

3 Botswana

Compiled by Leapetswe Maletle and Kagiso Kobedi

COUNTRY CONTEXT STATISTICS	
	<p>Population: 2.0 million (2011) GDP per capita: US\$16 200 (2011) Human development index: 0.633 Unemployment: 17.8% (2010 est.) Key economic sectors: mining, manufacturing, agriculture, tourism Principal exports: diamonds, copper, nickel, soda ash, meat, textiles HIV and AIDS prevalence: 24.8% (2009) Gross primary enrolment ratio: 110% (2009) Gross secondary enrolment ratio: 82% (2009) Gross tertiary enrolment ratio: 7% (2006)</p>
<small>Country context data were obtained from a variety of sources: CIA (2012), UNAIDS (2011), UNDP (2011), UNESCO (2011).</small>	

Since its independence in 1966, the economy of Botswana has maintained one of the highest growth rates in the world. Despite a drop in growth below 5 per cent in the 2007–2008 financial year and subsequently a sharp negative shift in 2009, the country has one of the most stable growth rates in the region, although the 2009 economic downturn witnessed a near 30 per cent fall in overall industry output.

Through fiscal discipline and proficient management, Botswana has transformed itself from one of the poorest countries in the world to a middle-income country with an estimated per capita GDP of \$16 200 in 2011 (CIA 2012). Two major investment services rank Botswana as the best credit risk in Africa. Diamond mining has fuelled much of the expansion and currently accounts for more than one third of GDP (accounting for between 70 and 80 per cent of export earnings, and half of the government's revenues). Botswana's heavy reliance on a single luxury export was a critical factor in the sharp economic contraction of 2009. Tourism, financial services, subsistence farming and animal husbandry are emerging as key sectors.

In spite of the significant economic growth, a more holistic picture of Botswana reveals a country faced with numerous social challenges. Botswana was ranked 118 out of 187 countries in the 2011 human development index (HDI). According to the African Development Bank (ADB 2009), Botswana experienced a drop in HDI ranking in recent years, and this is closely linked to the high HIV prevalence in the country (the second highest in the world). Besides the high HIV/AIDS prevalence, Botswana faces other major social challenges, including high poverty rates, inequality and unemployment. The high unemployment rate largely reflects the narrow base of an economy dominated by the mining sector which has only limited linkages with other activities.

Improved healthcare has impacted positively on the welfare of the Botswana population. Both infant mortality rates and the number of underweight children below the age of five dropped steadily between 1996 and 2008. The maternal mortality rate also declined substantially, from 326 deaths per 100 000 live births in 1991 to 198 in 2008. Botswana has consistently improved its health

service infrastructure and facilities, and has increased the employment of qualified physicians and other medical personnel. The health infrastructure network consists of 31 hospitals, 243 clinics and 340 health centres. By 2009, more than 95 per cent of the population had access to a health facility within a radius of eight kilometres. The proportion of the population with access to potable water and sanitation was 95.8 per cent (compared to 79.8 per cent in 2007), with the prospect of further improvement following continued investment in social services (BFHS 2007).

Botswana enjoys a stable political environment, based on a representative parliamentary system. The president is head of both state and government. Botswana is a multi-party constitutional democracy where elections since independence in 1966 have been freely and fairly contested and held on schedule. The country has an Independent Electoral Commission whose mission is to facilitate the formation of democratically elected governments by providing transparent, free and fair elections in accordance with the established legal framework in Botswana and with internationally accepted standards and principles.

Higher education landscape

This section highlights the key initiatives and policies that have shaped the higher education landscape in Botswana since independence.

Brief historical overview of higher education

Higher education in Botswana began in 1964 with the establishment of the regional University of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland, subsequently renamed University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (UBLS), with its campus in Roma, Lesotho. Following the breakup of UBLS in 1975, Botswana and Swaziland established the University of Botswana and Swaziland (UBS), comprising the University College in Gaborone (specialising in economics, social studies and natural science) and the University College in Kwaluseni (which offered law).

Co-operation between the two countries and their colleges remained high with a free interchange of students and a common vision for tertiary education which, at the time, was seen as playing an increasingly important role in national development, not only by providing the necessary skilled human resources, but also by using the university as a focus for academic and cultural activities. At the same time, both colleges concentrated on developing their infrastructural and academic resources. In 1982, UBS was dissolved and separate universities were established in each country: the University of Botswana, and the University of Swaziland. After the split, co-operation remained high with student exchanges and special consultative mechanisms established between the two institutions.

