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## Botswana's changing position in a changing world: towards the formulation of a cultural policy

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### Abstract

*What kind of culture will Botswana need fifty years after independence? The paper argues for research and recognition of cultural diversity, urban-rural differences, and the need to eliminate poverty, rather than a stereotyped vision of national culture. The author surveys progress since 1991 in drafting cultural policy, including changes in the Southern African region, and the needs of women and youth in particular for participation in development. Aspects such as the commercial marketing of culture and the potential impact of television are also discussed.*

### Introduction

Botswana finds itself in a period of history when social attitudes and values around the world are changing at an unprecedented rate. The people of Botswana must adapt to the challenges of global society while retaining the positive aspects of their cultural values that distinguish them from other nations. Development is becoming more and more complex. It can no longer be seen as a single, uniform, linear path, for this would inevitably eliminate cultural diversity and limit mankind's creative capacities in the face of a treasured past and an unpredictable future.

Alongside development is a widening gap between the haves and the have-nots, and the attendant problem of individualism. The combination of these two elements is quite serious for Botswana, as it threatens the peace and security of the individual—both of which have been guaranteed by social obligation among household or family members to care for one another. Desirable as it is, development is therefore threatening the peace and security that have been the pillars of Botswana's culture. Through all this, Botswana need to assert the value of their own cultural wealth—that cannot be measured in monetary terms, while simultaneously seeking the universal values of global ethics.

The critical question around which this paper is premised is 'what kind of society would Botswana like themselves to be by the year 2016 when the country celebrates its fiftieth anniversary of independence?' (Botswana Government 1997b). This paper is an attempt to answer that question, basing itself on the large issue of culture. It sets out the state of the art with respect to the role of culture in Botswana's development and also spells out the measures the country has taken to place culture at the centre of the country's development efforts since independence in 1966. The paper highlights measures that Botswana plans to adopt to ensure that the country's development, and indeed its long term vision, will be increasingly based on its culture.

## Cultural diversity and cultural pluralism

Botswana is a country with eight major tribes and a number of small tribes. The major tribes, who collectively constitute the overall majority of the population, speak one language, Setswana. Smaller tribes, some of which are ethnically different from the major tribes, speak other languages, even though they understand Setswana. Europeans and Asians have also settled in Botswana, some of them now being Batswana. Different social groups have their own cultures, social practices and traditions and rituals.

The country has a rich but diverse culture based on these differences. People are allowed to communicate in their own languages, but the official languages are Setswana and English. While there may be a few smaller tribal groups that feel disadvantaged, Botswana has, in general, managed its cultural diversity with a large measure of success, and with indisputable social stability.

Moving culture to the centre stage will require the country to focus on pluralism or cultural diversity. In this connection, it will be necessary for Botswana to make a commitment to pluralism and to address the issue of diversity in full. Among the issues to be addressed under cultural pluralism is language. As indicated above, there are other languages in Botswana apart from Setswana, the main indigenous language. Previous language policy has been to develop only Setswana, ostensibly as a way of encouraging social cohesion and cementing national unity. Currently, following recognition of the role of language in transmitting the culture of a community or language group, the official policy is being reviewed and consideration is being given to develop other local languages. The challenge, however, is to ascertain that by encouraging all local languages, the country does not run the risk of inciting tribalism and divisiveness.

Cultural diversity goes well beyond the question of language to include recognition of all tribes and ethnic groups, large and small. Botswana has been focusing attention on only the eight major tribes, but smaller groupings are now making a case for recognition. The government is responding cautiously, avoiding discrimination while discouraging proliferation of officially recognised groupings.

The need for caution is justified, because official recognition has far-reaching implications, including giving the communities resources such as land. Land, in particular, is difficult to re-distribute because it is usually already in the hands of others. Botswana cannot claim it has addressed all its problems of cultural diversity, but at least it can boast that since independence in 1966 there have been no open revolts or insurrections on account of unrecognised cultural diversity.

