2

Decentralisation in Botswana

Summary

This chapter races the trajectory of decentralisation implementation in Botswana. It covers the circumstances that led to the adoption of decentralisation; the type of decentralisation being pursued; the main area(s) of focus; achievements so far; and the challenges and suggestions for improvement. In writing the chapter, three data-collection methods were adopted: (a) an analysis of the country report submitted by the Ministry of Local Government (MLG) to the Commonwealth Secretariat; (b) a two-week rapid field survey conducted in Botswana in October 2009 by a consultant hired by the Commonwealth Secretariat to validate the country report; and (c) a regional validation workshop organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat in Gaborone during which comments were solicited from government institutions on the draft country report. The final draft report was further reviewed by the MLG and Office of the President.

This chapter therefore expresses the views of a number of stakeholders who contributed towards writing it. The chapter is divided into six sections. The first section provides a short introduction of Botswana and a detailed explanation of the methodology adopted in compiling the chapter. Section two provides the socio-cultural, political, economic and historical context under which decentralisation should be understood in Botswana while sections three and four address decentralisation in practice by analysing local councils and the other local institutions involved. In section five, the chapter assesses the contribution of decentralisation to two key objectives: service provision and empowerment of local institutions for long-term growth and sustainability, while section six highlights the lessons, challenges and suggestions for improvements.

Botswana adopted a liberal democratic system of government at independence in 1966. Since then successive development plans and policies have embraced decentralisation although no official decentralisation policy was adopted. The Government of Botswana (GoB) is persuaded, especially by the arguments of efficiency in delivery of services and democracy, that decentralisation is a valuable policy tool which should be considered as a means to contribute to a desired goal: to improve service delivery to the people wherever they live (urban, small towns, villages, etc.). As a means, decentralisation is to contribute to development by empowering the people and institutions at every level of society including public, private and civic institutions; increasing

people's participation in decision-making; assisting in developing people's capacities; and enhancing government's responsiveness, transparency and accountability.

Following this goal, the GoB has used decentralisation in two ways:

- To develop a local government system that consists of tribal administration, district administration, land boards, and local councils.
- To transfer some of the service delivery responsibilities of sector ministries to field agencies in the districts.

The key strategy that Botswana has pursued in the implementation of her decentralisation is creating a reasonable balance of power, resources and responsibilities between the centre and four local institutions that constitute local government in the country.

Reflecting on the land size and small population, the historical circumstances under which Botswana was established, the influence of chieftaincy in local affairs, the developmental model that the state adopted, the technocratic approach to planning for local and national development, initial limited human and financial resources, and the quest for equitable distribution of national resources across all districts and communities, it is evident that decentralisation has been skewed towards a system of deconcentration.

In summarising the chapter, two major findings are highlighted: First, decentralisation has made a lot of progress as far as delivery of services is concerned. The people of Botswana, referred to as Batswana, enjoy a very high standard of services provision in education, health, water and sanitation, more than most citizens in other African countries. The local councils have managed to effectively deliver basic services that are part of their responsibilities despite the challenges that exist. The presence of deconcentrated sectoral agencies and departments, each with their own budget and employees, and the occasional direct implementation of projects at the local level by sectoral ministries, ensures that if one or more local institutions failed to function the other would somehow deliver, thereby ensuring not only expansion of services provision but also continuous delivery. Nevertheless the costs of providing services need to be analysed carefully in Botswana because the system appears to be too expensive to be adopted by any country that faces serious financial constraints.

Despite initial commitment to local governance resulting in the creation of local councils, full decentralisation has not been achieved. While the current trend in Africa and the wider world is towards democratic decentralisation or devolution, the present set-up of Botswana has been skewed towards a system of deconcentration. Many stakeholders in Botswana would like to see an empowered local council system.

To conclude, decentralisation in Botswana is not a myth. Since independence the country has seen some of the central government powers, resources and responsibilities

being transferred to local institutions and authorities. However in an attempt to keep a reasonable balance between the centre and the local, the trend has favoured deconcentration rather than devolution. As a result, decentralisation is seen in terms of service delivery but there are other equally important goals of decentralisation that need to be pursued. One of them is empowering local institutions to take control of the processes that deliver the services.

2.1 Introduction

Botswana is a landlocked, semi-arid country with an estimated 2009 population of 1,950,000. The country covers an area of 582,000 km^2, about the same size as Kenya or France. Geographically, the country is flat and up to 70 per cent of it is covered by the Kalahari Desert (UNDESA, 2009). While there are many tribes (Bangwato, Batawana, Bakgatla, Bakwena, Bangwaketse, Barolong, Batlokwa, Balete, etc.), tribal loyalty does not breed divisiveness as it does in many African countries because there is a high degree of ethnic and linguistic homogeneity. Much of the population is concentrated within a 100km-wide corridor on the eastern side of the country along the Zimbabwe–South Africa railway line, where the desert gives way to more fertile land. In 1971, only 9.1 per cent of the country's population was urbanised but by 2001, 54.2 per cent of the population was living in urban areas.

The country adopted a liberal democratic system of government at independence in 1966. Since then successive development plans and policies have embraced decentralisation. The Government of Botswana (GoB) is persuaded, especially by the arguments of efficiency and democracy, that decentralisation is a valuable policy tool which should be considered as a means to contribute to desired goals. Decentralisation contributes to development by:

> Empowering the people and institutions at every level of society including public, private and civic institutions; improving access to basic services; increasing people's participation in decision-making; assisting in developing people's capacities; and enhancing government's responsiveness, transparency and accountability. (Ministry of Local Government, 2008: 1).

The GoB's main goal in pursuing decentralisation is to improve service delivery to people wherever they live (urban, small towns, villages, etc.). In pursuit of this goal, the GoB has used decentralisation in two ways:

- to develop a local government system that consists of tribal administration, district administration, land boards and local councils; and
- to deconcentrate some of the service-delivery responsibilities of sector ministries to field agencies in the districts to be co-ordinated by district administration.

In recent times, the GoB has started to decentralise some of the state's responsibilities to markets through privatisation and corporatisation. The government's commitment to decentralisation and privatisation is clear in the National Vision 2016 and more particularly in the institutionalisation of National Development Plans (NDPs). This was a major policy shift from the state, which since independence had been stably democratic but nevertheless bore some of the features of a centralised system. The key issues in the country's quest to further decentralise were efficient and effective service delivery, and resource availability and management between the government and the markets.

Considering that rather than a 'one size fits all' design, decentralisation should be sensitive to the institutional context of a country, how have these four parallel systems been influenced by the historical, socio-cultural, economic, and political set-up of Botswana? What are the gaps between policy intentions (as stated in the statute books) and actual practice? What are the consequences of these gaps for the equity and quality of local governance and service delivery? Who are the protagonists of decentralisation reforms in the country? What are their interests? How have they pushed through their interests? How have various actors and institutions (formal, informal, public, private, and civil society) reacted? Is the government serious about its declared intentions regarding decentralisation? How are power and resources shared between central government and local institutions? What is the perception of decentralisation by politicians? These are the questions that this chapter will try to answer.

2.1.1 Sources of data and data-collection methods

The research collected data that illuminates the circumstances that led to the adoption of decentralisation; the type of decentralisation being pursued; the main area(s) of focus; achievements so far; and the challenges and suggestions for improvement. The study adopted four methods of data collection. The first was based on the country report that the Botswana Ministry of Local Government submitted to the Commonwealth Secretariat for validation. The report did not provide all the information and analysis required for a proper assessment of some key issues in decentralisation (see section 1.3). This led to a second phase of data gathering. This involved a two-week rapid field survey conducted by a consultant hired by the Commonwealth Secretariat. With the support of the Public Services Reform Unit at the Office of the President, the consultant conducted a rapid field survey to solicit information from key stakeholders. Among them were senior government officials in the sectoral ministries, national and local politicians, leaders of civil society organisations, donor agencies, traditional authorities, Land Boards, district commissioners and academics (see Table 1.1 in chapter 1).

Apart from the semi-structured interviews carried out with key people, the study also incorporated a range of data collection techniques including: document reviews,

team discussions, and direct observations. Given time constraints, the team visited a few districts, sub-districts, and towns including Gaborone, Goodhope, Molepolole, Kgalagadi, Tsabong, Tlokweng, etc. The third data-collection method was a regional validation workshop in Gaborone organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat. During the workshop country representatives made a number of comments on the draft country report submitted by the consultant. The comments were incorporated into the final draft papers and sent back to GoB for final validation and ownership.

The chapter is divided into six sections including this introduction. Section two provides socio-cultural, political, economic and historical context under which decentralisation should be understood in Botswana while sections three and four discuss decentralisation in practice by analysing local councils and other local institutions involved in decentralisation. In section five, the chapter assesses the contribution of decentralisation in two key objectives: service provision and empowerment of local institutions for long-term growth and sustainability. Section six highlights the challenges and lessons to be learned and suggestions on some ways to improve implementation.

2.2 Decentralisation in the Botswana Context

2.2.1 Decentralisation before and during British Protectorate rule

Prior to the country becoming a British protectorate, Batswana (a term used to refer to the people of Botswana) lived as farmers under tribal rule. Each tribe owned a given piece of land. The tribal authorities made the law and acted as judges, allocated land, controlled the cycle of agriculture, were responsible for public works using the labour of regiments, and were in charge of trade and defence, etc. The villagers were divided into several wards and each was headed by a headman (Sharma, 2000). However hostilities broke out between Batswana traditional rulers and Boers settlers from the Transkaal (present South Africa). The traditional authorities asked for British protection not only for their own security but also to preserve the integrity and autonomy of their polities and to avoid being integrated into the Union of South Africa.

In 1885, the British government put Botswana under her protection. During the early part of the protectorate period, the British colonial government exercised minimal control over local administration at the tribal level. The tribal authorities were allowed maximum independence in their tribal area to maintain the rule of law and order. Between the years 1934 and 1943, a series of administrative proclamations (including the Native Administration Proclamation of 1934, Native Tribunal Proclamation of 1934, and Treasury Proclamation of 1938) were announced that broadened the functions of tribal authorities by granting them power to make rules concerning law and order and provide local services, as well as levy fees for such services.

During 1957–1966, the need to reform state–local relations was discussed and an attempt was made to create local councils to 'advise' tribal authorities. The Government White Paper No.21/1964 stated:

> 'It is essential that constitutional development at the centre should be balanced by the growth of democratic institutions throughout the country. Freedom and responsibility in thought and action must be stimulated at every level if they are to be understood and given effective expression. One of the best checks to any tendency to authoritarianism is a wide spread cultivation of these habits of mind and the readiness of people at every level of society to play a part in the conduct of local affairs.' (GoB, 1964).

