

Universal Periodic Review of Botswana

Child Rights

SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES FROM PREVIOUS CYCLES

In the last review of 2018, States recommended that Botswana : pursue the implementation of plans and strategies to promote the rights of the child; continue conducting the Situational Analysis of the National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children; allocate dedicated funding to the National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children for more effective implementation; implement gender equality policies that foster girls' access to health and education; and raise awareness among the population about sexual and gender-based violence. These recommendations were made by Cuba, Slovenia, Singapore, and Mexico and they were supported by the government of Botswana. Finland made a recommendation for Botswana to take all appropriate measures to ensure children's equal access to quality education, including, when possible, education in their own language. However, Botswana indicated that it would examine it and provide a response in due time. All the recommendations were partially implemented.

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

The rights of the child are enshrined in the Children's Act (2009). Botswana conducted a Situational Analysis on the National Plan of Action on OVCs in 2019. However, it has not published any information since, on how identified areas of attention in the report have been translated into concrete action. The Children's Act (2009) established a high-level, multi-sectoral National Children's Council (NCC), the National Children's Consultative Forum (NCCF), and Child Protection Committees (CPCs) with government and community representation. In 2021, the Botswana Police Service announced the launch of the Gender and Child Protection Unit which would handle issues concerning domestic violence and sexual abuse related to children. The Unit is operational in Gaborone, Francistown, Shakawe and Boteti area. On 28 February 2023, the Botswana Police Service (BPS) launched the Child Friendly Policing Standard Operating Procedures . There is no statistical information concerning cases dealt with by Gender and Child Protection Unit.

CHALLENGES

- 1 The mandate for Child welfare issues is spread across different Ministries.
- 2 There is no information available on the implementation progress of Child Protection Committees.

IMPACTS

1. There is no centralised budgeting and effective coordination of children's issues in the country.
2. There is inability to monitor and evaluate effectiveness of programmes. It is difficult to determine extent of protection children.



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RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The government should adopt a revised strategy on how to resuscitate or establish the CPCs as they can address grassroots vulnerabilities of children in the villages.
2. Establish a special budget for supporting Child Protection Committees and strengthen their capacity to carry out their mandate.
3. Review the Children's Act of 2009 to ensure its compliance with other legislation. For example, the Anti-Human Trafficking Act of 2014.

QUESTIONS

1. Are there any plans to establish a Child Welfare Ministry?
2. Provide information on the number of children who have been subject to abuse and have been effectively removed from shelters, rehabilitated, and socially reintegrated.
3. Provide gender disaggregated statistics and information about the status of cases being dealt with under the Gender and Child Protection Unit.

SOURCES

Mmegi, August 11th, 2022, <https://www.mmegi.bw/opinion-amp-analysis/unicef-launches-eseng-mo-ngwaneng-campaign/news>, (accessed September 18th, 2022)

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