In 1990, a major review was undertaken of the organisation, management and structure of the University of Botswana (UB). This led to considerable changes in governance, starting with the creation of new faculties of business, engineering and technology, and subsequently a school of graduate studies, bringing the total number of faculties to eight. The Botswana College of Agriculture (BCA), which awards degrees through UB, functions as an autonomous ninth faculty. The Okavango Research Institute (formerly the Harry Oppenheimer Okavango Research Centre, established in 1994) attracts post-doctoral researchers from different parts of the world. The institute offers excellent research facilities.

National higher education policy context

Botswana's higher education system is highly centralised and faces significant co-ordination challenges. There is no ministry of higher or tertiary education, nor does the Ministry of Education and Skills and Development have a higher education desk (although there is talk of plans to set up a higher education desk within the ministry in the near future). Currently, public higher education institutions are the responsibility of different ministries and departments of government, while private institutions run independently of government control, except for the oversight role relating to ensuring academic quality and curriculum development under the Tertiary Education Council (TEC). Concerns about programme quality and poor regularity framework were raised in the Report of the National Commission on Education of 1993, which recommended the setting up of the TEC to formulate policy and co-ordinate tertiary education provision. The fragmented tertiary education provisions in Botswana have resulted in major inequalities and uneven development of institutions.

Some institutions are well governed, well resourced and have good quality facilities and programmes, while others are underdeveloped, poorly governed and managed. They lack well-trained staff, facilities are inadequate and poorly maintained and the staff lack opportunities for further development. Only degree-awarding public institutions and a few diploma-awarding institutions (such as institutes of health sciences and some colleges of education) seem to enjoy a resource environment suitable for teaching, learning and research at tertiary level. A significant number of public and private institutions do not have resources to match their level and description.

Besides the TEC, there are a number of bodies within the education and training sector that have a separate responsibility for quality assurance and academic standards. These include the Botswana Training Authority, the Botswana Examination Council, the Quality Assurance and Assessment Unit within the Ministry of Education, the Nursing Council, the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants and the Association of Chartered Accountants. In 2002 the TEC developed a draft policy for tertiary education in Botswana, which proposed a set of regulations for the registration of public and private tertiary education institutions operating in Botswana. By the end of 2006 the TEC had registered 18 of the estimated 30 public and private tertiary institutions operating in the country at the time. Other activities of the council have included the formulation of a funding strategy and allocation formula, both of which are expected to change the current management and funding regimes for tertiary education in Botswana.

In 2006 the Ministry of Education set up a consultancy to formulate the development of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The report of the consultancy came up with the proposal to establish a National Credit and Qualifications Framework (NCQF) with ten levels, beginning from pre-school to a doctoral qualification. The ministry is currently designing the structure and location of the NCQF. It is clear even at this early stage of their operations that both the TEC and the NCQF will have transformative effects on the tertiary education landscape in Botswana, but it is too early to tell the real impact of these changes. To this point, the TEC's registration of institutions, especially private tertiary institutions, seems to have already opened the door for the highly desired but long denied government sponsorship of students to these institutions. It has also created a greater awareness of the need to pay attention to quality assurance and academic standards in curriculum development and resource allocation before new programmes can be approved.

Size and shape of higher education

Number of public higher education providers

Botswana's tertiary education system has two major public universities: the University of Botswana (UB) and the newly established Botswana International University of Science and Technology (BIUST) which opened its doors to students in March 2011. There are 23 publicly-funded technical colleges. Colleges offering four-year degrees, masters degrees and professional qualifications include the Botswana Accountancy College (BAC) and the Botswana College of Agriculture (BCA); colleges of education offer a three-year diploma; vocational schools (known as brigades) offer certificate or diploma courses; technical colleges offer advanced certificates and diplomas in technical fields; and institutes for health sciences offer health-related non-degree qualifications. There is also training provided by department-based colleges including the Police College, the Military School, the Roads Training Centre, and the Department of Environmental, Wildlife and Tourism Institute. Most public institutions are generally focused on meeting the human resource needs of the public sector, a focus that has naturally tended to limit the institutions' external outlook. The University of Botswana, in contrast, strives to be a regional and global university of international repute.