During the constitutional debates that led up to independence, some of the traditional chiefs that took part in the discussions considered various options for Botswana, including a federal state system to enable them to continue to possess a degree of autonomy in their areas of control. A majority of the people, however, wanted a unified state, which led to Botswana becoming a unitary state at the time of independence in 1966. The leaders of the newly independent country faced the dilemma of how to restructure local institutions and authorities in such a way that traditional legitimacy represented by chieftaincy was not undermined while at the same time recognising the importance of expanding service delivery to the people.

2.2.2 Post-independent era

At independence, Botswana adopted four national principles: democracy, development, self-reliance and unity. As one of the most impoverished countries in Africa and with most of the population living in rural areas, Botswana depended heavily on agriculture as a source of livelihood. The cattle industry was the major contributor to gross domestic product (GDP). The government depended on foreign aid to finance most of its desperately needed social services and recurrent expenditure (Sharma, 2005a; GoB, 2003: 27). The government set off on a course to facilitate the attainment of its four principles by reforming its state and local governance institutions and relations, land administration and management and, among other approaches, by institutionalising its national development plans.

In reforming governance, roles of traditional authorities were reduced. Some of the functions of the chiefs that remained included the administration of justice under customary court and organisation of village assembly (*Kgotla*). Most of the functions and powers of tribal authorities were assumed by district councils. The government also enacted the Tribal Land Act and established Land Boards to administer all tribal lands, which cover about 71 per cent of Botswana's land. The Land Boards were initially administered by the chiefs. State lands, which comprise urban lands, national game and wildlife, mining areas, and forest reserves and which constitute about 23 per cent of the total land area, were set to be managed by the Ministry of Lands and Housing and the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism.

In 1969, the government appointed a study group to look into the organisational structures of local authorities – a term that was used to cover district councils, the chieftaincy system and district administrations. In addition to restructuring local authorities, the study recommended the establishment of District Development Committees (DDC). The release of the Government White Paper on Rural Development (GoB, 1973) and the administrative decision to create DDCs was coupled with the strengthening of councils as providers of essential services via delegation of responsibilities and vast increases in capital expenditure budgets. The district commissioner (DC), whose responsibility it then was to represent the central government at local levels, was empowered to co-ordinate the activities of the DDC and report to the MLG (Reilly, 1983).

From 1976 to 1980, attempts were made to revive decentralisation. A Local Government Structure Commission was established in 1979 and recommended the transfer of human, material and financial resources to local authorities to enable them to effectively discharge their responsibilities. In the early 1980s, with the diamond-mining boom, there was a need to improve the physical infrastructure of Botswana and to expand the economy. The additional functions were transferred to councils to implement huge infrastructure programmes. The National Development Plan (NDP) 7 (1991–1997) laid out its clear commitment to decentralisation, defining it as 'delegating greater responsibility for development planning, finance and implementation to the local authorities, while increasing their capacity to manage these responsibilities.' On the basis of this policy statement, the then Ministry of Local Government, Lands and Housing prepared a *Policy Paper and Action Plan on Decentralisation* in October 1993. The policy paper contained an action plan on fiscal and human resources administration. The former covered areas such as new revenue sources for local authorities, accounting and budgeting, while the latter included human resources development, delegation of powers to local authorities in the form of the transfer of control of personnel matters from the ministry.

A presidential task force was established in 1997 to develop a long-term vision for the country. The report outlined the vision of Botswana in a document entitled *Towards Prosperity for All* (also known as Vision 2016), with seven goals (pillars) to achieve by the end of 2016. As far as decentralisation was concerned, the fifth pillar of the vision envisages a Botswana that is 'an open, democratic and accountable nation'. The Botswana of the future will be a 'community-oriented democracy, with strong decentralised institutions' (Vision 2016, p,11). Since then all national policies and development plans in the country have maintained themes that gravitate around the ideas in the vision and especially the seven pillars. Given that there is no government policy on decentralisation, the government embraced decentralisation in its broad meaning and uses statutory instruments and administrative directives as its official policy framework, hence the recent endeavour to develop a comprehensive policy on decentralisation.

The financial support for implementing the vision and subsequent programmes was given a shot in the arm when Botswana's economy started to grow remarkably. By 1999, agriculture's share in the economy had fallen from 42.7 per cent in 1966 to 2.6 per cent with the mining sector (mainly the diamond industry) contributing over 33 per cent. GDP growth has averaged more than 6 per cent per annum over three decades, based largely on diamond and beef exports and tourism.

In 2000, Botswana and Malaysia were judged by UNDP to be the 'most' progressive countries in terms of human development since 1960 (UNDP, 2000). The country's economic growth rate has outpaced even those of the Asian Tigers, and the World Bank cites Botswana as one of the world's great development success stories (IMF, 2008). From being one of the poorest countries in the world at independence with a per capita income of the equivalent of US$70 (Republic of Botswana, 2001), today Botswana has a per capita income of about US$6000 (AfDB, 2009). It is classified by the World Bank as an 'upper middle income' country.

In 2001, a presidential commission was set up to review the effectiveness of the structure, organisation, roles and responsibilities of LG institutions at all levels in Botswana. Based on the findings, it was to make recommendations to establish a clear pattern of authority and functional responsibilities between central and local authorities (district councils, land boards and tribal administration) to improve efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery among other objectives. The government, via its *White Paper No.1* (GoB, 2003a), adopted some of the recommendations of the commission, including the formulation of a clear decentralisation policy to cover all sectors. Following the commission's report, a number of national documents have been prepared emphasising decentralisation. The National Development Plan 9 (2003/2009) included the need to formulate a comprehensive decentralisation policy and establish additional structures at the sub-district level. The implementation of these is ongoing, as evidenced by the establishment of Moshopa and Tonota Sub-Districts, as well as the upgrading of Chobe Sub-district Council to a fully-fledged Chobe District Council. The government is currently at the final stage of the development of a comprehensive decentralisation policy.

2.2.3 Structure of contemporary state administration

Botswana has one of the longest periods of stable multi-party democracy in Africa, anchored in regular elections that are held every five years. The country operates a parliamentary system of democracy where the leader (and presidential candidate) of the political party that win the most seats in parliament assumes office. The president then nominates a vice president, to be endorsed by parliament. In addition, the president appoints four additional members of parliament (MPs) and selects his ministers from among all the members of parliament. The president is head of the executive arm of government and presides over the cabinet. Since

independence in 1966, the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has governed the country without interruption. In 2004, the party won 44 out of 57 seats (77 per cent) while the other seven political parties won 13. In 2009, the BDP again won 45 out of 57 constituencies (79 per cent).

Table 2.1. Number of parliamentary seats controlled by political parties

Political party	*Parliamentary seats won in national elections*		
	1999	2004	2009
Ruling BDP	33	44	45
Combined opposition political parties	7	13	12
Total parliamentary seats	40	57	57
Voter turnout (%)	77.1	76.2	75.2

Source: National Electoral Commission http://www.iec.gov.bw

According to the Constitution of Botswana, Parliament is the supreme decision-making body. Alongside the National Assembly is the House of Chiefs (*Ntlo ya Dikgosi*), which consists of 35 traditional leaders. The *Ntlo ya Dikgosi* also reviews draft bills before they are laid before Parliament for consideration.

As a unitary state that operates a two-tier system of government, the central government forms the first tier and is headed by the president. There are 16 central government ministries[1] each headed by a minister. The ministers are responsible for leadership and policy direction of the ministries. The administrative heads of the ministries are called permanent secretaries (PS) and are appointed by the permanent secretary to the president, who is also the head of the public service. Each ministry is divided into several departments headed by directors. The second tier of government is local authorities, comprising district/urban councils, land boards, tribal administration, and the office of the district commissioner. In a recent development, the term 'local authority', as communicated by Presidential Directive (CAB 22/2005), is reserved only for councils. Land Boards, District Administration and Tribal Administration are referred to as local institutions.

There are also other institutions and organisations which have delegated legislative powers and functional authority in their areas of operation. These semi-autonomous institutions and organisations include the Botswana Housing Corporation (BHC), Botswana Power Corporation (BPC), Water Utilities Corporation (WUC), auditor and accountant generals, ombudsman, and many others managed through a board of directors. The structure of state administration is shown in Figure 2.1.

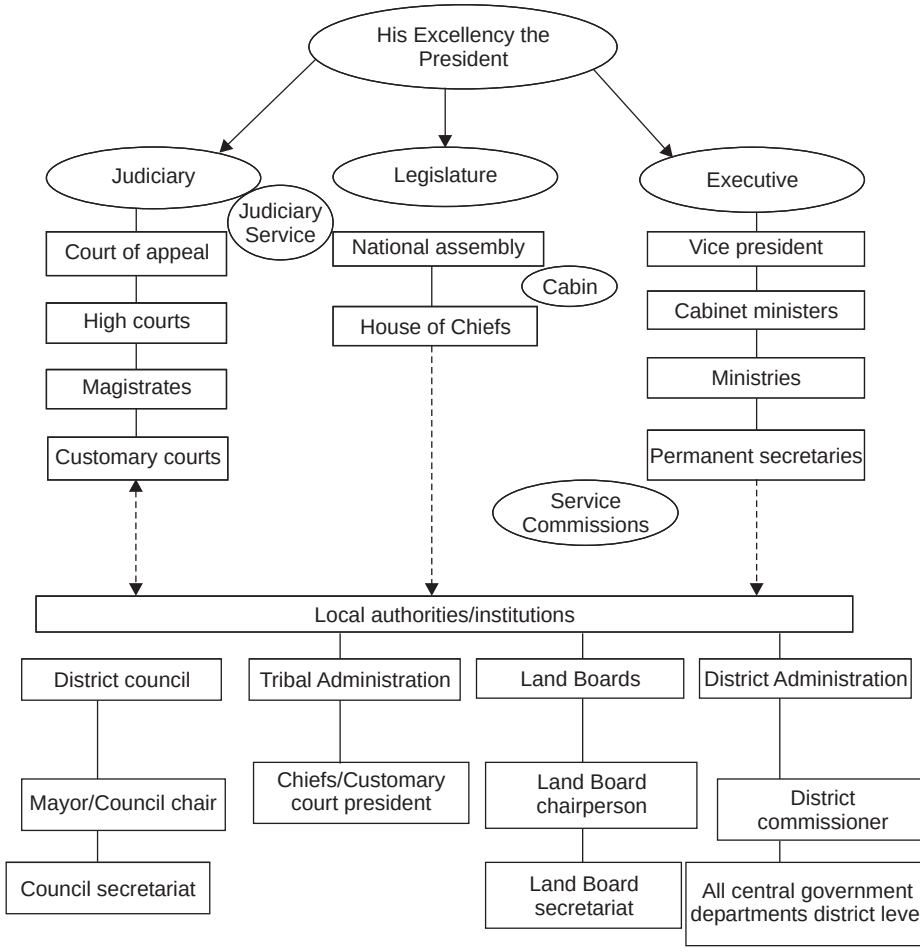

Figure 2.1. Structure of state administration

Source: National Development Plan (NDP 9) 2003–9: 3.

