

TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION

Botswana is a unitary republic with 16 local governments at the municipal level: the country is divided into 10 district councils and 6 urban councils.¹



Unless otherwise indicated, all the information in this profile is taken from the previously published Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs).²

1. NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR SDG IMPLEMENTATION

The country developed SDG Planning Guidelines to entail a systematic integration of specific SDG targets and indicators into national and sector-level plans and programmes. The SDGs are integrated into **Vision 2036 (2017-2036)** and the **National Development Plan (NDP) 11** as well as in subnational development plans. Botswana has complemented its NDP with an **SDGs Roadmap**, which includes a five-year plan of action implemented through annual work plans. The country is developing its 12th National Development Plan, which will build on the measures taken to integrate the SDGs into the national development process.

1.1 NATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

The **Ministry of Finance** leads the implementation of the SDGs in Botswana. Following the establishment of the National SDGs Secretariat within the Ministry of Finance in 2015, the creation of a National Steering Committee on SDGs (NSC) and of the **Technical Task Force** in 2016, and of the **Parliament Special Committee on SDGs** in 2019, a **Joint National Steering Committee on SDGs (JNSC)** was created in 2022 to strengthen the SDG coordination mechanisms. The JNSC is the result of the merger of the NSC and the Development Partners Forum, and was established with the purpose of revitalizing partnerships for the achievement of the goals. SDGs Technical Working Groups were previously established by the NSC to perform technical functions to support the implementation of the SDGs. Members include local authorities, civil society organizations, the private sector, research institutions and other development partners.³ Recently, to stimulate action at the sectoral level, **SDG Focal Points** have been appointed within line ministries that act as liaisons between the Ministry of Finance and sectors, with the overall objective of advocating for, and mainstreaming, the SDGs in policies, programmes and plans at national and subnational levels.

1.2 VNR ELABORATION PROCESS

The 2017 VNR was produced under the guidance of the **SDGs National Steering Committee** and its Technical Task Force, with the supervision of the **SDGs Secretariat** at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. The **Ministry of Finance** was responsible for the overall preparation of the 2022 VNR. A **VNR core team** was established, including focal persons from UN agencies, line ministries and civil society representatives. For both VNR processes, **consultations** were held with targeted government departments and agencies, civil society organizations, the private sector, research institutions, and academia. It is worth noting that at the core strategy of the 2022 reporting process was the need to reach **left-behind populations** to address one of the shortcomings of the 2017 VNR, which focused mainly on urban populations. Consequently, consultations covered the national, district and community levels and allowed for representative participation of key populations including women and girls, the elderly, young people, rural residents, people with disabilities, sex workers and LGBTIQ+ persons, etc.

1. Since the latest elections in 2019, there are 609 councillors, of which 490 were elected democratically, and 119 were appointed by the Minister of Local Government and Rural Development. See: <https://www.sng-wofi.org/country-profiles/>

2. See: https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2021/16397BOTSWANA_VNR.pdf (2017); https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2022/VNR%202022%20Botswana%20Report_0.pdf (2022)

3. See: https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/botswana_2022.pdf

1.3 MONITORING

Findings by the Indicators Baseline Report and the Botswana Domesticated SDG Indicator Baseline Stats Brief, which revealed that the country's SDG monitoring capacity was at 34.8% of the SDG indicators, highlighted the need for a data revolution, pioneered by the development of the **SDG Planning Guidelines**. The Guidelines serve as a tool for mainstreaming SDG indicators into Botswana's medium and long-term development frameworks. Nine ministries piloted the guidelines, resulting in several indicators moving from easily feasible to measurable categories. Furthermore, the SDG indicators are mainstreamed into the **National Monitoring Evaluation System (NMES)** of the NDP 11. The appointment of SDG Focal Points at the sectoral level strengthened advocacy for collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of data on SDGs relevant to the respective ministries.

2. LRGs INVOLVEMENT IN SDG LOCALIZATION

Vision 2036 and NDP 11 recognize the important role played by local governments in the country's development trajectory. Most respondents to the survey circulated in 2022 by the Botswana Association of Local Authorities (BALA) for its VSR (see below) are aware of the existence of the SDGs. However, the majority of them seem not to be fully aware of the relevance of the SDGs to their work.

