, such as fees to water user committees, if they provided tangible benefits (Juul, 2006).

There is no evidence that taxpayers in Botswana distinguish between central and local government taxes or that rates of compliance reflect differences in the perceived accountability of different levels of government. Instead, compliance seems to vary with the technology of revenue collection. Compliance rates are relatively high for charges that can be collected through payroll deductions, such as rental payments for staff accommodation and fees for managing payroll deductions for third parties (e.g., insurance companies, burial societies). The council budgets also show substantial increases associated with the ongoing reform of the billing system for water and sewerage. The planned introduction of a pre-paid system for water utilities should increase bill payment even further. Compliance with local levies, rates for SHHA plots, and (in urban areas) property rates, however, is poor (e.g., Kologwe, 2010).

Neither centralization nor decentralization guarantees sound macroeconomic development or healthy government revenues. Since elements of centralization and decentralization can be combined, the technical superiority of centralized or decentralized management in any single area (e.g., management of mineral revenues) does not justify a blanket application of that approach.

4.6.3 REFLECTIONS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEVOLUTION AND DECONCENTRATION

Botswana presents visible forms of deconcentration and delegation and very limited (if any) devolution. Decentralization has always been driven by the central government and has therefore reflected the preferences of the center. As a result, institutions associated with deconcentration, such as the DC's office, continue to occupy a prominent role at the local level, at times directly or indirectly undermining the authority of local governments. The limited authority of the councils is manifest in their inability to adopt their own policies or projects without approval from the center or to reject policies or programs devised by the central government.

We have reported several examples of the councils' lack of formal authority. We have shown how their financial dependence allows the central government to encroach on areas of discretionary authority that are formally held by the councils. In conducting field research, we also had informal interactions with councilors, council staff, and officials with the district administration. In this manner, we got glimpses of the extent to which politicians defer to their staff and the extent to which the staff assume that they – and not the councilors – are the ones who hold the ultimate authority at the local level.

Through informal interactions, we also saw how the staff can block decisions or activities by claiming that approval is required from the center – even when such approval is not actually required. In Gaborone, for example, the Town Clerk claimed that the team needed a letter from the Office of the President in order to conduct interviews or collect data from the Gaborone City Council. There is a research permit process in Botswana, but it is geared towards academic research and it is not clear that it applies to a consultancy for a development agency such as USAID. In any case, a research permit for research on the councils would be issued by the MLG, and not by the Office of the President. When the Town Clerk was informed that the Minister and Assistant Minister knew about our research and had no problem with it, she asked whether we had spoken with the Permanent Secretary. In other words, in her view, the fact that political leaders – even national-level political leaders—had agreed to something did not matter as much as the approval of senior civil servants.

These informal interactions are consistent with the widely held view that Botswana is an "administrative state" in which real power is in the hands of the bureaucracy rather than the politicians (e.g., Holm & Darnolf, 2000). Although there is some truth to this view, as we have observed, the dominance of the *civil service* should not be overstated. The legislative dominance of the BDP created space for an alliance between BDP politicians and senior civil servants in the 1970s and 1980s (Charlton, 1991). As electoral competition increased, it narrowed the scope for bureaucratic autonomy (Poteete, 2003). Increasing political competition raises the political costs of deferring to the civil servants. Increased political intervention does not imply, however, that all politicians are equally able to claim or assert political control. The increased use of presidential directives reflects President Khama's unwillingness to leave decision-making to the civil service. The regular interventions by the President, however, make it more difficult for other politicians, particularly BDP politicians, to exercise authority. As was the case with the Gaborone Town Clerk, it is widely assumed that decisions are ultimately within the Office of the President. The civil service – both council and district administration staff – looks first to the Office of the President for guidance, and then to their ministry's permanent secretary. Then, if any scope for discretionary decision-making remains, they *might* seek guidance from the council. Evidence from Botswana does support the idea that deconcentrated structures act as a shadow government through which the center wields authority that would be exercised by local governments in a truly devolved political system. As one respondent stated,

> Some people support decentralization mainly because they are not the ones who have to worry about the implementation part while some oppose it because they think they will lose power and control of local authorities (personal communication, July 2010).

Concerns about power make reform difficult, as lamented by an official in Letlhakane (Boteti sub-district):

> The problem with the current structure is that instead of having a constructive dialogue on how we can improve it to advance the interests of the citizens, people only think of how best can they protect their territories (personal communication, July 2010).

Overall, decentralization in Botswana follows a clear but sometimes unsaid principle that decentralization is fundamentally of functions (responsibilities) and not powers (Molaodi, 2010). Even the commitment to decentralize functions is coming into question, however, given the recent recentralization of services such as water, health, local policing and education (Molaodi, 2010). The recent recentralization of certain services may in itself be an admission by the central government that *it* lacks the capacity to oversee the current system of deconcentrated structures. From the perspective of central government, that failure of capacity is "corrected' through centralization. This argument assumes that there are more benefits from centralization than from devolving more powers to the local governments. Current trends around the world in terms of decentralization, local government reform, and general democratic governance make this assumption difficult to defend. Centralization may actually have little to do with lack of capacity by the local councils, or even lack of capacity to oversee decentralization on the part of the central government. As discussed above, centralization may have little to do with the reducing uneven development or a fear of ethnic mobilization. Instead, complaints about capacity and concerns about ethnic conflict serve to rationalize a centralized system of administration that offers increasing advantages in a context of growing political uncertainty for the government.