2.2.4 Public sector management

There are about 100,000 employees on the government's payroll. This comprises about 21,000 teachers, 60,000 public servants, and 27,000 local authority and local institutions employees. About 50 per cent of the employees at the local level are classified as 'industrial' or 'semi-skilled'. The institutional framework for public sector management includes the Directorate of Public Service Management (DPSM), Department of Local Government Service Management (DLGSM) and Teaching Service Management (TSM) (in the case of Ministry of Education). DLGSM, which is in the Ministry of Local Government, formulates and administers human resource management policies and other conditions of services for local authorities within the general policy framework defined by DPSM.

2.2.5 Sub-national administration

The sub-national administration in Botswana comprises four institutions: (a) tribal administration; (b) elected local councils; (c) land boards; and (d) district administration (see Figure 2.2).

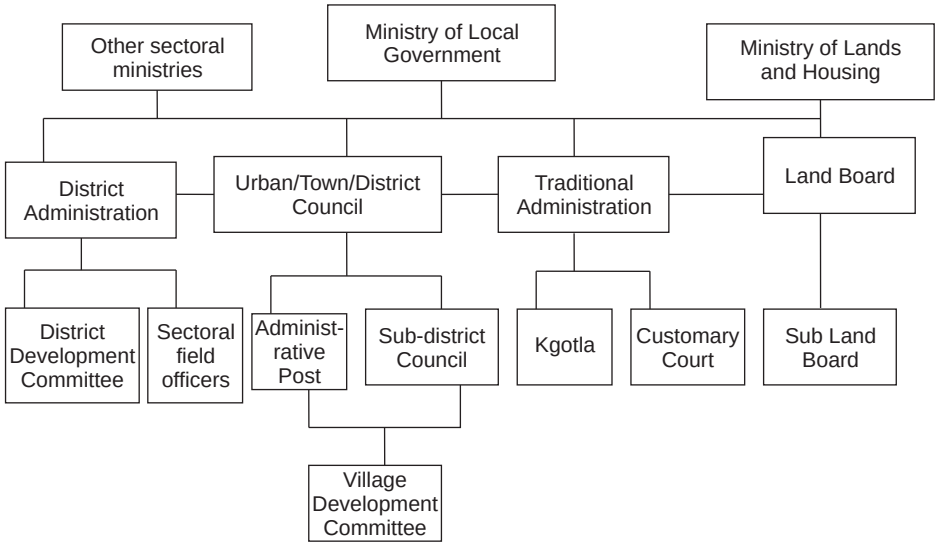

Figure 2.2. Structure of sub-national administration in Botswana

2.2.6 Privatisation and corporatisation of the public sector

Decentralisation of state responsibilities has not only been implemented through central government–LG transfers but also to markets through a policy of privatisation and corporatisation. With the adoption of the privatisation policy in 2000 and the privatisation master plan in 2005, the GoB signalled its commitment to implement market decentralisation. Unlike most countries in Africa, privatisation in Botswana was borne out of the quest for achieving excellence in delivering public services, rather than necessitated by structural adjustments. The privatisation policy aims to enhance private sector activities in areas that the government was solely involved in through divestiture and contracting out; creating of autonomous agencies; greater application of market efficiency mechanisms in activities in which the government continues to be involved (corporatisation and commercialisation); promotion of citizen-owned businesses; promotion of foreign direct investment; and public–private partnerships (GoB, 2005). Public–private partnerships (PPP) were identified in NDP 9 as a mechanism for increasing private-sector participation in government activities. A number of state-run companies have become candidates for privatisation, including the Botswana Housing Corporation, Botswana Telecommunication Corporation,

Botswana Post, Botswana Power Corporation, Botswana Railways, Air Botswana, etc. Nevertheless not much has been seen in terms of privatisation transactions.

2.3 Devolution through Local/District Council System

2.3.1 Structure and responsibilities of local councils

Currently, there are 16 local councils (10 districts, 4 towns, and 2 cities), an increase of 7 since they were first established in 1966. When established, a local council becomes a corporate body capable of suing and being sued. The largest council in terms of size is Central District, while South East is the smallest. In an endeavour to reduce the distance between the people and LG services, sub-districts, administrative authorities and service centres are being established.

Legal framework for local councils

District and urban councils are established by Acts of Parliament, in particular Act 40:01 (District Councils Act) and Act 40:02 (Townships Act). These two acts are being merged. Unlike in many other countries, the establishment of these institutions is not entrenched in the constitution.

Roles and responsibilities of local councils

The statutory responsibilities of councils are to provide basic social infrastructure and services, which includes (among other things) constructing primary school infrastructure, primary health care and sanitation services, maintaining ungazetted public roads, operating and maintaining rural water supplies, general administration of markets, parks, cemeteries, relief services, recreation and welfare, commerce, byelaws, abattoirs, and beer halls, and the regulation and licensing of beer halls. These responsibilities have been expanded by a number of statutes and regulations to include the protection of common property, social and community development, self-help housing, trade licensing, remote area development, fire extinction and prevention, physical planning and *Matimela* (lost and found cattle). It is perhaps noteworthy to mention that councils develop their own byelaws.

Membership, leadership and managers of local councils

A local council is composed of elected and appointed members in addition to the district commissioner and the tribal chief (who are ex-officio members). On average, the ratio of a councillor per population is about 1:3,000, however, given the size of the country there are some districts (Kgalagadi, Ghanzi, North West) that are sparsely populated but cover too large of an area to be effectively represented using this ratio. The executive functions of local councils are divided into committees (finance,

education, social and community development, and planning). Councillors receive monthly salaries as well as a seating allowance each time they meet to deliberate and take decisions on local issues. A council is politically headed by a chairperson or mayor who is elected from among the councillors. The administrative work of the council is undertaken by civil servants headed by the council secretary/chief executive. The council secretary or chief executive is recruited by the MLG's Department of Local Government Service Management. The council chief executive reports both to the council and the MLG.

2.3.2 Local council elections

Since independence members of local councils have always been elected directly by the people in multi-party elections. Local elections are held at the same time as national parliamentary elections, and there is no significant difference between voter turnout in local and national elections. Average voter turnout has not dropped below 75 per cent of registered voters since 1989. Across the country council elections are contested by three main political parties, the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), Botswana Congress Party (BCP), and Botswana National Front (BNF). Although the ruling BDP enjoys massive support across the country (see Table 2.2), since 1999 its share of the vote has been dropping.

Table 2.2. Local council elections

Election Year	*No. of seats won by BDP*	*No. of seats won by other political parties*	*Voter turnout (%)*
1999	303 (75%)	102 (25%)	77.45
2004	335 (68.4%)	155 (31.6%)	76.2
2009	332 (67.89%)	157 (32.11%)	76.51

In the past three elections, the major towns such as Selebi Phikwe, Franscistown, Lobatse, Jwaneng and Gaborone have been won by the opposition parties. Gaborone City Council has been in the hands of the opposition for 22 years. However, as can be seen in Table 2.3, opposition parties' control of local councils has gradually declined from 1994 when they controlled seven (50 per cent) of local councils to only two (12 per cent) in 2009.

Table 2.3. Number of councils under ruling and opposition parties' control

No. of Councils under political control	*1994*	*1999*	*2004*	*2009*
Ruling BDP	7	9	11	14
Opposition political parties	7	5	3	2
Total number of districts	14	14	14	16

If this trend continues, by the next election (2014) the opposition may not control a single local council. The decline of opposition parties' control of local councils is steeper than their fall in national elections. While the ruling BDP enjoys mass support in the country, it has been criticised for appointing additional councillors to fill local councils and retain control. (They are able to do this because the Minister of LG may nominate any person with special skills that are relevant to the development needs of the district. The nominated councillors enjoy all the rights and privileges of elected councillors.)

Anecdotal evidence suggests that at the local level people vote not based on party affiliation but on personalities. For instance, in the 2009 general elections the BDP lost their parliamentary seat in Chobe constituency to the BCP but won a majority in the district council election. Similarly, the MP of Francistown West is not a native of that constituency but the people voted for him anyway. If this trend grows, it will mean that voters are becoming more mature and discerning in their choice of local leadership. It also means that Botswana has built strong bonds of national unity, an indication of a maturing democracy that rejects the politics of tribalism and its associated patronage system. It is also an indication that at the local level people are interested in leadership that can deliver rather than in the political party affiliation.

2.3.3 Qualification of local councillors

LG laws do not prescribe minimum academic qualification for councillors. As a result, the academic qualifications of a majority of councillors (both elected and nominated) have never been high. In 1981, most had a very low level of education and practically no understanding of how a council functions nor of their own responsibilities (Reilly, 1983: 157). A study by Molutsi (1992) found that only 12 per cent of councillors had a senior secondary school certificate. About 65 per cent had standard 7 or lower, a stark contrast to council executives, about 63 per cent of whom hold post-O-level qualifications. The capacity imbalance between local politicians and bureaucrats resulted in the latter dominating the former. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that there have been substantial improvements in the current educational levels of councillors across the country. They also show a lot of confidence and aspire to use local-level politics to launch their political careers. The fact that more councillors are now contesting national elections is testimony to their growing confidence. For example, the Botswana Association of Local Authorities (BALA) claims that in the 2004 elections, 13 out of 57 elected MPs were former councillors. If the claim that the educational levels of councillors have improved substantially turns out to be true (no data available at the moment) then we can expect an improvement in the quality of local governance.

