National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods

B O T S W A N A

Country Gender Assessment Series
Country Gender Assessment Series

National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods

BOTSWANA

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
Gaborone, 2018
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The Government of Botswana recognises that gender equality is central to achieving poverty reduction, food and nutrition security and sustainable development. The Government is signatory to protocols and instruments that promote gender equality and women’s rights. A national machinery has been put in place to ensure that the momentum to promote gender equality in the countries is sustained. However, gender gaps still exist as a result of socio-economic and cultural practices that determine gender roles, access and control of productive resources and services for women and men. Such dynamics have disadvantaged women asset ownership, and limited their access to agricultural inputs and credit, extension and information services, technology and innovations, and markets. Compared to men, women are under-represented at most levels of decision making and development planning in public, private sectors and rural institutions.

Although Botswana has developed sound policies, strategies and legal frameworks to support food and nutrition security, growth of agriculture, forestry and range resources management. However, most of the policies so not adequately address gender disparities. There is a gap between policy intentions on gender and implementation. Gender inequalities continue to undermine women’s financial independence and personal autonomy.

It is within this context, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in 2015 commissioned a Country Gender Assessment (CGA) of the agricultural and rural sectors in collaboration with the my Ministry and the Ministry of Nationality, Immigration and Gender Affairs. The assessment is aimed at analysing the gender dimensions and existing inequalities in agriculture and the rural sector in Botswana. The CGA was an extensive consultative process to which many stakeholders including government departments, civil society, academia, research institutions and development partners, took part.

The results of the assessment have highlighted glaring gender disparities in the agriculture and rural sector in Botswana. It has further provided qualitative and quantitative gender indicators that will be used to improve gender mainstreaming in policy, programming and action planning.

I would like to heartily appreciate FAO for spearheading this initiative; and we will be looking forward to our continued partnership in addressing the gender gaps highlighted in the report.

Honourable Patrick Pule Ralotsia
Minister of Agricultural Development and Food Security
March 2018
Although crop production is difficult and risky due to drought and erratic rain patterns, Batswana women play a dominant role in crop production and food and nutrition security, while men are the main players in livestock production, owning more cattle, sheep and goats than their female counterparts.

The Government of Botswana has made great strides towards mainstreaming gender across sectoral policies to advance the position of women in agriculture, food and nutrition security and natural resource management. An evidence of such progress towards gender equality and women’s empowerment is for instance, that more females (58 percent) own arable land than males (42 percent), albeit the size of their plots is usually smaller. Due to the strong policy of the Government of Botswana to reduce poverty and promote women’s economic empowerment, women have benefitted more than men from poverty reduction initiatives.

In spite of these achievements, major facets of gender inequalities still exist, especially among rural women who constitute the majority of the agricultural labor force. Agriculture still failed to provide an exit to many of the Batswana people who still suffer severe poverty, with 18.4 percent of the population living below the poverty line. The proportion of female-headed households living in poverty is higher than that of male-headed households, 33 percent and 27 percent, respectively.

It is against this background that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) commissioned a Country Gender Assessment (CGA) of the agriculture and rural sectors in collaboration with the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Food Security (MoA) and the Gender Affairs Department (GeAD). The CGA analyses gender-related disparities in the different sectors related to agriculture, food and nutrition security, and natural resource management in the context of climate change. It highlights gender deficits with regards to credit and financial services for farming and farming technologies; information on nutrition and extension services; ownership and control of farm enterprises and the effect of climate change on farming activities. The report makes policy recommendations to close the existing gender gaps.

The report also provides a good baseline both for the roll out of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) process that is starting in many countries and the monitoring of national agricultural policies and investment plans.

It is my conviction that if the findings and recommendations of this report are internalized and utilized by the different actors, there is bound to be acceleration in improvement of livelihood of families, and above all enhancement in the economic and social status of women for the benefit of the agriculture and rural development sectors.

Chimimba David Phiri
FAO Subregional Coordinator for Southern Africa, and Representative in Botswana
The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) recognizes the centrality of gender equality to its mandate to achieve food security for all by raising levels of nutrition, improving agricultural productivity and natural resource management, and improving the lives of rural populations. FAO’s Policy on Gender Equality adopted in 2012 aims at advancing equality of voice, agency and access to resources and services between women and men in sustainable agricultural production and rural development. This Country Gender Assessment (CGA) of the agricultural and rural sectors in Botswana has been undertaken as part of FAO’s efforts to effectively implement its Policy on Gender Equality. The development of the CGA for Botswana was conducted under the leadership of the FAO Country Representative, Mr David Phiri who is also the Sub-regional Coordinator for southern Africa, and the overall coordination of Tacko Ndiaye, FAO Senior Gender and Rural Development Officer for Africa. It was spearheaded by: Dorina Minou, former Policy Officer and Gender Focal Person and Aida Galindo Ortiz, Junior Professional Officer at the FAO Sub-regional Office for Southern Africa (SFS); Gertrude Kara, HIV, Gender and Nutrition Officer at the FAO Sub-regional Disaster Risk Reduction Office of Southern Africa (REOSA); Keletso Segokgo, Programme Assistant and Mildred Mushunje, Gender Focal Point at the FAO Office in Zimbabwe. The preparation of the report benefitted from the technical backstopping of Francesca Distefano, Gender and Development Consultant at the Social Policies and Rural Institutions Division (ESP) at FAO Headquarters in Rome.

This gender assessment report benefitted from the contribution of a wide range of stakeholders from the Government of Botswana, United Nations organizations, civil society organizations (CSOs), farmers’ groups and academia at various stages whose interest and commitment were a great asset to the report. FAO commends all the informants and all those who participated in the validation meeting (see lists in Annex). The information, data and comments they provided enriched the report.

Our special thanks go to partners that include the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Botswana College of Agriculture, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and civil society organizations (CSOs) such as Putting Women First and Women Finance House Botswana. Special recognition goes to the Botswana National Gender Machinery for affording time to discuss with the consultant and facilitating the validation workshop.

FAO is indebted to the intellectual contribution of Shinga Mupindu and Martha Chinyemba of Gender and Rural Development (GERUDE) Trust commissioned to prepare this CGA. Their dedication to excellence in undertaking this challenging yet exciting assignment is shown in the quality of the report. Appreciation also goes to Ann Dela Apekey and Pious Asante, consultants at the FAO Regional Office for Africa who contributed tremendously to the editing of the report. Thanks are also due to Sadhana Ramchander, consultant editor, BluePencil Infodesign, and her team, for the final editing and layout of the report.
# Acronyms and abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACHAP</td>
<td>African Comprehensive HIV/AIDS Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFDB</td>
<td>African Development Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALDEP</td>
<td>Arable Lands Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APP</td>
<td>The Alternative Packages Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART</td>
<td>Anti-Retroviral Treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAMB</td>
<td>Botswana Agricultural Marketing Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCP</td>
<td>Botswana Congress Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BDP</td>
<td>Botswana Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMC</td>
<td>Botswana Livestock Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMI</td>
<td>Body Mass Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNF</td>
<td>Botswana National Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNNSS</td>
<td>Botswana National Nutrition Surveillance System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOT</td>
<td>Botswana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BYFA</td>
<td>Botswana Young Farmers Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Conservation Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAT</td>
<td>The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community Based Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDA</td>
<td>Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBNRM</td>
<td>Community Based Natural Resources Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGA</td>
<td>Country Gender Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORDE</td>
<td>Cooperation for Research Development and Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPF</td>
<td>Country Programme Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC</td>
<td>The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSOs</td>
<td>Civil society organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSW</td>
<td>Commission on the Status of Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DABP</td>
<td>Division of Agricultural Business Promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAP</td>
<td>Division of Animal Production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAR</td>
<td>Division of Agricultural Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCP</td>
<td>Division of Crop Production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCS</td>
<td>Division of Corporate Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESC</td>
<td>Division of Extension Service Co-ordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVA</td>
<td>Domestic Violence Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVS</td>
<td>Division of Veterinary Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP</td>
<td>FAO Social Protection Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union (formerly the European Economic Community)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAP</td>
<td>Financial Assistance Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBOs</td>
<td>Faith Based Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FES</td>
<td>Friedrich Ebert Stiftung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIDH</td>
<td>International Federation For Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAD</td>
<td>Gender and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender Based Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDI</td>
<td>Gender Development Index</td>
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Botswana attained independence from Britain in 1966, and at the time, agriculture accounted for 40 percent of GDP and 15 percent of formal employment. The discovery of diamonds has led to the restructuring of the population; where 80 percent were living in the rural areas before, it is now characterized by a higher percentage living in urban areas. To date, with a total population of about 2,038,228, only 38 percent (774,527) remain in the rural areas, of which 52 percent (402,754) are women. Although crop production is difficult and risky due to drought and erratic rain patterns, Batswana women play a dominant role in crop production and food and nutrition security, including utilizing food-related labour-saving technologies. Batswana men are the main players in livestock production and they own more cattle, sheep and goats than their female counterparts do. More females (58 percent) own arable land than males (42 percent). With that being the case, agriculture still failed to provide an exit to many of the Batswana people who still suffer severe poverty, with 18.4 percent of the population living below the poverty line. The proportion of female-headed households living in poverty is higher than that of male-headed households, 33 percent and 27 percent, respectively. However, due to the government’s strong policy to reduce poverty and promote women’s economic empowerment, women have benefitted more than men from poverty reduction initiatives in Botswana. Despite these efforts, unemployment remains higher among women (21.4 percent) than among men (14.5 percent).

The Country Gender Assessment (CGA) provided an opportunity to identify the gender dynamics and issues in the Botswana agricultural and rural sector, and then use this to provide data to the FAO-supported programme framework. The partnership between FAO and the Government of Botswana (GoB) has seen the implementation of several projects with gender mainstreamed in agricultural and rural development, food security, and natural resources management through the FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF).

Botswana has achieved gender parity at the primary, secondary and tertiary level and the adult literacy rate is 86.73 percent for people aged 15 years and above (87.12 females and 86.34 males). These figures are not disaggregated by rural and urban areas. Major health issues faced by women in Botswana include breast and cervical cancer as well as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). HIV and AIDS prevalence rates are higher among females (21 percent) than among males (18 percent). The country has a good health care system of which 84 percent of the population is within 5 km of a health facility. About 99 percent of births in Botswana are attended by skilled birth personnel. About 60 percent of women (figure not disaggregated by rural and urban) in Botswana experience some form of violence.

The national development programme is intertwined with Vision 2016, in which Botswana guarantees and promotes equality of women and men, upholding the participation of Botswana women in positions of power, decision-making and political leadership. Despite all the efforts by the GoB to elevate women, even through affirmative action, the patriarchal culture has a very strong influence on most of these processes. Women in Botswana still remain under-represented in the key decision-making structures of governments especially the legislative, executive and local government spheres (only 8 percent of parliamentarians and 19.4 percent of the councilors are women). Vision 2016 created a policy environment conducive for moving the gender equality agenda forward. The Gender Affairs Department (GeAD) provides guidance and leadership on gender and developmental issues to partners including government ministries, government departments, parastatals, the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), but lacks the capacity needed and requires strengthening.
There is a huge disparity in borehole ownership with women owning 27 percent and men owning 73 percent. Ownership of a borehole on customary land gives the owner de jure rights to groundwater and de facto rights to the surrounding grazing land, as well as woodland products and grassland products.

Women dominate the informal economy, and they form the majority of informal market players, that is vending and hawking among other forms. Women also form the majority of subsistence fishers in the Okavango Delta. The gender dynamics of forestry in Botswana are not clear but women of the Baswara ethnic group dominate veldt product gathering that mainly include wild fruits.

The Ministry of Agriculture has implemented programmes which offer platforms to address gender equality and equity issues. These programmes include Agri-business, Conservation Agriculture (CA), fisheries projects and income-generating programmes that currently fall short of systematic gender mainstreaming.

**Good practices**

- The practice by GeAD to finance income-generating groups (which consisted of either women alone or groups of more than 80-90 percent women) to the maximum of P250 000 (two hundred and fifty thousand Pulas) is good. The group should not be less than five members and all beneficiaries should maintain proper books of accounts, which should be audited by a recognized independent auditor.

- The GoB offers partial support to partner organizations such as NGOs, community based organizations (CBOs) and faith based organizations (FBOs) to assist those that are promoting gender equality, particularly in the areas listed under the national development agenda such as economic empowerment. To show their commitment, the partner organizations contribute in cash or kind to the funded programme. This helps reduce dependency of the organization on the Government.

- The practice of having female extension officers working with farmers is a good practice as this inspires female farmers not only to engage in agriculture but also to take it seriously as a business.

**Conclusion**

Botswana still faces a big challenge of a lack of sex disaggregated data in the agriculture and rural sector. Within the agricultural sector, implementation of gender equality programming is unsystematic pointing to the fact that proper strategies and guidelines need to be put in place. There is no coordinated perspective that measures progress on gender equality in the sector.

Women farmers have considerably less exposure to agricultural and market information, as compared to male farmers. This leads to their low participation in markets and sale of produce. Moreover, the majority of rural female and male subsistence farmers lack business skills, making them unable to produce sustainably for markets while simultaneously not being able to add value to their produce.

The majority of farmers continue to use rudimentary farming practices. Lack of access to appropriate technologies, compounded by a heavy workload also limits women’s capacity to pay attention to soil and water conservation practices.

The country has good programmes which provide platforms to address gender equality interventions: Agri-business, CA, fisheries projects and income generating programmes. However, systematic and coordinated gender mainstreaming is lacking in agriculture and rural development initiatives in Botswana.

**Recommendations**

The Ministry of Agriculture and GeAD in collaboration with FAO and other partners could pursue the following recommendations to contribute towards achieving the gender equality mandate in its policy formulation and programming in the country:

- Systematically mainstream gender in all agricultural programmes and projects, policies and strategies including the poverty eradication programmes such as Integrated Support Programme for Arable Agricultural Development (ISPAAD) and *Ipelegeng*, forestry and fisheries where there seem to be gender gaps.
• Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system in food and agriculture government institutions and GeAD in order to capture and monitor women’s and men’s participation in agricultural and rural development initiatives, thereby having a coordinated view of progress taking place on gender equality in the country.

• Carry out gender analysis to better understand and address gender dynamics surrounding each main crop, horticulture production and honey production in Botswana.

• Address gender considerations in livestock ownership patterns in policy formulation and livestock development interventions. The Ministry of Agriculture and GeAD should revisit the livestock marketing policies, in particular to ensure that poultry production and marketing benefit small players like rural women farmers.

• In view of utilization of food production technologies, spearhead further investigations about the National Food Technology and Research Centre (NFTRC) institution to establish its mode of operation in view of supporting rural women farmers including the resource poor. FAO can facilitate work with this institution to reach more rural women on issues of food processing, value addition and marketing, especially women who are into horticulture.