Definition of culture may be considered an arcane academic exercise, but we should at least acknowledge that culture is the sum total of the life of a community (or even an individual). It is a complex phenomenon unique to a social group and has the attribute of distinguishing one group from another (Mothusi 1998). Culture is of course dynamic, not static. Its dynamism today is often driven by globalisation, a phenomenon that will be discussed later in this paper. Culture and its preservation today is a multi-faceted question, at the very foundation of economic development .

Preservation of a nation's culture(s) is a necessary condition for a stable social environment, in which free and uninterrupted economic activity can take place. Sustainable social development needs a strong and well performing economy. In Botswana the environment for social development has been transformed by the country's rapid economic growth since independence. This is primarily due to the exploitation of major diamond exports. Over the 25 year period from 1965 to 1990, Botswana's economy was the fastest growing in the world, with GDP growing at an average annual rate of 14% (Botswana Government 1995: 6).

Over the past 28 years, Botswana has been using its high mineral revenues to build up stocks of physical, human and financial capital—and also to raise the level of formal sector employment, which actually grew from 30,000 in 1965 to 229,000 in 1991. The government built both social and physical infrastructure, to facilitate the participation of the private sector in economic development, and also in a bid to raise the quality of life for all its people.

This strategy has had successes and limitations. Until it was recently reduced by projections of future AIDS mortality, the relatively high position of Botswana in the UNDP Human Development Index by comparison with the rest of sub-Saharan Africa was partly attributable to government's social expenditure. Life expectancy had greatly increased since independence, the mortality of the under fives had been dramatically reduced, employment had risen. Eighty per cent of the population is now within 15 km of a health facility, many households have potable water in their compounds, electric power supply has expanded. The road system has been greatly improved, and more schools have been built. The literacy level of the nation has risen significantly, although productive skills are badly lacking.

Although average income has been rising rapidly, inequitable distribution of wealth remains Botswana's greatest problem. The Gini coefficient was 0.56 in 1985, with 61% of the income accruing to the top 20% of the population and the poorest 40% receiving only 11% of total income. Some 30% of the people in the urban areas had incomes below the poverty line, in rural areas the figure was 64%. Poverty remains widespread in the rural areas, especially among female headed households. In 1994, unemployment was estimated at 14%. There are indications that poverty is falling, because while 59% of the population was below the poverty datum line in 1985/86, the figure had dropped to 47% in 1993/94 (Botswana Government 1998).

The country's gains have been countered by the high growth rate of the population, and by severe constraints imposed on job creation and income generation by the limited potential of the agricultural sector. Botswana's agricultural sector is distinctly different from that of most other countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Although the country is large and, in overall terms, sparsely populated, most of it is covered by Kalahari sands. Only five per cent of the surface area is good for arable production, and rainfall is very low and erratic. Although cattle rearing is widely practised, the distribution of cattle is highly skewed. Some four per cent of the farmers own 60 per cent of the cattle. Overgrazing is already a problem, and there is little scope for

increasing the size of the national herd. As a result of these adverse physical conditions, it is extremely difficult for people to survive on the basis of subsistence agriculture on a regular basis. This contrasts sharply with much of the rest of sub-Saharan agriculture, where rural poverty is primarily the result of inappropriate rural development and agricultural policies.

Botswana's situation has left many people still poor. Yet they have not been ignored, especially during droughts which recur so often. Government has initiated a drought relief programme which is among the best in Africa, to spread the benefits of economic growth by giving to the poor supplementary feeding, labour intensive public works, and free grants for ploughing to farmers. The destitutes programme, the drought relief schemes, and the recently introduced old people's pension are the main components of Botswana's rural welfare state.