2.3.4 Authority to make byelaws

LG Act 40:01 (section 33) gives local councils the authority to make byelaws in respect of all matters they consider necessary for the maintenance of the health, safety, and well-being of the inhabitants of their area. However, such byelaws made by the council shall be submitted to the Minister of LG for approval and published in the *Government Gazette*. Many at the local level think the need to seek ministerial approval causes unnecessary delays. The Second Presidential Commission Report (GoB, 2001) therefore recommended that the statutory authority of the minister to approve a council's byelaws be repealed. This recommendation was however rejected by the government White Paper No.1 of 2004. The reason given was that it was absolutely necessary to synchronise the activities of local authorities with those of central government, and the minister performs such a role.

2.3.5 Human resource management at local level

At independence local councils had more responsibilities for human resource management in their areas of jurisdiction. They were responsible for hiring school teachers, community development workers, sanitation officers, and for the basic overall management of their staff. The Unified Local Government Service (ULGS), now called the Department of Local Government Service Management (DLGSM), was created in 1976 to recentralise human resource management. The recentralisation of human resource management was necessary because some rural districts were not attractive to many qualified applicants thereby resulting in various negotiations and incentive arrangements. The councils also faced capacity constraints, for example, in terms of fiscal resources. Negotiating terms of remuneration with prospective employees without sufficient local revenue only transferred the burden of payment to the government. Therefore it was necessary for the government to centralise human resource management to ensure greater uniformity in conditions of employment across the country.

Human resource management at the local level is now covered by the Public Service Act, 2008, which has been passed to basically amalgamate the Teaching Service Act, 1976, Public Service Act, 1979, Land Board Act, 1967 and Unified LG Service Act, 1975. In the past these different acts were used to govern human resource management at the local level. Implementation of the Public Service Act, 2008, started in May 2010. All government employees are now governed by a single human resource management act, although functions are delegated to the sectoral ministries, including councils.

Recruitment and dismissal of local council employees

By 1991 there were about 13,000 people working at local councils, representing 20 per cent of all government employees. Though absolute numbers increased to 16,000 in 1996, in proportional terms that was a reduction to 19 per cent of total government

employees (GoB, 1997). It is now estimated by the DLGSM that there are 27,000 people working in local government (about 27 per cent). All senior employees at local councils were recruited by MLG. In 1999, local councils were given the authority to recruit level B1, which is the lower quartile of the establishment. From 2004 to 2007 they were given additional powers to recruit and manage human resources at C3 and C1 levels, the second and third quartile respectively, while in 2010 councils were given authority to recruit level D2, which is management level.

Training and transfer of LG staff

A civil servant once employed is posted to any part of the country and is also transferred from one district to another or across ministries. The training and transfer of LG employees is handled by the MLG. The MLG asks councils to nominate people for training and then makes the selection according to the areas of need and financial budgets.

Conditions of employment

Across the public sector there is only one salary structure and conditions of service. Employees who work in remote areas where electricity, roads, and services are inadequate or lacking receive an allowance called 'Remote Area Service Allowance' (RASA). To some extent the allowance has been effective in enticing people to move to remote areas.

Capacity of LGs employees

The academic qualifications and competence of local council employees have improved over the years. Many heads of departments in councils have university degrees while a few have postgraduate (masters) degrees. There have been programmes of short and long-term training for local authorities which have substantially improved their competence to provide the public services that they are responsible for. The government now appreciates that human resources capacity at local councils has improved over the years. Some of the council secretaries have even been posted to ministries as Deputy Permanent Secretaries.

The unified career structure for LGs is supposed to respond to the staffing needs of remote districts by enabling transfers and standardising personnel policies. It creates a basis for co-ordinated training and staff development programmes, but its implementation also affects LG development in Botswana. The system constrains any control that local councils have over their employees. Civil servants' ability to develop policies and programmes and to implement projects based on the priorities of locally elected councillors is impaired by the Unified Personnel Management system that makes civil servants accountable and loyal to the central government that employs them instead of the locally elected body. In addition, the unified staff system delays

decision-making regarding recruitment, dismissal, and disciplinary action at the local level. This has been improving, however, with more power given to councils to recruit up to middle-management level.

2.3.6 Local-central fiscal relationship

Revenue assignment

Botswana depends on diamonds for a great percentage of its national revenue. As only two administrative districts have diamond mines, the country chose a deliberate policy of centralising revenue collection and subsequent redistribution to various local councils according to their planned developmental needs. Fuel, hotel, corporate and income taxes have also been centralised, limiting the revenue sources that local councils can mobilise. They collect rents on council properties, fees and licences on small businesses, charges on service delivery, and private property rates (property rate applies only to urban councils). However, local councils have not been very successful in collecting fees for services that they deliver such as health, water, and education.

Expenditure assignment

Local councils are expected to spend their revenue providing primary education infrastructure and primary health care and sanitation services, maintaining ungazetted public roads, operating and maintaining the rural water supply, and administering markets, parks, cemeteries, relief services, recreation and welfare services, abattoirs, beer halls, and other local infrastructure. They are also expected to pay the salaries of their employees and other recurrent expenditure. As previously mentioned, the internally generated revenue of the local councils is inadequate and therefore they depend on funds from the central coffers (see also Section 3.5.2).

Internally Revenue Generation (IGR)

In the urban councils, total internally generated revenue constitutes about 20 per cent of the total recurrent expenditure needs in contrast to that of the rural district council, whose revenue generation is insignificant – about 3 per cent. Urban councils have the potential to generate more from their revenue sources, but they do not put much effort into collecting the fees and levies that they have set because they rely on the central government grant. Gaborone City Council, for example, could generate a substantial amount of money from car parking but it does not capitalise on this potential. In the 2009/10 recurrent budget, car parks were estimated to bring in P242,000, while interest on their bank deposits generated P4.74m (about 9.3 per cent) of the total recurrent budget. Revenue from bank deposits therefore appears to provide a 'cushion' for the councils.

Central government transfer to local councils

Local councils in both developed and developing countries generally depend on central government to finance their expenditure needs. In the case of Botswana, urban councils currently depend on central government for about 80 per cent of their recurrent budget (salaries, maintenance of equipment, purchase of lubricants, stationery, etc.) while in rural districts, dependency on the central government is about 97 per cent. In terms of development budget (expenditure on water, schools, clinics, health posts, roads, etc.) all local councils receive a 100 per cent grant from the central government. Unlike in other countries, there is no law in Botswana that specifies the amount or percentage of the national revenue that is to go to local councils. The recurrent and development budgets given to local councils are embedded in the general budgets of the MLG and are disbursed as grants to the councils. In 2009, about 17 per cent of the national budget went to the MLG but it is not clear how much of this money constitutes transfers to LGs. Additionally, each sectoral ministry has projects that are earmarked for districts and directly implemented through their departments and district offices.

Fairness in disbursement of grants to local councils

A formula for the allocation of central government grants to districts was previously used but was abandoned in 2007 because it discouraged local councils from making efforts to generate their own funds. However in the absence of any formula or criteria, grants for recurrent and development budgets are distributed to councils based on budget estimates that each council submits through the MLG. This process seems to have created inequality in the distribution of grants. For example, per capita recurrent grants for the six urban councils show a lot of disparity, ranging from as low as P1,231 (US$177) in Gaborone to P13,315 (US$1914) in Sowa township (see Table 2.4). There is no reason to doubt that that disparity occurs in rural councils as well as in the distribution of the development budget. In the absence of data, however, one cannot make further comparisons.

Table 2.4. Per capita recurrent grant to urban councils (2009/10)

Urban councils	*Population (2001)*	*Recurrent revenue support grant (2009/10) (pula)*	*Per capita recurrent expenditure (pula)*	*Per capita recurrent expenditure (US$)*
Gaborone	185,891	223,655,690	1,203	177
Francistown	81,003	165,296,670	2,041	293
Selebi-Phikwe	48,825	95,195,840	1,950	280
Lobatse	28,801	114,429,910	3,973	571
Jwaneng	14,559	69,219,620	4,754	683
Sowa Township	2,726	36,296,790	13,315	1,914

Source: Population figures from 2001 National Census, Republic of Botswana Recurrent Budget: Ministry of Local Government (Urban councils' recurrent budget, 2009/10)

Power to borrow money to finance local development

The LG Acts (Act 40:01 and 40:02) give the councils the power to raise loans of any amount upon meeting conditions set by the Minister of LG, acting in accordance with the advice of the Minister of Finance and Development Planning. The loans shall be secured on the revenue and assets of the council. Given this condition, borrowing is not common among the councils. Moreover, availability of funds has never been an issue in local council finance. In fact, councils have substantial bank deposits on which they earn interest, which is the second-largest source of internally generated revenue (IGR) for urban councils (see Table 2.5).

Table 2.5. Interest earned by urban councils

Description	*Francistown*	*Gaborone*	*Jwaneng*	*Lobatse*	*S/Phiwe*	*Sowa*
Interest on bank deposits (pula)	3.2m	4.7m	1.5m	1.8m	4.5m	3.6m
% share of interest on bank deposit to IGR	9.3	6.2	19.3	19.7	22.1	62.9

Source: MLG Urban Councils Recurrent Budget, 2009/10: 4

Auditing of LG accounts

Monthly and quarterly council reports are the basis of local councils' accountability to central government on the use of grants. While councils have their own internal auditors, the central government Auditor General also reviews the accounts of councils yearly (although there is a backlog of at least two years for some councils).

2.3.7 Village Development Committee (VDC)

The Village Development Committee (VDC) was established by a presidential directive in 1968 as a non-statutory, non-political, voluntary committee of villagers responsible for promoting and co-ordinating village development but without legally enforceable powers to raise funds or invoke sanctions. VDCs normally have about 10 members who are elected every two years at a public meeting in the *Kgotla*. Supervision of the activities of VDCs is undertaken by local councils. Members of VDCs do not receive a monthly salary but do receive a seating allowance of P147–180 (US$26) from the local councils for monthly meetings. A VDC proposal to implement a project is discussed at *Kgotla* in order to gain the support of community members. Once a project is accepted, VDC requests financial support from the district council for its implementation. The VDC undertakes additional responsibilities for local councils such as identifying destitute and orphaned children that can be assessed by the council for welfare support, overseeing the implementation of development projects, and managing community social activities including the day-care centre, community library, community or town hall, communal toilet facilities, etc. There are other

village groups that also undertake local self-help activities but are not part of the official government-sponsored institutional programmes. These include the Farmers' Committee; Parent–Teachers Association; Drift Fence Groups; Dam Groups; Health Committees; Botswana Council of Women; and the Village Extension Team (all government workers in a village).