Private higher education providers

Botswana has seven private higher education providers that enrol about 41 per cent of the country's registered higher education students. A 2008 White Paper on Higher Education envisages increasing the gross enrolment ratio (GER) to 17 per cent by 2016, and then to 25 per cent by 2026. Botswana sees private universities as playing a key role in this expansion. Private colleges such as Limkokwing University of Creative Technologies (a branch campus of a Malaysian university), the National Institute for Information Technology (a franchise of the Asian IT training giants), ABM University College and Ba Isago University College provide niche programmes in emerging skill

needs such as ICT and business administration. These institutions are for-profit and tend to be either branch campuses or partners of foreign universities.

An interesting aspect of private higher education provision in Botswana is the joint public-private collaboration in which the government subsidises private tertiary education. In addition, the government pays for students' tuition costs at private tertiary institutions. Providing post-secondary education in Botswana has been the exclusive responsibility of government for many years. These recently-established private institutions have been more responsive to market demand and when particular employers have needed certain types of skills, they have been able to respond faster than public institutions, including the University of Botswana.

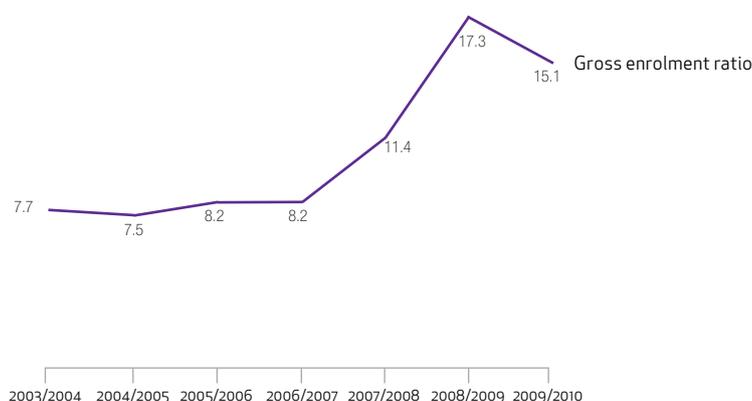
Demand for higher education

The growth in the number of tertiary education institutions has had a positive impact on access to education opportunities and also benefits the economy. In the last two academic years (2008/2009 and 2009/2010) the number of people aged between 18 and 24 accessing higher education within Botswana almost doubled. However, the economic recession, which saw some cuts in the government student sponsorship budget, had an immediate negative impact on enrolment. Mass schooling has led to a 100 per cent transition from primary to junior secondary education, and a 67 per cent transition from junior to senior secondary level, with a projected increase to 83 per cent by 2009 and 100 per cent by 2015 (Government of Botswana 2008). Access to basic ten-year education (i.e. up to junior secondary school) is universal. Such a massive expansion has implications for higher education demand.

Figure 1 below gives a summary of gross enrolments, highlighting growth in the level of participation in higher education in Botswana over a seven-year period. Between 2003 and 2009, the participation rate increased by 7.4 per cent. Presently, the higher education participation rate is 15.1 per cent. About 48 per cent of these students are registered with universities, as more than half are in colleges and other tertiary institutions (Bailey, Cloete and Pillay 2011). When this is viewed in relation to the size of the school age population, it can be seen that only a small proportion of school students make the transition to higher education. The situation has been exacerbated by the decline in funding for students and increasing demand for higher education (Siphambe 2010).

At the University of Botswana, a total of 7 184 applications were received for undergraduate study in 2009/2010, a decrease from 2008/2009 by 1 195. Of the applicants, only 5 006 were admitted. This decrease is partly due to the Ministry of Education Skills and Development application cut-off points for sponsorship, and a quota system for public institutions. Regarding graduate programmes, the university research strategy commits UB to significantly increase MPhil and PhD enrolments in the next two strategic planning periods to 2021. From its very modest beginnings in 1996, the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) has co-ordinated graduate programmes at UB to ensure that the first PhD research student graduated in 1998/1999. This has been followed by about 20 MPhil and 28 PhD qualifications awarded so far.