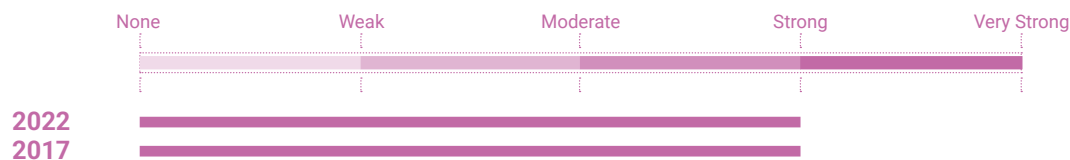
Elements of the three dimensions of sustainable development are embodied in **District Development Committees and Urban Development Committees** where all sectors or sub-structures converge for the effective implementation of all programs. At the local level, the **District and Urban Development Plans** determine the implementation of projects and the related budgets, and provide an enabling environment for the incorporation and localization of the SDGs. Indeed, the majority of BALA survey respondents confirmed that LRGs have development plans and strategies that "speak to some SDGs".⁴

LRGs participate in the **SDGs Technical Working Groups**. This is a structure where the BALA also sits. Overall, 44% of respondents to the BALA survey acknowledged "ad hoc" participation in coordination mechanisms for the SDGs; while only 18.5% indicated regular participation in these mechanisms.

In Botswana, the national reporting unit in charge of the 2022 VNR conducted an extensive consultation that covered the national, district and community levels. The report validation process included representatives of the BALA.

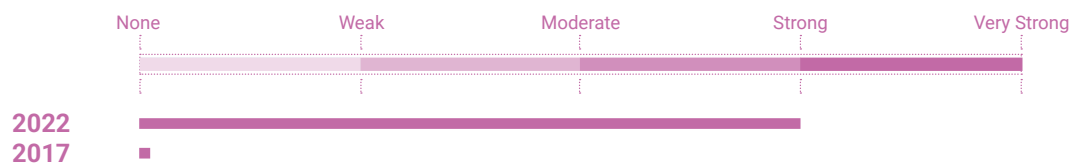
2.1 LRGs PARTICIPATION

► In the VNR process



Comments: A consultation covered the national, district and community levels and the VNR validation process included representatives of the BALA.

► In national coordination mechanisms for SDG implementation



Comments: LRGs and the BALA Secretariat participate in the **SDGs Technical Working Groups**.

This assessment is based on the information collected in the VNRs and in the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments' annual survey on the localization of the SDGs.

2.2 VNR REFERENCES

There were limited references to LRGs throughout the 2017 VNR. There was a special subsection on "Districts and community discussions" as part of the presentation of the national strategy to create ownership of the SDGs at all levels of government (see VNR, 2017, p. 11-12). There is very little reference to LRGs in the 2022 VNR as well. However, there is a subsection on "Mainstreaming SDGs into the National and Subnational Frameworks" (see VNR, 2022, p. 14).

4. See: https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/botswana_2022.pdf

2.3 SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND CASES

- ▶ **Francistown** and **Gaborone** have held training workshops, with the support of UN-Habitat and UNECA, to improve their capacities in such areas as monitoring, producing disaggregated data and reporting on SDG 11, using various statistical tools.⁵
- ▶ **Tlokweng** was facing tensions between preservation and development given the impacts of rapid urban growth on the loss of habitat, green space and agricultural land. Through a participatory process, the community chose a resilient growth development plan based on land use zones considering values of biodiversity and cultural heritage, health and food access and economic opportunity.⁶
- ▶ The town of **Jwaneng** established a District Child Protection Committee, and a children's consultative forum in order to manage child protection issues. The town has also worked towards achieving SDG 11 with the establishment of a Ward Development Committee, the construction of a multipurpose recreational facility and the implementation of the Local Economic Development Strategy.
- ▶ **Chobe** District established a Gender and Child Protection Unit and has taken steps to raise public awareness of all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres.
- ▶ The **Botswana Association of Local Authorities (BALA)** adopted a strategy for SDG implementation and is active in awareness-raising and capacity-building initiatives, in collaboration with the ministry responsible for local governance and international partners. The association also developed the local economic development policy, with the support of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum, which acts as a catalytic tool for inclusive impactful projects with an impact on many of the SDGs.⁷

