

# Gender and Social Security

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## Abstract

Gender equality is a core development and human rights issue. Throughout the world, emphasis is now being placed on eliminating all forms of harmful social-cultural, economic and political barriers that prevent women from participating fully in development. The Government of Botswana instituted a National Policy on Women and Development in 1996 to facilitate the promotion of gender equality. The adoption of this policy marked a major milestone in recognizing the important role of women in decision-making. Gender focal persons were then appointed in each Ministry to facilitate the integration of gender issues in the national development process. The analysis of gender and social security is made within the context of these developments. The chapter argues that while various institutional reforms and best practices have been put in place to address equal rights for men and women, a paradigm shift must be adopted to remove existing disparities. The chapter acknowledges that the provision of educational opportunities for girls has contributed significantly to the reduction of gender inequalities in formal employment. Addressing gender dimensions in the informal labour market, the chapter demonstrates that, similar to other SADC countries, women in Botswana dominate in this sector. It argues that this sector could increase productivity and open up new job opportunities if women were given adequate skills, credit facilities, land with better infrastructure and transport. The chapter submits that, when it comes to social security coverage, women in the formal sector are disadvantaged compared with their counterparts in the formal market.

## Keywords

Gender, Social Security, Women, Labour Market, Employment, Social Benefits

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## 1. Introduction

Gender equality is a core development issue. Throughout the world, emphasis is

now being placed on eliminating all forms of harmful socio-cultural, economic and political barriers that prevent women from participating fully in development. The government of Botswana instituted a National Policy on Women and Development in 1996 to facilitate the promotion of gender equality. The adoption of this policy marked a major milestone in recognizing the important role of women in decision making. Gender focal persons were then appointed in each ministry to facilitate the integration of gender issues in the national development process<sup>1</sup>. This analysis of gender and social security is made within the context of these developments. The paper argues that while various institutional reforms and best practices have been put in place to address equal rights for men and women, a paradigm shift must be adopted to remove existing disparities. The paper acknowledges that the provision of educational opportunities for girls has contributed significantly to the reduction of gender inequalities in formal employment.

Addressing gender dimensions in the informal labor market, the paper demonstrates that, similar to other SADC countries, women in Botswana dominate in this sector. It argues that this sector could increase productivity and open up new job opportunities if women were given adequate skills, credit facilities, land with better infrastructure and transport. The paper submits that, when it comes to social security coverage, women in the informal sector are disadvantaged compared with their counterparts in the formal market.

## **2. Women, the Labour Market and Social Security**

### **2.1. The Historical and Changing Nature of Work and Gender Dimensions**

The traditional form of work in Botswana was predominantly agricultural. Seemingly, the household produced the bulk of food, built its own granaries and performed all economic activities. The division of labour was clearly defined: women tilled the fields, built and repaired the walls of huts and granaries, thatched roofs, prepared food, fetched wood and water, collected edible plants, and performed most household tasks. Men on the other hand, herded cattle, hunted, cleared new fields, and occasionally assisted in planting, weeding and reaping<sup>2</sup>. Invariably, work was confined to the home environment and employment opportunities outside the home were non-existent.

With the advent of colonialism and other social change factors such as the expansion of educational provision, industrialization and cultural diffusion, the pattern and nature of work gradually altered. The imposition of the hut tax, fines and levies by the British, for example, forced a large group of men to migrate to South African mines and farms in search of paid employment. It is estimated that over 50000 Batswana or 10% of the population were employed in South Africa in the early 1950s<sup>3</sup>. A majority of these people were men, as women were perceived to

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<sup>1</sup>See Ministry of Finance and Development Planning National Development Plan 2003/04-2008/09.

<sup>2</sup>Schapera, I & Comaroff, JL (1991). *The Tswana* G. B. London.

<sup>3</sup>See Schapera I, *The Tswana*, pp30-31.

be purely home-makers<sup>4</sup>. It is interesting to note that as men migrated from rural Botswana to South Africa, they periodically sent remittances in the form of money and clothing to support the family. However, this pattern of work had unintended consequences, such as the disruption of family relations, the deterioration of the rural economy, an increase in female-headed households, a lack of child support and an increase in divorce rates (Sillery, 1965).