Figure 1: Tertiary education gross enrolment rates (%)* 2003/2004 to 2009/2010



Source: TEC Annual report (2009/10)

*The gross enrolment ratio is the total enrolment at a given educational level, regardless of age, divided by the population aged 18-24, multiplied by 100

Student profile

For this study, only students from the University of Botswana are represented due to the unavailability of data from BIUST (2009/2010 enrolment data were not available owing to its recent establishment). UB had 14 180 contact students and 505 distance students enrolled in 2009/2010. Full-time students numbered 11 566 and part-time students 2 614. Looking at the nationality of the student body, 13 837 were Botswana citizens and 309 from other SADC countries, while 539 students were enrolled from non-SADC countries. The largest proportion of students are enrolled in the humanities and social sciences (30 per cent), followed by science, engineering and technology, and business management and law (both 17 per cent). The number of female and male students per major field of study is shown in the figure below. In total, male students account for 52 per cent of the student population.

Enrolment patterns at national level

The 2009/2010 academic year showed a general decline in tertiary enrolments compared to the previous year. The total enrolment dropped from 47 889 in 2008/2009 to 42 366 in 2009/2010. In percentage terms, this was a decrease in GER from 17.3 per cent in 2008/2009 to 15.1 per cent in 2009/2010. The main reason for this significant drop in enrolments was a substantial cut in government scholarships for tertiary students. The number of students sponsored in both public and private tertiary institutions declined due to the budget cut, but the cut in numbers was more pronounced in the private institutions. Private enrolment declined from 45 per cent of the total enrolment in 2008/2009 to 41 per cent in 2009/2010. In 2009/2010 there were 24 996 students enrolled in public tertiary institutions, constituting 59 per cent of the student population, while 17 370 students (41 per cent) were enrolled in private institutions (Figure 3). The combined private tertiary education enrolment was followed by UB with 34 per cent, while other publicly funded tertiary education providers accounted for only 25 per cent (with the Botswana Wildlife Institute enrolling the smallest number of students).

During the 2009/2010 academic year, 1 499 students were enrolled in graduate programmes: 145 for a postgraduate diploma, 1 227 for masters and 127 for MPhil or PhD qualifications. The School of Graduate Studies at UB projected its growth rates as follows: the MPhil programme enrolment will grow on average by 7 per cent and PhD enrolments by 18 per cent annually over the next seven years.

Figure 2: Number of students per major field of study and gender

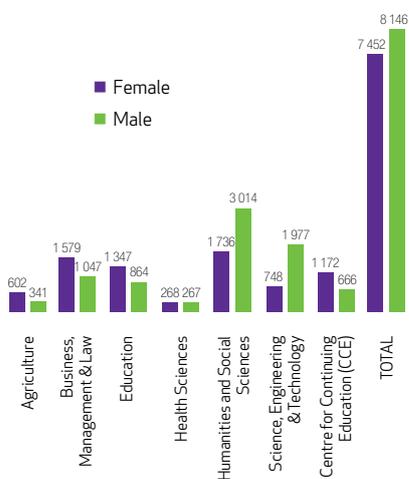
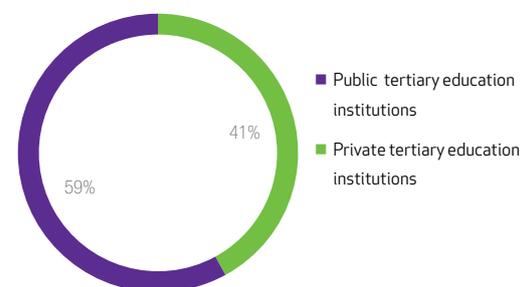


Figure 3: Public and private tertiary education institution national enrolment share 2009/10



Source: TEC Annual Report (2009/2010)

Staff profile

In the 2009/2010 academic year, 514 of the academic and research staff employed at UB were Botswana citizens, 102 were citizens of other SADC countries, and 190 were from non-SADC countries. For the same year, the universities employed 1 465 management and administrative staff of whom 1 400 were Botswana citizens, 25 from other SADC countries, and 40 were citizens from non SADC countries. The distribution of staff according to faculty and gender is shown in the full data profile available on the SARUA website at www.sarua.org. There were no statistics to show the breakdown of academic and research staff according to other variables such as highest qualifications and gender. This was also lacking for management or administrative staff members by major field of study. These data are yet to be compiled by the institutions. The University of Botswana in particular has an ongoing human resource data cleaning exercise as part of the enterprise resource planning (ERP) software implementation programme.

Identified areas for expansion

Attrition in higher education in Botswana is growing, due to increasingly attractive packages in the region. Domestic, regional and global demands for personnel in areas such as law, management, engineering and health have ensured major recruitment and retention challenges. At the national level there is also major competition with the private and public sector for skills in these and related disciplines.

