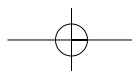
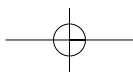
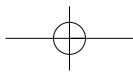
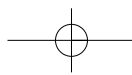


Botswana







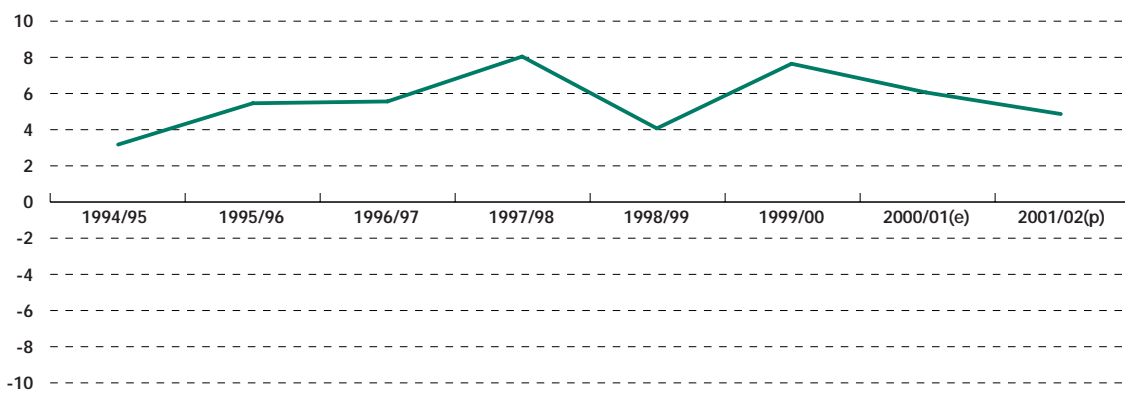
Botswana

BOTSWANA HAS GAINED A REPUTATION for its remarkable economic growth and prudent macro-economic management. A small economy with abundant diamond resources, the country's good governance has enabled the resources to be put to growth enhancing and development uses. Economic growth has been strong over the past decade with real GDP growth recording 7.7 per cent in 1999/2000. Real GDP growth in 2000/2001 and 2001/2002 is estimated to rise but at a slightly lower rate than in 1999/2000. The estimated lower growth rate at 6.1 per cent in 2000/2001 and 4.8 per cent in 2001/2002 is due to the fact that diamond production reached a plateau in 1999/2000 and future growth in diamond revenues will be dependent on price increases.

Botswana is a politically stable country, with efficient institutions running the economy. The country continues to put in place reforms and measures to strengthen the economy as well as attempt to diversify it away from its dependence on diamonds. Botswana's strong economic growth and efficient institutions have, however, not translated into poverty alleviation as the country is still riddled with high levels of poverty. The education system, considered one of the best in Africa, is still not empowering citizens to access jobs in a highly competitive labour market. Botswana has a health system that provides free primary health care. However, the country suffers from one of the highest rates of HIV/AIDS infections in the world.

Good governance has enabled the resources to be put to growth enhancing and development uses

Figure 1 - Real GDP Growth

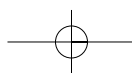


Source: Authors' estimates and predictions based on domestic authorities' data.

Recent Economic Developments

Over the past five fiscal years, real GDP in Botswana averaged about 6.2 per cent per annum, with the growth rate in 1999/2000 recording 7.7 per cent. The growth performance has depended heavily on the diamond sector. Thus, the weak international demand for diamonds in the wake of the 1997 Asian crisis led to a downturn in the rate of growth of the mining sector in 1997/1998, and resulted in the relatively slower

growth of the economy at 6.2 per cent in that year. Significant diamond sales in 1998/1999 and 1999/2000 resulting from double-digit growth in diamond output contributed to reversing the growth setback in 1997/1998. Some additional production in diamonds will be forthcoming from the "B/K pipes", near the Orapa mines, where development is about to start for diamond production to commence in 2001/2002. However, production from this new mine will be small compared with production from existing mines.