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APPENDIX B: LIST OF INTERVIEWS

Anonymous, senior official in the Ministry of Local Government. Confidential personal interview conducted by A. Poteete in June, 2010 in Gaborone, Botswana. *The interview was conducted for a research project and not as part of this consultancy*.

Mr. Basesenykng, Mbangu wa Kathimana Cultural Society, North West District. Telephone interview conducted by A. Poteete on 22 July 2010 from Maun, Botswana.

C. T. Bethia, Chair, North West District Council, and BDP councilor representing Thamalakane North ward, Maun East constituency. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 21 July 2010 in Maun, Botswana.

K. Botana, Human Resource Manager, Central District Council, Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi on 21 July 2010 in Serowe, Botswana.

K. Dipholo (PhD), Lecturer, Department of Adult Education (University of Botswana), Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi on 13 July 2010 in Gaborone, Botswana.

T. Dube, Principal Physical Planner, Central District Council, Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi 21 July 2010 in Serowe, Botswana.

O. Gaerobale, BDP Councilor representing Moiyabane ward, Central District Council, Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi 21 July 2010 in Serowe, Botswana.

Mr. Gare, Deputy Clerk, Francistown City Council. Personal interview conducted by D. Molaodi on 27 July 2010 in Francistown, Botswana.

Mr. Gogoma, Council Treasurer, Central District Council, Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi 21 July 2010 in Serowe, Botswana.

G. Haskins, Deputy Mayor of Gaborone and BDP councilor representing Babusi ward, Gaborone South constituency, on the Gaborone City Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 14 July 2010 in Gaborone, Botswana.

N. Kalake, Programmes Manager, Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (BOCONGO). Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 15 July 2010 in Gaborone, Botswana.

D. Kandjii, Senior Assistant Auditor General, Auditor General's Office. Personal interview conducted by D. Molaodi on 6 August 2010 in Gaborone, Botswana.

D. M. Kanyevo, Chair, Village Development Committee, Kasane Central. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 26 July 2010 in Kasane, Botswana.

O. Kemelo, BNF councilor representing Bontleng ward, Gaborone South constituency, on the Gaborone City Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 13 July 2010 in Gaborone, Botswana.

S. Kgakge, Deputy Treasurer, Kweneng District Council. Personal interview conducted by D. Molaodi on 15 July 2010 in Molepolole, Botswana.

B. Kgaodi, Deputy Council Secretary (Technical), Kgatleng District Council, Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi on 29 July 2010 in Mochudi, Botswana.

G. Khethiwe, Principal Accountant 1 (Council Treasurer), Kgatleng District Council, Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi on 29 July 2010 in Mochudi, Botswana.

B. Komissa, Corporate Communications & Public Relations, Botswana Confederation of Commerce, Industry, and Manpower (BOCCIM). Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi on 26 July 2010 in Gaborone, Botswana.

T. Leipego, Principal Economist, Chobe District Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 26 July 2010 in Kasane, Botswana.

Ms. Leseru, District Officer Development, Serowe Administrative Authority, Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi on 22 July 2010 in Serowe, Botswana.

M.B. Letina, District Commissioner, Mochudi, Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi on 2 August 2010 in Mochudi, Botswana.

E. Mabengano, BCP councilor representing Segoditshane ward, Gaborone Central constituency, on the Gaborone City Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 13 July 2010 in Gaborone, Botswana.

M. Maemo, Senior Economist, Chobe District Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 26 July 2010 in Kasane, Botswana.

S. Makhura, Chair of the Kgatleng District Council; BCP councilor representing Malolwane ward, Kgatleng East constituency; and member of the BCP Central Committee. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 17 July 2010 in Maun, Botswana.

I. Malipiti, BDP (BMD) councilor representing Bophirima ward, Gaborone City Council. Personal interview conducted by D. Molaodi on 27 July 2010 in Francistown, Botswana.

Mr. Mangoye, Deputy Council Secretary (Administration), North West District Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 21 July 2010 in Maun, Botswana.

B. Mapa, BCP councilor representing Sepopa/Ikoga ward, Okavango constitutency, on the North West District Council and member of the Okavango sub-council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 19 July 2010 in Maun, Botswana.

B. Mashaba, Head of Human Resources & Administration, Kweneng District Council. Personal interview conducted by D. Molaodi on 15 July 2010 in Molepolole, Botswana.

M. Matseka, Senior Assistant Council Secretary (Boteti Sub-District), Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi 23 on July 2010 in Letlhakane, Botswana.