National higher education outputs and alignment with policy imperatives

Graduate patterns

Graduate statistics show a decrease in the number of graduates in 2010 compared to 2009. In 2009 about 3 172 students were awarded degrees, including ten PhDs and 191 masters (the rest being bachelors degrees, diplomas and certificates). In 2010 a total of 2 898 graduated from the University of Botswana while 216 graduated from the Botswana College of Agriculture. Of the 2 071 degrees awarded, eight were PhDs, 190 were masters, and the remaining 1 846 were bachelors degrees. About 120 students were awarded postgraduate diplomas in education (PGDE), while 645 and 64 students graduated with diplomas and certificates respectively from diverse fields. In the same year, the Botswana College of Agriculture produced 169 bachelors degrees and 47 higher diplomas. Graduation data at UB is processed manually outside the system, so it is very difficult to analyse the data with regard to aspects such as age or gender. This is expected to change with the implementation of the ERP in 2012. The gender distribution of graduates is expected to mirror the 55 per cent female enrolment proportions.

Research output

Alongside the steady growth of its primary teaching mission which has produced much of the needed human capital skills, UB has developed a strategy to become a leading academic centre of excellence in Africa and the world. The aim of the university research strategy is to elaborate the meaning of increased research-intensiveness in order to enhance academic output. There are national and international drivers behind the need for the University of Botswana to transform its research performance. At national level, the draft Policy on Tertiary Education (Government of Botswana 2008) clearly sets the expectation that the university must contribute more significantly to the new national research and innovation system, which is critical for the next stage of Botswana's development. The vigorous implementation of the university research strategy during 2009/2010 has manifested itself in the form of increased research activity across a number of fronts. Overall, the dominant research output type is the peer-reviewed journal article, followed by refereed conference papers and peer-reviewed book chapters (as seen in Table 1). Peer-reviewed books and non-peer-reviewed journals make up the next group of sizeable contributions. The majority of the researchers publish in peer-reviewed journals.

Table 1: Higher education knowledge outputs in Botswana

Category of research output	2008	2009	2010
Peer-reviewed journal articles	306	338	347
Peer-reviewed books	22	23	28
Peer-reviewed book chapters	83	97	102
Patents	0	0	0
Other: refereed conference papers	131	98	178
Other: non-peer-reviewed journals	8	16	28

Sources: SARUA university questionnaires (2011)

Currently the University of Botswana and the Botswana College of Agriculture are the two main institutions that account for significant research output and graduate training. For UB, much of the research takes place within faculties. However, the university has set up a number of thematic multi-disciplinary research centres and institutes that are aimed at increasing research output. These include the Okavango Research Institute, which specialises in natural resource management, and the UB Centre for the Study of HIV and AIDS (established in November 2006). Other significant research centres are the UB International Tourism Research Centre, the Centre for Strategic Studies (housed in the UB Department of Political and Administrative Studies), and the Centre for Scientific Research, Indigenous Knowledge and Innovation, tasked with developing indigenous knowledge systems and producing scientists who recognise the important role of the resource-rich but economically disadvantaged communities and their indigenous knowledge.

Quality assurance

Internal quality assurance processes are in place at UB and a specific budget is set aside to facilitate these processes. The quality assurance framework includes teaching, research and community service activities, as well as student performance, administrative processes, entrepreneurial activities and external relations. The national quality assurance framework prescribes quality assurance procedures to be adhered to. UB is required to report to the national authorities on quality assurance issues.

UB takes part in mandatory peer review quality assessments. There are mechanisms in place to provide ongoing staff development, training and orientation to newly-appointed staff members. There are also mandatory processes in place for evaluating the performance of individual teaching staff. UB regularly conducts internal evaluations of its academic programmes. Some student learning services (libraries, advice centres, student orientation etc.) and all research activities are evaluated. The intense internal moderation of examination and marking for each course has quality dividends that outweigh the high cost of the process. Student feedback is actively sought on academic issues, governance and student services. Formal student satisfaction surveys are conducted across these three areas in order to improve quality.