Emphasis has been put on putting in place government policies that enable widespread participation in income opportunities generated by economic growth. Such participation is expected to usher in development—through both the basic needs approach, and the income and employment approach. The two approaches are complementary; they are nevertheless dissimilar. The income and employment approach emphasises increased employment and raised incomes; the basic needs approach focuses on mobilising particular resources for particular groups, identified as deficient in these resources. By contrast the income and employment approach neglects important features of meeting basic needs (Streeten 1979).

Botswana's prosperity will need to be anchored on the culture of the people of the country. While development planning has given culture some recognition, it has not been based on that culture. In other words, culture has not been used specifically as a basis for development planning. Economists, who are central to the entire planning process, are yet to recognise the importance of culture. Nor has the civil society appreciated culture in any significant manner. Both the civil society and economists easily tend to take the view that cultural activities are not vital to the economy, because they cannot be measured using some economic measurement tools. Economists object that culture cannot be measured using cost-benefit analysis.

In consequence, there is little mobilisation of resources for cultural activities within the Government and private sector circles. However, the Botswana Government took a step during the preparation of National Development Plan 7 (NDP 7) towards placing culture nearer the centre of its idea of development. Culture may yet play a more pivotal role in the country's development.

The World Bank was ahead of the pack. Its view expressed at a in 1982 was that the cultural dimension should be the starting point for development strategies, to adopt a broad concept of development beyond economics—concepts of costs, benefits and values. The need to broaden the concept of human empowerment was underlined. The notion of development has since broadened, as people have come to realise that economic criteria alone cannot provide for human dignity and well-being. Clearly, there is a need to

transcend economics without abandoning it, since uneven development creates cultural tensions (de Cuellar 1996).

Globalisation, as indicated earlier, is a major phenomenon that is influencing culture and development and is set to do so well into the future. The word means slightly different things to different people. But it is basically understood as trade liberalisation and the reduction of barriers to the flow of goods and services and capital between and across nations. The essential feature of globalisation is that it is a powerful process, and that it is driven by Western culture. The cultures of developing countries are placed at the receiving end, because of the weakness of their economies in comparison with those of the west.

Furthermore, there are other social arrangements that go together with globalisation. These include democratic governance. Trade and investment liberalisation have been closely associated with the extension of democratic governance. But the introduction of democratic governance, and the advances of globalisation, have introduced uncertainties into developing countries such as Botswana. During the colonial era, traditional Tswana governance was overseen by a *kgosi* or chief, who was born into that office. Starting even before the advent of democratic rule with independence, the chief was in many places replaced by a tribal authority—a person close to chieftaincy but not exactly a chief. Since then, the concept of chieftainship has undergone even greater changes. In place of a chief, there is now an elected *kgosi*. This kind of *kgosi* does not have to be someone from the royal family, or even someone with any links with traditional royalty.

Such transformations can be explained by the fact that globalisation is accompanied by the re-arrangement and reformulation of social order and social organisation. Traditional Tswana social organisation for economic production was set within the ideology of kinship ideology, emphasising the communal element. Globalisation, on the other hand, has been epitomised by what has been conceived and labelled as modern, and is set on what is largely an individualist norm of operation. Individualist norms have resulted in the collapse of the extended family. In turn, that collapse has meant that elderly people—those aged 65 and above—have been left virtually without regular or reliable source of income, care or protection. The introduction of the state's old age pension scheme for the elderly, in the last year of NDP 7, constituted a significant development, as a response to current realities.

Yet, while Botswana accepts that globalisation is inevitable, the country also recognises that for socio-economic development to proceed smoothly, uncertainties with respect to the cultural factors that underpin it have to be minimised. The following are some of those cultural factors:-

- ***Social, family and individual welfare:*** in keeping with the long standing national development planning objective of social justice, every Motswana is entitled to have access to economic opportunities—so that, including government or non-governmental organisations assistance (for destitutes and the handicapped), individual welfare may be improved.