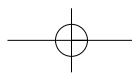
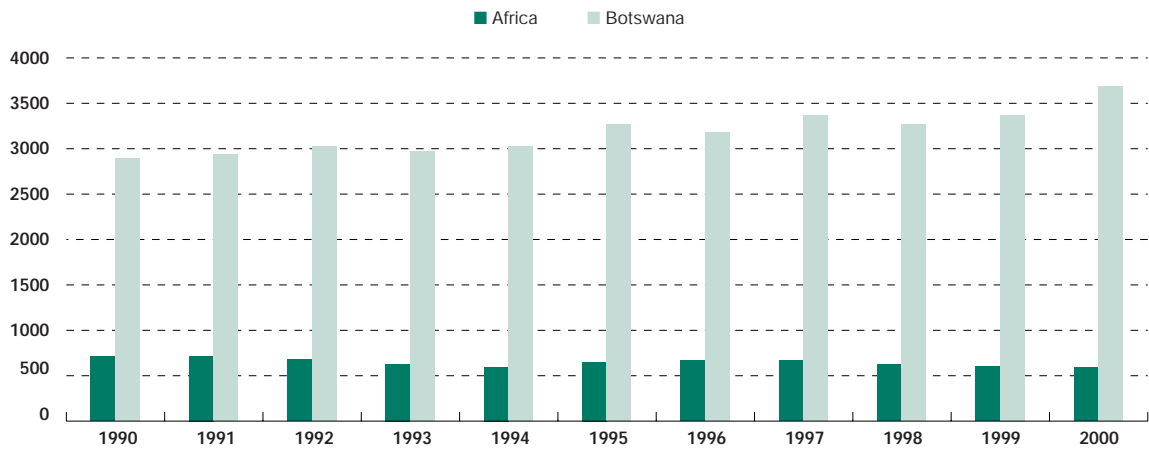


Figure 2 - GDP Per Capita in Botswana and in Africa (current \$)



Source: Authors' estimates based on IMF data.

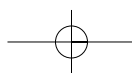
Consequently, growth is projected to level at 4.8 per cent in 2001/2002.

The mining sector accounts for about 35 per cent of GDP, with diamonds contributing about 94 per cent of the total mining share in GDP. Botswana produces the world's largest gem diamonds, with an output that represents about 40 per cent of the total world output. The recent completion of the Orapa Expansion Project (Orapa II) has contributed to strengthening the country's position in world diamond output. The Orapa complex, officially inaugurated in May 2000, is considered to be the world's largest diamond mine. Botswana produces other minerals including copper and nickel, soda ash and salt. Soda and salt production increased by 19 per cent and 8.5 per cent respectively in 1998/1999 compared to the 1997/1998 levels. Outputs of the two minerals were however down in 1999/2000 because of brine dilution from the floods of early 2000.

Other sectors of the economy have also performed well, in part as a result of Botswana's market-friendly environment, sound macroeconomic policies, and social and infrastructural investments. The performance of the manufacturing sector, which accounts for about 4 per cent of GDP, slowed in 1999/2000 with a growth rate of 0.6 per cent compared with 5.3 per cent in 1998/1999. The sector suffered a setback in 1999 with

the closure of the country's main automobile assembly plant, following the liquidation of the Motor Company of Botswana (MCB) Hyundai assembly plant. The liquidation of MCB was in the wake of the liquidation of the Wheels of Africa Group of South Africa of which MCB was a member. The Government of Botswana has since opened discussions with several automobile groups with a view to re-establishing production at the motor assembly plant.

Bucking the growth trends, the agricultural sector has experienced a pattern of negative growth, leading to the share of the sector in GDP declining gradually. In 1999/2000, agriculture accounted for 3 per cent of GDP, off from its highs of about 5 per cent in the early 1990s. The climatic conditions of the country, marked by recurrent droughts, the relatively low levels of investment in the sector especially in irrigation, agricultural infrastructure and marketing are contributory factors to the decline in agriculture. The decline in agriculture was manifested mainly in crop production. In 1999/2000, total crop production was estimated at only 12 per cent of normal output, with the shortfalls having to be met from commercial imports. The drought of 1999 followed by the floods in early 2000 prevented farmers from carrying out proper crop management, paving a conducive environment for pests. In addition, there was the outbreak of quelea birds and the bollworm, which