• FAO and other development partners could support GeAD and the Ministry of Agriculture in strengthening the functioning of the Gender Focal Point (GFP) system in the departments and build the capacity of the GFPS to enable them to play their role effectively.
1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Historically agriculture was the main economic activity for the majority of Batswana people, both rural and urban dwellers. At independence in 1966, agriculture accounted for 40 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 15 percent of formal employment. To date its contribution to the GDP and formal sector has significantly declined to 2.5 percent and 1.8 percent, respectively (GoB. Revised 2004 Agricultural Census Report. 2008). This decrease in contribution to GDP is also the result of the rapid growth of other sectors such as mining. Like in many other countries in the region, the agricultural sector in Botswana is still the mainstay of the rural economy and the livelihoods of rural people. Batswana women play a dominant role in food production and food security, investing more time and resources to contribute to food production at the household level as compared to men. Crop production is difficult and risky due to periodic droughts, the harsh climate and the limited availability of arable land. Taking this into account, average yields are extremely low and have not been improving. Livestock is the primary source of subsistence and income for the majority of rural households across the country (Whiteside & CORDE, 1997). The Inheritance Law in Botswana used to discriminate against women where women were regarded as ‘minors’ and therefore were not entitled to possess property including land and other resources like cattle. To date, more females (58 percent) own arable land than males (42 percent). That being the case, agriculture has still failed to provide an exit to many Batswana women from severe poverty with 18.4 percent of the population and majority being rural women living below the poverty line. Youth participation in agriculture is low in Botswana, and their access to productive resources, such as land, is also limited.

1.2 FAO’s presence in Botswana

FAO is a key stakeholder for the GoB in agriculture, food security, nutrition, natural resources/forests management and in poverty eradication as a whole. FAO’s presence in Botswana dates back to 1987 and the organization has supported the GoB in achieving national agricultural development milestones including animal disease control, capacity strengthening (including from a gender perspective), running farming as a business and in agricultural extension (Botswana CPF 2014-2016). As in many other countries in the region, Botswana’s agricultural sector is the backbone of the rural economy and the livelihoods of rural people. Data from a rapid assessment of the two government-sponsored programmes in the agricultural sector indicates that women farmers are participating and benefiting from important poverty alleviation and economic empowerment programmes (Botswana CPF 2014-2016). Botswana has adopted national action plans for food security, which seek to eliminate inequalities in women’s access to productive resources. Altogether the partnership between FAO and Botswana has seen the implementation of over 112 projects in the areas of agriculture and rural development, gender equality issues in agriculture, food security, and management of natural resources, through a CPF tool (FAO, 2009). In addition, through this partnership, Botswana has adopted national action plans for food security that seek to eliminate inequalities in women’s access to productive resources (FAO, 2009). FAO has a clear comparative advantage in addressing gender issues in agriculture and rural development.

1.2.1 FAO policy on gender equality

Gender equality is central to FAO. FAO’s mandate is to achieve food security for all by raising levels of nutrition, improving agricultural productivity and natural resource management, and improving the lives of rural populations. Thus the goal of FAO’s policy on gender equality is to achieve equality between women and men in sustainable agricultural production and rural development for the elimination of hunger and poverty. FAO’s gender equality objectives target at achieving the following:

- Women participate equally with men as decision-makers in rural institutions and in shaping laws, policies and programmes.
- Women and men have equal access to and control over decent employment and income, land and other productive resources.
- Women and men have equal access to goods and services for agricultural development and to markets.
- Women’s work burden is reduced by 20 percent through improved technologies, services and infrastructure.
- The percentage of agricultural aid committed to women/gender-equality related projects is increased to 30 percent of total agricultural aid.

FAO adopted a gender mainstreaming approach in all its work. This entails examining and addressing women’s as well as men’s needs, priorities and experiences as part of the development of policies, normative standards, programmes, projects and knowledge-building activities, so that women and men benefit equally. In the cases where the gender gap is so large that women have no access to available opportunities, FAO carries out programmes and projects that specifically target women to close the gap. The GoB embraces gender equality to achieve food security, development and growth and works with FAO on agriculture and rural development for the elimination of hunger and poverty focusing on food and nutrition security and agriculture.

1.2.2 Botswana-FAO CPF 2014-2016

The identified priority areas for FAO’s collaboration with the GoB are closely aligned with the national priorities as articulated in the GoB Vision 2016 and National Development Plan 10 (NDP 10). The CPF is also consistent with Botswana United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2010-2016 as well as FAO comparative advantage, FAO minimum standards for gender mainstreaming, and global strategic objectives of eradicating hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition and rural poverty.

The document identified three priority areas for Botswana as follows:

**Priority area 1:** Support to producers and natural resource managers in the adoption of environmental friendly and climate-smart agricultural practices and approaches for sustained increase of agricultural production.

**Priority area 2:** Support for the development and implementation of inclusive policies and strategies for sustainable increase of agricultural production and food security.

**Priority area 3:** Support for the promotion of more inclusive, efficient and trade-oriented livestock, crop and food systems.

FAO will continue to provide support in strengthening the institutional capacities for promotion of gender-responsive climate-smart agricultural approaches and practices. The Organization further provides a strong foundation for engagement with other UN agencies, women organizations and CBOs to achieve gender equality and equity in climate change responses. FAO will support women organizations who will work with communities to ensure that both women and men farmers’ needs and interests in climate change responses are taken into consideration. The CPF is determined to engage gender mainstreaming approaches and practices in agricultural extension and research for sustainable climate change responses and agricultural production. To this end FAO will build the capacities of the gender officers, agricultural extension personnel and the focal points of the relevant government stakeholders in mainstreaming gender issues into the food security and nutrition programmes and support activities according to the following outputs under Priority 1 Output 1.4 that states: “Innovative gender responsive approaches and practices for sustainable agricultural production
identified, disseminated and adoption by extension workers and farmers facilitated (e.g. mechanization and small-scale irrigation)“.

1.3 Purpose of CGA

The purpose of the gender assessment was to analyse gender dimensions and existing inequalities in agriculture, food and nutrition security, natural resources management and rural development in the context of climate change.

1.3.1 Objectives of the assessment

The main objective of the assessment is to explore the situation of women compared to men's in agriculture and rural development in Botswana with a view to understand the extent to which rural women are able to realize their rights and potential in those areas where FAO is mandated to assist Botswana. The information generated from this exercise will be used to inform country level planning and programming, including the formulation of the new CPF as well as any other FAO interventions at country level including project formulation, and policy and technical advice in line with national development priorities and FAO’s mandate and strategic framework. Further, the findings of the assessment will provide baseline data and information to inform the roll out of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Finally, the assessment will contribute to country reporting on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and UNDAF formulation and implementation with up-to-date and objective information on the situation of rural women in the country.

1.3.2 Methodology

The exercise involved identifying stakeholders for consultation, developing study tools and conducting interviews with FAO-Botswana project staff that are based in Zimbabwe and Botswana, development partners, the United Nations, the Ministry of Agriculture, Gender Machinery and implementing partners in gender, agriculture and rural development. Interviews with stakeholders were necessary to fill the literature review’s information gap.

Methodology entailed secondary and primary data collection.

- **Secondary data:** This involved collection of and desk review of available literature from CPFs, country reports, strategic frameworks, legislatives, policies, academic literature, statistical information, UN documents, CEDAW reports, other relevant organizations and government documentations.

- **Primary data:** This involved collecting data to complement the desk review through interviews (direct, online and telephone calls) with national stakeholders, individuals and FAO technical staff, UN staff, representatives of different departments and units at the Botswana Ministry of Agriculture, international organizations, Botswana Gender Machinery and implementing partners.

1.3.3 Organization of the report

The report is divided into six sections, entitled the introduction, country context, gender analysis, conclusions, good practices and recommendations. The first section, the introduction, discussed the purpose, objectives and methodology used in the CGA and FAO presence in Botswana. The second section provided information on the country context and it included analysis of information on demographic issues as well as socio-economic and political characteristics of Botswana. The third section of the report focused on the gender analysis of the agriculture and rural sector analysing the policy and institutional issues, the gender disparities in food and nutrition, crops, livestock, post-harvest handling, marketing, value chain, forestry, fisheries, climate change, land, water, extension, infrastructure, social protection, rural labour, rural finance, rural institutions, and rural development planning. The fourth section is the conclusion. The fifth section identified the good practices upon which planned interventions could be built. The last section of the report lists the recommendations and documents possible actions that can be implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and the GeAD in partnership with FAO and other stakeholders.
2. Country context

2.1 Main demographic characteristics of Botswana

Botswana is a flat, relatively small and landlocked country located in the centre of southern Africa. It is bordered by Zambia and Zimbabwe to the north, and Namibia and South Africa to the south. Botswana lies 900 meters above sea-level. Botswana has a total area of 602 957 square km with its inhabitants spreading over about 600 000 square km. It is an arid environment with the Kalahari Desert occupying 70 percent of the country area. According to the Central Statistics Office in 2011, Botswana has a population of about 2 038 228 people. This number represents an absolute increase of 344 041 from the population of 1 680 863 in the 2001 census, and a latest inter-censal annual growth rate of 1.9 percent, with about 52 percent females and 48 percent males (GOB-GeAD. 2014). About 38 percent (774 527) of this population lives in rural areas of which women are 52 percent (402 754). The urban population stands at 1.3 million with an annual urban growth rate of 2.5 percent versus -0.7 percent in that of the rural population (World Bank Indicators 2014). The proportion of female-headed households living in poverty is higher than that of male-headed households - 33 percent and 27 percent respectively (WB Botswana Social Protection Assessment, 2013). About 60 percent of the population are youth below the age of 30 years, and supposedly 52 percent of this figure are young women and girls. Household headship by children stands at 1.5 percent but this figure is not disaggregated by sex (WB Botswana Social Protection Assessment, 2013). There are about three major ethnic groups in Botswana, namely the Tswana (80 percent), Kalanga (11 percent), and the Sarwa (3 percent). More demographic data is tabulated in Annex 1.

2.2 Socio-economic and political characteristics

Botswana is a stable and peaceful Constitutional Republic that got its independence from the British rule in 1966. The country operates on a constitutional three system government: the Executive, the Legislature, and the Judiciary, and it is an active member of the United Nations, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Nonaligned Movement and the Commonwealth. It is also a member of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) together with Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland (Botswana Progress MDG Report, 2014).

At independence, most people in Botswana relied on mixed agriculture (crops and livestock), hunting and gathering wild foods and remittances from migrant labour in South Africa. But diamonds were found soon after independence, and since the 1970s, mining has provided a strong backbone for economic development. Farming of sorghum, maize, millet and beans, along with small stock and cattle, are still important for subsistence and also commercial returns.

Botswana is classified as an upper-middle income country with the world’s highest economic growth rate of 8.7 percent from independence in 1966 to 2008. Botswana’s GDP was about US$17.3 billion in 2011 (World Bank 2012) with a real GDP growth rate of 5.2 percent in 2014 driven by the non-mining sector including trade, hotels and restaurants, the finance and banking sector, social and personal service. Inflation stood at 3.8 percent in December 2014. On the average Botswana has a nearly universal access to clean water, education and health care. Although it has a fairly stable economy, noticeable gender disparities exist as is reflected in Table 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Female (percent)</th>
<th>Male (percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Household headship</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically active population</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gainfully paid employment</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower paying jobs</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural force</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed population</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: World Bank Indicators, 2017

2.2.1 Tradition, culture and religion

Vision 2016 envisaged all citizens of Botswana fully embracing and actively managing the process of change, placing the family at the centre of development efforts. "The family would be the central institution for the support and development of people in Botswana, and for the transmission of social and moral values. The ability of a society to accept change is strengthened by the personal morality of its people. The emphasis on a strong family unit would encourage responsible parenting and the institution of marriage. It will provide the social foundation for the eradication of problems such as the high incidence of teenage pregnancies, adultery, prostitution, street children, and the spread of HIV" (WB, 2013).

The Vision clearly spells out that the Botswana of the future would have citizens who are law abiding, strong in religious and spiritual values, and who possess high ethical standards and that no citizen of the future Botswana would be disadvantaged as a result of gender, age, religion or creed, colour, national or ethnic origin, location, language or political opinions. Botswana would have eradicated negative social attitudes towards the status and role of women, the youth, the elderly and the disabled, and would be free from all forms of sexual harassment. Traditional divisions of labour persist in Botswana particularly in rural areas. In households among the different ethnic groups, tasks are assigned by gender and age. There are three main ethnic groups: the Tswana, Kalanga and Basarwa, and the Tswana is the largest with eight tribes: Bamangwato, Bakwena, Bangwaketse, Batawana, Batlokwa, Bakgatla, Barolong and Balete.

Tswana patriarchal customs elevate the male to a position of power and relegate women to subordinate positions. The senior male is traditionally the head of the household. House building and agriculture are primarily female tasks, while work with livestock varies among ethnic groups. Hunting is primarily a male activity everywhere. Infants are carefully attended to and indulged. Mothers and older sisters carry infants almost everywhere in slings tied across their back.

Households in the Tswana tradition often maintain three residential sites: one in a village, one at agricultural holdings around the village periphery, and one farther out at the cattle-post. Many urban residents today continue to maintain a house in a village of origin, and many men and some women also develop cattle posts. Villages are distinguished from towns and cities by a significant engagement in agriculture by residents, and by the political structure of the settlement. At the heart of a village is the chief’s central court and public forum, known as a kgotla. The village is divided into wards, each of which also has a kgotla where a headman hears lower-level disputes and matters of ward concern are aired. Among the Sarwa, women have been active participants in political affairs; among the Tswana, women formerly were not allowed to participate in their own right, except as an occasional regent. In the “modern” economy, there is no formal division of labour by gender, but fewer women are in upper-level management and government positions, and certain positions are gender-based (herders are male; housemaids are female).2

The commonly practiced religion in Botswana is Christianity with an estimated figure of 70 percent of Botswana citizens who identify themselves as Christians. The Muslim community of Asian origin occupies about 3 percent, and others (Bahá’í, Traditional African religion such as worshipping of ancestral spirits and Hinduism) make up the remaining 27 percent.

2 Countries and Their Cultures, Botswana - http://www.everyculture.com/Bo-Co/Botswana.html?i=xz3YnaiC5R
Sorghum or corn meal porridge is the staple of most Botswana meals. A thicker version of the porridge, known as bogobe suffices the midday meal, accompanied by a stew of meat and/or cabbage, spinach (or wild greens), or beans. English and Setswana are the official languages. 90 percent of the population is said to speak Setswana. The term Setswana refers both to the Tswana language, and to Tswana practices/culture.