2.4 Deconcentration through Sectoral Government Ministries, District Administration and other Local Institutions

2.4.1 Deconcentration of sectoral ministries to districts

The sectoral ministries are strongly represented at the local level. A district commissioner appointed by the permanent secretary to the president co-ordinates all sectoral ministries that operate at the district level. In 2001, a task force was established to identify central government functions and authority in the ministries and agencies that could be decentralised further in order to improve on the efficiency of government administration and service delivery. The organisation and methods (O&M) report of the task force recommended that all sector ministries that had established their own deconcentrated districts or regional boundaries be aligned to district administrative boundaries. A description of few of the sectoral ministries now follows.

Ministry of Education and Skills Development (MESD)

In 2009, the total number of employees on the Ministry of Education and Skills Development (MESD) payroll was 36,944, of whom 26,170 (71 per cent) were teachers in primary, secondary, and teacher training colleges. The MESD has divided the country into 10 educational regions (Mochudi, Gaborone, Kanye, Ghanzi, Maun, Francistown, Molepolole, Tsabong, Kasane and Serowe). Each education region has several inspectorates, depending on the size and population of the area. In 2006, the MESD decided to align the division of educational regions to the current LG administrative districts. Ten new educational districts were created (leaving out the urban councils of Gaborone, Selibe-phikwe, and Lobatse).

The MESD aims to decongest its headquarters to concentrate on policy formulation and regulation while management of schools would be delegated to district educational offices. As a result of this policy, the MESD is currently transferring senior personnel from its headquarters to the districts to become regional education directors. A regional director is responsible for human resource management in the respective area and has much autonomy to recruit, promote, transfer and dismiss personnel in the district. The implication of this arrangement is that although the MESD will continue to operate in a deconcentrated system, field directors will have much autonomy at the local level in terms of human resource management. This initiative

of the MESD is expected to improve education service supervision. By posting to the district a senior person whose grade is comparable to the DC, the MESD aims to solve one of the challenges at the district level when it comes to district development plans, namely, contentions that sectoral district co-ordinators are unable to take decisions at the local level and have to refer everything to the Ministry in Gaborone for advice. However, this policy may also raise a new challenge.

The MESD may create a potential conflict and ambiguity of administrative hierarchy and subordination at the local level. The reason being that the DC is supposed to co-ordinate all deconcentrated government departments and agencies at the local level and therefore needs a clear administrative hierarchy to enable that function to be effectively delivered. Even where sector co-ordinators have lower administrative grades than the DC, co-ordination of their activities at the district level has been a challenge to DCs.

Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)

The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) has six deconcentrated regional agriculture offices called agriculture districts. As part of the deconcentration process, the MoA in 2008 expanded field offices to 10 districts by appointing district agriculture co-ordinators. The MoA has about 8,000 employees of whom only 5 per cent work at the centre in Gaborone – the rest are posted to the districts and villages, including about 1,000 extension officers and 3,500 veterinary officers. Under crop production, frontline staff (extension officers) who operate in the villages relate directly with district co-ordinators, while the latter report directly to their directors in the ministry.

Ministry of Works and Transport (MWT)

The Ministry of Works and Transport (MWT), now split into two ministries, Transport and Communication, and Infrastructure, Science and Technology, is responsible for public infrastructure works (electricity services, highways and major roads, and maintenance of government buildings) and the transport system (government vehicles, road safety, civil aviation, and railways). The MWT is divided into five departments: Ministry Management, Road Transport and Safety, Civil Aviation, Building and Engineering Services, and Central Transport Organisation. Deconcentration of the MWT can be seen in three departments (Roads, Building, and Transport and Safety). The Department of Roads has three regional offices while the Building Department has five regional offices and numerous depots in the districts. The Transport and Safety Department has five regional offices and government fuel points established all over the country and managed by the MWT. There are about 8,000 government workers of whom about 70 per cent are posted to regions and districts. Apart from establishing regional offices in the form of deconcentration, decentralisation of the ministry is seen in terms of transferring more power and responsibilities to parastatals.

For instance, responsibility for the airport has been transferred to Air Botswana and railways to Botswana Railway to operate as semi-autonomous institutions, and later to become candidates for privatisation.

Ministry of Local Government (MLG)

The Ministry of Local Government (MLG) has oversight of the creation of an enabling environment for local development, community participation, provision of strategic direction for LGs and governance in Botswana. More specifically, the MLG is responsible for (a) providing basic physical and social infrastructure services (water, primary schools, clinics, construction and maintenance of tertiary roads) through local authorities; (b) co-ordinating the activities of the central government at district level through the Office of the District Commissioner, and (c) serving as a focal point for local governance and community mobilisation. A Presidential Directive (CAB 22/2005) 'restructuring of the Ministry of LG' states that:

> 'The ministry should concentrate on LG policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and decentralise project implementation to local authorities (councils) and its institutions'.

Despite its primary role as policy and supervisory agency of the central government, the MLG is involved in the direct implementation of projects in some districts where it finds that inadequate capacity at the district level will affect effective and efficient delivery of the service. The MLG, for example, is involved in the implementation of the Backlog Eradication Project that is building classrooms and teachers' residential accommodation in the districts.

2.4.2 District administration (DA)

Quest for district administration

District administration (DA) is a deconcentrated central government institution that plays an important administrative and co-ordinating role for local-level development and is headed by a district commissioner (DC). The need for a District administration pre-dates the independence of Botswana. When the council system was established at independence, the District administration was not disbanded but allowed to operate alongside the district councils. By the end of the 1960s, the government was becoming concerned about the lack of co-ordination in the activities of the district councils, sectoral field agencies, and other local institutions. The DCs were therefore tasked with the responsibility of co-ordinating all central government departments and agencies at the local level.

Role of district commissioners (DC)

As the head of the district administration and a senior central government representative at the local level, the DC advises the government regarding different issues in the district; interprets policy guidelines to other local institutions; co-ordinates drought relief and other disaster programmes of government and non-governmental organisations; reviews cases from customary courts, authorises judicial warrants; and provides a secretariat for the co-ordination of national programmes at the district. Together with the council chief executive officer, the DC co-ordinates implementation of all the development plans taking place at the local level, including that of the council. In performing their key roles of co-ordinating central government programmes at the local level, they ensure that local institutions get the necessary support from the central government.

District Development Committees (DDC)

District development committees (DDCs) were set up in 1971 to co-ordinate development and planning at the district level. The DDC is managed by the district administration and chaired by the DC, while the district development officer is the secretary. Other members of the DDC include representatives from the district council and government departments in the district. The DDC provides an institutional framework through which the DC is expected to co-ordinate the development inputs of different ministries and departments. The effectiveness of the DC's corporate role depends on the support of the sectoral ministries but this is not always forthcoming. Sometimes central government ministries are represented by junior officers who are not able to take any decision without referring to the central government. Given that central government ministries and departments account for about 80 per cent of the development expenditure at the districts, lack of effective co-ordination and supervision could be detrimental.

Decentralised development planning and budgetary process

The long-term goals of Botswana are highlighted in Vision 2016. These goals are broken down into development policies and programmes in what is called the National Development Plan (NDP). The government has so far formulated ten NDPs since 1966. At the district level, plans are prepared within the framework of Vision 2016 and the NDP. The planning process starts with the consultation process between the DDC and the Village Development Committee (VDC). The DDC informs the community about government policies, programmes and priorities while the VDC takes its turn to inform the DDC about their list of projects and priorities. All VDC projects are put together and submitted to the district council for further prioritisation and decision-making. Priority projects approved by all 16 local councils are sent to the MLG and then to respective sectoral ministries to enable them prepare

sectoral plans. A stakeholders' conference is organised where delegates (between 10 and 12 people) from all 16 districts meet to discuss sectoral projects that have been selected by the ministries based on both what the districts submitted and also on the ministries' own considerations and priorities. Based on the projects that are finally selected and agreed upon, the districts prepare their final development plans. The councils' plans contribute to the MLG sector plan, and then all the sector plans become the national development plan. The national plan is then submitted to the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) for financial consideration (see Figure 2.3).

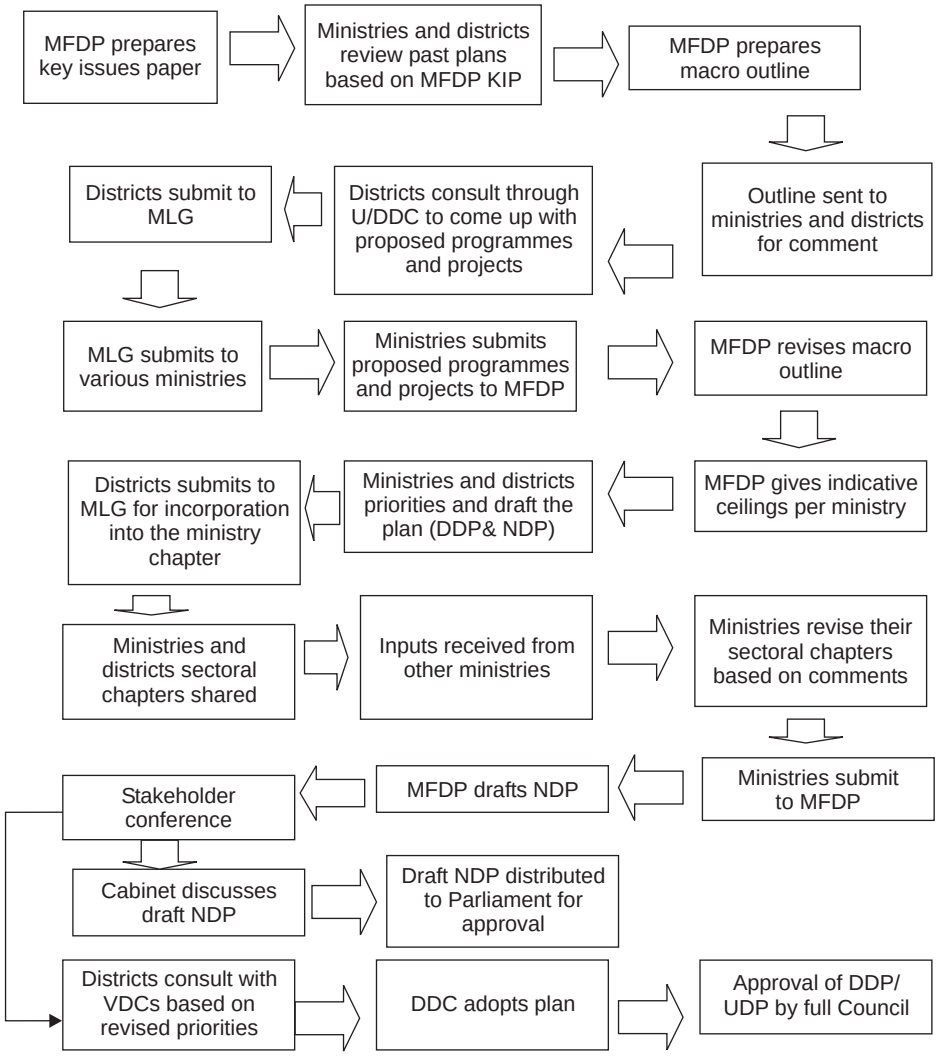

Figure 2.3. Planning process in Botswana

When district plans are approved, funds are sent to the sectoral ministries for project implementation at the local level. The DCs do not have any control over the development budget. The approved budgets of councils are also sent to the MLG and are released to the councils in instalments.