Available records show that, by the 1960s, employment opportunities in the formal market within the country became available. However, data from the Bechuanaland Protectorate Standing Order 19 of 1964 shows that over 90% of the senior posts in the public service were occupied by expatriates, either from South Africa or Britain. Local citizens on the other had were concentrated in fields such as the police, the postal telegraphic services, store keeping clerical services, and as messengers and typists.

At Independence in 1966, Botswana was classified as one of the poorest countries in the world, with a per capita income of US \$80. The country bore the usual marks found initially in many developing countries—a large subsistence sector, extensive reliance on outside donations, little industrial development and a large pool of untrained labour. The discovery of diamonds in the late 1960s significantly boosted the economy the economy. Hence by 1985, expansion of the labour force both in the government, private and parastatal sectors had grown from 117,110 to 224,000 (UNDP/GOB/UNICEF, 1993). By the 1980s, the nature of work had shifted significantly with more women participating in paid employment. This transition was largely attributed to the implementation of the first National Policy on Education that emphasized the need to increase educational opportunities are concerned<sup>5</sup>. In practical terms, the curricula and teaching materials are now made gender sensitive, thus encouraging female students to take science subjects; and career guidance and counseling in schools have been strengthened<sup>6</sup>. It is anticipated that through this initiative, girls will begin to pursue careers that will improve their chances of competing equitably with boys, thereby reducing the gender pay gap over a period of time.

Another key objective of this policy was to satisfy manpower requirements for all sectors, emphasizing particularly the needs of rural development<sup>7</sup>. Records reveal that, by the early 1990s, 40% of women were employed by government whilst 33% were found in the private and parastatal sectors<sup>8</sup>. At the professional level, the highest proportions of women were found in education (65%), health and commerce (60% each), and domestic services (94%). In terms of income levels, records indicate that a large number of women were clustered in lower paying jobs<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid, pp30-31.

<sup>5</sup>See Republic of Botswana National Policy on Education. Government Paper #1 of 1977.

<sup>6</sup>Republic of Botswana 2003.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>See Labour Statistics 1991-92, Central Statistics.

<sup>9</sup>See Ibid.

With the rapid growth in the economy, the situation of women has continued to improve. The most recent data shows that GDP has grown from P44.3 billion in 2003/2004 to P49.7 in 2004/2005, an 8.3% growth compared to 3.4% recorded during the previous year<sup>10</sup>. The increase in mining output has contributed significantly to this growth, followed by the transport sector, finance and business services, government, agriculture, and water and electricity. Future trends predict that the economy will continue to grow with the introduction of reforms such as the elimination of administrative barriers to investment, the establishment of competitive exchange rate, increased development expenditure for projects and a general rise in the level of productivity<sup>11</sup>. Below, an analysis is made of the extent to which rapid economic growth has contributed to the size and composition of the labour market.

## **2.2. Size and Composition of Labour Market**

Statistics reveal that formal sector employment increased from 257,066 in September 1999 to 262,386 in September 2000, representing 5,320 additional jobs. From March 2004 to March 2005, a growth rate of 2.8% was recorded, down slightly from the rate of 3.1 in the previous year<sup>12</sup>. Employment in the private and parastatal sectors rose by 3.1%, while it fell by 1% in government<sup>13</sup>. In general, most sectors within the private sector recorded positive growth rates in terms of employment, except Mining and Quarrying (-0.9%) and Real Estates (-0.2%). Water and Electricity recorded the highest growth rate of 37.4%, followed by Education (9.4%), Health and Social Work (5.2%), Transport and Communication at 4.4% and other community Activities at 4.0%<sup>14</sup>. Other sectors of the economy such as manufacturing, wholesale, retail trade and finance, performed relatively well. There was, however, a decline in the employment growth rate in the construction sector due to the completion of some larger development projects initiated by the government. Overall, men constitute 60% of those in paid formal employment, while women account for 40%<sup>15</sup>. Unemployment is slightly above 20%<sup>16</sup>.