2.2.2 Employment

Vision 2016 envisaged that by the year 2016, Botswana would have reached full employment, where the total number of jobs available in the formal or informal economies would be in balance with the number of job seekers. Employment legislation has been reformed to eliminate discriminatory provisions, in particular those prohibiting women from working in mines, industrial and agricultural work at night. In general, unemployment is higher among women than men - 21.4 percent and 14.5 percent, respectively. The greatest challenge facing Botswana is not only to improve food security but also to improve rural employment and incomes under semi-arid and marginal environments (UNFPA Botswana, 2011). An analysis of the population incomes in the 2011 census revealed that 32 percent males and 28 percent females received incomes from agricultural activities and about 8.1 percent males and 12.8 percent females received their incomes from household activities. 44.7 percent of rural men and 37.2 percent of rural women received their incomes from agricultural activities whilst 11.3 percent of men and 18.1 percent of women received theirs from household activities (UNFPA Botswana, 2011). The government targeted rural development in an effort to promote agricultural productivity, despite its poor performance which is mainly associated with the arable sub-sector as compared to the livestock sub-sector.

However the Gender Status Index (GSI) for Botswana is 0.79. GSI is an indicator for women’s and men’s access to economic power opportunities/employment. The GSI focuses on three components: income, time-use and employment as well as access to productive resources. The Income and Wages Index across sectors indicates that overall, women in Botswana earn less than men, with a gender gap range of 0.93 and 0.98. Many women tend to occupy junior positions in civil service or are employed in the informal economy and thus have no access to social security benefits. However there has been an increase in women occupying high-level positions in the private and public sector, though according to Africa for Women’s Rights (2010), women still remain under represented (31 percent in 2007).

According to the Deputy Secretary Report to the 56th Session UN Commission on the Status of Women 2012, Botswana has adopted affirmative action for women’s empowerment through the provision of both financial and technical support for women’s empowerment projects and programmes. Deliberate efforts by the GoB have been made to train rural women on skills for their economic empowerment. However, the majority of secondary school graduates remain unemployed. Of those seeking employment, 34 percent are aged 20-24 years while about 41 percent are adolescents aged 15-19 years, mainly adolescent girls.

A Youth Development Fund was created in April 2009 to promote the active participation of young people in the socio-economic development of the country; to reduce rural-urban migration by making it attractive to start growth-oriented citizen-owned youth enterprises and encourage out-of-school, marginalized, unemployed youths to venture into viable income-generating projects; and to create sustainable employment opportunities for young people.

2.2.3 Health

Botswana has a good health care system with 84 percent of the population being within 5 km of a health facility and skilled personnel attended 99 percent of births (GoB-GeAD, 2014). SADC Gender Development Index (GDI) scored Botswana at 72 percent, ranking the country 4th in the region. Major health issues faced by women in Botswana include HIV and AIDS and breast and cervical cancer.

The current status of malnutrition relates a distinct need for more attention to be provided to children in the lowest quintiles, female-headed households, and districts that consistently register the poorest nutritional indicators (UNICEF, 2011). A large number of children suffer from malnutrition and 11.4 percent of children under the age of five, although not disaggregated by sex at this stage exhibit stunted growth as compared to the 31.4 percent in 2014 (FAO, 2015).

2.2.4 HIV and AIDS

Botswana Vision 2016 declared that HIV in Botswana must be halted if the country was to avoid catastrophic consequences. The Vision planned to diversify family planning and education services to the youth to reduce the incidence of HIV, along with other sexually transmitted diseases, and teenage pregnancies (Statistics Botswana, 2014). Ways to fulfill this vision included the development of an HIV and AIDS policy, and programmes and strategies to support the national response to HIV and AIDS. Botswana’s policy on HIV and AIDS takes cognizance of the fact that due to age, gender, socio-economic status, sexual orientation or disability, some Batswana are more vulnerable to the devastating effects of HIV and AIDS than others. Not only are young women and girls more vulnerable to the HIV infection than men and boys but they also bear the brunt of the burden of caring for the AIDS-infected members of the family. This means women must compromise on their agricultural time and need labour- and time-saving technology to enable them to contribute meaningfully to agricultural and rural development activities.

In Figure 1, HIV prevalence among females is consistently higher than that of males, giving an average of about 21 percent HIV prevalence among females and 18 percent prevalence among males. The prevalence for both males and females is highest in towns (17.3 percent and 22.8 percent respectively) and lowest in urban villages for males with 13.5 percent and in rural areas for females with 17.6 percent. Contributing to this differential HIV prevalence among Batswana males and females included multiple and concurrent relationships, inter-generational relationships, unequal gender and power relations, early marriage and teenage pregnancy amongst girls. Estimated prevalence rates by age, sex and location are as shown in Figure 2 below.

In Figure 2, the scenario is almost the same with HIV prevalence among females of the ages 15–40 years being higher than the males in the same age range. From age 45 years and above, the HIV prevalence among females begins to decline to below that of males. Social indicators show that due to diamond trade life expectancy in Botswana had gone up, before the catastrophic reversal by HIV and AIDS (Statistics Botswana, 2007).

Education and marital status also influence the spread of HIV. Educated people tend to have a lower HIV prevalence justifying why girl child education should be given utmost attention to save her from the pandemic. Those in Botswana with higher secondary education have an HIV prevalence of 16.3 percent. Those with no
formal education have a prevalence of 28.4 percent (SADC, 2013). These two statistics unfortunately are not
disaggregated by sex. The HIV prevalence is also higher amongst those who are widowed than those who
never married - 39.6 percent and 16.1 percent respectively (SADC, 2013).

The Maternal Mortality Rate for Botswana is 198 per 100 000 and this is mostly due to AIDS-related deaths but
coverage of antiretroviral treatment (ART) to prevent Mother-to-Child Transmission (MTCT) of HIV in Botswana
is more than 80 percent (SADC, 2013).

2.2.5 Population dynamics

Urban areas have grown rapidly in Botswana since independence. In 2008, 60 percent of the population was
urban, a percentage that continues to grow (CIA World Fact Book 2011). Cities are centred by a downtown area
of shops, businesses and government offices.

Today after decades of labour migration, declining marriage rates, new laws guaranteeing women civil rights,
and the modern economy, almost half of all households in Botswana are headed by women. Western education,
the modern economy (particularly the service sector), and civil service positions have all provided venues for
women to improve their positions, but women’s cash income in both rural and urban households lags far
behind men’s and women’s overall income is more dependent on informal activities such as agricultural and
other household activities. Women have had trouble breaking into national politics except in supporting roles,
but in the 1999 elections, several women were elected to the National Assembly and others were appointed to
seats, and one of the elected positions in the House of Chiefs was taken up by a young woman. Although they
are overall under-represented in the political environment, some women now hold prominent ministerial
positions.  

2.2.6 Education, training and literacy

The Botswana Vision 2016 was launched in August 1996 and was meant to be fulfilled by the year 2016, when
Botswana would be celebrating its fiftieth anniversary of independence. Vision 2016 outlined clearly the
vision that Batswana wanted for their country, underpinned by the following five national principles derived

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Figure 2: HIV prevalence by age and gender

![HIV prevalence by age and gender](http://www.everyculture.com/Bo-Co/Botswana.html#ixzz3Yna6ci5R)

Source: Botswana 2013 Global AIDS response report - Progress report of the national response to the 2011 Declaration of Commitments on HIV and AIDS
from Botswana’s cultural heritage: democracy, development, self-reliance, unity, and batho: the concept of a person who has a well-rounded character, who is well-mannered, courteous and disciplined, and realizes his or her full potential both as an individual and as a part of community where he/she belongs.

The Vision’s Pillar 1 envisaged an Educated Informed Nation: All Batswana would have the opportunity for continued and universal education. Botswana would have a system of quality education that is liable to adapt to the changing needs of the country and the world at large and improvements in the relevance, the quality, and the access to education lay at the centre of the Vision for the future (GoB, 1996).

Botswana has recorded a rising and high national adult literacy rate of 86.73 percent in those 15 years above (87.12 percent in females and 86.34 percent in males). This was not aggregated by rural and urban. Formal education is considered the means to prepare Batswana citizens for the future as spelt out in the country’s Vision 2016: “The education system would empower citizens to become innovators, and the best producers of goods and services. Public education would raise awareness on skills needed for life.” The government has invested considerable energy and money to improve primary and secondary school education in Botswana. Enrollment in rural areas, though not disaggregated by sex, still drops considerably and dropout rates are also high. Teenage pregnancy accounted for 31.7 percent of all girls dropping out of secondary school in 2010 and discernible patterns indicated that teenage pregnancy increased with rural location, poverty and double orphan status (UNICEF, 2011). Botswana’s policy on “Return to school after giving birth” helps the girls to continue their education after they deliver but with the majority of rural girls, the tendency is to then get married early or stay at home and raise the child. Livelihoods and cultural factors could also lead to children dropping out of school because of entrenched work patterns, for example, seasonal planting and harvesting. The dropout rates of young boys in rural areas could be attributed to being taken out of school to look after livestock for a pay. The report also pointed out that the GoB has sufficient institutional capacity to guarantee all school-going aged children 10 years of basic education.

With a youthful population of about two-third of the entire population, Botswana has succeeded in getting its young people to school. According to the SADC Gender Barometer (2012), Botswana has achieved gender parity at primary, secondary and tertiary levels well ahead of the 2015 deadline (GoB-GeAD, 2014). In 2012/2013, there were over 120 females enrolled at the tertiary level for every 100 males but there was concern that female enrollment in science, vocational and technical institutions had never exceeded 35 percent. This is also the case with agricultural institutions, for example the Botswana College of Agriculture. The perception among both students and teachers that engineering jobs are only for men persists. This explains why very few women are found engaged in practical agriculture.

2.2.7 Gender Based Violence (GBV)

The Vision 2016 envisaged concrete measures to prevent and eradicate violence against women through community-based education, the enactment and enforcement of laws, as well as the provision of services to support women subjected to violence. On the contrary, violence against women in Botswana remains high (67 percent in 2011) and issues of security in agricultural lands and cattle posts had been of serious concern to the nation with a large rural populace that thrives on agriculture and related activities. This comes from the fact that sound agricultural activities like cattle rearing and farming are done in cattle posts and lands – areas which are detached from service centres, and in some cases very remote areas that have limited infrastructure such as telecommunications, roads, police services and electricity. Increase of GBV cases that included rape, murder and sexual harassment of females in farm lands was reported and this alienated females from practicing ranching and other agricultural activities.

Although the Domestic Violence Act 2008 criminalized many forms of violence, under customary law and common rural practices, men are perceived to have the right to “chastise” their wives (FIDH, 2010). Thus the majority of crimes are unreported and those that are reported are rarely effectively investigated and prosecuted. Botswana has also recently seen an increase in cases of murder of women by their partners. Discussions during the focus group revealed that women from marginalized communities such as Basarwa suffered GBV in cattle posts and surrounding forests as they gather veldt products for food.


10 National Gender Profile of Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods – Botswana: Country Gender Assessment Series
According to the UN Joint Programme (UNJP) of Support to End GBV in Botswana 2015-2016, results of a situational survey of 2012 revealed that GBV was the most flagrant violation of human rights in Botswana. Although the rate of GBV is not segregated according to rural and urban women, about 204,938 Batswana women experienced violence in 2012 and only 1,596 got relief from the courts (Women Affairs Department and Gender Links, 2012).

2.2.8 Women’s voice and political representation

The Constitution of Botswana (1966) guarantees the equality of men and women according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of United Nations (1948), as a prerequisite for the attainment of sustainable socio-economic development and democracy. Botswana Vision 2016 clearly indicated that positive measures including affirmative action in favour of women should be taken to ensure women’s full participation in positions of power, leadership and decision-making at all levels of Botswana society (GoB, 1996). A National Council on Women to promote and monitor the implementation of the Women in Development policy was put in place. The strategies ensured focus on full empowerment of Batswana women and eradicating poverty by formulating, reviewing and adopting economic policies, laws and practices which targeted women’s needs, and ensuring their equal access to and control of productive resources including affirmative action. However women in Botswana still remain under-represented in key decision-making structures of governments especially the legislative, executive and local government spheres (only 8 percent of parliamentarians and 19.4 percent of the councilors) despite the government having signed the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development 1997 which committed to achieving at least a 30 percent quota for women in political and decision-making structures (SADC, 2013). Women only make 18.8 percent of mayors and deputy mayors. Several reasons for non-participation of women include women’s multiple roles that tend to hinder them from participating in active politics, citing high energy demand, time and finances needed in political campaigns (GoB-GeAD, 2014). In a patriarchal society such as Botswana, socialization (women trained to be a home-keeper and submit to men) of the girl child could also be a contributory factor.

In the 2009 general elections, the country’s two largest political parties - the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) and the opposition Botswana National Front (BNF) - each fielded just three female candidates even though there were 57 constituencies. The third largest party - the Botswana Congress Party (BCP) - was slightly more progressive, putting up four female candidates. All seven female opposition candidates lost, while two of the ruling party’s women candidates won. The president later nominated two more women to parliament, raising the number of female legislators to four – or just 6.6 percent of the seats in parliament. Surprisingly, more women participated in the elections than men as evidenced in 2009 elections where 403,000 women registered to vote compared to just 320,000 men. There is a general saying that “One’s vote is one’s voice” so more women “spoke” during elections. It is common for women in Botswana to be at the forefront of grassroots campaigns, singing and drumming up support and conducting door-to-door campaigns, but doing all this to put men in power. This is a good example of the patriarchal stronghold in Botswana society.

2.2.9 Human development

Table 2: Human development aspects (UNDP, 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Indicator Female</th>
<th>Indicator Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Botswana HDI</td>
<td>HDI 0.683(2013)</td>
<td>109/187 countries</td>
<td>0.693</td>
<td>0.704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDI</td>
<td>0.944</td>
<td>133/149</td>
<td>0.693</td>
<td>0.704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADC GDI (SGDI 2013)</td>
<td>70% for 3 years</td>
<td>Source: Botswana Human Development Report (UNDP, 2016)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows the Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.683 placing Botswana in the 109th position out of 187 countries of the world. HDI measures average achievements in three basic dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, knowledge and decent standard of living. However, when the value is discounted for inequality, the HDI falls to 0.422, a loss of 38.2 percent due to inequality in the distribution of the dimension indices. The average loss due to inequality for medium HDI countries is 25.6 percent and for sub-Saharan Africa is 33.6 percent. The Human inequality coefficient for Botswana is equal to 36.5 percent, way above medium economy countries but within range for sub-Saharan Africa. The GDI is an empirical measure of
Gender inequalities in achievement in three basic dimensions of human development—health (measured by female and male life expectancy at birth), education (measured by female and male expected years of schooling for children, and mean years for adults aged 25 years and older) and command over economic resources (measured by female and male estimated Gross National Income (GNI) per capita. The 2016 female HDI value for Botswana is 0.693 in contrast with 0.704 for males, resulting in a GDI value of 0.984.