Student support services include accommodation, sports facilities, information on study opportunities in other institutions, social and cultural activities, support for international student health and wellness, disability and catering services. Though they cannot accommodate the increasing student numbers, the services have been rated as reasonable in quality and capacity, except sports facilities, which are rated as of good quality. Academic orientation, academic support, career guidance, psychological counselling, protection and domestic services, health facilities, and residence programmes (living, learning community programmes) are available and sufficient to accommodate student numbers. These services are either rated at a reasonable or good level. The university is currently constructing a recreational centre to be used by students and staff.

The university has 1 600 computers available for students to use, making a student-to-computer ratio of 10:1. The computers available to students are complemented by student personal laptops which connect to a campus-wide wireless network at no charge. Academic and administrative staff are provided with Internet access. The total bandwidth (uplink and downlink) available to UB is >100 MBps. It was reported that digital library materials and sporting facilities are available and

sufficient to accommodate the numbers of students that need to use them. Science and computer laboratories, a library, lecturing, tutorials and small group learning venues, office space, student recreational areas and student accommodation are available, but cannot accommodate the numbers of students.

Recent developments and debates in higher education

During 2009/2010 one of the TEC's foci was on the implementation of the tertiary education policy (TEP) and support towards establishing the Human Resource Development Advisory Council. The approved first phase of the implementation (known as the founding development phase) consists of four main activities:

1. Developing new legislation to govern tertiary education: The TEC decided that the first step in implementing the policy was to design a new legal instrument. Hence, the need for generic legislation to synchronise all existing laws governing the establishing of universities and other public tertiary institutions, including private institutions. These included regulatory bodies such as TEC and BOTA (Botswana Training Authority), as well as other laws that may hinder the comprehensive integrated implementation of the TEP.
2. Developing a change management strategy: The changes envisaged under the TEP were far-reaching. With the need to change the modus operandi of institutions and government, TEC perceived the need to develop a change management strategy which will assist in making the change process less disruptive, uniformly understood and positively received.
3. Formulating a communication strategy: For the proposed changes to take place smoothly, the TEC identified a critical need for adequate communication between stakeholders and institutions. This will ensure that everyone is properly informed about the contents of the policy and the expected role of each stakeholder in its implementation.
4. Establishing stakeholders' task working teams on different aspects of the policy: The TEC, working with the Ministry of Education and Skills Development, established working teams to develop detailed implementation programmes for each aspect of the policy. There is an over-arching policy implementing and co-ordinating task team or committee, which receives reports from four sub-teams:
 - task team on rationalisation and merger of BOTA and TEC;
 - task team on establishing autonomy of colleges and institutes of health sciences;
 - task team to define the role of private tertiary education institutions;
 - task team on rationalisation of programmes at university-level institutions.

Besides these four areas, the first phase involves the establishment of a tertiary education management information system (TEMIS). This database and information management system is critical for the successful implementation of several projects, including the funding model, design of institutional plans, monitoring and evaluation frameworks, accreditation and registration of institutions and projections of their enrolments. During 2009/2010 a consultant was appointed to implement phase one of TEMIS, which mainly involves a situational analysis and definition of the requirements of the database.

Another recent development is the approval of the human resource development strategy (HRDS). The HRDS was approved during the 2008/2009 financial year. During 2009/2010 the TEC set up the transitional Human Resource Development Advisory Council (HRDAC). The HRDAC and HRDS were officially launched in November 2009. A joint secretariat, comprising staff endorsed by BOTA and TEC, was set up and operates relatively autonomously from both organisations. The HRDAC also started the process of the merger of BOTA and TEC and the Manpower Unit of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning into a new Human Resource Development Council.

Regionalisation

Higher education in Botswana at both national and institutional level has significantly embraced the regionalisation agenda championed by the SADC Protocol on Higher Education and Training. A strong emphasis on regional collaboration and integration exists within Botswana institutions. The SADC protocol has been considered in national educational planning, as reflected in fees, shared resources and partnerships. The development of an education hub seeks to address domestic and regional higher education imperatives. This is also reflected in the educational plan, which includes the development of a national qualification framework, informed by existing regional frameworks, and is the basis of Botswana's input into the development of SADC's long-awaited regional qualification framework. This regional framework is intended to facilitate student mobility among SADC countries and the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Education and Training. At a more practical level, Botswana students are encouraged to study at universities located in other SADC member states if a course is not available locally. This is designed to widen the skills capacity within the country and to use the opportunities created by regional associations.