## **2.3. Female Participation in the Formal Labour Market: Current Trends**

Although remarkable achievements have been made with respect to female participation in the formal labour market, in terms of occupations, the situation has not drastically changed. Similar to the statistics recorded in 1991, the most recent statistics show that women tend to be crowded in traditional “feminine”

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<sup>10</sup>Republic of Botswana Budget Speech, Republic of Botswana and Annual Economic report 2006.

<sup>11</sup>See Budget speech 2006, page 4.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid, p 5.

<sup>13</sup>Central Statistics Office National Population and Statistics Census Government Printer, 2001.

<sup>14</sup>Central Statistics Office National Population and Statistics Census Government Printer, 2001.

<sup>15</sup>Central Statistics Office National Population and Statistics Census Government Printer, 2001.

<sup>16</sup>Republic of Botswana, State of the Nation Address, 2004.

jobs. **Table 1** below shows the distribution of participants by occupation and gender extracted from the latest study on the wage gap between men and women in Botswana's labour market conducted by the Central Statistics Office (CSO)<sup>17</sup>.

**Table 1.** Distribution of participants by occupation and gender.

Occupation	Total	Male	Female	% Female
Administrators/Managers	133	99	34	<b>26</b>
Professionals	221	125	96	<b>43</b>
Technicians and Associate Professionals	1072	378	694	<b>65</b>
Clerks	854	274	580	<b>68</b>
Sales Workers	1081	486	595	<b>55</b>
Skilled Agricultural Workers	49	32	17	<b>35</b>
Crafts Workers	1254	896	358	<b>29</b>
Plant and Machine Operators	727	573	54	<b>9</b>
Elementary and Others	2827	1482	1345	<b>48</b>
Total	8118	4345	3773	<b>46</b>

Source: CSO (1999).

As shown in this table, women account for 46% of workers in the sample. In terms of occupation, a significant proportion of women are concentrated in the technicians and associate professions such as teaching, social work and nursing, as well as in clerical positions and sales. On the other hand, over 70% of men occupy high-paying positions in the managerial and administrative cadres. Occupations which are dominated by women command comparatively low remuneration<sup>18</sup>. It is therefore clear from this table that there is gender disparity and segregation as far as occupations are concerned. What is interesting about these figures is that, at the professional level, women are competing favorably with men. This is a significant trend because it shows that as more women become educated, the gender gap narrows.

A close analysis of wage earnings by occupation and gender in the public sector reveal that women managers earn on average 1.2 times what managers earn, whilst women professionals are paid just as well as male professionals<sup>19</sup>. In the private sector however, women tend to be paid less for similar jobs than their male counterparts. These discriminating practices in the private sector could be emanating from the fact that employees negotiate for pay packages, whereas government has a much more transparent with checks and balances. As research indicates, occupational segregation and gender discrimination are the two main factors that cause the gender pay gap in the formal labour market (UNDP, 2006).

<sup>17</sup>Central Statistics Office The wage gap between Men and women in Botswana Labour Market. Government Printer, 1999.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid, p 2.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid, p 15.

## 2.4. Social Security Implications

As far as social security is concerned, women in the formal labour market enjoy better social security benefits compared to their counterparts in the informal sector. These benefits include universal old age pension, access to pension funds, workman's compensation, healthcare insurance and maternity benefits. These are discussed below.