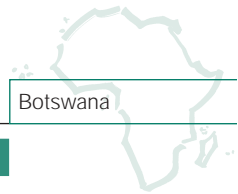
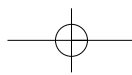
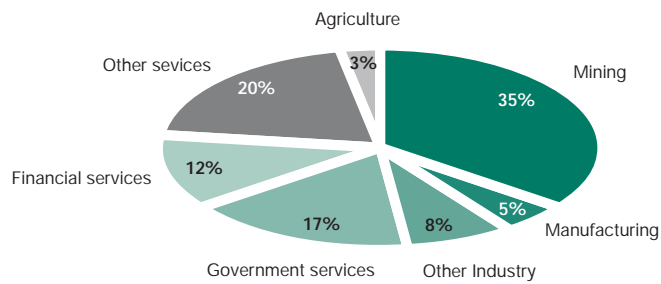
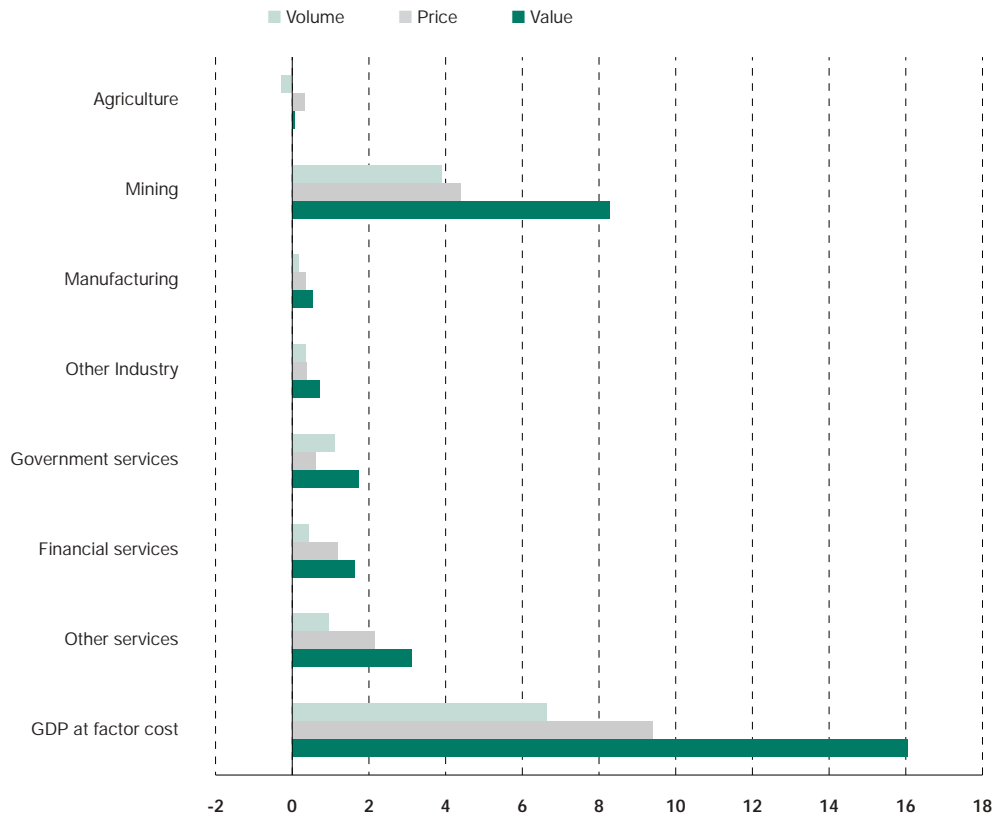


Figure 3 - . GDP by Sector in 1999/2000



Source: Authors' estimates based on domestic authorities' data

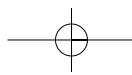
Figure 4 - Sectoral Contribution to GDP Growth, 1999/2000



Source: Authors' estimates and predictions based on domestic authorities' data.

affected yields. The decline in agriculture is, however, not across the board. The livestock sub-sector still caters for about 80 per cent of Botswana's rural population and about 46 per cent of the national population. Though the sub-sector is largely underdeveloped and characterised by extensive systems in communal areas, it produces beef that remains a

major foreign exchange earner after diamonds. Although the cattle herd declined by about 12 per cent following the outbreak of Cattle Lung Disease in 1996, the numbers have increased markedly in the last three years; as at the end of September 2000, a total of 122 216 cattle had been re-stocked in the affected area.



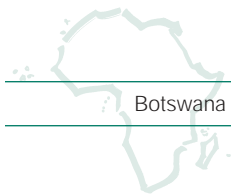
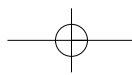
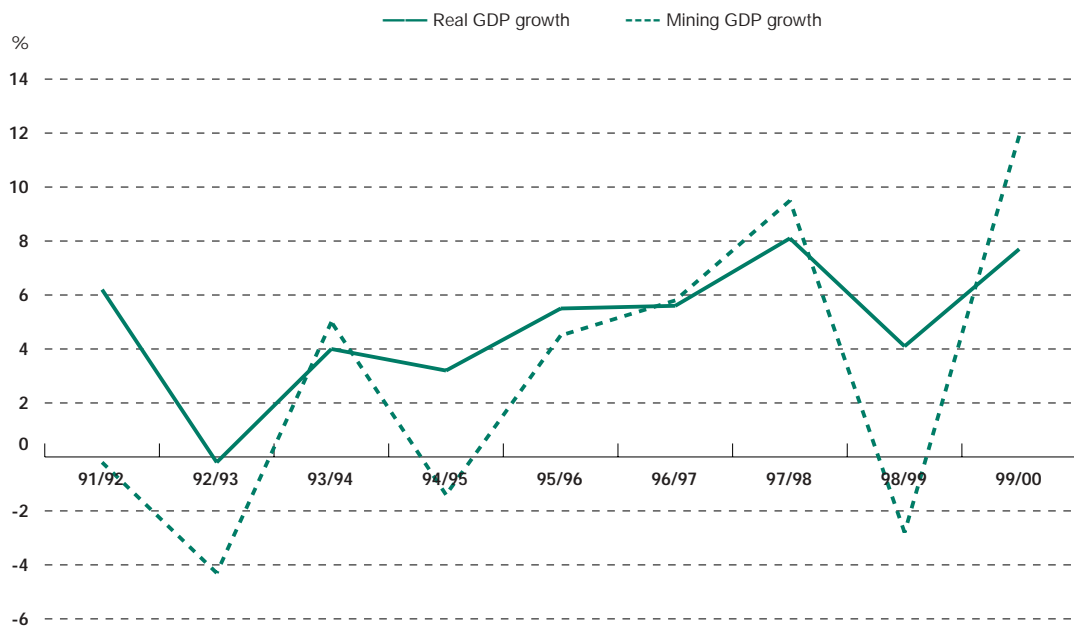