2.2.10 Infrastructure, and rural roads

In Botswana, access to resources and services is more difficult in rural settings than in urban areas and poverty is more prevalent in rural areas than in the urban environment (CEDAW Report, 2008). The government has responded positively by providing utilities such as electricity, telecommunication and water in these rural and remote areas. About 22 percent of farmers have access to telecommunication and 17 percent to electricity. The statistics however were not disaggregated by gender and sex. The burden of accessing forms of energy sources other than electricity disproportionately affects women, especially in rural areas. This may translate into poor households in rural areas, particularly female-headed households, living in unhealthy conditions (CEDAW Report, 2008).

a. Rural transport

Vision 2016 clearly indicated that Botswana must ensure that every village had tarred and well-maintained roads linking it to other settlements. A rural roads development project supported by the African Development Bank (AfDB) in 1999, established a reliable network of roads in rural areas taking into consideration women’s needs. The rural roads development facilitated the supply of agricultural inputs and the marketing of crops and livestock, leading to improvement in the incomes of women. Also the daily tasks undertaken such as cooking, water and firewood collection were considerably made easy. Improved access meant gas and kerosene and other supplies were generally available in the rural trading centres that sprung up along the alignments of the roads; women secured employment in shops, clinics, restaurants and petrol stations in these centres. The rural road system in rural areas improved greatly so that the furthest distance of a village from the capital did not imply lack of basic amenities like water, electricity, roads etc., as was the case in the past (CEDAW Report, 2008). With remarkable growth of the Botswana economy that resulted in modern and better infrastructure in towns and urban villages, the rural population dwindled from more than 80 percent at independence to about 38 percent today.

In view of this change, the Settlement Policy in Botswana that discouraged provision of public assets (roads, schools, health centres) to less populated areas was put in place. Planning decisions were rationalized on minimizing per unit cost of service provision. It then happened that the less populated areas were also near places where agricultural activities also took place. As a result, agricultural production areas were characterized by poor roads, lack of schools and communications infrastructure (Moepong, 2013).

b. Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

The GoB, placed water and sanitation as an issue of high priority to women as demonstrated in its sanitation programme: “Strategic Development for Sustainable Sanitation and Wastewater Management in Botswana” (CIDA, 2013). Available statistical data on access, utilization and management of improved water supply and sanitation is not disaggregated by sex/gender but by rural and urban. Botswana has made significant progress in providing safe drinking water to the majority of the population. In 1993/94 all urban households had access to safe drinking water which included 90 percent of the poor and very poor female-headed households (CEDAW Report, 2008). The population which had access to improved water supply in the rural areas was about 774 000 people and 752 000 in 2013 and 2015 respectively and 1 142 000 and 1 171 000 in 2013 and 2015 respectively in urban area (World Bank Report, 2015).

Access to water has shortened the time otherwise spent by women collecting clean drinking water in the urban settings. In the rural areas, the government initiated the rural village water supply programme that is providing water to communities. Although 97 percent of the population has access to safe drinking water, the burden of collecting water still remains predominantly a women’s responsibility (CEDAW Report, 2008).
The GoB however acknowledged the role, rights and needs of women in water use and management as indicated in one of its principles in the Integrated Water Resources and Water Efficiency Plan that states that:

Women play a central part in the provision, management and safe-guarding of water. The role of women as providers and users of water and guardians of the environment has seldom been reflected in institutional frameworks for development, planning and management of water resources. Gender awareness and participation are therefore crucial to sustaining the resource. Participation of both men and women in influential positions in the water sector can accelerate the achievement of sustainable water use and management. The government has put in place plans and strategies to address women’s water requirement issues which included engaging them in all projects and programmes related to water and sanitation (CIDA, 2013).

The population served with improved sanitation grew from 360,000 in 2013 to 377,000 in 2015 in the rural areas and from about 887,000 to about 928,000 in the urban areas. Regarding access to improved water supply, about 774,000 people and 752,000 in 2013 and 2015 respectively received improved water supply in the rural areas and 1,142,000 compared to 1,171,000 people received it in urban areas in 2015 (World Bank Report, 2015).

Many households in the urban villages have shifted from pit to water system toilets, improving the new sewage disposal and consequently contributing to better women’s health.
3. Gender analysis of the agriculture and rural sector

3.1 Agriculture and rural development

Botswana Vision 2016 pointed out that the greatest challenge that was facing Botswana in 1996 was improvement of food security, rural employment and incomes under semi-arid and marginal environments. The Vision further pointed out that the country was facing challenges and needed to be more innovative in making use of modern techniques, such as improved animal husbandry and irrigation to raise productivity in the agricultural sector, and maximizing the returns on investment, hence planned to treble production levels of dry land crops and horticulture. This production according to the Vision would develop the role of women in the mainstream of development.

Agriculture plays a significant role in providing food, income, employment and investment opportunities to Botswana, especially the rural population in the country (Republic of Bostwana, 1991). The dominant production activity is mainly livestock farming, beef cattle production and small stock. Agriculture is also an important supplier of raw materials for agro-based industries such as milling, breweries, oil, soap, furniture and meat industries. Of the estimated two million people in Botswana, about half live in the rural areas and derive their livelihood mainly from agriculture, off-farm activities (brewing, basket-making, woodwork, etc.) and remittances.

Within agriculture, crops production is associated with women, justifiably so as more women (47 percent) than men (41.6 percent) own arable land, whilst livestock production is associated with men (SADC, 2013). Although some division of labour exists in the crop production cycle, it is not a uniform scenario in all crop-producing districts. It emerged from focus group discussions that in districts where sharing of tasks occurs, men are responsible for clearing land and ploughing with cattle, guarding fields, hoeing and doing equipment checks; otherwise women could be responsible for the whole crop production cycle. Women generally are responsible for small stock and indigenous chicken, and men for large livestock – cattle. Gathering of firewood, veldt products for home consumption and the collection of water are generally a woman’s responsibility in Botswana. Ownership and control of agricultural resources, water sources, credit, markets and technology is skewed towards men.

Since independence, the agricultural sector has been characterized by cyclic performance mainly due to erratic rainfalls. The arable sub-sector has been more sensitive to climatic changes than the livestock sub-sector. The climate of the country is arid to semi-arid, thereby making cattle farming the main agricultural activity, which has resulted in Botswana being one of the major suppliers of beef to the European Union. Arable farming is primarily subsistent. On average, the performance of both sub-sectors has been less than expected.

3.2 Policy level

The GoB has demonstrated a political will and determination to deal with gender equality and equity by creating the necessary legal and policy frameworks. These frameworks pave way for the development of policies and well-resourced gender mainstreamed programmes that brought change in agriculture, rural development and poverty reduction initiatives (GoB-GeAD, 2014).
The government is a signatory and has ratified a number of regional and international instruments/protocols which include:

- **CEDAW** which came into force in 1981 is commonly referred to as ‘the international bill of rights for women’. It addresses discrimination and exclusion experienced by women in various spheres. Article 14 specifically provides protection for rural women, ensuring their right to participate in development programmes, “to have access to adequate health care facilities”, “to participate in all community activities”, “to have access to agricultural credit” and “to enjoy adequate living conditions.” Article 14 further demands that policy-makers pay attention to women's legitimate demands for equal rights and their aspirations for a decent life and a better future.

- The **Beijing Platform of Action** adopted in 1995 affirms women’s human rights and economic, social and political empowerment through 12 critical areas of concern that address women’s greater vulnerability to poverty and their access to education and skills, health and productive resources. It advocates for women’s participation at all levels of decision making including in the management of natural resources and in environmental protection. The **Beijing+20** review process conducted in 2015 recognizes that the most disadvantaged rural women are in need of specific measures to improve their status and access to productive resources. It affirms that gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women is fundamental to achieving sustainable development for all. The review acknowledges an overall reduction in the proportion of girls and women living in extreme poverty, as well as improvements in food security for both.

- The **Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights, on the Rights of Women in Africa** adopted by the 2nd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union in Maputo, 2003, to among other things, recognizing the crucial role of women in the preservation of African values based on the principles of equality, peace, freedom, dignity, justice, solidarity and democracy by African Heads of States.

- The “**AU Declaration on 2015 Year of women’s empowerment and development towards Africa’s Agenda 2063**” adopted by the AU Summit in June 2015 invites governments to increase mechanization, technological innovation, education and skills development for women. It also calls upon financial institutions to have a minimum quota of 50 percent to finance women to grow from micro to macro businesses.

- The **Malabo Declaration on “Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods”** adopted in June 2014 by the AU Summit called for deliberate and targeted public support for women to participate and directly benefit from the growth and transformation opportunities to improve their lives and livelihoods.

- The **AU Summit Declaration of 2016 on “Africa Year of Human Rights, in particular, with focus on the Rights of Women”** specifically emphasizes the rights of poor women to food, land and social protection as part and parcel of their human rights.

- The **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** addresses issues facing women in agriculture and calls upon states to: fulfill women’s equal rights to economic resources, basic services, technology and financial services, land and other forms of property and natural resources; and double by 2030 the agricultural productivity and incomes of women small-scale food producers, including through markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.

- The voluntary guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests in the context of national food security: these guidelines, adopted by the Committee on World Food Security in 2012, call upon states to ensure that women and girls have equal tenure rights and access to land, fisheries and forests, independent of their civil and marital status, and provide policy, legal and organizational frameworks that are non-discriminatory. The guidelines further invite states to address the obstacles faced by women and girls with regard to tenure rights, and to take measures to ensure that legal and policy frameworks provide adequate protection for women, calling for laws that recognize women’s tenure rights to be implemented and enforced. They advocate for states to facilitate the full participation of users of land, fisheries and forests in tenure governance, including the formulation and implementation of policy, law and decisions on territorial development.

- The **AU Solemn Declaration** which recognizes that major challenges and obstacles to gender equality still remain and require concerted and collective leadership and efforts from all of us including networks
working on gender and development. The concern about the status of women and the negative impacts on women of issues such the high incidence of HIV/AIDS among girls and women, conflict, poverty, harmful traditional practices, high population of refugee women and internally displaced women, violence against women, women’s exclusion from politics and decision-making, illiteracy and limited access of girls to education were issues addressed.

• AU Declaration on 2015 Year of Women’s Empowerment and Development towards Africa’s Agenda 2063 acknowledges the challenges faced in the implementation of many of those decisions and declarations, in particular on progress made in attaining the minimum targets of gender equality and women’s empowerment in women’s socio-economic and political life that should demonstrate Africa’s willingness, leadership and commitment to the achievement of goals as enshrined in the 2003 Maputo Protocol on Women’s Rights in Africa.

• Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): The eight MDGs– which range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, all by the target date of 2015 – form a blueprint agreed to by all the world’s countries and all the world’s leading development institutions. They have galvanized unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world’s poorest.

• International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights recognizes that, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ideal of free human beings enjoying civil and political freedom and freedom from fear and want can only be achieved if conditions are created whereby everyone may enjoy his civil and political rights, as well as his economic, social and cultural rights, considering the obligation of States under the Charter of the United Nations to promote universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and freedoms.

• International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention on equal pay for work of equal value is the 100th ILO Convention and the principal one aimed at equal remuneration for work of equal value for men and women. States parties may accomplish this through legislation, introduction of a system for wage determination and/or collective bargaining agreements. It is one of eight ILO fundamental conventions.

Whilst CEDAW has not been fully domesticated in Botswana, the government initiated a process for the domestication in 2013 and 26 consultations with stakeholders were conducted. The stakeholders included public service, community leadership and CSOs (SADC, 2013). A report on areas of critical concern was not available at the time of the gender assessment, but between 1995 and 2009, Botswana amended some of its laws to make them gender-sensitive through the Miscellaneous Amendment Act (2008) which ensured that all relevant laws were aligned to CEDAW principles. It is one of two SADC countries (the other is Mauritius) that has not signed the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development (SADC, 2013).

The following instruments are now consistent with the provisions of CEDAW:

• The 2003 amendment of the Citizenship Act allows women married to foreign spouses to pass citizenship on to their children.

• The 1996 Mines and Quarries Act removes restrictions placed on women working underground in the mines.

• The Botswana 1996 Chapter 33:02 Deeds Registry Act has a special provision for women, and states that: “A person married whether in community of property or not shall not require the assistance of his or her spouse in executing any deed or document required or permitted to be registered in the deeds registry or required or permitted to be produced in connection with any such deed or document, and immovable property may be transferred or ceded to the person as if such person was married out of community of property.” (The 2004 Abolition of Marital Power Act)

• The Domestic Violence Act (2008) was adopted and it protects family members, including victims of GBV in the home.

• The 1997 amendment of the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act provides for the mandatory hearing of sexual offenses in camera.
• The 2004 amendment to the Penal Code makes rape gender-neutral and introduced a minimum sentence of ten years. If violence accompanies the rape resulting in injury to the victim, the minimum sentence is increased to 15 years.

• The Employment Act 1996 that gives equal remuneration for work of equal value.

All the policies, programmes and projects for the past 19 years were developed on the basis of the national Vision 2016 of 1996 which clearly indicated that no citizen of the future Botswana would be disadvantaged as a result of gender, age, religion or creed, colour, national or ethnic origin, location, language or political opinions. The future Botswana would have eradicated negative social attitudes towards the status and role of women, and would be free from all forms of sexual harassment. The vision sought to promote prosperity for all by 2016 and expressly promotes equal opportunities for women and men, boys and girls. The vision also emphasized on land allocation to women, and spelt out that special attention must be given to female-headed households to increase their employment and income capacity. It also recognizes that women of all ages bear the heaviest burden of caring for HIV and AIDS-positive family members and there must be greater support for home-based or hospice care to help relieve this burden.

The National Strategy for Poverty Reduction: The poverty eradication strategies were developed within the context of Vision 2016 which stated: "The particular needs of resource-poor and low-income women in social safety net measures will be crucial in order to improve their quality of life." Poverty was higher in female-headed households compared to male-headed households. The measures would ensure food security, availability of social safety nets to reduce poverty and the promotion of opportunities for special groups such as women, the elderly and people living with disability (GoB, 2015).

National policy on Women in Development (WID)-1996:

The WID policy is in the process of converting to Gender and Development (GAD) and at the time of the assessment it was awaiting endorsement by Parliament. From the discussions with the Deputy of the GeAD, there were no major changes in the original WID policy as GAD policy was still based on Vision 2016 and WID policy. The WID policy attempted to address the situation of women in Botswana focusing on women’s empowerment, women’s rights, needs and roles in the areas of socio-economic issues: health, education, agriculture and overall elimination of all negative economic and socio-cultural practices. These are the same issues that fall under the FAO’s mandate. A national council on women was established to promote and monitor the implementation of the policy on women. The policy was implemented through five strategic areas for which sufficient resources were allocated by the GoB.7

• First, to eradicate the persistent burden of poverty against women, provide support for the aged, and integrated support for arable agricultural development providing inputs to farmers including those who are resource poor.

• Positive measures including affirmative action in favour of women should be taken to ensure women’s full participation in positions of power, leadership and decision-making at all levels of Botswana society.

• Gender equity would be ensured in education and training through programmes aimed at the eradication of illiteracy, and improving women’s access to vocational training, science and technology.