G. Mhapha, BDP councilor representing Kgosing ward, Maun West constituency, on the North West District Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 22 July 2010 in Maun, Botswana.

Mr. Mogomotsi, Assistant District Officer, Maun Administrative Authority, Ngamiland District. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 21 July 2010 in Maun, Botswana.

Rev. M. Moruakgomo, Chair, Botswana Association of Local Authorities (BALA) and nominated councilor on the Kgatleng District Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 16 July 2010 in Gaborone, Botswana.

K. Moilwe, Chief Finance Officer, Ministry of Local Government. Personal interview conducted by D. Molaodi on 29 July 2010 in Gaborone, Botswana.

G. Mosiakgabo, Principal District Officer Development, Chobe District. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 26 July 2010 in Kasane, Botswana.

K. Mothobi, Principal Personnel and Training Officer, North West District Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 22 July 2010 in Maun, Botswana.

D. Motsewabeng, Senior Administration Resources Officer. Personal Interview conducted by D. Molaodi on 15 July 2010 in Molepolole, Botswana.

R. Mpuang, BDP (BMD) Councilor, Francistown City Council. Personal interview conducted by D. Molaodi on 27 July 2010 in Francistown, Botswana.

C. Munifhango, BDP councilor representing Kasane Central ward, Chobe constituency, on the Chobe District Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 27 July 2010 in Kasane, Botswana.

S. Nyeku, Mayor of Francistown and BMD councilor representing Philip Matante East ward, Francistown South constituency, on the Francistown City Council. Personal interview conducted by D. Molaodi on 27 July 2010 in Francistown, Botswana.

T. K. Okaile, Deputy Council Secretary (Finance & Administration), Central District Council, Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi on 21 July 2010 in Serowe, Botswana.

S. Phutego, Principal Economist, North West District Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 21 July 2010 in Maun, Botswana.

K.E. Pilane, Human Resource Manager, Kgatleng District Council, Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi on 28 July 2010 in Mochudi, Botswana.

Ms. Pule, Head of Human Resources & Administration, Francistown City Council. Personal interview conducted by D. Molaodi on 27 July 2010 in Francistown, Botswana.

R.R. Radibe, Director, Rural Development Policy (Rural Development Council), Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi on 14 July 2010 in Gaborone, Botswana.

R. Radibe, Deputy Director, Department of Social Services, Ministry of Local Government. Personal interview conducted by D. Molaodi on 21 July 2010 in Gaborone, Botswana.

L. Raditanka, Council Chairman, Central District Council, Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi on 21 July 2010 in Serowe, Botswana.

M.D. Ramodisa, Principal District Officer Development, District Commissioner's Office (Mochudi), Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi on 28 July 2010 in Mochudi, Botswana.

K. E. Samunzala, BCP councilor representing Kasane Platteau ward, Chobe constituency, on the Chobe District Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 27 July 2010 in Kasane, Botswana.

R. Sebopeng, Auditor General, Auditor General's Office. Personal interview conducted by D. Molaodi on 6 August 2010 in Gaborone, Botswana.

G. Sekwakwa, Deputy Council Secretary, Kweneng District Council. Personal interview conducted by D. Molaodi on 15 July 2010 in Molepolole, Botswana.

M. Selala, BNF councilor representing Thamaga West ward, Kweneng South constituency, on the Kweneng District Council. Personal interview conducted by D. Molaodi on 16 July 2010.

E. Selelo, District Officer II (Administration), District Commissioner's Office (Serowe) Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi on 21 July 2010 in Serowe, Botswana.

T. Setlhare, Economic Planner, North West District Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 21 July 2010 in Maun, Botswana.

T. Setumo, District Commissioner, Chobe District. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 26 July 2010 in Kasane, Botswana.

C. Sewagodimo, Chief Human Resource and Administration Officer, Chobe District Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 26 July 2010 in Kasane, Botswana.

E. Sikunyane, Chief Financial Officer, North West District Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 22 July 2010 in Maun, Botswana.

O. Tawana, Independent councilor representing Letlhakane, Personal interview conducted by B. Mothusi on 22 July 2010 in Letlhakane, Botswana.

S. I. Thekiso, BCP councilor representing Village ward, Gaborone Central constituency, on the Gaborone City Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 13 July 2010 in Gaborone, Botswana

S. Thelo, BCP councilor representing Metsimotlhabe ward, Kweneng South East constituency, on the Kweneng District Council. Personal interview conducted by D. Molaodi on 16 July 2010.

Ms. Tirelo, Acting Deputy Council Secretary and Chief Education Officer, Chobe District Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 26 July 2010 in Kasane, Botswana.

P. L. Tlou, BCP councilor representing Itekeng ward, Francistown East constituency, on the Francistown City Council. Personal interviews conducted by A. Poteete on 19 July 2010 in Maun, Botswana and by D. Molaodi on 26 July 2010 in Francistown, Botswana.

K. Tsele, Assistant Economic Planner, Chobe District Council. Personal interview conducted by A. Poteete on 26 July 2010 in Kasane, Botswana.

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