Figure 5 - Trends in Growth Rates of Total and Mining GDP



Source: Based on domestic authorities' data.

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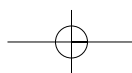
The services sector has also boomed along with the economy. Tourism that hinges upon the country's extensive wildlife resources is estimated to contribute about 3 per cent of GDP. Telecommunications have seen significant growth, with the total number of mobile phone subscribers growing from 88 000 in December 1999 to 195 000 in December 2000. Similarly, the Botswana Telecommunications Corporation (BTC) increased its number of main lines from 110 000 in 1999 to 132 866 at end-2000.

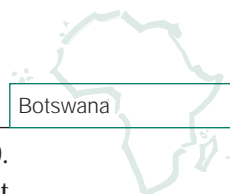
The strong economic growth performance in Botswana is clearly derived from strong export performance that has enabled increasing consumption (private and public) in recent years. The level of domestic investment that appeared to decline in 1999/2000 to 26.6 per cent of GDP compared with 36.8 per cent of GDP in 1998/1999 is expected to increase in 2000/2001 to 28 per cent of GDP at the back of the strong growth of economic activity in 1999/2000. The level of domestic investment is projected to continue

Table 1 - Demand Composition (percentage of GDP)

	1994/95	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01(e)	2001/02(p)
Gross capital formation	25.8	30.0	36.8	26.6	27.9	31.7
Public	8.4	10.2	16.8	14.8	12.9	15.0
Private	17.3	19.8	20.0	11.8	15.0	16.7
Consumption	63.7	57.5	62.8	60.9	57.2	57.2
Public	28.9	27.0	30.6	29.9	28.7	28.9
Private	34.7	30.4	32.2	31.0	28.5	28.3
External sector	10.6	12.5	0.4	12.5	14.9	11.1
Exports	49.5	56.5	46.7	56.0	53.6	50.3
Imports	-38.9	-44.0	-46.3	-43.5	-38.7	-39.3

Source: Authors' estimates and predictions based on domestic authorities' data.





its upward trend in 2001/2002. Significantly, the high level of domestic investment in Botswana has always been below the level of domestic savings, thus reducing the country's need to source foreign savings for domestic investment.

Macroeconomic Policy

Fiscal and Monetary Policies

Owing to mineral taxes, the government has been able regularly to run surpluses on its budget. However, the situation changed in 1998/1999 when the overall budgetary position deteriorated sharply, recording a deficit of 6 per cent of GDP. Total revenues as a percentage of GDP fell by 11 per cent largely owing to the world's reduced demand for diamonds in the

preceding year that hit mining revenues in 1998/1999. The revenue shortfall combined with a 25 per cent increase in civil service salaries and increased development spending to result in the budget deficit of about 6 per cent of GDP, which was the first in 16 years. In 1999/2000, total revenues recovered as a result of significantly higher mineral revenues. The recovery combined with selective cuts in both recurrent and development expenditures to turn the 1998/1999 deficit of 6 per cent of GDP to a surplus of 6 per cent of GDP in 1999/2000. A similar level of surplus is estimated for 2000/2001, as mineral revenues remain strong. However, the primary surplus is projected to reduce to 2.4 per cent of GDP in 2001/2002 owing in part to the anticipated transfer of substantial revenue for the Public Officers Pension Fund, which became effective on 1 April 2001.