- **Cultural identity:** the importance of all cultures must be recognised. Every community's culture represents a unique and irreplaceable treasure of values, traditions and forms of expression.
- **The role of traditional institutions:** traditional institutions, such as the *kgotla*, are important vehicles for the evolution of the nation's culture.
- **Security of the family unit:** a family is the building block of society. Emergence of factors which threaten the existence and stability of the family pose a serious threat to any culture. A family constitutes an important vehicle for handing down traditions, as well as moral, spiritual and ethical values of society to successive generations.

Attaining a certain measure of social welfare commensurate with upholding human dignity is essential for social harmony, for respect for the rule of law, and for giving every individual a sense of belonging in society.

### Cultural developments

Botswana's National Development Plan 7 covered the period 1991-1997. An important development during the NDP 7 period was the implementation of a World Decade for Cultural Development (1988-1997). This has entailed the start of drafting of a National Cultural Policy for Botswana, a process involving all the relevant stakeholders which will be completed during NDP 8. The thrust of the World Decade for Cultural Development was to ensure that culture became an integral part of development.

The NDP 7 period also saw the growth of performing arts in Botswana, and the establishment of a Unit for Performing Arts in the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs, which has the portfolio responsibility for culture. The popularity of performing arts continues to grow, including traditional song and dance, theatre, poetry and modern music. Traditional dance groups continue to feature regularly in national celebrations and cultural events.

The 1995-1998 Southern African Development Community (SADC) arts and culture programme includes music, theatre, dance and visual arts festivals. Botswana, through various performing groups like *Ditholwana*, *Kgwanyape* and *Reetsang*, continues to display high levels of talent and artistic excellence. This is evident in the many national, regional and international festivals in which Botswana has been asked to perform. Countries in which such festivals were held include the USA, Norway and Zimbabwe.

### Women in development

Traditionally, women in Botswana were treated as if they were below men socially. Often, they were more or less equated with children. They could not participate in *kgotla* discussions. Wives were expected to be so submissive to their husbands; they were not allowed to question them, even when the latter were clearly in the wrong. There was no social equality between males and females. And yet women were respected as the custodians of customs and belief systems. Gender discrimination has been complex and subtle, intricately intertwined with culture and tradition.

It has become clear that gender inequality is a form of subtle but manifest discrimination and injustice that cannot be retained. Equality, social justice

and democracy cannot be realised unless practical measures are taken to redress structural issues that inhibit women from participating fully in development, and from sharing equitably from the benefits of development. International bodies such as the United Nations (UN), regional organisations such as the Commonwealth, and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) have for some time now been adopting resolutions and programmes demanding equality, freedom and justice for women (Machacha and Kewagamang 1993).

The limited achievement of women-specific projects and programmes point to structural constraints—in the areas of culture, attitudes, law, and economic policies, standing in the way of improved status for women. Women's groups and NGOs worldwide have come to recognise that the solution to gender inequality lies less in welfare oriented women-specific projects and more in broad social and political reforms.

The Decade for Women from 1975 to 1985 achieved much in terms of conscientisation of women, of men, of governments, and of regional and international organisations about the conditions faced by women. It also led to the establishment by many governments of structures responsible for women's affairs.

Botswana government moves to redress gender inequality are, in part, a way of adapting culture for releasing the full potential of sectors of the society. Studies carried out in Botswana have underscored the indispensability of women in social development, at all levels between the household and the national level. At the same time, studies have indicated that the contributions of women to household incomes and social reproduction too often go unacknowledged.

In keeping with the national development planning objective of achieving social justice, the Botswana government has tried to create an enabling environment for effective participation by women in development. A national policy on Women in Development was formulated and adopted at the end of NDP 7. The policy's main objective is to ensure that women have uninhibited access to economic opportunities of employment, trade, investment, etc., and to decision-making positions. The policy seeks to achieve full integration of gender issues into the development process.

The Botswana government is taking steps to enhance women's participation and involvement in national development in consonance with the "national principles" of democracy, national unity, development and self-reliance, in conjunction with the "planning principles" of rapid economic growth, sustained development, and social justice.