• Women’s access to appropriate, affordable and quality health care should be improved, in addition to preventative programmes for the promotion of women’s health, including reproductive health.

• Concrete measures to prevent and eradicate violence against women should be taken through community-based education, the enactment and enforcement of laws, as well as the provision of services to support women subjected to violence.

The national efforts towards gender equality are also driven by international instruments to which Botswana is aligned. The following initiatives and programmes have been implemented to strengthen Botswana’s response to gender equality agenda.

GoB Vision 2016 highlights its commitment to the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

National Gender Programme 1999-2003: it supported women’s access to economic opportunities, developing safety nets for vulnerable groups and women’s education skills, and striving for poverty eradication among women and children.

Development Plan 10 (2010–2016): The programme targets women and marginalized groups who engage in small-scale agriculture. The strategy focuses on the provision of subsidized services, inputs, skills and the promotion of clustering through service centres to be distributed strategically across the country.

UNJP on Support for Gender Mainstreaming in Botswana 2015-2016 promoted gender equality in development.

UNJP on Support to End GBV 2015-2016

CPF for Botswana 2014-2016

Some important policies and programmes that are weak on gender include:

National Policy on Agriculture 2014: This includes improved food security, diversification of agricultural sector, productivity and growth, promoting marketing of agricultural products and mainstreaming of disadvantaged groups. This policy does not speak to the gender agenda.

National Food Strategy (NFS) of 2000: This provides economic access to food by households through attaining broad-based income security; to assure household food security while guaranteeing food safety and nutritional security. The strategy does not reflect any gender dimensions.

Forestry Policy of 2011: This assists in creating awareness that guards against unsustainable utilization of forestry resources. Gender is weak in this policy.

Revised National Policy on Rural Development (RNPRD) 2002: The main goal of RNPRD is to implement policies and strategies that will optimize the social and economic well being of the population and will strengthen its ability to live in dignity. The main objectives of RNPRD are to reduce poverty; provide opportunities for income generation and involvement in economic activities; create employment; and enhance people’s participation in planning and implementation of development processes. It is weak on gender issues.

3.3 Institutional level

3.3.1 The GeAD

Botswana has in place both mechanisms and processes to address gender issues. The Women’s Affairs Unit was established in 1981 and later upgraded to a Women’s Affairs Department in 1997 to coordinate and manage the national gender response (GoB-GeAD, 2014). With effect from 1 April 2013 the unit was renamed the Gender Affairs Department (GeAD) (SADC, 2013). The GeAD is expected to pursue the gender equality and equity agenda. Its main mandate is to facilitate the process of creating positive change through sensitization of development agents on gender and development issues. A 15-member advisory board, the Botswana National Council on Women, was put in place to promote and monitor the implementation of the gender equality agenda.

The department provides guidance and leadership on gender and development to partners including government ministries and departments, parastatals, the private sector and NGOs. This is achieved through:

- Formulating and interpreting gender and development policies, and establishing performance standards.
- Supporting the development of gender-sensitive sectoral policies and procedures, M&E of all projects undertaken by partners, and providing technical advice on gender planning and budgeting.
- Promoting effective publishing and dissemination of information on gender and development.
- Coordinating and facilitating capacity-building in various aspects of gender and development at the national level.

Gender analysis of the agriculture and rural sector

**Gender mainstreaming**

The GeAD development programming is founded on the human rights approach and advocates for the employment of gender mainstreaming as a core strategy. This makes gender a cross-cutting issue and an imperative for the achievement of sustainable development. All stakeholders should ensure that gender concerns were mainstreamed in all development programmes and policies.

**National development areas for gender mainstreaming as stipulated by the GeAD include:**

- Economic development, prosperity and poverty eradication to achieve sustainable development.
- Social protection and social services (Health, adequate sanitation and improved well being, access to quality education, training and information, safe housing, energy provision and climate change).
- Political power, democratic governance and decision-making.
- Access to justice, protection of human rights and freedom from violence.
- Targeting of vulnerable groups in every area of their lives.

**Budget for the department**

Currently the regular budget allocated for the National Gender architecture constitutes 5 per cent of the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs allocation, where the GeAD belongs. This budget excludes additional funding from special public funds. As a way of empowering women’s NGOs, CSOs and other groups, the GoB allocates funds to the GAD annually in order to assist the organizations that are promoting gender issues, particularly in the areas listed under the national development agenda above, which were adopted by the Botswana Government during the 1995 UN World Conference in Beijing.8

The government offers partial support to partner organizations to reduce dependency on government funds, and organizations declare their contribution which may be in kind or cash. The beneficiaries must also show commitment in the implementation of the project. The interview with the GeAD Deputy Director revealed that the GeAD financed economic empowerment/income-generating groups which consisted of either women alone or more than 80-90 percent women to the amount of P250 000. The group should not be less than five members. All beneficiaries should maintain proper books of accounts, which should be audited by a recognized independent auditor. Audited financial statements and reports on how funds were utilized must be submitted to the GeAD department. All beneficiaries funded shall submit a written report on how they utilized the funds they were allocated. Any organization or group that fails to submit a report in pursuing project objectives shall return the full grant to the WAD.

**Achievements**

- The department has also supported the initiation of development of an Agricultural Gender Policy (2005-2010) that is still ongoing. Interview with the former gender focal person who was stationed in the Ministry of Agriculture, Division of Agricultural Policy and Statistics revealed that although there was ad hoc implementation of gender in the Ministry, the policy remained a draft which at the time of the country assessment was already in need of a review. The GeAD works very closely with the Ministry of Agriculture in implementing one of the Department’s core mandates - women economic empowerment - by supporting agro-based women’s projects. The Department gives grants to women groups to run income-generating projects. The Ministry of Agriculture Department of Cooperatives is responsible for training women farmer groups in business skills and management, leadership and group dynamics. They recommend to the GeAD the women groups for financial support. These are the groups that would receive grants of up to P250 000 as alluded to earlier in this section. GeAD offers training on gender issues to different government departments. GeAD also provides financial support to CSOs who are working on women empowerment. The GAD has spearheaded the appointment

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8. Policy guidelines for financial support to women’s NGOs, CBOs and other groups
of GFPs in different government departments and supported the formation of a Gender Technical Working group in the Ministry of Agriculture. Discussions with some of the members of the technical working group revealed that the group is currently not very active due to movement of staff who were not replaced. The past five years have witnessed intensive training of GFPs in the government and the private and parastatal sectors to enable them to mainstream gender in their respective areas. Most importantly, through the support of bilateral and development partners, senior managers and economic planners in the government sector were trained on mainstreaming gender into public finance in 2013.

- According to the draft of the Fourth Botswana Report on the implementation of CEDAW (2014), the Constitution of Botswana makes it clear that both women and men are equal before the law and does not allow for discrimination of women in any form (GoB-GeAD, 2014). The report further states that Government has introduced the first Legal Aid Programme to assist women and men to access justice.

**Challenges faced by the GeAD**

The major challenge, as indicated by the Deputy Director, was lack of capacity among the staff, including those based in the field, to move the gender agenda forward. The Department did not have a systematic monitoring system in place to follow up and monitor all its activities including grant utilization by income-generating farmer groups. This is despite the fact that GeAD spelt out that the projects division would conduct quarterly monitoring visits to reinforce monitoring of projects. At the time of the assessment (April 2015), some consultants had been hired to develop a M&E system.

Although the GoB provided financial support to NGOs and CSOs as partners in development work, the whole idea, noble as it might appear, makes the NGOs weak when it comes to pushing the government to do things for the general populace for fear of falling out of favour with the government.

**3.3.2 Gender mainstreaming in the Ministry of Agriculture**

The Ministry of Agriculture comprises of seven divisions, namely: Division of Corporate Services (DCS), Division of Crop Production (DCP), Division of Animal Production (DAP), Division of Veterinary Services (DVS), Division of Extension Service Co-ordination (DESC), Division of Agricultural Research (DAR) and Division of Agricultural Business Promotion (DABP). The Ministry did not have a gender equality goal in its programming but it has made some efforts, with support from the GeAD department, to develop an agricultural gender policy which is still incomplete since 2003. Following one-on-one interviews with staff from different departments, including heads of departments, it emerged that gender was not prioritized in their programming and work activities. The level of understanding of the gender issues among the staff members who were interviewed varied hence gender implementation was not systematic where attempts were made to do so. Some of the staff members admitted having received gender awareness training but implementation without proper guidelines was not practical. As a result, gender issues received lip-service. Some staff members indicated that they trained in gender but needed a refresher course. Others believed they were being gender-aware as long as they included women in their programmes and projects. Different departmental budgets did not speak of gender. Some project reports did not reflect any gender dimensions except for the ISPAAD project and Livestock Management and Infrastructure Development (LIMID) that reported on the sex of the beneficiaries.

At the time of the assessment, the GFP who was stationed in the Agricultural Research Department, and had spearheaded the development of the agricultural gender policy had moved on and the position remained vacant. Since her departure, no Gender Technical Working group meetings had taken place.

**3.4 Gender disparities in different sub-sectors of agriculture and food security**

The agriculture sector in Botswana covers both crops and livestock production and about 70 percent of rural households derive their livelihoods from agriculture (GoB, 2012). Men are in most cases the ones who have full access, ownership and control over land and other valuable agricultural resources such as water resources, credit/finance, information, markets, technology and agricultural support services. Smallholder arable agriculture is dominated by women who are also often responsible for small livestock and indigenous
chickens, as revealed by focus group discussions, whilst men are mainly engaged in large livestock farming. Botswana statistics showed equal number of chickens between women and men. Crop production is mainly based on rain-fed farming. The industry is dominated by small traditional farms with an average size of 5 ha. About 63,000 arable farms fit under this category, while only 112 farms are larger than 150 ha (Statistics Botswana, 2012). The arable agriculture provides for rural livelihood activities and it is also a substantial source of employment, food and income: 44.7 percent males and 37.2 percent females received their incomes from agricultural activities in rural areas.

3.4.1 Gender, food and nutrition security

The Botswana diet is cereal-based with maize, sorghum, millet and pulses - mainly beans. Food production in Botswana does not meet standardized dietary requirements. A rapid assessment of the ISPAAD programme in 2009 indicated that women play a dominant role in food production and food security. In all the districts, women were in the majority in the ISPAAD programme and they invested more time and resources to contribute to food production at the household level as compared to men. The assessment further indicated that youth participation was very low and their access to productive resources, such as land, is limited confirming past research reports that the youth lacked resources to participate in agriculture.

In Botswana, consumption of micronutrient dense foods such as animal products, fruits and vegetables is rare hence micronutrient deficiencies are widespread. A recent cross-sectional survey on the nutrition status of both adult males and females, of a nationally representative sample of people aged 20 to 49 years, was used for the analysis of an outcome measure of Body Mass Index (BMI).9

Out of the total population of the country, 24.1 percent of them are undernourished representing 0.5 million people (FAO SOFI, 2015) of the total sample, 19.5 percent of males and 10.1 percent of females were underweight (BMI less than 18.5). The wealth index showed that 30.9 percent of the adult population with a low BMI belong to the poorest 20 percent of the households, while only 9.6 percent comprised of the richest 20 percent of the households. Results from logistic regression analysis indicated that both adult men and women who had no education and belonged to the low socio-economic group had a statistically significant association with low BMI (Letamo & Naveneetham, 2014). A large number of children suffer from malnutrition and 31.4 percent of children under the age of five exhibit stunted growth. The respective prevalence of stunting and underweight children remain obstacles that have far reaching consequences (WHO, 2017). However, the GoB imports food to meet production shortfalls. Rural grand households spend up to 20 percent of income on food. Cereal imports, mostly sorghum and maize, covered 81 percent of domestic requirements between 2003/04 and 2008/09. The food import bill increased by 50 percent around 2007/2008, justifying the reason why Botswana needs to prioritize investing in diversified agriculture. Figure 3 shows a positive correlation between fuel and food imports meaning that more resources are spent on transporting food into the country, the bulk of which comes from South Africa.

Despite Botswana importing nearly 80 per cent of her food needs, she is now self-sufficient in poultry production (GoB, 2013). Such great success in reducing the import bill for chicken meat indicates that the country has the potential to feed itself and compete in the international market. The poultry sector is concentrated among a few large poultry firms. There is very little evidence that small-scale indigenous chicken farmers who are traditionally rural women are participating in this trade. The GoB is also promoting food security through improvement of cattle production, small stock and livestock management, range resources utilization, CA and irrigated agriculture to eradicate poverty.

3.4.2 Gender and agricultural labour

Botswana has experienced acute shortages of labour in rural areas, especially in small-scale arable farming and livestock holdings (GoB, 2013). Unemployment is very high at 17 percent and for the youth it is estimated to be about 50 percent (GoB, 2013). Although there were many reported vacancies in home-based employment such as nannies, household hands, and farm employment, many Batswana who could fill these vacancies do not want to take them up. The reason is primarily cultural and availability of alternatives for those unemployed.

9. Calculated using weight in kg over height in meter squared.
On the other hand, the nature of the job in the rural areas informs the type of gender/sex of the employee e.g. baby-sitting is basically for girls and tending livestock is meant for boys and men. As a matter of fact, tending livestock in rural areas by young boys is contributing to school dropouts because of the attraction of wages attached to the task. The current labour market in Botswana is no longer meant for agriculture production alone, but consists of aggregate household labour supply and demand decisions. Available jobs in farming and livestock sector are practically despised and usually unaccepted due to attitude problems, especially in the youth, thus skilled labourers are not willing to take up available vacancies.

From a different angle, farmer training for rural livelihoods is inclined towards income generation projects. The Botswana Ministry of Agriculture, Division of Agricultural Cooperatives is spearheading the formation of agricultural cooperatives to engage in agro-business, where farmers work together, share capital for investment, production and risks, responsibility and accountability, benefits and ideas. By so doing the farmers create employment for themselves. Although the division of cooperatives is supporting a very important programme with farmers, the gender dynamics of the labour force needs further analysis so that rural development policy should promote investments in agricultural pursuits that are sustainable and can pay competitive wages that can attract labour and pay decent wages to both women and men labourers (GoB, 2013).

In Botswana, most tourist centres such as Chobe do not experience problems of unemployment, implying that growth in other sectors such as tourism can be an incentive to increase demand for rural labour in sectors outside agriculture. For instance, agricultural labour can easily adapt and change to serve as garden keepers, porters, cleaners and tour guides in wildlife tourism. The growth of tourism can increase demand for cash crops such as horticulture that can pay higher wages than traditional agriculture. However, this can be detrimental for food security.

3.4.3 Gender and land

Although women were responsible for crop cultivation and housing during the pre-colonial era, they could only access land through their male relatives (husband, paternal uncle, father or son). Only male siblings had the right to land. But during the colonial era, chiefs started allocating land for cultivation and housing to unmarried mothers that they could use to support their families. Most subsistence crop farmers (majority...
women), operated with 5-10 ha land in the communal sector, and more women (57.6 percent) than men (41.6 percent) own arable land (SADC, 2013).