- **Pension Schemes.** All government officers are entitled to receive pension benefits upon retirement. This pension acts as a safety net in the event of serious health or untimely death. In April 2001, government moved away from the defined benefit pension fund and introduced a new defined contribution pension fund. While employees contribute a minimum of 5% of their annual salary, the employer contributes 15%. The new fund gives employees an alternative option regarding their retirement as well as more flexibility regarding the benefits payable. Beneficiaries also include the spouse and children (adopted or biological, and also those born out of wedlock). In addition other members of the extended family can be included. Under this new scheme, employees can choose to retire early at 50 years or wait until they reach the compulsory retirement age of 60. There is no age discrimination regarding when employees can retire, and the benefits are calculated equitably for both men and women. There are currently 68, 625 registered members from central government and local authorities<sup>20</sup>.
- **Workman's Compensation.** The workman's compensation Act provides for compensation of workers for injuries suffered or occupational diseases contracted in the course of their employment. This Act also provides for compensation for death resulting from such injuries or diseases. The Act covers all employees in government, local authorities and statutory corporations. An employer whose worker suffers personal injury or an occupational disease arising out of and in the course of employment is liable to pay compensation in accordance with the Act.
- **Health care Insurance Schemes.** Although government provides a universal health care system, most employers in the public, parastatal and private sectors have private health schemes that give employees options to pay for medical costs within and outside the country. These insurance schemes are contributory in nature. While employees pay 10% towards medical expenses, Medical Aid covers 90%. Private health insurance schemes give employees access to quality medical care and a wider choice in the health care system. In addition to healthcare insurance, most female employees in the formal sector have life insurance cover, educational policies and other insurance schemes to protect them against future risks and life-threatening shocks.
- **Maternity Benefits.** In accordance with General Orders governing the conditions of service for public officers, female officers are entitled to 84 calendar days maternity leave on full pay, up to a maximum of three confinements. For

<sup>20</sup>Botswana Public Officers Pension Fund Trustees Report, 2003.

the fourth and subsequent confinements, officers are entitled to the same period of leave at half pay. The employer bears all the costs of the paid leave; however, for one to qualify, the following conditions apply<sup>21</sup>:

- Officers must have been on continuous service for at least one year before proceeding on maternity leave;
- To qualify for the second or subsequent confinements, an officer must have served continuously for at least two years after resuming duty following the previous confinement.

Maternity leave is intended to give the mother an opportunity to rest immediately before and after delivery and to recuperate and nurse the baby for some time before resuming duty. When officers come back from leave, they are entitled to one hour recess per working day for a period of one year for purposes of nursing the new-born<sup>22</sup>. Before and during maternity leave, officers are fully covered by their contributory medical health insurance. Pregnant women who know that they are HIV-positive are encouraged to enroll for PMTCT, and have access to free ARVs if their CD4 count is less than 200.

The Employment Act protects women against unfair treatment or dismissal. Employers who contravene the provision of the Act are liable to heavy penalties<sup>23</sup>. For women working in the private sector, the Act enforces that they should be on maternity leave for the same duration as public officers and that they should at least receive 25% of their salary. Currently in Botswana, there is no paternity leave or unemployment insurance benefit. It is however significant to note that some non-governmental organizations, such as HOPE world Wide Botswana offer paid paternity leave of up to five days for their male employees<sup>24</sup>.

## 2.5. Family

The Government of Botswana does not have a comprehensive family policy. However, in 1995 a National Programme of Action for Children (NPA) was launched to address the problems of children in difficult circumstances, such as street children, working children, disabled children, socially and culturally disadvantaged children, orphans of AIDS affected families, HIV-positive children, out of school children, and the girl-child<sup>25</sup>. Below an analysis is made on the critical support services provided for these children, namely child support, adoption, foster care and informal social protection.

### *Child support*

The Affiliation Proceedings Act of 1999 gives a woman with a child, a parent of a child or a person having custody of a child the right to obtain child support for a child aged 18 or below. A complainant seeking a paternity order may be made to a court having jurisdiction in the administrative district in which the complain-

<sup>21</sup>See Republic of Botswana, General Orders governing public officers p. 83, section 152, 1996.

<sup>22</sup>See Republic of Botswana, General Orders p 84.

<sup>23</sup>See Section 113-119 of the Employment Act.

<sup>24</sup>See information obtained HOPE worldwide Botswana Employee Manual, 2021.