2.4 VOLUNTARY SUBNATIONAL AND/OR LOCAL REVIEWS (VSRs / VLRs)

The **Botswana Association of Local Authorities (BALA)** developed the first VSR of Botswana in 2022.⁸ It gives several examples of local programmes geared towards the SDGs and highlights that “local authorities drive the national aspiration to uplift the standard of living of the population” (see VSR, 2022, p. 16). Limited financial and technical resources, as well as limited engagement with key stakeholders, were among the main challenges mentioned by the interviewed district councils.⁹

2.5 MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The **Parliament Select Committee on SDGs** was created in 2019 as a high-level SDG financing advocacy group, due to the recognition of the role of financing for the achievement of the SDGs and of the national budgetary oversight role of the Parliament. Furthermore, Botswana is a signatory to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the domestication of which is ongoing through the development of an **SDG Financing Strategy**.¹⁰ A gender-responsive and climate-smart SDG financing strategy is being developed. The process adopted several good practices including Zero-Based Budgeting and Results-Based Budgeting.

3. RELEVANT INFORMATION

General comments: Botswana has one of the oldest decentralization policies in Africa. The legislative framework for LRGs was consolidated in 2012 with the Local Government Act. More recently, in 2016, the country released a development plan called Vision 2036, which supports the development of a decentralization policy (a draft version was presented in 2019). A countrywide consultation on constitutional reform is currently ongoing.¹¹

In the country, existing structures at the subnational level are used to ensure that everyone is involved in SDG implementation. Kgotla (traditional meeting place) is used for community consultations to raise awareness and involve local communities in the planning process. Participation is also assured through structures such as village development committees, village health teams, and village extension teams set up to ensure that communities play an important role in the development of their villages, towns and cities.

5. UCLG, 2019, GOLD V Report, <https://www.gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/ENG-GOLD-V-2020.pdf>

6. UCLG, 2022, Towards the Localization of the SDGs, https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/hlpf_2022.pdf

7. Answer of the BALA to the GTF Survey in 2022.

8. See: https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/botswana_2022.pdf

9. UCLG, 2022, Towards the Localization of the SDGs, https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/hlpf_2022.pdf

10. An assessment of the financing landscape within and outside the country was undertaken in the context of the Integrated National Financing Framework in 2022. The findings will be used to develop an appropriate and fit for purpose SDG Financing Strategy for the country.

11. UCLG, 2022, Towards the Localization of the SDGs, https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/hlpf_2022.pdf

3.1 WOMEN PARTICIPATION

The number of women in the National Assembly and local councils remains low, and no effective measures have been put in place to promote the participation of women in electoral processes as well as political representation.¹² At the local government level, women account for 18% of the seats.

3.2 COVID 19

In 2020, the government developed an **Economic Recovery and Transformation Plan (ERTP)** to help the national economy to recover from the impact of the COVID-19 crisis and to build back better. It is aligned with the spirit of SDG 17 and aims at avoiding setbacks in progress towards the 2030 Agenda due to the pandemic. In Botswana, COVID-19 responses at the local level were carried out by district health management teams.¹³ When local authorities were involved in mitigating the COVID-19 crisis, the measures had more impact and were more easily received and accepted by the communities.¹⁴

4. SDG INDICATORS¹⁵

5.5.1. (b) Proportion of seats held by women (%) in local governments		14.9 (2019)
6.1.1. Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services (%)	Urban	83 (2020)
	Rural	-
6.2.1. (a) Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services (%)	Urban	-
	Rural	-
11.1.1. Proportion of population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing (%)		-
11.6.1. Proportion of municipal solid waste collected and managed (%)		91.2 (2013, Gaborone)
11.6.2. Air pollution – annual means of particulate matter in cities (population weighted)		25.2 (2016)
11.b.2. Proportion of local governments that have adopted local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national strategies (%)		28.1 (2018)

12. UCLG Africa, Cities Alliance, 2021, "Assessing the Institutional Environment of Cities and Subnational Governments in Africa", https://www.citiesalliance.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/CitiesAlliance_Assessing%20Inst.%20Environment%20of%20Cities%20and%20Subnal.%20Govs%20in%20Africa_EN.pdf

13. Answer of the BALA to the GTF Survey in 2022.

14. See: https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/botswana_2022.pdf

15. The data used for this table come from the UN SDG Indicators Database. See: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/dataportal>