The 1993 amendment to the Tribal Land Act permitted any citizen, regardless of tribal affiliation, to apply for any land, and extended the right to women. Despite the amendment, the Land Boards often continue to assume that women obtained access to land through their husbands and could be discriminated against when it came to applications for land for women (USAID, 2010). Today Botswana formal law provides women and men with options to hold land individually or jointly if married.

**Tenure system**

Vision 2016 made robust improvements in the system of land tenure and land allocation processes to give a boost to agricultural production in Botswana. The Vision highlighted the need to empower Batswana with deliberate effort made to allocate land to women, including single parents, and to adapt suitable schemes and technologies that would assist women to maximize their potential in agricultural production.

Security of tenure in most rural land in Botswana is weak and nearly 75 percent of the land is held under customary land rights. In many rural areas, raising credit to invest in productive enterprises that can benefit from intensive land use is very difficult because of lack of land markets. In peripheral areas, land markets would not develop on their own because there is no pressure on demand compared to areas adjacent to cities (GoB, 2013).

The CPF (2014-2016) pointed out that one of the major problems for tenure rights and inheritance laws was that women appeared to be unequally treated under the law. Under customary law, the homestead and land around it could be inherited only by the son. The majority of the land-holding contracts in Botswana are under the name of the man in the house (either the husband or older son). This clearly demonstrates the impact of upholding patriarchy in Botswana. Historically, patriarchy has since been influential on the type and nature of land rights that women enjoyed. A focus group discussion that was held with workshop participants revealed that patriarchy and the socialization of women tended to put pressure on women to conform to societal expectations (of man being the head, hence the land owner) rather than what would have otherwise been their independent preferences (women in marriage owning land in their own right). About 70 percent of land in Botswana is tribal land, 25 percent state land, and 5 percent privately owned freehold land (USAID, 2010). The land tenure system comprises of four landholdings, namely: state, freehold, 99 year-lease and communal land. Of the 404 706 landowners, 186 699 (46 percent) are women.

Most subsistence crop farmers operated with 5-10 ha land in the communal sector (the majority here are women). Women seem to suffer unequal treatment regarding land tenure rights and inheritance, particularly under customary law where the homestead and land around it can be inherited only by the son. Botswana has little arable land, measured at 0.46 ha in 2011 according to World Bank. This is land defined by FAO as land under temporary crops, temporary meadows and pastures, temporary fallow land, and land under market and kitchen gardens. More women than men own arable land that is used for growing food and other crops. Whilst a total area planted with crops in 2008 was 140 250 ha, women managed to plant 47 758 ha and men 92 491 ha (Botswana Statistics 2008). It would seem that women have more arable land at their disposal yet are still harvesting less than men, as they are hindered by lack of inputs to maximize utilization of all the land that they have.

**3.4.4 Gender and crop production**

As alluded to earlier, Botswana’s harsh climate and poor soils renders the bulk of Botswana unsuitable for crop production, except for the eastern part of the country. Although it varies from region to region, more women than men in Botswana are major players in crop production, due to the fact that they own more arable land than men do (57.6 percent against 41.6 percent), even if their plots tend to be the smaller ones. In the crops value chain, women are responsible for planting/broadcasting seeds, weeding, harvesting, processing and post-harvest handling, whilst men are responsible for land preparation, equipment check and ploughing.

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11. Batswana Women lead the way in Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance 2015
Major crops produced in Botswana include sorghum, millet, maize and pulses, and of these sorghum and millet are more drought-resistant than maize. Other crops produced include sweet reed, pumpkins and watermelons. Although Botswana is not able to produce sufficient quantities of the major cereals to cover its domestic requirements and relies heavily on commercial imports, it is more than 50 percent self-sufficient in horticultural products (GoB, 2013). Nearly all small-scale horticulture production is the women’s domain that depends on rainwater and harvesting from rivers. Water extraction from the rivers is free. The growth of the horticulture sector is also linked to a few large producers. The agricultural policy does not include horticulture as one of its objectives but it is mentioned in passing in some government programmes such as CEDA. There is no stated policy framework that government has committed to pursue towards the development of horticulture.

Bee farming is emerging as one climate-smart income-generating and food security initiative. Although the gender dynamics are not known and data is not disaggregated by sex, 17,027 metric tons of honey from 1,037 honey bee colonies was recorded in March 2015 by the Department of Crop Production. According to the CPF (2014–2016), red and African migratory locusts were found in Botswana in Chobe Enclave, and surveys were conducted fortnightly during the rainy season; army-worm normally carried by Eastern-South-bound winds was monitored through use of traps which were serviced annually before the start of the rainy season. The pest control was done through the use of chemicals as farmers were currently not able to effectively control migratory pests through use of their own resources.

### 3.4.5 Gender and livestock

Livestock ownership in Botswana is an important household asset because they are significant in maintaining the livelihoods of those who keep them by providing food, draught power, manure, skin, hide, cash, security, social and cultural identity, medium of exchange and means of savings (Mrema and Rannobe 1996) (Oladele & Monkei, 2008). Also, a lack of alternative investment opportunities in rural areas has promoted investment in livestock, particularly in cattle.

In Figure 4, significant differences exist between male and female ownership of cattle, goats, sheep and chicken. However, no significant difference exists between male and female in terms of ownership of donkeys and pigs. Cattle ownership is highly skewed towards men whilst chicken ownership is skewed towards women. The cattle to human population ratio in Botswana is about 2:1 which is unique in Africa. Gendered statistical data on marketing and utilization of income realized from selling the livestock was not available.

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**Figure 4: Livestock ownership by sex**

Source: Botswana Agricultural Statistics (Dec 2008)
In terms of ownership across location in different regions of Botswana, women in the central region own more cattle, goats, sheep, donkeys and chicken than other regions, while women in the Maun region own more horses than others, and women in the Gaborone region own more pigs than others. Generally, central and southern regions are more prominent for cattle, sheep, donkey and chicken ownership. Exports of animal products from Botswana, mainly in the form of fresh meat, account for 17 percent of GDP and almost one half of the value of exports. Export growth has been robust in the first half of 2013 – including strong growth of beef exports, following their return to the European Union market after nearly two years of suspension (World Bank, 2014).

About 70 percent of small stock are goats and are in the hands of traditional farmers (MoA 1991). Men own more cattle and goats than their female counterparts. The assessment has revealed that men tend to have more resources, and for that reason they can afford to own more livestock. Ownership of goats by the poorer sector of farmers is encouraged by the government through a number of projects, policies and programmes. Since traditional farmers live in the communal lands (70 percent of the total area), most of the goats are found in these areas. Here, extensive grazing is practiced and very little controlled grazing is done (ILRI, 1996). A recent study on LIMID revealed that women constitute the majority of the resource-poor component largely producing small stock, Tswana chickens and guinea fowl and this is consistent with the traditional role of women in primarily small stock and other home-based livestock industries.

A recent study on Tswana chicken farming among women in Lentsweletau village, revealed that the respondents, who were women, were interested in Tswana poultry farming but lacked funds to establish these farms (Setlalekgomo, 2012). These women were not only interested but also concurred that they knew about the LIMID programme that was introduced by the GoB to empower local communities and help curb rural-urban migration. It emerged that 77 percent of LIMID beneficiaries were women.

3.4.6 Gender and fisheries

There are two main kinds of fishing activities in Botswana, commercially-oriented and subsistence-oriented. While commercial fishing is the main source of revenue for the local fishing communities, subsistence fishery is the main source of food for socio-economically challenged rural fisherfolk who live on the fringes of the Okavango Delta and the Chobe River systems.12 Commercial fishers use gill nets, while subsistence fishers use a motley of fishing gear that ranges from homemade gill nets, to fishing baskets, hook and line, fishing traps, and fishing fences. While fishery has very little impact on the national economy (approximately 0.002 percent of national GDP at 2002 market prices), it has a relatively high socio-economic impact at the regional level (i.e. the Okavango Delta region which has the main fishing grounds).13

“Some socio-economic research in the Okavango Delta’s subsistence fishery has shown that the majority of subsistence fishers are single parent/female-headed households. Generally, households have seven individuals on average, and are also characterized by a relatively high prevalence of young children of age range 0-5 years. These households regard fish as their major livelihood strategy where the majority of them increase fish catches as a major strategy to offset food shortages. Moreover, there is a high proportion of females (53 percent based on a 2006 frame study of the Delta’s fishery) in the Okavango Delta’s fishery which attests to its importance as a major source of protein to young children. This is based on the observation that female basket fishing harvests mostly low value fish species (small-sized fish species) which do not have any market value, either for barter or for selling, and is rather consumed within the household. Moreover, research has shown that most people turn to fishing during lean economic years and then pursue other livelihood activities during good years, which makes the fishery a social safety net for most households.”14

Focus group discussions with participants revealed that fishing by women reached its peak during the rainy season when river banks are flooded and women can fish from the flooded areas using hand-woven baskets, whilst standing in the water. When the floods subside, fishing activity by women also reduces but continues in main waters using boats. The government has in the past decade built several major dams in the northern part of the country with fish farming expected to feature predominantly in some of those dams. FAO has also supported the government in this effort to enhance the potential of the fisheries sector in Botswana through

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13. Ibid.
projects on assessment of the needs of the fisheries sector (TCP/BOT/3201) or on construction of small dams (UNO/BOT/003/CDF), among others.

Both men and women are involved in fishing in the Chobe River and Okavango Delta, but women are the ones involved in the small business of selling fish. Regulations (as a response to climate change) on fishing stated that "no fish could be caught for selling during breeding periods." Women are usually left with no source of income during this period as they rely on fishing.

3.4.7 Gender and forestry

The forests of southern Africa, Botswana included, provide significant benefits in terms of timber and wood as well as non-wood forest products and an array of ecosystem services, in addition to supporting millions of livelihoods across the sub-region. As at independence in 1966, a number of forest policy statements guided the practice and management of forestry in Botswana. These include Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM). The main thrust of such fragmented policy declaration was: provision of protection and conservation for indigenous forests and woodlands; creation of exotic plantations for production of timber, fuel wood, and poles; setting up central forest tree nurseries to supply tree planting; plantation establishment operations and creation of employment in the rural areas, among other activities. Over the years now, the forestry sector has seen significant improvements. Various programmes have been put in place by the forestry authority to promote tree planting in order to reduce pressure on indigenous natural forests and wooded lands, and also to increase the stock of multipurpose trees, and ameliorate environmental sustainability. For example, the annual national tree planting programme, backyard nurseries programme, homestead tree planting programme and schools tree planting programme are part of such initiatives.

Although gender is silent in all these programmes, a window of opportunity exists for women in the backyard nursery programme, a new programme whereby farmers are encouraged to set up their own backyard nurseries as part of income-generating activities. Government nurseries may be phased out and backyard nurseries encouraged to take over their functions, putting income directly into the pockets of the poor. Raising plants nurseries is a task associated with women in Zimbabwe and Batswana women could do the same task and make a living. Forests are limited and confined to the extreme north of the country covering approximately 20 percent of Botswana’s land mass. The gender dynamics in forestry farming in Botswana are not clear but the policy instrument, the National Forestry Policy, approved by Parliament in 2011 is assisting in creating awareness that guards against unsustainable utilization of forestry resources. A large part of the forest reserves constitute part of the Chobe and Moremi parks. Forestry activities are limited in Botswana, with the government currently providing tree nurseries throughout the country for sale (USAID, 2010). The country’s increasingly prospering economy and urban population are putting greater pressure on the country’s natural resources through its growing demand for food, land and fuel resulting in rangeland degradation, soil erosion, loss of grazing habitat, deforestation, over-exploitation of wild life and wood, water pollution, bush fires and conflicts between people and wild life. Botswana’s forest provides fuel wood, construction timber, veldt products, food and grazing. The forestry sector suffers low investment, limited capacity and lack of data especially those disaggregated by sex.

3.4.8 Gender and water

The GoB recognizes that water management is not the sole responsibility of the government, but of all stakeholders, including water users, women, the private sector, and civil society (Republic of Bostwana, 2013). Land use and allocation processes have a profound impact on water resources and demand, and the rights of access to land generally include access to surface water resources, subject to existing rights. Individuals and syndicates requesting a borehole generally contribute to the cost of sinking the borehole, and operate and maintain the borehole in exchange for free use of the water. This scenario already displays some gender inequalities as fewer women than men would afford paying for the sinking of the borehole because they lack access to financial resources and other agricultural inputs. Farmers are responsible for paying 15 percent of the cost of constructing dams, and have responsibility for maintaining the dams in exchange for use of

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15. Ibid.
the water (USAID, 2010; FAO, 2005; Hitchcock, 2002). The assessment revealed that there is a huge disparity in borehole ownership with women owning 27 percent and men owning 73 percent. This could mean women would not have access to water for domestic use and farming and could mean they have to walk long distances to get water.

Botswana is the most water-scarce country in southern Africa, characterized by low rainfall and high evaporation, and prone to drought. Internal renewable surface water is estimated at 0.8 cubic km annually. About 95 percent of the population has access to clean drinking water and about 60 percent has access to safe sanitation facilities. Botswana’s susceptibility to drought threatens groundwater levels and river basins and limits the availability of water for human and livestock consumption, agriculture and industry. Water losses also represent a major water security challenge. Under customary law, open water sources are available for domestic use by families or individuals.

Opportunities for cropping are constrained by the country’s semi-arid climate, with a mean annual rainfall ranging from 650 mm in the extreme North-East to less than 250 mm in the extreme South-West. Rainfall is very erratic with the result that rain-fed crop production only succeeds in 6 out of 10 years.18

Botswana’s access to drinking water as at 2001 reached 99.5 percent for urban areas and 83.5 percent for rural areas (Central Statistics Office, 2009). Total surface water capacity is currently at 697.1 million cubic metres while underground capacity (developed resources) is at 131 290 cubic metres/day. The rate of abstraction of underground water in a number of wells in some districts exceeded sustainable water resource use.

The focus group discussions, however, pointed to the fact that of the 27 percent of female borehole owners, the majority could be single females/mothers. Ownership of a borehole on customary land gives the owner de jure rights to the groundwater and de facto rights to the surrounding grazing land as well as woodland and grassland products. Once money and labour is invested in a borehole, the investor holds exclusive rights to it. Since ownership of a borehole comes with rights to woodland, it implies that those few women are saved from walking long distances to fetch firewood and water compared to the majority of rural Batswana women and girls who walk long distances to fetch water for domestic use. Collecting water and ensuring that there is enough water for household use is usually the domain of women and girls. This, in addition to other household tasks, can be labour-intensive and time consuming. Through their role as carers, women are more likely to be affected by poor sanitation and water-borne diseases resulting from inadequate sanitation infrastructure.