Table 2 - Public Finances^a (percentage of GDP)

	1994/95	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01(e)	2001/02(p)
Total revenue and grants^b	36.5	41.1	35.7	47.4	44.8	43.3
Tax revenue	29.6	33.6	26.2	39.4	36.9	35.5
Total expenditure and net lending^b	34.9	36.7	42.1	41.8		
Current expenditure	24.5	24.4	29.1	28.4		
<i>Excluding interest</i>	<i>23.8</i>	<i>24.0</i>	<i>28.7</i>	<i>28.0</i>	<i>26.9</i>	<i>27.2</i>
Wages and salaries	9.0	8.4	9.7	9.7	9.3	9.5
Interest on public debt	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.4		
Capital expenditure	11.2	13.4	13.6	13.7	11.9	13.9
Primary balance	2.3	4.8	-6.0	6.0	6.2	2.4
Overall balance	1.6	4.4	-6.4	5.6		

a. Fiscal year begins 1 July.

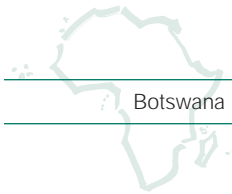
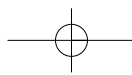
b. Only major items are reported.

Source: Authors' estimates and predictions based on domestic authorities' data.

Botswana experienced a credit boom in 1998, reflecting the strong demand conditions in the economy, when broad money (M2) expanded by over 30 per cent in the year. Since then the monetary policy objective of the Bank of Botswana (BOB) was to dampen inflationary pressures in the economy by stricter control on growth of monetary aggregates. The growth of money supply subsequently slowed in response to the BOB open market operations involving sales of BOB certificates, repurchase agreement transactions and commercial banks utilisation of the

secured lending facility. Broad money (M2) growth fell to 18 per cent in 1999 and fell further to 9 per cent in 2000.

The rate of inflation continued on an upward trend increasing from 6.4 per cent in 1998 to 7.4 per cent in 1999 and further to 8.4 per cent in 2000. The rising rate of inflation was attributed to a number of factors including the international crude price increases. Also, the rate of inflation in Botswana broadly mirrored the core inflation in South Africa, with which Botswana



has close trading ties and with the exchange rate pegged to the South African rand and the SDR. Inflation is estimated to reach 8.0 per cent in 2001 as the strong demand condition in the economy continues. It is then projected to come down to 4.2 per cent in 2002 as economic growth stabilises.

In the attempt to achieve the objectives of price stability and positive real interest rate, the BOB re-discount rate was increased twice in 2000. The first was in February from 13.25 per cent to 13.75 per cent, and a subsequent increase to 14.25 per cent made in October. The rise in inflation reduced real interest rates, which nevertheless remained generally positive. The three-month real money rate ranged between 1.66 per cent and 4.3 per cent during January to October 2000. However, savings deposit real interest rates were negative.

The exchange rate of the Botswana pula is pegged to the South African rand and the SDR. The pegged system has helped the pula to be generally stable in effective terms. In nominal terms, however, the pula has recently followed a downward trend against the US dollar, as the dollar has generally appreciated against other world currencies: the rate of depreciation, however, reduced from about 16 per cent in 1998 to 2.2 per cent in 2000.

External Position

Botswana operates trade policies that are varied and complex. The country is simultaneously a member of a customs union, the Southern African Development Community (SADC); with one group of neighbouring countries, the Common Customs Area (CCA); has a free trade agreement with another, South Africa; participates in a highly successful cartel for governing its principal export, the Central Selling Organisation for diamonds; and has preferential access to a large, highly protected market for another major export. In spite of Botswana's strong import demand, stronger export performance attributable to the performance of the diamond industry has generated current account surpluses year after year. Consequently Botswana has developed a strong external position over the last 20 years.

During 1999/2000, exports rose sharply gaining a 40 per cent increase compared with 1998. The rise was attributed to an increase in sales of diamonds, copper/nickel and hides and skins: the shares of diamonds and copper/nickel in total exports rose to 79 per cent and 8 per cent respectively during the first quarter of 2000, from 71 per cent and 6 per cent during the same quarter of 1999. There was also a shift in the relative importance of export markets away from the United Kingdom and the CCA to other European countries and Zimbabwe. The export share of the United Kingdom fell from 30 per cent in 1998 to 23 per cent in 1999, while that of the CCA declined to 9 per cent from 17 per cent. The rest of Europe and Zimbabwe increased their export market shares to 61 per cent and 7 per cent from 47 per cent and 3 per cent. Imports grew at a faster rate of 8 per cent in 2000 compared with 3 per cent in 1999. A slowdown was substantial in imports of metals, metal products, vehicles and transport equipment. On the other hand, there was a significant rise in imports of machinery, electrical equipment, food, beverages, tobacco, chemicals, rubber products, textiles and footwear. In 2001 and 2002, imports are expected to stabilise around 33 per cent of GDP while exports of diamonds could experience a decrease depending on the price. The trade balance would then deteriorate slightly although remaining largely positive.