<sup>25</sup>See Government of Botswana National Plan of Action for Children of Botswana, 1997.

ant resides, or an administrative district that is convenient. In accordance with this Act, the parent is required to pay not less than P100 per month for the maintenance and education of the child<sup>26</sup>. If the parent is unable to pay the full amount, the court orders the social worker to conduct the socio-economic assessment of the parent and to prepare a report for the court. To ensure consistency in payment, the social workers provide progress reports every three months.

Apart from monetary support, other forms of care are provided under the Children's Act of 1981, such as the protection of infants, the prevention of neglect or ill-treatment of children by parents or guardians, the removal of children to a place of safety, and the creation of schools of industry where juvenile offenders can be referred for specialized trades training<sup>27</sup>.

#### *Adoption of children*

According to the Adoption Act of 1952, the following persons may adopt a child: a husband and his wife jointly; a widower and widow or unmarried or divorced person; or a married person who is separated from his/her spouse by judicial decree<sup>28</sup>. The adoption of a child is affected by the order of the court of a district where the child resides following a social enquiry assessment by the social worker. To qualify to be an adoptive parent, the court has to be satisfied that the applicant is of a good reputation; possesses adequate means to maintain and educate the child; that the proposed adoption will serve the interest and welfare of the child; and that the consent to the adoption has been given by both parents and the child or, if the child is illegitimate, by the child's guardian.

#### *Foster care*

The children in need of care regulations of 2005 grant eligible persons to become foster parents upon submitting an application to the Social Community Department of the Ministry of Local Government. To be eligible, applicants must possess the following qualities: good reputation; absence of mental or physical disability acceptable levels of warmth, tolerance, and maturity; possess no criminal record, be above 21 years old<sup>29</sup>. Widowed, divorced and single parents as well as non-citizens are permitted to foster a child. Even when all the above qualities apply, an assessment by a social worker is required to ensure that the best interests of the child are protected. Further, the Act makes provision for the creation of foster homes or institutions for the care and support of children in need of care.

#### *Informal social protection*

Although the extended family is slowly disintegrating, it is not uncommon to find family members or relatives adopting children or fostering them out of love and compassion. Non-government organisations, church groups and community based organisations also play a key role in complementing government's efforts.

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<sup>26</sup>Republic of Botswana Affiliation Proceedings Cap 28: 02 1999.

<sup>27</sup>Republic of Botswana Children's Act 1981. This act is currently under review.

<sup>28</sup>See Republic of Botswana Adoption of Children 1952.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid Section, 12.

## 2.6. Female Participation in the Informal Labour Market: Current Trends

The average size of the informal economy in Botswana (in percentage of GDP) is 33.4% (Schneider, 2002). For operational purposes, the informal sector consists of “enterprises with five or fewer employees, [that] do not maintain any formal accounts, [have] no fixed location of operation though some would have permanent structure, [with no] registration of the enterprise or its employees; and finally, the enterprise is not separate from the household one”<sup>30</sup>.

The Central Statistics office carried out the first Informal Sector Survey in 1999/2000. Out of the sample of 9100 households that owned businesses, the study revealed the following unique characteristics of the informal sector in Botswana<sup>31</sup>.

- Most informal business enterprises are operated within the owner’s home (55%);
- Most of the enterprises are within retail, real estate/rentals and manufacturing;
- Most enterprises do not have employees;
- The informal sector raises its capital mostly through own savings 68.3% and government Financial Assistance Policy grants (18.7%);
- The main difficulties affecting the operations of informal businesses were the unavailability of credit facilities, non-payment of debts and a lack of space;
- The most useful form of assistance required is better access to loans, assistance with marketing and the provision of a permanent site;
- Training in the form of managerial skills, marketing, commercial skills, book keeping and technical skills was lacking.

Consistent with the pattern in the SADC region and elsewhere, the informal sector in Botswana is dominated by women (Mhone & Chisopa, 2004; Schneider, 2002). For example, out of the 68383 currently employed with this sector, 37971 are women<sup>32</sup>. **Table 2** shows a profile of these women by occupation and employment status.