***Essential features of the policy on women.*** Below are the positions taken on a number of issues by the recently adopted Botswana's policy on women.

- In accordance with the constitution, all policies of Government must recognise that women and men are guaranteed *equality* before the law.
- All government policies must *recognise* women and men as equally *important human resources* for economic, social and political development.

- Economic and social development policies must ensure that there is equity in *access* to resources, information, opportunity and decision-making positions for women and men—and special measures must be developed to ensure that current disadvantages in access to resources experienced by women are redressed.
- All policies must take cognisance of women's *multiple roles* in production and community management.
- All policies must recognise the need to develop the potential of women and put to optimal use their skills and capabilities, including their important role as *transmitters of culture* and primary educators—in order to create a wholesome and enriched *family and community life*.

The Department of Women's Affairs in the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs endeavours to create an environment that is conducive to women's full participation in the socio-economic, political and cultural development of the nation. This is done within the framework of the policy of Women in Development. Government's adoption of the policy in 1996 emanated from the recognition that women must become fully involved in the economic development of the country.

### Youth in development

Youth form the largest single group of the population. No meaningful discussion of culture can ignore this age group, growing in numbers and experiencing the greatest challenges of transition, including unemployment. National development planning cannot be equitable unless the youth are taken into account. Yet, the youth, just like women, have been marginalised in previous national development plans. Even under National Development Plan 8, the role of youth in development remains unclear and undefined.

In Botswana, the National Youth Policy, adopted in 1996, defines youth as the proportion of the population falling within the age range of 12 to 29 years. According to the 1991 Population Census, there were 475,443 young people, aged 12 to 29 years in Botswana, which was 36% of the country's population. Generally, Botswana is characterised by a youthful population, of which over 60% is below the age of 30 years.

Young people in Botswana find themselves caught in the middle of the process of transition from traditional to modern society. Gradual breakdown of the extended family system, which formerly provided support and social guidance, has compounded the problems of young people.

Furthermore, unemployment, low levels of education, health problems (including HIV/ AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases), and teenage pregnancy are some of the problems which confront youths.

In 1981, the social category with the highest unemployment rate (about 26%) was young females within the 15 to 19 years age group. The same category rose to about 33% in 1984-85. In 1991 it rose further to 43%. These statistics indicate a trend of unemployment among youth that has been steadily rising over the years. This explains why they should be at the heart of culturally-based development planning.

**Youth programmes.** In view of the growing numbers and rising unemployment, it is important to develop sporting facilities for youth—to engage their bodies, keeping them fit, and to engage their minds, keeping them from crime.

One of Botswana's major challenges is to how to involve more of its citizens in sporting and recreational activities. Sporting activities should not only be viewed as a form of entertainment; they should also be promoted as an industry making a meaningful contribution to the economy. Youths have a major role to play in this regard.

The government failed to live up to the great importance it gave in the NDP7 plan to raising sports standards to international level, through provision of sporting facilities. It was planned to build integrated sports facilities in major villages, but no sporting facilities had been built by the end of the Plan period. This was explained as being due to changes in design briefs by government departments, and constraints on implementation capacity within the relevant departments. Lack of good quality sports facilities continues to be cited as a major reason for Botswana's poor performance in international sport competitions.

### Sections of Botswana's economy involved in cultural activities

This section discusses activities which promote cultural expression—the development of artistic or creative talent, the promotion of performing arts, etc. It then highlights Botswana's national cultural policy for activities undertaken by government, non-governmental organisations, communities and social groups formed for a cultural purpose.

There are two main sources from which artists and cultural activities can get funding—the Botswana National Cultural Council (BNCC) and the Botswana Cultural Activities Support Trust (B-CAST). The BNCC gets its funding from the Department of Culture and Youth in the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs. It is linked to all government ministries and institutions that have a stake in the preservation and promotion of culture (Kesupile 1998: 8).