The nature of development planning in Botswana, despite the declared objective of bottom-up planning, continues to be top-down. Local institutions criticise the planning process for not being participatory enough. Some VDCs also criticise central government institutions at the district level for not providing them with feedback on whether their priority projects have been accepted or rejected.

2.4.3 Land Boards

Structure of Land Boards

Land Boards are decentralised national institutions at the district level responsible for the management of tribal lands. They are corporate bodies established under the Tribal Land Act (CAP 32:02). Land Boards were established in 1970 in order to take over the allocation of tribal land from tribal authorities to improve efficiency and meticulously take on board the emerging challenges of allocation of land for development. The *Dikgosi,* however, continued to be involved in the allocation and management of land. Land overseers also assist in identifying vacant land for prospective applicants. Nine Land Boards were originally created and three more were established in 1976. In 1973, 23 Subordinate Land Boards were set up to assist the Land Boards in the more populated districts. The number of Subordinate Land Boards has since increased to 41.

Functions of Land Boards

Section 13 of the Tribal Land Act stipulates the functions of the Land Board with respect to Customary Land Tenure as:

- granting and cancelling rights to use land;
- imposing restrictions on the use of tribal land;
- authorising any change of use of tribal land and any transfer of tribal land; and
- hearing appeals from decisions made by Subordinate Land Boards.

Election and appointment of members of Land Boards

A Land Board has ten members and Sub-Land Boards have eight. Half of Land Board members are democratically elected by the people for a four-year term, while the other half are appointed by the Minister of Lands. The administrative work of the board

is handled by career civil servants. The board members elect their chairperson every year. The process of electing Land Board members begins with elections at village *Kgotla*, although the Minister of Lands and Housing is not obliged to uphold their choice of candidates.

Land Board administration and management

All applications for land must be endorsed by the local chief or headman through their land overseers. Land Boards also refer to the traditional leaders when there are disputes about land which was granted before the establishment of the Land Boards in 1970. At the community level there are land overseers who work for the Board and their role is to identify vacant land for prospective applicants. Land overseers receive a seating allowance each time the board meets. The largest Land Board operates a budget of about P81m (US$11.5m), while the smallest operates a budget of about P11.9m (US$1.7m). Government grants make up around 80–90 per cent of the board's budget, meaning that a land board raises no less than 10–20 per cent of its budget. Some of the challenges faced by Land Boards include incidences of double allocation of land to different individuals, managing the information system, and monitoring land allocation and use.

There is currently an ongoing project to improve the land-use information and management system, known as Land Administration Procedures, Capacity and Systems (LAPCAS). The main purpose of the project is to develop efficient land administration based on simplified procedures, correct information on land parcels and rights to these. This will be carried through the development of an interoperable/integrated information system that can be maintained and supported in a sustainable way. Capacity building in all areas of land administration is a major exercise, targeting to a large extent Land Board members and staff. The project is organised into several components, developing or improving:

- a national system for identifying/numbering parcels of land;
- a national system for location-based addresses for buildings and parts of buildings;
- land administration processes;
- deeds register computerisation;
- systematic adjudication of rights in tribal land;
- IT procedures and organisation; and
- The exchange and dissemination of land administration data.

Land Board institutional infrastructure

Land Boards initially depended on district councils for office accommodation, transport and staff, and were under the tutelage of the MLG. With the realisation of the key role they play in the implementation of tribal grazing land policy and their involvement in the implementation of land-use planning, however, their capacity has improved to the extent that Land Boards currently have the best office accommodation and infrastructure in the districts. Land Boards now operate under the Ministry of Lands and Housing.

2.4.4 Tribal administration

Tribal administration includes a hierarchy of chiefs, headmen and subordinates. Contemporary tribal administration in Botswana involves the administration of justice under customary law and the organisation of village assemblies (*Kgotla*).

Administration of justice under customary court

Each village in Botswana has a customary court presided over by the representative of the tribal administration (a headman, subordinate chief or deputy chief) depending on the size of the village. The customary judicial system provides a popular and accessible means of settling minor offences and crimes (common theft, assault, drug use) and locally generated disputes. The customary judicial system does not have a legal representation system but settles over 70 per cent of criminal and civil cases in the country amicably. The traditional administration used to command a local police to enforce its ruling but this has recently been merged with the national police.

Traditional assembly (Kgotla)

Kgotla is the traditional assembly where local concerns are discussed and decisions are made. The chief or headman presides over the *Kgotla* and calls the meetings. *Kgotla* provides avenues for chiefs to influence the people as far as customs and traditions of the country are concerned and is still considered the most important and respected village institution throughout Botswana. It is the primary means for the communication of government plans and policies to the people. Government officials and politicians address villagers at the *Kgotla* which also serves as the venue where elections of members of various village committees are held.

Chiefs also function as ex-officio members of district councils and commissioner of oaths; they also verify citizen addresses, citizenship identification cards, passports, etc. The tribal administration operates under the tutelage of the MLG and since it has no source of revenue, the institution is fully dependent on the government for all its recurrent expenditure. Compared to other countries such as Ghana, chiefs or traditional leaders in Botswana are not expected to play any development role such as providing physical infrastructure (e.g., water, health, education, electricity).

2.4.5 Other autonomous institutions that support decentralisation, local governance and development

Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (BOCONGO)

BOCONGO is an umbrella organisation that co-ordinates the work of NGOs in Botswana. It has a membership of about 120 NGOs, though not all NGOs are registered members of the association. BOCONCO is involved in HIV education, women in development, microfinance and development, human rights, and environment and agriculture, among other sectors. It was established in 1995 with the aim of networking, mobilising resources, and bringing co-operation among NGOs in the country for development. The need to establish BOCONGO came as donor support for Botswana began to dwindle. NGOs have made much progress in HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns, caring for orphans through the provision of home-based care, and caring for people with disabilities.

BOCONGO contends that the decentralisation process in the country is slow and that local councils seem not to be empowered. In research carried out by BOCONGO on the role of local councils and electorates in Central District Council, the results showed that councils do not understand their roles while citizens in rural areas do not know the role of their councillors (BOCONGO, 2006; 2008). The question that BOCONGO's findings raised was 'How can accountability be improved at the local level when the electorate does not understand the roles and responsibilities of their leaders?' The findings of the research led to the design of a capacity-building workshop.

Botswana Association of Local Authorities (BALA)

The Botswana Association of Local Authorities (BALA) was established in 1983 with the overarching objective of contributing to the development of a strong, democratic and developmental LG system in Botswana. The objectives and functions of BALA are to promote and strengthen local governance and democracy, arrange training for councillors and officers, monitor standards, provide opportunities for discussing issues of common interest, and formulate common policies on issues affecting local councils. BALA consists of all the 16 local councils and has been one of the main protagonists of decentralisation reforms in Botswana. While the government has made service delivery the key focus of its decentralisation policy, BALA is driven by a common objective that service delivery can be improved through enhanced local democracy and good governance. BALA argues that local councils, being the second tier of government and much closer to the people than the central government, need to be strengthened. At the district level, BALA organises a series of seminars and workshops for its members.

Political parties on decentralisation

In 2009, the leader of the opposition in parliament moved a motion for government to decentralise by devolving power to local authorities and endowing them with administrative and financial capacity (Parliament of Botswana, 2009). The opposition's central argument was that Presidential Commissions' reports in 1970, 1978 and 1987 recommended more autonomy for local councils to give them scope to effectively face the problems of development in their respective areas, but that the government had rejected most of the recommendations. The opposition leader also argued that for the purpose of nurturing, deepening, and developing democracy, it is better to decentralise to enable people to release their energy and participate better in governance at the local level. This would enable local councils to innovate, reduce their over-reliance on Gaborone for resources and direction, and improve people's capacity to participate in their local development. However, the motion was defeated since a process of developing the decentralisation policy had already begun; therefore the objections were simply taken into consideration in the process of coming up with a comprehensive policy to guide the endeavour.

2.5 Decentralisation Achievements: Improvement in Service Provision and Empowerment of Institutions for Local Governance?

Decentralisation, as a policy to reform state–local relationships, may be instituted for several reasons but two key objectives in Botswana are to (a) to improve service provision and (b) to empower local institutions for good governance. In this section we critically analyse the extent to which the two objectives have been achieved.

2.5.1 Institutional arrangements for improving local service provision

Primary education

Local councils build and maintain primary school infrastructure (buildings, computers, books and other stationery) while teachers, curricula, supervision and management are provided by the MESD. Pre-school education is provided by CBOs or private organisations. Though local councils are responsible for primary school infrastructure, the actual construction of school buildings and provision of furniture and equipment have largely been contracted out to private enterprises by the councils. Botswana is perhaps the only country in Africa to have achieved almost 100 per cent enrolment at primary level and district councils may be credited with this success.

Health services

Provision of primary health care (health posts and clinics) has been the responsibility of councils for many years. Unlike primary education – where councils are only involved in infrastructure provision – in health services all 525 Primary Health Care Centres (PHCs) have been devolved to local councils and the councils build the infrastructure, employ the staff and manage health care services. The Ministry of Health (MOH) is responsible for hospitals and health centres. Accessibility to health care services is very high. In the urban areas about 96 per cent of the population have a health facility within 5km while in rural areas it is about 72 per cent (see Table 2.6).