As reflected in **Table 2**, most females worked as labourers, service and sales workers or clerks. The type of work done in major enterprises included running small kiosks, street stalls, market sales, street vendors, hawkers, tailoring and dressmaking, traditional beer and beverage making, hair dressing, field crop and vegetable growing, baking pastry making, cleaning, bush clearing and other related tasks. In terms of employment status, the survey indicated that there were more females self-employed with employees (37%) than males (14.6%). A majority of women who were self-employees worked as managers, labourers and trade workers. For both females and males, regular monthly earnings were below the P600 mark<sup>33</sup>.

<sup>30</sup>See Central Statistics Office of the Informal Sector Survey Report, p 6, 2003.

<sup>31</sup>See Ibid, p 6.

<sup>32</sup>See CSO Informal Sector Survey Report, 2003.

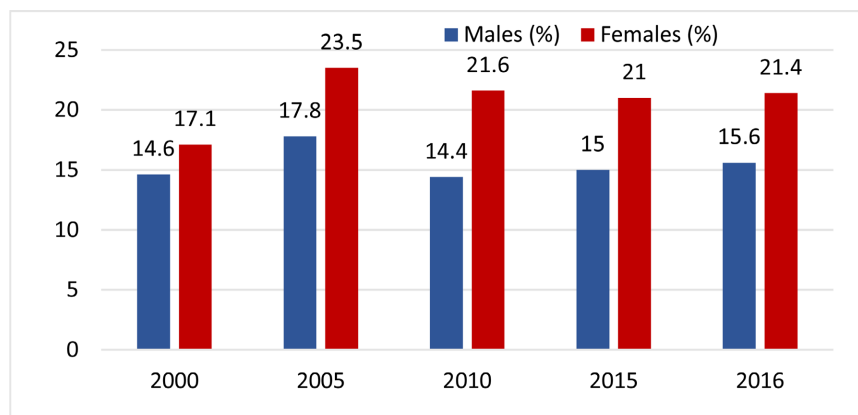
<sup>33</sup>See Review of Social Safety Nets, 2006, p 13.

**Table 2.** Currently employed females by occupation and employment status.

Occupation	Employees	Self-employed with employees	Self-employed without employees	Family workers	Lands and cattle posts	Not known	Total
Managers	533	2757	975	101	-	-	4349
Professionals	522	13	53	-	-	-	588
Technicians	2061	109	92	-	-	-	2261
Clerks	2971	-	22	26	-	-	3019
Service & Sale workers	3464	1992	392	511	-	4	6360
Agricultural workers	129	101	140	20	1069	-	1459
Trade Workers	1883	2309	804	169	-	-	5165
Machine Operators	468	40	34	-	-	-	542
Labourers	6512	6205	923	564	98	8	14,032
Not known	95	42	29	26	6	64	198
Total	18,279	16,568	3445	1507	1173	77	37,971

Source: Central Statistics Office. Informal Sector Survey Report 2003.

Unlike their counterparts in the informal sector, a majority of women in the informal sector have very little education. Most ended their schooling in junior certificate level or year nine of schooling, a few have never been to school. Coupled with this, these women have not received any formal training to run their enterprises, hence they lack basic managerial and accounting skills. Moreover, they experience other serious setbacks such as the unavailability of credit facilities, a lack of capital equipment, a lack of space and transport problems (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Botswana-unemployment-by-gender.

### 3. Botswana Continues to Grapple with High Employment

A new report by Statistics Botswana has revealed that over 275,160 Botswana aged 15 and above are currently unemployed, translating to a 25.9% unemployment rate. The Quarterly Multi Topic Survey also identified a concerning 47.269 gradu-

ates, constituting 17.2% of the total unemployed population, are unable to find work despite their qualifications. The data also exposes a gender disparity in the workforce. Women are disproportionately affected, with 53% females unemployed compared to 47% males. Responding to these figures, finance Minister Peggy Serame outlined a multi-facet strategy to tackle unemployment. She says the government aims to increase opportunities for Botswana within the diamond industry, empower youth through financial support for their initiatives, and encourage participation in the agricultural sector to create new employment avenues<sup>34</sup>.