To give young people in Botswana a more meaningful contribution to the country's development, the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs established a new Department of Sport and Recreation. This was in line with the Ministry's major objective of creating opportunities for the youth to be engaged in sporting and economic activities. Programmes for youth development follow the framework of a National Youth Policy worked out in 1996.

**Tirelo Sechaba.** Tirelo Sechaba is a scheme of national youth service which was established in 1981 under the Office of the President, following the recommendations of the 1976 National Commission on Education. Tirelo Sechaba's main objectives are:

- to give an educating, broadening, maturing experience to all senior secondary school leavers before they begin further education or employment;
- to satisfy development needs in rural areas, especially remote areas.

This national service scheme demonstrates the Botswana government's seriousness in implementing development based on culture.

***The role of other Ministries.*** The Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs shares the responsibility for cultural and social services with other ministries. Apart from Tirelo Sechaba, Information and Broadcasting also falls under the Office of the President. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry plays a critical role through its Department of Tourism. The Ministry of Education organises cultural activities for students at various levels, including national competitions for schools.

The government wants to see other stakeholders, notably the private sector, taking a keener part in the promotion of cultural activities.

### **Marketing of Botswana's culture**

There have been some achievements in marketing Botswana's culture, but the potential is so great that much more still remains to be done. Marketing of Botswana's culture can succeed only if all the various stakeholders are involved.

The National Museum and Art Gallery can obviously play a decisive part in the marketing of Botswana's culture through its display services. Its field research, field collecting and public programmes, including displays of art work in the art gallery, have made the National Museum of Botswana well known regionally and globally. Its educational programmes, notably its mobile museum service which visits rural schools, have played a major role in creating cross-cultural awareness among Botswana. It has conducted programmes of public education for land developers and Land Board members about the necessity to preserve sites and monuments for the future, using radio programmes and *Kgotla* meetings. Its achievements during the NDP 7 plan period include partial development of the Tsodilo Hills site museum and the expansion of its headquarters buildings in Gaborone with new facilities. But these achievements are less than were planned because of administrative problems of implementation.

Great possibilities exist to expand the marketing of cultural products and to encourage culture-based tourism in Botswana. In order for the full potential to be unleashed, Botswana should have an inter-ministerial cultural committee to act in partnership with the private sector, with parastatals and NGOs.

The involvement of the private sector in the promotion and marketing of culture should be seen within the wider framework of current government policy. Government's view is that, from now onwards, the private sector should be the main engine of growth in the development of the country. Previously, central government expenditure has been the engine of growth, but it now wants the private sector take the lead.

There is a need to improve research and international cooperation for cultural policy. Very little research been done on issues affecting culture in the various government departments dealing with aspects of culture, due to staff constraints. As for international cooperation, the situation is better.

Botswana has made cultural agreements with several countries, which have resulted in cultural exchanges between the signatories.

Botswana is a member of the recently launched Itenerant College of Culture in Africa, designed to foster cultural exchange among member states. Its potential to enhance international cooperation in the area of culture has yet to be explored. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) also has a framework for promote cultural cooperation. The problem, however, is that Botswana is too much on the receiving side of culture in these cultural agreements—rather than on the giving side.

Much needs to be done in the development of culture in Botswana, most immediately to reorganise the Botswana National Cultural Council (BNCC):

- to leave the BNCC as it is, but create within it a different structure that will dispense funding, or
- to reconstitute the BNCC, with new terms of reference.

Other tasks lie ahead. The successful and world-famous craft industry making Botswana baskets around the Okavango delta in the north-west needs to be expanded but in an environmentally sustainable manner. The private sector could become more active in marketing the baskets overseas. (Though it is recognised that, given the small size of the Botswana economy, there are relatively few companies producing sufficient surplus to support cultural activities.) Historical monuments and archeological sites, currently entered free of charge by tourists, could be fenced and entrance fees charged for those who wish to view them. The private sector should be encouraged to show interest in ventures that are potentially profitable.