The country's current account surplus amounted to 12.2 per cent of GDP in 1999. The higher current account surplus resulted in further accumulation of foreign exchange reserves estimated at \$4.9 billion at end-2000, sufficient to cover about 36 months of imports of goods and services.

Botswana continues to avoid contracting any new debt from commercial creditors. The total external debt stock amounted to \$462 million at end-1999 and represented only 8.1 per cent of GNP. The country's debt stock is composed of 73 per cent bilateral debt and 22 per cent multilateral debt, with the remaining 5 per cent owed to private creditors. As a result of the low level of debt and the sizeable foreign exchange reserves, Botswana is among the very few developing countries that have not implemented the IMF/World Bank structural adjustment programme.

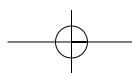
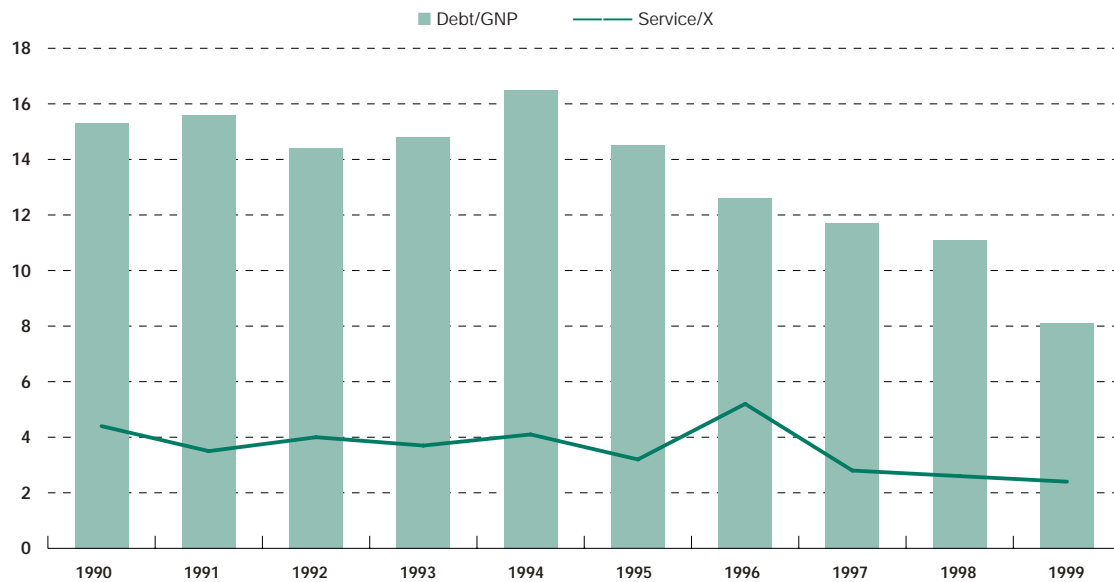


Table 3 - Current Account (percentage of GDP)

	1995	1998	1999	2000	2001 (e)	2002 (p)
Trade balance	11.6	1.6	15.5	15.3	13.1	9.9
Exports of goods (f.o.b.)	45.3	41.8	52.6	49.0	45.4	42.6
Imports of goods (f.o.b.)	-33.6	-40.2	-37.1	-33.7	-32.2	-32.7
Services	-3.9	-4.7	-3.1	-3.7		
Factor income	-0.7	2.4	-5.2	-5.2		
Current transfers	-0.8	4.9	5.0	3.9		
Current account balance	6.3	4.1	12.2	10.4		

Source: Authors' estimates and predictions based on domestic authorities and IMF data.

Figure 6 - Stock of Total External Debt (percentage of GNP) and Debt Service (percentage of exports of goods and services)



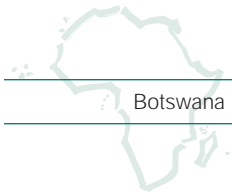
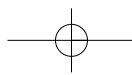
Source: World Bank (2001), *Global Development Finance*.

Structural Issues

In addition to its characteristic high economic growth performance deriving from its vibrant mining sector, Botswana continues to implement reforms and put in place investment incentives packages that are among the most attractive in the world. An Act of Parliament which came into effect in April 1998 transformed the Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (TIPA) into an autonomous parastatal, Botswana Export Development and Investment Authority (BEDIA) — a one-stop-service-centre for investors that offers services relating to land acquisition, factory shell, work and residence permits, travel visas,

grants and any other regulatory authorisation. Incentive packages in place include refund by the government of 80 per cent of the wage bill of shop-floor workers in manufacturing during the first two years, 60 per cent in year three, 40 per cent in year four, and in year five, 50 per cent of training costs are refunded by the government. Corporate tax is only 15 per cent for manufacturing enterprises; and profits and dividends are readily repatriated. There is no foreign exchange control.