The university has set a target that 10 per cent of the student body should be made up of international students by the end of the National Development Plan (NDP10). Progress is being made towards attaining that goal as 848 (6 per cent) of the student population in 2009/2010 were international students, of which more than a third were from other SADC countries. Interestingly, the number of students from the rest of the world outnumbers those from within SADC. This supports arguments by Molutsi and Kobedi (2008) as they observe that 'foreign students do not seem to be a significant factor in the internationalisation of tertiary education in Botswana'.

SADC has established regional training and research centres, such as the Centre for specialisation in Public Administration and Management at the University of Botswana (SADC 2008). Public universities in Botswana also form part of the Southern Africa Regional Universities Association (SARUA), which is a tool for universities in the SADC region to enhance collaboration, partnership and integration. The University of Botswana reports that collaboration with other higher education institutions in the SADC region is valued and given high priority by management and senior academic staff.

The University of Botswana's vision and its value of internationalisation make it imperative that students and staff internationalise in all their intellectual endeavours. Enrolment of students from the SADC region is valued and given high priority by management. Consequently UB has begun student recruitment in the region to significantly increase the number of students from SADC. This strategy accounts for the increase in foreign student enrolment over the past five years. In line with this strategy, UB has established an Office of International Education and Partnerships to offer various kinds of support services to international students and staff including:

- academic advice for students, assistance with visas, orientation and other welfare issues;
- enhancing the internationalisation of all curricula by augmenting international and comparative subject matter in both general education and disciplinary courses; and
- the provision of internships for UB students outside Botswana.

Enabling and hindering influences on regionalisation

Most of Botswana's potential to draw regional and global students comes from its reputation as a politically stable and economically growing country in Africa. Standardisation of entrance requirements, harmonisation of academic years, ease of credit transfer, provision of in-state tuition fee rates to students from other SADC countries, the establishment of joint academic programmes, and the easing of immigration formalities, are some of the mechanisms that the organisation recommended to facilitate the mobility of students (and of academic staff). UB is one of the better-resourced and staffed institutions on the African continent.

Most of the challenges faced by education and training in the sub-region are common to all countries. Challenges related to regionalisation include inadequate education and training facilities and equipment, a shortage of teaching and learning materials, lack of comparable standards and qualifications across all training institutions and countries, limited comparability of the educational and training systems of member states, and the existence of barriers to access these systems. These

factors hinder the mobility of students and staff and the mutual recognition of qualifications. Financial and human resource limitations that hinder the financing of structures to drive regionalisation seem to be central to the under-development of linkages. Universities are also not yet accustomed to direct engagement without a third party (usually from the developed world).

Conclusions

This chapter has presented and reflected on key aspects of the Botswana higher education landscape. The information highlights policy directions, areas of achievement, challenges faced and opportunities for growth in the higher education sector. While data management has improved significantly, much still needs to be done in this area to be able to accurately assess progress in the various sectors. Accurate data remain important in this endeavour.

From a policy standpoint, a number of key policy frameworks are in progress, aimed at reforming the sector to enhance efficiency and quality and to ensure relevance of skills to national development. Examples of these policies are the National Credit and Qualification Framework (which has to be aligned to the regional framework), the Tertiary Education Policy and the Human Resource Development Strategy. Amid cuts in government funding, enrolments at local institutions and transition rates into higher education have increased significantly. This is mainly due to deliberate policy and planning that has resulted in an increase in the number of public institutions, while growing the capacity of existing ones, as well as increasing the number of private institutions.

The major constraints identified are in the areas of quality assurance and limited growth at the postgraduate level, especially in disciplines that are key drivers of modern economies, such as engineering and technology, applied sciences, health and business. Higher education institutions also face staffing challenges in professions such as medicine and health sciences, law, business, psychology and natural sciences. These challenges range from inability to attract highly qualified and experienced staff to mobility of senior academics. There seems to be increased movement of senior academics to regional universities and the private sector, which suggests a need for better staff recruitment and retention strategies at major public institutions, including UB. Overall, research output remains low, albeit with some improvements. This is against the backdrop of challenges emanating from a lack of a national research funding strategy as well as intra-institutional constraints and postgraduate enrolments. The ongoing discussion on a national funding strategy is expected to bring about the much-needed change.

While regional and international co-operation remains low or negligible across small public and private institutions, the University of Botswana has experienced significant growth in this area, mostly because of a deliberate policy and plan. This has generated significant value, as evidenced by the number and quality of bilateral and multilateral projects around student and staff exchanges and research collaboration.