### ***Social Security Implications***

Virtually no empirical research has been done on the impact and nature of female participation in the labour market on social security coverage and entitlements. However, available records show that women are excluded from all the statutory social protection schemes except the universal old age pension scheme. Administratively, eligibility criteria for social security coverage, such as maternity benefits, the public pension fund, workman's compensation or employment injuries and health insurance, is tied to employment status. Conversely, female participating in the informal labour market are automatically excluded since most of them are self-employed or are unpaid workers in family enterprises. An additional constraint is that their family income is often low compared to their counterparts in the formal sector, so that they find it difficult to purchase private health insurances or secure a pension. Interestingly, tax financed social assistance and social insurance schemes do not cover these women either, since these provisions are means tested and therefore targeted at the poorest of the poor. Given these circumstances, it may be concluded that women participating in the informal labour market are seriously disadvantaged.

It is however worth noting that Botswana offers affordable comprehensive health care services to all its citizens. With a current network of 243 clinics, 340 health posts, 810 mobile stops and hospitals in major districts<sup>35</sup>, access to health has been made possible to everyone. Further, provision of free primary education and other essential social services are examples of indirect social security which go a long way in enhancing the wellbeing of women in the informal labour market.

## **4. Conclusion**

This paper has made an attempt to discuss gender dynamics and social security provision in Botswana. It has been shown that considerable efforts are being made to eliminate gender discrimination, particularly through providing access to education and training. Other strategies employed to improve the standards of living of the very poor, many of which live in female-headed households, include provision of social support system. Further, government has adopted a Privatization Policy aimed at increasing the private sector's participation in activities that were previously undertaken by government departments and para-

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<sup>34</sup>Gabz-FM March 20, 2024.

<sup>35</sup>See Ibid p 56.

statal bodies. While government perceives this initiative as a mechanism for increasing economic growth, concern has been expressed that this policy may instead lead to job losses, particularly in sectors where employees are deemed to be in surplus. As a safeguard, employers are expected to provide affected employees with retrenchment packages and to devise appropriate redeployment schemes.

Yet another strategy is the newly introduced Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA), which aims to support the development of viable citizen businesses through funding, training and mentoring. Through this scheme, financial assistance is provided in the form of loans from P500.00 to P7 million. Companies owned by citizens aged 18 and above are eligible to apply without being required to pay a deposit<sup>36</sup>. In principle, CEDA aims at providing a financial scheme that is both inclusive and integrative. For example, since beneficiaries are not expected to pay any deposits, it is envisaged that the poor and other vulnerable groups, such as youth, people with disabilities and women will benefit equitably. Women participating in the informal sector will have to be targeted to benefit from this scheme. However, even at the initial stage of the scheme, potential beneficiaries have lodged serious claims about the complexity of the application procedures that require a high level of technical knowledge of proposal development.

Finally, the provision of the social security cover will require a coordinated, preventive, integrated and inclusive framework. In order to reach the Vision 2016 pillar of creating “a Compassionate, Just and Caring Nation”, Government will have to undertake an organizational assessment to help ensure improved coordination of social security schemes. Currently, these schemes are scattered throughout government departments and ministries. Second, a preventative rather than crisis oriented approach is necessary. Consequently, there is a need to strengthen indirect social safety support such as health and nutrition, education and training, shelter, water and sanitation, and the provision of psychosocial support. Further, efforts must be made to integrate people with disabilities through a range of measures, including vocational training, rehabilitation, counseling, mobility, housing and provision of basic material needs. Lastly, research must be undertaken on the informal social security to inform policy and programme implementation.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study acknowledges that this is a virtually new area and no empirical research has been done. It is one of the first in the area and not much writing in Botswana has been done. While this is so, this paper will inspire others to conduct more research in the area of gender and social security.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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<sup>36</sup>See Ibid, p56.

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