Table 2.6. Percentage of population with access to health care services/facilities in 2007

Selected districts	*% of population with access to health services within 8–15km radius*	*% of population with access to health services within 5–8km radius*	*% of population with access to health services within 5km radius*
Gaborone	–	–	100
Jwaneng	–	20	80
Maun	14	6	80
Kgalagadi South	22	3	75
Kweneng West	55	40	5
Rural Average	11	17	72
Urban Average	–	4	96
National Average	5	11	84

Source: Health Statistics Report, MOH 2007

All health services (from health posts to referral hospitals) are free – patients pay only a token amount. As a result, health care consumes about 15 per cent of the national budget. Primary health care services have been delivered through an array of clinics and health posts under district councils. These services have been transferred to the MOH as of 1 April 2010. The reason for this realignment is to improve on referral and continuum of care to patients/clients. There are many private clinics and hospitals as well as traditional/herbal practitioners that operate alongside the formal government health care system. The MOH is responsible for health policy while the Botswana Health Professional Association is responsible for regulation of medical professionals. Given that HIV/AIDS is a multi-sectoral issue in the country with a high prevalence rate (38.6 per cent of adult population) the central government has put all programmes under the office of the President.

Roads and transport

Local roads are managed by local councils while inter-district roads, highways and major road maintenance are managed by the Ministry of Works and Transport. Local councils have managed to put a large proportion of their roads in good condition.

Road maintenance in the districts involves contracting-out to private enterprises and direct delivery using council own staff and equipment.

Water and sanitation

Water provision is shared between three institutions. Rural water is the responsibility of district councils, urban water is the responsibility of the Water Utility Corporation (a parastatal) and major villages' water supply is the responsibility of the Department of Water Affairs at the Ministry of Minerals, Energy and Water Resources (MMEWR). The government has decided to have all water provision transferred from the three service providers to a single water authority. In terms of solid waste collection most of the urban councils and a few rural ones contract out to private enterprises and deliver directly using the council's own employees and equipment. However, the capital sanitation system for urban areas is delivered by the Department of Waste Management and Pollution Control under the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism.

Housing

The Ministry of Lands and Housing is responsible for the facilitation of housing delivery through the National Policy on Housing of 2000. The facilitative role of government entails making land available to all citizens, providing serviced plots (roads, water, sewerage and electricity) at a subsidised price for low-income households, providing loans for low-income housing which includes improving on existing structures and constructing turnkey houses. Councils build mainly for their employees. The Self Help Housing Agency (SHHA) revolving fund programme of the Ministry of Lands and Housing provides low-income housing for the public. The local authorities (councils) are responsible for the day-to-day implementation of low-income housing programmes. The Botswana Housing Corporation and other stakeholders in the private sector are also involved in the direct delivery of housing to citizens.

2.5.2 Standards of service delivery

The MLG develops performance standards on which service delivery is measured. While the standards may be described as a technocratic approach to service delivery, they compel service-providing agencies and institutions including local councils to be up and running. Table 2.7 shows some of the standards. First, the quality of services that clients/users receive is assessed through 'public service customer satisfaction surveys' organised by the Public Sector Reforms Unit of the Office of the President.

Table 2.7. Service delivery standards

LG services	*Description/definition*	*Service delivery standard*
Health services	Client waiting time	2 hours
	Availability of essential drugs	80%
	Client satisfaction rating	80%
Social services	Maximum acceptable time to register a request for assistance by destitute and needy students, and assessment and notification by local councils	4 weeks
Payment and procurement	Time required to complete payment to clients after submission of invoices	10 working days
	Tendering process for development of a project	13 weeks
Response to emergencies	Water supply restoration	5 hours
	Building maintenance	1 day
	Maintenance of street lights and traffic light	1 day
Permit and licences	Residential permit	7 days
	Issuance of building permits	6 weeks
	New trade licence	30 days
General services	Residential waste collection	3.5 days
	Commercial waste	1 day
	New water connection processing time	4 weeks

Source: MLG Service Standards: Raising the performance bar towards provision of quality and timely services (undated)

Batswanas enjoy a very high standard of service provision in education, health, water and sanitation, more than most citizens in other African countries. The local councils have managed to effectively deliver some of the MDGs that are part of their responsibilities. Every village in the country has a health post or clinic. More HIV patients are receiving ARVs because distribution is handled by local councils that are closer to the people. Nevertheless there are quite significant differences in the quality of services that urban and rural dwellers receive (see Table 2.8).

Table 2.8. Indicators of the level of quality in some services

Service indicator	*1990s*			*2000–2007*		
	National	*Urban*	*Rural*	*National*	*Urban*	*Rural*
IMR (per 1000 live births)	45	34	51	33	–	–
Under 5 MR (per 1000 live births)	56	42	67	40	–	–
Primary school enrolment	83	93	18	99	100	90
% of households with sanitation	55	82	41	47	60	30
% of households with access to potable water	77	100	69	96	100	90

Sources: 1990 figures from Lekorwe et al. (2000: 47); 2000–2007 figures from UNICEF Statistics, Botswana http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/botswana_statistics.html

Second, there are duplications, ambiguity of responsibilities, and inefficiency in the institutional arrangement for service delivery because work is carried out by deconcentrated sectoral agencies and departments, each with their own budget and employees, but also occasionally projects are implemented at the local level by sectoral ministries who sometimes by-pass their own deconcentrated departments and agencies. Such problems can be found in services such as education, health, housing and sanitation. For instance, in Kgalagadi South (Tsabong), which has a population of about 43,000 people, there are about 43 central government departments working under the district commissioner to deliver services. Most of these deconcentrated departments have their counterparts in the local councils. Apart from local institutions that provide services, there are projects that the MLG temporarily delivers in the communities, such as 'backlog projects'. The MLH also directly implements projects in this way, for example contracting out district housing projects to the Botswana Housing Corporation.

2.5.3 Empowerment of local council institutions for good governance

Despite initial commitment to local governance resulting in the creation of local councils, there are still challenges at the local level in running local affairs and developing local competence. However, recently (2010) councils were given authority to hire up to D2 grade employees (middle management). To enhance local political leadership, accountability and efficiency, BALA and a number of stakeholders and councillors prefer an executive mayor system in Botswana.

The Minister of Local Government has powers to appoint non-elected councillors. The rationale for these appointments is to augment the technical expertise and skill which may be low in the elected members of councils. Though these nominated councillors have no geographic jurisdiction, they enjoy all the privileges of elected councillors.

In the current National Development Plan and District/Urban Development Plans, local authorities have laid down strategies about how they will raise their own revenue and exploit new sources of revenue. This is aimed at reducing the burden and over reliance on the national budget to finance local initiatives. Currently the urban councils raise about 80 per cent of the recurrent budget while 100 per cent of the development budget is from the centre. The district councils do not raise much revenue as about 90 per cent of their recurrent budget and 100 per cent of their development budget is from the centre.

2.6 Lessons, Challenges and Suggestions

The analyses/discussions in previous sections on the processes and outcomes of Botswana's decentralisation provide a lot of challenges and lessons. In this last section, we tease out some of them and suggest ways to move the process forward.

2.6.1 Lessons

Design of decentralisation and effect on local governance

The design of decentralisation is crucial in determining whether its impact will be positive or negative. If designed well and supported by (a) political commitments to transfer authority, (b) adequate resource capacity, (c) clear allocation and balance of responsibility, and (d) effective accountability mechanism, it can improve service delivery, expand democratisation and accountability processes, and improve local governance. If not, it can have undesirable consequences. Reflecting on the large land size and small population of Botswana, decentralisation was needed to improve interaction and linkages between the people in various localities and the centre. The physical characteristics would also suggest that the design of a central–local relationship would be far easier there than in a populous country. However, the design of an administrative and institutional set-up for central–local governance is more complicated than the system in many countries in Africa because of the:

- historical circumstances under which Botswana was established[2];
- influence of chieftaincy in local affairs;
- developmental model[3] that the state adopted (Taylor, 2002);
- dominance of a single political party in multi-party democracy;
- technocratic approach to planning for local and national development;
- initial limited human and financial resources; and
- quest for equitable distribution of national resources across all districts and communities.

These factors strengthened the tendency for a centralised approach to development in the country although from the early years of independence the government recognised the need to decentralise. Four decades after the implementation of decentralisation and the local council system, the arguments for centralisation have not changed but continue to dominate any discussions that suggest ways to strengthen democratic decentralised institutions, especially the council system.

Given the historical background and reasons stated earlier, Botswana has designed four parallel local institutions that operate simultaneously in the districts without a clear hierarchy in institutional structures. The parallel institutions have also created many vested-interest groups that work against each other, leading to frequent debates about which of the four parallel institutions have legitimacy and authority over the others at the local level. The debate about the structure of the second tier of government in Botswana has led to three Presidential Commissions. While the first two (1970 and 1978) rejected establishing an integrated LG structure, the last commission proposed a structure that makes councils the head of all local institutions. However,

the government rejected that recommendation along with others that sought to strengthen local councils. Despite these rejections, councils and a number of stakeholders in local governance and development still agitate for devolution and strengthening of the local council system by giving them a greater degree of autonomy in a number of areas (personnel management and expenditure discretion).

The current trend of decentralisation in Africa is towards developing autonomous, democratic and efficient systems for local governance, however, the present set-up in Botswana does not follow this trend. It is too dominated by the central government, which leads, controls and delivers. Democratic local institutions represented by councils appear to have been crowded out by parallel state and local bodies. As a result, the current set-up, although ensuring that abundant services are made available to the people, has structural deficiencies (an expensive administrative set-up and underused infrastructure and equipment). This makes service delivery too expensive to be adopted by any country without abundant financial resources.

Effectiveness of Botswana's decentralisation approach to natural resource use and distribution

Not all government functions should be entirely decentralised. Following the principle of subsidiarity, a function should not be decentralised to a lower level if: (a) it is critical in the achievement of central-level goals and its sustainability at the local level cannot be guaranteed and (b) if the capacity to perform the function does not exist or the function at this level is not cost-effective.

In Africa, land and natural resources are critical for both national and local development. Botswana, unlike many Africa countries, has managed to carry out land reform in a very successful manner. It has managed to keep traditional authorities out of land issues and made natural resources[4] the preserve of the central government without any particular local institution claiming rights of use or entitlements to royalties from their exploitation. Consequently, the country has managed to avoid the chaotic land disputes that seem to affect local development in many countries in Africa. In addition, by nationalising or centralising all natural resources and suppressing any discussion by tribal authorities for royalties, the state has managed to control the key resource base of the country and distributed those resources fairly well. Botswana has managed to evade the resource curse that frequently plagues African countries with abundant oil and mineral resources.

The politics of decentralisation

Decentralisation policy in Africa (or elsewhere) is driven by politics and interests. The gains of local politicians and bureaucrats mean losses for their counterparts at the centre. In spite of the noble policy intentions, in reality the current decentralisation process as seen in the present set-up of the central government–LG

relationship, may not lead to complete devolution in the near future. The politics of decentralisation also manifests abundantly in the drive to efficiency in delivery of services. This however will be clarified in the decentralisation policy which is in its final drafting stage.