The development strategy of Botswana puts the accent on the diversification of the economy away from its heavy dependence on diamonds. Regarding



investment opportunities, Botswana currently places emphasis on the diversification of the industrial base away from the mineral sector. The sectors that are currently being promoted include textiles and garments, assembly of cars as well as production of parts and components for the automobile industry, polishing of diamonds and semi-precious stones, leather products including the setting up of tanneries, ceramics, etc. However, there are indications that some policies and programmes aimed at the diversification of the economy are not achieving results. One such programme is the Financial Assistance Policy (FAP), whose fourth evaluation was completed in 2000. The evaluation revealed, among other things, high failure rates among FAP-assisted businesses, as well as widespread abuse of the scheme by some beneficiaries: about 75 per cent of small-scale FAP projects have not survived beyond the period of assistance; corresponding failure rates were 45 per cent for medium-scale and 35 per cent for large-scale projects.

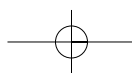
Botswana initiated a privatisation programme in 2000, out of a desire to improve efficiency in the delivery of services and from the need to create further opportunities for the growth of the private sector. Privatisation in Botswana, unlike in many other sub-Saharan African countries, was not adopted as a solution to financial, economic, or political crisis. Many of the most important state enterprises are earmarked for privatisation. These include the Botswana Development Corporation (BDC), the National Development Bank (NDB), the Botswana Power Corporation (BPC), the Water Utilities Corporation (WUC), the Botswana Telecommunications Corporation (BTC), Air Botswana (AB) and the Botswana Meat Commission (BMC). The privatisation process is expected to commence during the 2001/2002 financial year, as an interim board of directors for the Privatisation Agency was appointed in January 2001.

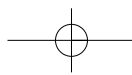
The financial system of Botswana is characterised by efficient institutions and infrastructure of high standard with good telecommunications facilities and institutional support mechanisms. Over the past decade, the government has liberalised licensing requirements for banks and developed local capital and money markets in an effort to establish a more

efficient financial services sector. A new Banking Act has widened the regulatory powers of the Bank of Botswana to include merchant banks, discount houses and other forms of specialised financial institutions. The Act also includes a reform of capital adequacy requirement that strengthens financial management beyond minimum international standards: currently, the minimum risk asset ratio for banks in Botswana is 15 per cent of risk weighted assets, which is considerably higher than the Basle Committee's 8 per cent stipulation. The banking sector continues to grow, with the licensing of the Bank of Baroda (Botswana) Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Bank of Baroda Group of India. Further, ULC (Pty) Limited was granted a licence to provide merchant and investment banking services in Botswana in 2000. The government has also established a Contributory Funded Pension Scheme for the public services. The scheme commenced in April 2001.

Botswana is also developing an International Financial Services Centre (IFSC). By May 2001, five companies had been approved under the IFSC, and accordingly issued with tax certificates. Among them were: ABC Bank Holdings, African Alliance, NatGilt and the Seed Company of Zimbabwe.

Other recent reforms include the restructuring of the Botswana Development Corporation. The Botswana Agricultural Marketing Board (BAMB) has also been undergoing restructuring which involves, among other actions, closing down of depots, leasing some of their storage facilities as well as right-sizing its staff. A draft Bill on public procurement and asset disposal was presented to Parliament in March 2001. The Bill proposes legal, institutional and procedural changes, aimed at bringing the procurement system in line with regional and international practice, as well as improving the overall performance of the public procurement system. The proposed changes include the devolution of procurement decision-making to line ministries up to a certain threshold, the establishment of an independent complaints review mechanism, standardisation of procedures and documentation across departments and structured consultation between government and the private sector.





The Botswana Stock Exchange started operations in 1995. Earlier reforms on the Exchange included the amendment of the Botswana exchange control regulations to permit dual listing; that is, shares in approved companies could be dual listed on the Botswana Stock Exchange (BSE) and other international stock markets. In 2000 there were 16 domestic listed companies with a market capitalisation which stood at the end of October 2000 at P5.3 billion (\$0.989 billion), an improvement of 10.4 per cent over the level recorded at end-1999. The number of dual listed companies on the BSE decreased by 2 to 7 in 2000 while the foreign companies share index declined by 1.85 per cent in October 2000 from end-December 1999. The performance of the market is affected by the perceived risk in investing in the region, which was brought about by political and economic problems in Zimbabwe. However, it is anticipated that there will be more activity on the BSE in 2001 because of the privatisation process. The establishment of an independent office to administer the BSE is also expected to boost the activities of the stock market.