Cultural groups for dancing, singing and other performances need to be encouraged and supported, so that they can market our rich culture outside national borders. If such groups have the potential to make money, no doubt the private sector will become involved in their activities.

The existence of a committee comprising government, parastatals private sector and NGOs would go a long way towards enhancing such ventures.

### **Botswana's draft cultural policy**

The Botswana government is about to complete the formulation of a cultural policy, the draft of which contains fourteen topics. The Department of Culture and Youth (Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs) is suggesting that a fifteenth topic—culture and media—be added.

There are two reasons to add culture and the media. First, the media broaden cultural horizons and help Botswana to overcome the stereotypes imposed on its culture. Secondly, modern media such as newspapers and broadcasting and television, are themselves important institutions in developing people's sense of cultural identity.

The issue of identity is critical in a cultural context. The World Bank's observation at the 1982 World Conference on Culture was that

clarity of cultural identity and its evolving continuity are essential to create an integrated and integrating cultural framework, which would be relevant for establishing effective institutions, which are also rooted in authenticity and tradition, yet open to modernity and change. This cultural identity is seen as essential for the

self-assurance that societies need for endogenous development' (World Bank 1982, quoted in Monowe-Seisa 1998).

A national television station is one of the major instruments or mechanisms of fostering national cultural identity. It can have a great effect on Botswana's culture, especially among the youth. So far Botswana does not have its own television station. Viewers in Botswana are entertained by South African, Zimbabwean and Namibian television stations. This situation is not healthy for the self image and self determination of Botswana as a sovereign state. The private sector should find it profitable to make use of the advertising services of national television. In the past the government has played the major role in providing a national newspaper and radio broadcasting services, but the private sector's participation in the dissemination of information is expected to increase during the NDP 8 plan period.

In view of all the foregoing, the need for a cultural policy in Botswana cannot be overemphasised. Every society has its own understanding of development, science and technology, economics and related values including politics, governance, division of economic resources etc. For example, Botswana have their own form of knowledge and understanding of weather patterns, the stars in the sky, and curative and poisonous plants and animals. Cultural policy is needed to structure and utilise this indigenous knowledge, as well as to guide development beyond mere economic emphasis so that Botswana can enjoy balanced and comprehensive human development (Monowe-Seisa 1998).

The quotation below is Botswana's own vision of the future in the area of information as expressed in Vision 2016. By the year 2016,

Botswana will have entered the information age on an equal footing with other nations. The country will have sought and acquired the best available information technology, and have become a regional leader in the production and dissemination of information. Botswana will have developed its communication capacity, particularly in the electronic media, radio and television (Botswana Government 1997b).

In light of all this, the main elements of Botswana's draft cultural policy should be:

- it encompasses all social and cultural values that exist in the country's communities, thereby ensuring that cultural rights enshrined in the Constitution are fulfilled without contravening social obligations;
- it is reliable because, being based on research rather than on stereotypes, it is reasonable, especially in its design to harness creative diversity for the benefit of all Botswana;
- it is people centred, allows for innovation and is fully responsive to the needs of the people and to the need for up-to-date social structures that promote development, such as democratic institutions;
- it successfully turns problems into prospects, through creating partnership with the private sector in mobilising resources which the government would otherwise be unable to marshal. The merit of this point will be greater if the government implements proposed strategies

such as requesting the private sector to operate some cultural activities like the viewing of cultural sites. A related matter is for the government to extend the Financial Assistance Policy (FAP) to manufacturing of cultural artifacts etc.

- it caters not only for policy pronouncements, but also for the evolution of policy processes that are flexible and pragmatic, thereby ascertaining that policy implementation will be achieved without undue hassles.