Gaps in decentralisation intentions and practices

Analyses of decentralisation that only examine the formal arrangements (i.e., constitution, laws, regulations and policy discussions) will be inadequate. This is because what takes place in practice is sometimes different from what is stated in the statutes. In the case of Botswana, the NDP 7 (1991–1997) declared that it would strengthen the role of local authorities in promoting economic development and delegate greater responsibility for development planning, finance and implementation to the local authorities while increasing their capacity to manage these responsibilities (GoB, 1991: 463). However in practice this has not yet taken place.

There is an intellectual appreciation in Botswana, even among the central government bureaucrats, of the need to decentralise and some gestures are made to do so. Given that there is no government policy on decentralisation, there is no clear understanding and consensus on the sort of decentralisation that the country is interested in pursuing.

For devolution to become a reality there is a need for a strong central government political leadership to be convinced that a strengthened council system does not take away their power and influence.

Enabling the role of the central government in decentralisation and local governance

The state has a key role to play in facilitating political, economic, financial and accountable decentralisation policies. While the central government can be seen as facilitative in terms of providing adequate financial resources to LGs and local institutions in Botswana, two critical areas still remain to be improved, namely (a) the supportive legal framework within which district councils operate and (b) human resource management.

Legally, the Constitution of Botswana is silent on whether local councils are the second tier of government, as it establishes Parliament as the only supreme body that can legislate. Local councils are established by subsidiary legislation (Acts of Parliament).

In comparison with other countries, LGs have been created through a number of legal instruments. In Brazil, Denmark, France, Nigeria, and India, LGs are created by national constitutions, while in Australia and the US they are created by state constitution. In the UK, Ghana, and Uganda, a legislative instrument is needed to

create LGs, while in Canada and Pakistan, provincial legislations are used. China uses executive order (Shah, 2006).

The fact that local councils were established through subsidiary legislation rather than a provision entrenched in the constitution may or may not become a challenge to local councils if there is a commitment to decentralisation. In Ghana and other countries there is a constitutional clause that entrenches decentralisation, defining it as devolution and ensuring that there is a constitutional provision that entitles LGs to a specific share of national revenue. However, commitment to giving local authority a constitutional status has not occurred.

In terms of human resource management, all senior officers at the local level belong to the centrally controlled personnel management system of the civil service that is responsible for their recruitment, selection, training, transfer, discipline, salaries and conditions of service. The rationale for centralising employment and human resource management was to ensure that government employees, no matter where they work (local or centre), would have equal conditions of employment. The process, however, is dampening initiative, innovation and accountability at the local level. It has worked against councils in terms of the time it takes for the central government to fill established positions at the local level.

Role of donors and organised groups in promoting decentralisation

As the country's economy started to improve with the discovery of diamonds coupled with good national leadership, donor agencies such as Danida, GTZ, and CIDA – who used to support the county on decentralisation issues – began to disappear, arguing that the country was capable of running its own affairs without any donor assistance.

In the absence of donors, diverse interest groups have emerged to advocate for more decentralisation. These include senior civil servants working in the councils, district commissioners, councillors, BALA, intellectuals and politicians.

2.6.2 Challenges

Legal ambit of decentralisation and LGs

Decentralisation and LG systems were established through legislation (Cap 40:01 and Cap 40:02) and not by the constitution, as is the case in other countries. Given that they are established by subsidiary legislation, learning from other countries such as Tanzania (1972–1982), they can easily be abolished by parliament without the public having a say.

Concerns expressed by different groups on decentralisation implementation in Botswana

Decentralisation is not a myth in Botswana. Since independence the country has seen some of the central government powers, resources and responsibilities being transferred to local authorities. However, in an attempt to keep a reasonable balance between the centre and local, many stakeholders (academic, civil servants, senior government officials, councillors, and identifiable groups) have expressed concerns, mostly about the slow pace at which decentralisation in the country is being pursued. Three Presidential Commissions have already been established to recommend ways to improve the LG system. Even where recommendations of the Presidential Commissions have been accepted, implementation has been slow. A decentralisation policy is currently being formulated, although it is not clear which direction the policy will take.

Supervision and subordination of LG institutions

Interaction between local councils and deconcentrated sectoral agencies is weak. It is mainly through district forums (such as DDCs and during preparation of district development plans) that local councils interact formally with deconcentrated departments. Given that there is no hierarchy among the four local institutions, the successful co-ordination of their activities has depended on the personality of the DC more than the institutional framework that exists at the local level. At district administrative level, the DC is expected to co-ordinate all central government institutions working in the district; however, the DCs are unable to do so as many of the central government employees receive instructions directly from their parent ministry.

Deconcentrated local councils or devolved local councils?

In Botswana, the operations of local councils resemble 'deconcentrated units' of the Ministry of Local Government (MLG). In other words, local councils implement the mandates of the MLG in the field rather than the mandates of local electorates.

Inefficiency in institutional arrangements for services delivery at local level

While the proliferation of service providers ensures continuous service provision, the cost of providing services needs to be analysed carefully in Botswana because the services appear to be inefficiently provided. There is a need to integrate institutional arrangements.

> 'In my view the three parallel systems of district councils, district administration, and direct sectoral provision must be integrated. It's just duplication of resources and effort and is making our system inefficient. There are so many unclear demarcations of responsibilities between the district council and district commissioners' offices.' (A District Commissioner)

Macroeconomic stability, good-quality national leadership, and a small population leading to less pressure on resources seem to crowd-out any negative effects that the present administrative and institutional inefficiencies may have on service provision. In other words, the abundant financial resources seem to buy out some of the institutional inefficiencies in service provision.

Benchmarking progress in decentralisation

Although Botswana has been very technocratic in her approach to assessing progress in her Vision 2016, there has not been any measure on progress made in decentralisation and local governance.

> 'It is difficult to monitor progress in decentralisation and commitment of the government to its implementation when there are no benchmarks against which to measure deliverables.' (A senior employee of BOCONCO)

The challenge is now on the government not only to develop a decentralisation policy but also to develop deliverable benchmarks so that progress can be assessed by the ministry as well as by civil society organisations.

2.6.3 Suggestions for improvement

Separation of sectoral ministries' policy role from implementation

The sectoral ministries must focus on providing policies and regulation while the implementation of projects and delivery of services are left to local councils and deconcentrated departments. That means that a number of central government sectoral officers or departments that operate parallel systems at the local level would need to integrate their operations with the local councils. This would compel sectoral ministries to transfer some of their employees with competence to the local level.

Compelling local councils to increase their internally generated revenue

Councils, especially the urban ones, need to be compelled to improve on their efforts at collecting their own revenue. The formula for distributing grants to local councils needs to be reintroduced with additional parameters: local council efforts. This will provide incentives for local councils that make much effort to mobilise their own revenue (responsive factor) to get more grants while the formula penalises those that do not.

Decentralise some aspects of human resource management to local councils

The MLG should develop recruitment policy/guidelines based on which the council may be given the authority to recruit people to fill established positions. When a guided recruitment policy is offered, local councils will be able to develop innovative

approaches to attract people to their areas. An alternative and arguably better approach would be to turn the Department of Local Government Service Management (DLGSM) into an independent LG service commission with the responsibility of regulating local council employees (see Table 2.9).

Table 2.9. Human resource management options to be considered

	Human resource policy & regulatory guidelines	*Recruitment*	*Terms of employment*	*Training*	*Dismissal*
LG service commission	√			√	
Local councils		√	√	√	√

Giving LGs some degree of discretion in the use of central government grants

The imperatives of national unity and uniformity in development across local areas have resulted in the centralisation of financial, human and natural resources in the country. In fiscal terms, this signifies that there are few viable sources of revenue available to local councils. The implication is that local councils will continue to rely considerably on central government grants for much of their expenditure needs. In both the developed and developing world, there is a considerable reliance of LGs on central governments, therefore this should not be used as a pretext to continuously deny local councils some degree of autonomy in the use of their grants. In fact in a democratic system, funds that are approved by the central government to be transferred to local councils are grants that the recipient (LGs) should have some discretion over. At the moment central government development and recurrent grants are non-discretionary.

Improving bottom-up planning and budgeting

The decentralised planning and budgetary framework needs to eliminate the hierarchical review and revision of local council budgets. Under a proper local planning and budgeting process, LGs are given firm budget ceilings at the beginning of the budget formulation cycle. As long as the district budget conforms to these ceilings and the associated (centrally-issued) planning and budget guidelines, there should be no space for central officials to modify local council budgets and priorities in a discretionary manner. The central government needs to provide formula-based budgetary allocation within which local councils could be allowed to plan their budgets. This would require the MoFDP & MLG to review the national planning and budget guidelines.

Creation of Local Government Finance Commission

It is clear from the analysis that the MLG is not a neutral actor in central government–LG relationship. The Ministry is represented by civil servants and politicians

that have vested interests in a deconcentrated LG system. One of the key weapons that the MLG uses to dominate local council is central government grants that are embedded in the MLG's budget. A LG Finance Commission will serve the interest of the councils better than the current set-up where the MLG controls the budget of local councils. The commission will have responsibility for negotiating with the central government on LG finances, designing a formula for sharing central government grants among the councils, overseeing disbursement of LG funds, etc. The membership of the Commission will consist of strong representation from the councils, the MLG, MoFDP and BALA. In Uganda and Ghana this has worked very well. Botswana must also consider passing inter-governmental fiscal transfer law that would enable the central government to automatically transfer a specific percentage of the total national revenue to the commission to be shared by the local councils.

Notes

1. State President; Finance & Development Planning; Works & Transport; Health; Education & Skills Development.; Labour & Home Affairs; Communications, Science & Technology; Agriculture; Trade & Industry; Foreign Affairs & International Coop.; Environment, Wildlife & Tourism; Lands & Housing; Local Government; Minerals, Energy & Water; Resources; and Youth, Sport & Culture.
2. The new state was established under the shadow of hostile regional forces so there was the need to centralise in order to have national unity, legitimacy and survival.
3. A state whose ideological underpinnings are developmental and one that seriously attempts to deploy its administrative and political resources to the task of economic development (Mkandawire, 1998: 2).
4. The management of parks, natural resources and wildlife is the responsibility of the Department of Wildlife at the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, which also allows private tourist operators to manage forest and wildlife on behalf of the community.