3.4.9 Gender and agricultural value chains

The Botswana Agricultural Policy provides a commitment to promoting the development of marketing and commodity value chains (GoB, 2011). This will require value chain analysis. Key participants in any agricultural value chain include consumers, retailers and processors. The strength of value chain analysis is that it covers all who are involved from production right through to the ultimate consumer.

In Botswana, generally women are responsible for seed planning, ploughing, tilling land, broadcasting seeds, weeding, scaring birds and animals, post-harvest processing, de-husking, storage and marketing of locally processed food. Men are responsible for clearing land and ploughing with cattle, guarding fields, hoeing and equipment check. Men are also responsible for cattle production - managing all the stages up to marketing. Available markets for crops include the Botswana Agricultural Marketing Board (BAMB), local communities, shopping centres and bus termini, the roadside and farm gates. Focus group discussions with participants revealed that women dominate these small-scale subsistence markets. BAMB provides market information to the farming community for locally grown rain-fed produce ahead of planting to guide them to plan their production. The information imparted typically includes market opportunities in the grain industry, crops that the market demands and price projections. Market information also helps farmers to access financial support for seasonal inputs from lending institutions. Given that women dominate small-scale, rain-fed agriculture, it is logical to assume that BAMB is presumably the final destination of their crops. The gender dynamics of a high-level marketing facility like BAMB are not known but they are worth exploring. BAMB also runs a

“Contract Farming Scheme”. Under this scheme, BAMB identifies market for a particular crop and contracts farmers to produce and supply BAMB with crops such as sorghum, maize, cowpeas or beans at agreed prices and quantities prior to planting. Women agricultural cooperatives would benefit from such a scheme.

Botswana lacks gendered agricultural value chain data and since women seem to dominate informal markets with different commodities, it is critical that commodity-specific gender analysis be carried out at the very beginning of any intervention as each commodity brings with it specific challenges and opportunities. In Botswana, developing pro-poor value chains to cater even to the rural women will be ideal as this will mean addressing the constraints that the poor face, as well as addressing the special additional constraints that women face due to their gender. Women farmers should be encouraged to move up the value chain as far as possible to obtain greater financial returns for their businesses.

3.4.10 Gender and post-harvest handling

A lot of documentation about post-harvest activities for both crops and fisheries in Botswana has been done, but it lacks the gender dimension, that is, the role of women and men in the process.

Women smallholder farmers in most developing nations including Botswana are usually responsible for growing and processing food and horticultural crops. Women play an important role in the processing of maize, small grains and pulses. For small grains, the process involves threshing, shelling, winnowing, transporting from farm to homesteads and treating with pesticides for storage. If the product is in excess, they are also transported by head to markets. Women are also responsible for vegetable processing that is mainly done through sun drying. Women usually use manual, time-consuming technologies such as wooden mortar and pestle for dehusking and grinding grain and head-loading for transporting grain. In this case, labour-saving technologies would be appropriate to reduce women’s work burden.

Fishing in Botswana is, to a large extent, subsistence, taking place mainly in the Okavango and the Chobe rivers and as stated earlier, women from this region are big players in fishing, though only at the subsistence level. The most adopted and affordable methods of post-harvest handling in this rural setting is salt and sun drying.

Fishing involves gill-netting and basket fishing; women are also involved in weaving these baskets.

3.4.11 Gender and agricultural extension

The mandate of the Department of Extension Services Coordination is to provide effective leadership in the coordination of agricultural programmes and projects in partnership with all stakeholders, to achieve increased productivity and food production in Botswana. This is in line with the Vision 2016 pillar of a prosperous, productive and innovative nation. The extension system focuses on the commercialization of the agricultural sector and the stimulation of its development, by facilitating the adoption of innovative and productive technologies in the farming communities. This is done through the development of appropriate competencies, diversification of the agricultural sub-sector and working with other stakeholders. Currently, the agricultural extension service is stronger in its livestock and rain-fed arable production, but weaker, almost non-existent, in horticultural production (GoB, 2013). In view of this, there is a need to re-design the extension services and make provisions for coverage to include the horticultural sector. Women comprise the majority of street vendors and hawkers, selling food and horticultural products among others. They are small traders doing their business in an unstructured way, with the majority of the players in this system generally lacking any formal training; so implicitly, the uptake of extension training may be a challenge.

In Botswana, the smallholder arable agricultural sector has persistently under-performed due to harsh agro-ecologies and erratic weather conditions, characterized by low soil fertility, recurrent droughts, and unpredictable weather patterns which are associated with climate change. Infrastructural deficits and unfavourable trading conditions have further compounded the fate of the poor and the vulnerable. In 2008, the Government initiated ISPAAD to support and develop the agricultural sector. The objective of ISPAAD was to improve extension outreach, increase grain production, promote food security at the household and national levels and facilitate access to farm inputs and credit. Women extension workers were hired to deliver extension to farmers and at the same time motivate women farmers to join extension farmer groups.
As a result more rural women farmers joined extension farmer groups. A recent evaluation of the ISPAAD programme showed that about 60 percent of the ISPAAD beneficiaries were women. About 63 percent of the beneficiaries were aged 50 years and above, with those aged 65 and above constituting the largest category of 28 percent of the beneficiaries. Youth participation in ISPAAD was very low and only about 8 percent of beneficiaries aged 18 to 29 years participated in the programme.

3.4.12 Gender and marketing

Types of market systems in Botswana include: formal organized markets such as the BAMB, livestock products market, rural products markets, cooperative markets, vending and hawking. There is lack of gender analysis in the market system, and over-concentration of market power in a small number of farmers, the majority of who are not only foreign but also predominantly white male commercial farmers. This scenario poses a challenge in understanding the gender dynamics of formal markets and the subsequent agricultural value chain. The current agricultural production in Botswana is not market-led (GoB, 2011) but from the assessment, it is food security-led.

Poor market intelligence leads to inadequate price information. BAMB does not usually provide enough information. Thus the wholesale price of crops, including maize and sorghum, is not easily available from BAMB (GoB, 2011). Much agricultural production in Botswana is geared towards markets that are ‘protected’ such as “border closure” for horticultural produce, “complete import ban” in case of chicken meat, quantitative restrictions e.g. grains, and tariffs e.g. 40 percent levy on imported ultra-high temperature processing (UHT) milk. Women comprise the majority of street vendors and hawkers selling food, horticultural products and non-agricultural items. Cooperatives in Botswana played an important role in the development of agricultural production and in provision of services in those rural areas. In particular, cooperatives provided services to small-scale farmers in both rural and remote areas through selling of their livestock to the Botswana Meat Commission.

To facilitate investment in the development of road networks across production areas, the government needs to improve communication networks and put in place appropriate monitoring and auditing services to ensure a smooth functioning of the cooperative movement. Botswana has recently invested heavily in internet services and with its large stock of educated young population majority of who are not formally employed, it would be a great idea to consider internet-based services under its economic diversification policy. Internet-based services can be most promising because anywhere in Botswana would be equally close to world markets.

Results from a snapshot survey that was conducted in two villages (Taupye and Thabala) and (Serowe) in Botswana’s Central District, revealed that the main market channels for selling cattle in the district are the Botswana Livestock Commission (BMC) and butchers, with few sales to individuals. For sheep and goats, the main channels were sales to individuals, followed by butchers (ILRI Research Brief, 2013). A recent poultry research reported that the relationships between the poultry abattoir with contract growers places smaller farmers in Botswana in a challenging position as they appear to be set up to fail with the high cost of poultry feed. The poultry sector research report calls on the national government to consider relaxing the protectionist policies that are currently being implemented because they benefit the big players in the market more than the small subsistence players, the majority of who are rural women.

3.4.13 Gender and rural finance

According to the GoB Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) report 2012, the government has adopted affirmative action for women’s empowerment through provision of both financial and technical support for women’s empowerment and programmes. One such programme is the Alternative Packages Program (APP). APP provides financing, training, and equipment for micro-businesses, ranging from bakeries to handwork as well as agricultural activities like beekeeping and poultry. Since women are the majority (70 percent) of informal sector players, it is logical to think that they were the majority beneficiaries of the APP.

LIMID is a farmer support programme managed by the Ministry of Agriculture. Its objectives are to promote food security by increasing the productivity of raising cattle and small animals such as goats. It provides small stock, guinea fowls, and Tswana chickens to resource-poor farmers who owned four cattle or less, or 20 sheep/goats or less, or who earn less than P150 per month with dependents, or P120 per month without dependents.
In 2012/13 the programme supported 3,586 farmers. Although the beneficiaries are not disaggregated by sex, participants at the validation workshop of this report concurred that more women than men benefitted from this programme.

Women in Botswana lack collateral to access adequate loans in the conventional financial institutions and the Ministry of Trade and Industry’s policy does not adequately respond to the financial needs of women (GoB, 2015). Many governments’ schemes such as the National Master Plan for Arable Agriculture and Dairy Development (NAMPAADD), the Financial Assistance Policy (FAP), Arable Lands Development Programme (ALDEP) I and ALDEP II required that applicants have ownership of land. This discriminated against most women as they did not own land that would serve as collateral.19

GeAD disburses grants to women’s NGOs, CSOs who support economic empowerment programmes for women and women farmer groups/cooperatives who work together as income-generating groups. The department is biased towards “majority women-groups” and both rural and urban women access the facility. Also at farmers’ disposal is the Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agent (CEDA). The agency provides financial and technical assistance for business development with a view to promote citizen-owned businesses (GoB-GeAD 2014). CEDA is a gender-neutral financial institution. It has no affirmative action for women. Although the Ministry of Agriculture-Cooperatives unit supports registration and training of farmer groups for agro-business and recommends such groups for support by the GeAD, gender is not part of the criteria to support these groups.

3.4.14 Gender and climate change

Women’s livelihoods are often dependent on climate-sensitive natural resources such as agriculture. Socio-cultural and legal restrictions also disproportionately increase the exposure and vulnerability of women and girls to climatic risk. It is therefore crucial that mitigation and adaptation activities offer opportunities to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Botswana is prone to severe and prolonged drought and women are worst affected by climate change. Whilst climatic change modeling is subject to uncertainty a general prediction for southern Africa suggests that Botswana may, on average, experience up to 20 percent less rainfall each year and that average temperatures may rise by 1-2 Celsius (MEWT, 2006).

A case study of two villages in rural Botswana, Seronga of Okavango river basin and Chobokwane of Kalahari desert system, revealed that there was a steady increase in temperatures particularly in the summer season and less frequent and more sporadic rains which resulted in reduced rain-fed agricultural yield for the farmers.20 Women in Seronga were most affected by this as they were the predominant farmers in arable farming, confirming the fact that women’s responsibilities and vulnerabilities are often exacerbated by environmental and climate change. A gender-conscious response to the challenges posed by the changing climate would certainly avert unintended adverse impacts on social development and poverty eradication. The empowerment of women will significantly enhance the efficiency of adaptation and mitigation efforts at all levels.

In Botswana, the smallholder arable agricultural sector has persistently under-performed due to harsh agro-ecologies and erratic weather conditions characterized by low soil fertility, recurrent droughts, and unpredictable weather patterns associated with climate change. The ploughing season is normally in October and ends in January but recent studies have shown that by 15 November most areas would not have received enough rains thus little ploughing and planting is done. The GoB ratified the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in January 1994 that came into force in April of the same year (SADC, 2013). Rural households in Botswana are aware of the risk of climate change and for years have adopted the use of multiple income sources as a coping strategy against the risk of climate change. Botswana has always faced recurring drought which threatened to roll back it development. In 2016, due to strong El Nino, people suffered the worst drought since the early 1980’s when another severe drought devastated the country and required a large influx of aid. GoB had taken steps to help the most vulnerable adapt to and mitigate the growing risks they face from climate change. For example, the government’s back yard gardening initiative has promoted small-scale irrigation among poor Batswana farmers, allowing them to grow healthy produce.

19. FAO-Botswana CPF 2014-2016
20. Gender and climate change, Botswana case study (Feb. 2014).
3.4.15 Gender and social protection

Although there had been extensive investment in social protection and safety net measures to mitigate poverty, poverty remains persistently high for a country of middle-income status like Botswana. The GoB has a strong policy environment to reduce poverty and promote women’s economic empowerment. Poverty in Botswana wears a female face and poverty eradication issues have been elevated to Office of the President. The programme basically focuses on reducing constraints to women accessing incomes and economic opportunities. The APP and LIMID are part of the President’s Poverty Eradication Initiative. They seek to eliminate absolute poverty by, among other things, focusing on the poor households and helping them to develop sustainable livelihoods.

In 2007/2008 Botswana began to implement a number of poverty eradication initiatives that mainly benefit women in both rural and urban areas. These programmes included the Ipelegeng Programme 2008 (see Figure 5) and ISPAAD 2009.

More women benefited from both programmes. The Ipelegeng (self-reliance) labour-intensive public works programme was made permanent in 2008 as an instrument of poverty alleviation both in urban and rural areas. It replaced a long series of drought relief “food-for-work” programmes dating back to Botswanian independence. A study of the Ipelegeng Programme in 2012 however found that about 82 percent of the beneficiaries reported that the programme had enabled them to improve their welfare (GoB-GeAD, 2014).

A major limitation of this programme was that it focused on poverty relief and had a potential to create a dependency syndrome among recipients, thus defeating the whole spirit of economic empowerment for women. As the Ipelegeng programme tended to pay the beneficiaries money above the minimum wage, it attracted other people who would not have otherwise joined it (WHO 2013). This goes to show that the programme is subject to abuse and fraud if not properly monitored.

The distribution of food is generally less cost-effective than the payment of benefits in cash. The Ministry of Local Government provides food coupons (in the form of a smart card) for food purchasing in some programmes, namely, the Orphan Care, the Destitute Persons, and the Community Home-based Care programmes. It also continued to distribute food through the Remote Area Development Programme (RADP) and the Primary School Feeding Programme. During the most recent drought, in 2012-2013, the GoB took a series of measures to mitigate its adverse impact on the poor that included the provision of some food at school for primary school students in the affected seven districts. The advantages of paying cash are many. First, it eliminates the need for logistic systems to procure, distribute, and preserve foodstuffs, which not only are costly and usually involve large transportation and storage, and food losses but also take a heavy toll in terms of the work

Figure 5: Ipelegeng Programme 2007-2013
time of social workers and other staff. Secondly, it gives families a choice of what to buy, when, and where, thus empowering families and making them more self-reliant, responsible, and less stigmatized. Thirdly, the infusion of cash into the local economy stimulates activity and can help create local micro-enterprises for the rural folk. However, cash may not be effective in all circumstances as it may not be appropriate when specialized foods are required, or in extremely food-insecure areas or when a natural disaster strikes and crops are damaged and/or market channels are disrupted and emergency assistance is required.