Finally, currently Botswana does not have a national policy relating culture to the new media technologies. The planned inclusion of the media in the draft national cultural policy will of necessity entail bringing in requisite measures for the control and management of technology. This will be particularly necessary if the proposed new national Science and Technology Policy lacks such a clause. It is in this connection that research will play a key role in the finalisation of the draft National Cultural Policy.

### Conclusion

Botswana is a country with a rich culture. In the past, this culture has not been placed at the centre of the country's socio-economic development. Moves are now underway to ensure that further development must be based on the culture or cultures of Botswana.

Women and the youth comprise the two largest social categories in the country's population. There are more females than males in Botswana. Young people up to 29 years old, form about 60% of the population. Both categories have so far been virtually marginalised in the impressive development that Botswana has achieved. The potential of these groups in stimulating socio-economic development has now been recognised. Consequently, the draft National Cultural Policy aims to unleash the potential of women and youth.

Future development of cultural activities must include the marketing of cultural activities, through the cooperation between the government and the private sector within the framework of national economic development policies, which see the private sector as the engine of growth for the entire economy in the future.

There are also a very important roles for NGOs to play in culture-based socio-economic development. Cultural exchanges between Botswana and other countries will facilitated through existing cultural exchange agreements.

It is hoped that the synergy from all these endeavours will result in stronger cultural expression in Botswana, and therefore in the enrichment of people's lives and the broadening national socio-economic development.

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## **Appendix**

### **Notes on Recasting Cultural Policies for Development Research**

#### *Threats and Problems*

- Laws governing research are over-protective. There is a need for legislation that facilitates research in all areas of culture.
- There is also a need to have a reference committee to assess research applications.
- A need also to come up with a Research and Development Policy which covers aspects of cultural development.
- Threats and problems—international co-operation.
- Threat of external cultural onslaught

#### *Opportunities and Strengths Research*

The threat to culture, as outlined above, is in itself an opportunity as it provides for a big scope in partnership.

#### *Way Forward—Research*

Need for legislation and conducive environment for research.

#### *Way Forward—International Co-operation*

Cultural activities that we host should be based on solid local cultural contributions. We should look at what we have, and take it out to the international community.

### **Mobilising Resources for Cultural Activities**

#### *Threat and Problems*

- Lack of incentives for companies willing to invest or sponsor cultural activities hamper cultural development.
- Some cultural activities hamper economic development

## **Opportunities and Strengths**

- Need to market cultural activities such that adequate resources are raised for them.

### ***Way Forward***

- Culture should be measured using the value points system to justify the need for resources for cultural activities.
- Compilation of information on craft manufacture of cultural artifacts; traditional musicians, performing arts etc.
- Launching of the report entitled "Our Creative Diversity".

## **Media in Cultural Policy**

### ***Botswana's Situation***

No policy exists that can propel the media to assist in the dissemination of information on culture.

### ***Summary***

- We need a cultural policy that will indicate what it expects from the media. Media policy should also include some aspects of culture. Guiding principles for the media in promotion of culture.
- The media should be used to broaden the cultural horizon, and media policy will help in this regard.

### ***Botswana Situation***

- Botswana has joined the technology bandwagon through installation of telecommunications.
- Computers in use but not extensively. Recently Botswana has been connected to the Internet.
- TV present but local stations transmit foreign channels.

### ***Problems***

Botswana is pirating TV from South Africa which has led to local culture being influenced by that of South Africa.

### ***Strength and Opportunities***

- Culturally the Botswana market is rich and the nation is eager for information. Botswana needs to exploit the current globalisation trend, to market its culture internationally.
- Media technologies present also Botswana with opportunities for selling its culture.
- Botswana needs to appreciate the fact that culture is dynamic, ever developing.

### ***Way Forward***

Botswana should make sure it establishes its own television station. There is a need for research to determine what the TV will be for. This should be based on the premises that:

- People always complain about television, yet they are always glued to it.
- People/ countries that have television stations think Botswana is better off without one.