Political and Social Context Developments

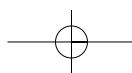
Botswana is a politically stable country with elections held every five years. The Government of Botswana generally adheres to democratic principles. The country's institutions work effectively to provide checks and balances on both the Executive and Legislative arms of the government. Consequently, there is a fairly predictable economic policy-decision environment and a stable environment for the private sector. Botswana is doing relatively well in terms of the incidence of corruption in the country. According to the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index of 2001, Botswana was ranked as the 26th least corrupt country in the world, and the least corrupt on the African continent.

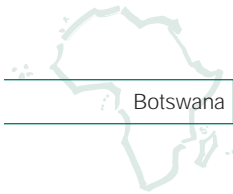
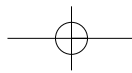
In spite of its remarkable economic performance, and despite several social welfare/safety net initiatives, Botswana is still riddled with a high level of poverty resulting mainly from weak economic base in rural

areas, lack of sufficient human capabilities, high population growth, unequal access to resources and socio-cultural problems (including gender relations) and a high unemployment rate estimated at 19.6 per cent of the labour force (1999). Available statistics indicate that over 47 per cent of the population live below the poverty line of US\$1 a day. The level of poverty appears surprising in view of Botswana's impressive growth record but it is not unexpected. According to the UNDP, the structure of income distribution in Botswana is broadly comparable to that prevailing in other countries in the region. The degree of inequality is, however, greater in Botswana than in many other developing countries. The distribution of income and the incidence of poverty are related to the urban-rural distribution of the population. Geographically, poverty is highest in rural areas, with 55 per cent of the rural population living below the poverty line compared with 46 per cent in urban villages and 29 per cent in urban areas. Poverty also varies significantly by region. The Central and North East districts have the largest number of poor people, but poverty rates are especially severe in the Western districts of Ghanzi and Kgalagadi, where the climate and soils are most poorly suited for arable agriculture.

The health system in Botswana provides free or near free primary health care for all. By the early 1990s virtually all Botswana had access to a health facility within a distance of 15 km. Considerable improvement has been achieved in preventive and curative health care: the infant mortality rate has declined from 71 per thousand in 1981 to 58.6 per thousand in 1998 following an expanded programme of immunisation that has achieved 90 per cent immunisation against DPT, polio, tuberculosis, and measles. The core disease pattern in Botswana is functionally related to levels of poverty, with patterns of morbidity characterised by a high incidence of respiratory diseases (including tuberculosis) and gastro-intestinal infections.

Recently, HIV/AIDS is offsetting much of the country's impressive health progress as Botswana suffers from the highest rates of HIV/AIDS prevalence in the world. Botswana's historic labour migration to South Africa, and the tradition of shuttling between village





homesteads, land areas and cattle posts across seasons, and more recently urban areas, make Botswana one of the most mobile populations in the world. This constant population mobility makes the distinction between a rural and urban area, at least in terms of disease patterns, ineffectual in Botswana. These factors explain in part the high rate of HIV/AIDS infection and the narrow gap between the rural and urban infection rates in Botswana. In 1999, an estimated 18 per cent of the population was infected with the HIV/AIDS virus. Infections are substantially high at 35.8 per cent for the adult age group of 15-49 years. In the worst cases, such as in Francistown, it is estimated that at least 45 per cent of the adult population is HIV positive. Young children are also significantly affected with almost 15 per cent of recorded HIV/AIDS cases in the 0-4 age group and HIV/AIDS responsible for 64 per cent of deaths of children under five. As a result, the country will lose some of its skilled and experienced labour, which will significantly reduce productivity, and consequently, the rate of economic growth. Lack of data to guide government to respond effectively to the challenges of HIV/AIDS led to the undertaking of a six-component study on the impact of HIV/AIDS on the economy and society. Four components of the

study have been completed and a national dissemination seminar was planned for 2001, with a view to discussing ways to implement the findings and recommendations of the study reports.

Although the educational system in Botswana is considered to be among the best in Africa, the system is not empowering people to access jobs in a highly competitive labour market, leading to unemployment and widespread poverty. The educational statistics are impressive by African standards: the gross primary school enrolment ratio is 107.8 (1996) compared to the African average of 79.5; the gross secondary school enrolment ratio is 64.6 (1996) compared to the African average of 28.3; close to 75 per cent of adult Botswana (15+ years) are literate compared to the African average of 43.5 per cent. The 1997 Botswana National Literacy Survey shows a national literacy rate of 69.9 per cent; 66.9 per cent for males and 70.3 per cent for females. Despite the higher literacy rate amongst women in the country, girls are sometimes denied schooling because of religious or customary beliefs. Overall, girls outnumber boys in primary and junior secondary school but the opposite is true at the level of senior secondary and higher education.