Many elderly people in Botswana retire without a pension and they face major financial difficulties in their old age. The number of people aged 60 years and over is estimated to be 135,187\(^{21}\) (as of 2012) of whom about 40,500 (30 percent) are estimated to be poor. This data, however, is not disaggregated by sex. The HIV pandemic has placed significant stress on the elderly as they can no longer count on the financial support of their own children. At the same time, they have had “to stretch their own meager resources to care for their grandchildren and relatives who have been orphaned or left vulnerable due to HIV and AIDS” (World Bank 2012). As a result, the government has established a universal Old Age Pension for all elderly people aged 65 and over. The data is however again not disaggregated by sex. HIV continues to be a “major public health and development problem in Botswana” as the prevalence rate has stabilized at a high level of 17.6 percent (World Bank 2012) (20.4 percent females and 14.2 percent for males). In addition, a large proportion of Batswana do not know their HIV status, and many have limited knowledge of the disease (World Bank 2012). The extent of comprehensive HIV knowledge among 15-24 years age group is higher among women (40 percent women) than their counterparts (33 percent men).

Although Botswana has good social infrastructure and education and health indicators, the country still faces several challenges, which include reducing under-nutrition rates for young children, creating jobs for youths and other groups with high unemployment rates, and continuing the efforts to revert new cases of HIV and to treat those already suffering from the disease. In 2010, the Botswana poverty head count rate was 20.7 percent (362,116 poor people) which was relatively high for a middle income country (GoB, 2012). Despite indicating in the visions that gender (the needs of a multiplicity of vulnerable groups) would be an integral part of any poverty eradication programme, the country still fell short of sex disaggregated data on poverty eradication as reflected in the figures above. The country’s main causes of poverty were structural, including a lack of education and a lack of employment opportunities.

3.4.16 Gender and agricultural technology

Food technology

Discussions with participants of the validation workshop of this report revealed that women are the major players in post-harvest processing and marketing. The processing entails sun-drying of vegetables and fruits, sweet reed and traditional melons; and cooking first, then sun-drying of ground nuts and fresh corn; and it usually takes place at home.

At a slightly higher level, an institution called the National Food Technology and Research Centre (NFTRC) exists that promotes food processing activities from product formulation to finished products adding value to both plant and meat products. Its main goal is to develop the food industry in Botswana and contribute to diversification in the local economy. The main activities entail:

- Process design, optimization and technology transfers to entrepreneurs
- Technical support in process equipment sourcing and fabrication, and
- Training and extension that link organizations and the general public, including both women and men farmers.

Training workshops in the following areas have been held: peanut butter processing, jam processing from fruits and melons, fruit juices, cereal snacks processing, sweet reeds processing and meat processing.

Although sex disaggregated data on who patronizes NFTRC, was not obtainable, it is only logical to conclude that many women farmers make use of the facility to learn mainly about food processing of both plant and
animal products for home consumption and for sale to generate income. Paying for the service may be a constraint to resource-poor rural women farmers.

**Irrigation technology**

Irrigation as a technology still delivers some of the highest yields in agricultural production. With about 200,000 litres/day in wastewater, Botswana has the potential to raise irrigation output from currently about 3,000 ha to more than double. It is important that access to technologies such as irrigation be noted as they are likely to affect women as food crop producers more than men.

With the government support for irrigated crop production, there is need to develop plant products as a means of value-addition, and to accommodate surplus produce, whilst reducing reliance on imported processed food products. The typical irrigation system in Botswana ranges from group-operated simple micro-schemes of a few ha to fully commercial farms in excess of 50 ha. Women usually settle for a less sophisticated irrigation system which could be laborious but less efficient. A case at hand was the Kolobeng irrigation scheme which comprised a group of nine women who irrigated vegetables on a plot of only 0.3 ha out of the 8 ha originally intended, using buckets of water carried on their head. Simple, women-friendly, less laborious but efficient irrigation technology would contribute to better diversified crop production resulting in food and nutrition security and better livelihoods for rural women farmers.

**Conservation Agriculture (CA)**

The GoB is committed to CA, a new technology that is both water and soil conserving for crop production, which is the women’s domain in Botswana. Although CA by the Botswana College of Agriculture is still in its infancy, an analysis of the composition of the Technical Working Group Members/Steering Committee revealed that there was no gender specialist among them to advice on gender responsiveness of the programme. This omission, if not corrected, could have far-reaching effects - a gender blind CA programme.

**3.4.17 Gender and rural development planning**

According to the GoB CSW report 2012, the government has put in place special measures intended to promote social inclusion, equal opportunities and meaningful participation of remote area dwellers. It also made a deliberate effort for remote area communities through capacity building and skills development. The programme was mainstreamed in national programmes across development sectors (GoB, 2012). Information about progress made in this area was not available.

**3.4.18 Gender and partnerships**

The following development partners have and will continue to provide the technical and/or financial support and partnership to GeAD: International organizations (GoB_GeAD, 2014) such as UNDP, UNFPA UN Women, The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), Project Concern International (PCI), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), European Union, African Comprehensive HIV/AIDS Partnership (ACHAP), JICA and German Development Corporation (GIZ).

In addition, implementation partnerships have been established with different development sectors in government, parastatal and private sector organizations as well as with CSOs including:

**The GoB:** e.g. Ministry of Local Government, University of Botswana, Botswana College of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism.

**NGOs:** e.g. Putting Women First, Women Finance House, Kagisawo Shelter, NFTRC, CEDAW, Agricultural Depts. BCA, Stepping Stones International, Ministry of. Local Governemnt. Ministry of Health, UN agencies, University Botswana, Community-based CSOs, Men and Boys for Gender Equality, Fisheries, Forestry, Kalahari Conservation Society.

**Private Sector:** CEDA and NFTRC

**FBOs:** e.g. Botswana Council of Churches; Workers’ unions and community-based groups.
3.4.19 Gender and representations in rural organizations

Farmer commodity organizations that cover all areas including rural areas exist in Botswana. An example is the Cattle Ownership Association that is dominated by men. The majority of the women who own cattle do so through marriage. The Botswana Young Farmers Association (BYFA) is a voluntary commodity organization whose members are young farmers aged below 40. They act collectively in the interests of the economic welfare of youth in agriculture, focusing on commodity issues and work with the government and other players in the industry. The gender dynamics of the organization are not clear.
4. Good practices

• The practice by GeAD to finance income-generating groups (which consisted either of women alone or more than 80-90 percent women) to the amount of a quarter of a million Pula. The group should not be less than five members and all beneficiaries should maintain proper books of accounts, which should be audited by a recognized independent auditor. Audited financial statements and reports on how funds were utilized are submitted to the GeAD.

• The GoB offers partial support to partner organizations (NGOs, CBOs and FBOs) to assist those that are promoting gender equality, particularly in the areas listed under the national development agenda such as economic empowerment. To show their commitment, the partner organizations contribute in cash or kind to the funded programme. This will also help reduce dependency by the organization on Government.

• The practice of having female extension officers working with farmers is good practice as this inspires female farmers not only to engage in agriculture but also to take its agriculture seriously as a business.
Botswana still faces a big challenge of lack of sex disaggregated data collection, which is currently inconsistent. Within the agricultural sector, implementation of gender equality programming is unsystematic pointing to the fact that proper strategies and guidelines need to be put in place. The country has good programmes which provide platforms to address gender equality interventions: agri-business, CA, fisheries projects and income-generating programmes; but systematic gender mainstreaming is lacking in agriculture and rural development initiatives in Botswana. A majority of the interviewees, which included the top government management team, acknowledged that they had received some gender sensitization or awareness training but they still faced challenges in the application of gender equality approaches.

Currently, rural areas and especially the women rural farmers are the most affected by the incidence of poverty in Botswana. The alarming increase in internal migration from rural areas to urban areas also has serious effects on agriculture. It is therefore important to focus on rural development initiatives that will attract the youth to remain in the rural areas and be active in agriculture. It is therefore one of the most critical approaches to eliminate poverty in Botswana and also create employment for the youth.

Despite all the efforts by the GoB to elevate women, even through affirmative action, the culture of patriarchy seems to have a very strong influence on most of these processes. It affects both women and men of Botswana and since this practice is of a social nature it can be unlearnt through gender training, promoting women or girls-alone development programmes, and introducing gender studies in school curricula starting as early as primary level.

The GeAD, which is the national machinery responsible for building capacity and ensuring that gender is mainstreamed into all programmes and policies, does not have skilled staff to integrate gender into its work and those in the field. The Department does not have a systematic monitoring system in place to develop gender sensitive indicators and also monitor all its activities as well as national policies and programmes. Developing a gender sensitive monitoring system is one of the key priority areas that the GaED needs to focus on in order to ensure gender mainstreaming at various levels nationwide.

Furthermore, ministries do not have gender equality indicators and goals in their programmes, while the gender policy on agriculture which was developed in 2003 is still in draft form and yet to be completed. This calls for a more proactive and holistic approach by GaED’s structure and staffing to ensure that gender mainstreaming and policies that promote gender are developed and stakeholders trained to implement such policies. The agriculture gender policy needs to be revised and made available to all stakeholders for implementation.

The level of understanding of the gender issues among the GaED staff is limited and incoherent. It is necessary to develop new gender tools for training to ensure staff members have the same level of understanding and are equipped with the necessary skills to carry out their work. Such training needs to be extended to other national institutions and ministries to build skills in gender mainstreaming in their work.

Although efforts have been made to give women access to land and other factors of production, the reality on the ground is different from what is written in policies. There is the need to identify the shortcomings which include ensuring women’s access to land, finances and markets as well as value addition to their produce as a means to economically empower the women farmers.

5. Conclusion
6. Recommendations

• The GeAD should continue the process of systematically mainstreaming gender in all agricultural programmes and projects, policies and strategies, including the poverty eradication programmes such as ISPAAD and Ipelegeng, forestry and fisheries in Botswana, with technical support from the FAO. This should include support to develop gender mainstreaming guidelines that should assist the government departments, CSOs and other partners to mainstream gender equality and equity in programming. Gender should also be mainstreamed in the roll out of the SDGs.

• The GeAD and the Ministry of Agriculture should develop a comprehensive M&E system that collects sex and age disaggregated data with clear rural and urban indicators. The instrument must be used to effectively capture and monitor women’s/girls, and men’s/boys’ participation in any agricultural and rural development initiatives.

• FAO should support the Ministry of Agriculture to further carry out investigations on the gender dynamics surrounding crops and horticulture production, and honey production in Botswana. Honey production has the potential of providing rural livelihood and food security to the rural women and men.

• The GoB through the Ministry of Agriculture should revisit livestock marketing policies to benefit small players like rural women farmers. There is need to give livestock ownership patterns proper consideration in policy formulation for livestock development; through ownership patterns, location-specific interventions could be implemented.

• GeAD in collaboration with FAO should support the Ministry of Agriculture to develop a gender-responsive policy for the poultry sector that can assist women farmers to benefit from a growing domestic and international market for chicken meat and eggs.

• The Ministry of Agriculture and GeAd should initiate the development and implementation of a gender-responsive fisheries policy.

• The GeAD should support relevant CSOs such as the Women Finance House Botswana to promote village savings clubs to assist women farmer group members to save money and create a revolving fund from where members can borrow money and invest in expanded business.

• GeAD should further investigate the NFTRC institution to establish its mode of operation in view of supporting rural women to process and add value to their farm products. FAO can strengthen GeAD to support NFTRC to reach more rural women on issues of food processing, value addition and marketing, especially those women who are into horticulture.

• GeAD should support the Ministry of Agriculture to create a women-friendly, time-saving and efficient irrigation technology for women farmers for instant drip-irrigation.

• FAO should support the Ministry of Agriculture to further conduct research on the nutritional value of various wild fruits, and stimulate markets for veldt products and implement nutrition awareness initiatives that address gender issues.

• GeAD should encourage the division of cooperatives to support women-alone groups so that women become their own leaders in the business and cooperatives, and become role models to the youth. This will increase women’s participation in rural institutions.
• The Ministry of Agriculture should strengthen coordination of its agricultural extension approach to better standardize it and make it more gender-responsive.

• The Ministry of Agriculture should strengthen gender mainstreaming in its CA programmes and activities particularly in reducing the labour burden and drudgery on women and cater to the majority of users of the technology - women farmers.

• FAO and other development partners could support GeAD and the Ministry of Agriculture in strengthening the functioning of the Gender Focal Point (GFP) system in the departments and build the capacity of the GFPs to enable them to play their role effectively.

• In strengthening the implementation of its gender mandate, FAO could partner with CSOs whose core business is gender/women in agriculture and rural development to reach out to more rural women in Botswana. These CSOs could include Women Finance House Botswana, Botswana Council of Churches, Stepping Stone International, Kagisano Society (Women’s Shelter) and NFTRC to expand their coverage and reach out to typical rural women with their food processing and packaging technology.
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cattlepost-Bothatogo%20Bo

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### Annex 1: Botswana at a glance: Summary of key socio-economic and demographic data

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<td>Female-headed households living in poverty</td>
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<td>2013</td>
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<td>Child-headed households</td>
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<td>Literacy rates - females</td>
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<td>Population within 5 km of health facility access</td>
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<td>Maternal mortality</td>
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<td>2013</td>
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<td>Landowners (number of people)</td>
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<td>Botswana CPF</td>
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<td>Female landowners</td>
<td>46%</td>
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<td>TCP/BOT/3201 BABY05</td>
<td>Study on Non-Tariff Barriers to Trade</td>
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<td>2011-05-31</td>
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<td>TCP/BOT/3301 BABY01</td>
<td>Botswana Agrifood Value Chain Project – Phase I: Beef Value Chain Study.</td>
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<td>TCP/BOT/3402</td>
<td>Management of Asian Fruit Fly (Bactrocera Invadens) in Botswana</td>
<td>2014-01-21</td>
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<td>TCP/BOT/3501 BABY01</td>
<td>Investigating the status, scale and main drivers of illegal hunting and bush-meat trade in northern Botswana and assessment of impact on long-term food security and livelihoods options.</td>
<td>2014-02-04</td>
<td>2014-12-31</td>
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Source: CPF Botswana 2014-2016
### Annex 3: List of key informants for Botswana CGA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<th>Organization</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Contacts</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>24. SOLA-BABUSI</td>
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<tr>
<td>25. CECIL PATRICK</td>
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<tr>
<td>26. ELSIE ALEXANDER</td>
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<tr>
<td>27. B.S BAKANE</td>
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<tr>
<td>28. JANE PITSO</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>BCC</td>
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Annex 4: List of validation workshop participants for Botswana CGA

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National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods

Gaps between policy and implementation, and limited availability of sex disaggregated data and gender-sensitive indicators to inform sound policies and budgets have kept women marginalized in many sectors. No baselines mean no measurement of progress in effectively implementing the array of commitments towards gender equality and women’s empowerment in agriculture, food security and nutrition, rural development and management of natural resources. This report reveals gender disparities in access to critical agriculture and rural resources, knowledge, opportunities, services and markets. It explores the existing gender relations and gaps in the various sub sectors of agriculture, and their possible causes and impact on food and nutrition security, and makes policy recommendations to address them.