

DRAFT REPORT

REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

NATIONAL REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION

“Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future”

Ministry of Education and Skills Development

2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0.

Introduction.....

2.0. Major Reforms and Innovation Introduced.....

2.1 Organizational Structure & Management of Education.....

2.1.1 Basic

Education.....

2.1.2 Regional

Operations.....

2.1.3 Education Support Services.....

2.1.4 Cooperate

Services.....

2.1.5 Other Developments under the Ministry.....

2.2. The aims and Purpose of Education at Each Level.....

2.3. Curricular Policies, Education Content and Teaching and Learning
Strategies.....

.....

2.4. The Legal frame Work of Education.....

3.0. Main Policies, Achievements and Lesson Learnt.....

3.1 Access to

Education.....

3.1.1 Pre-School

Education.....

3.1.2. Basic

Education.....

3.1.3 Vocational Education and Training.....

3.1.4 Tertiary

Education.....

3.1.5.Action Taken to Reach Children &Adults, currently excluded.....

3.1.6. Gender Equality and empowerment.....

3.1.7. Learning Outcomes Particularly Concerning the efforts to improve Learning
Achievements.....

.....

3.1.8. Teacher
education.....

4.0. The Role of Education System in combating Poverty.....

5.0. Inclusive
Education.....

5.1. Approaches, Scope & Content.....

5.2. Public
Policies.....

5.3 Learners and
Teachers.....

5.3.1 Curriculum
Adaptation.....

5.3.2 Language of
Instruction.....

5.3.3. Content
Selection.....

5.3.4. Teacher Learning approaches in Inclusive Curricular.....

5.3.5. Instructional and Support Materials.....

1.0 Introduction

Education has grown dramatically since independence. In terms of quality and scale, enrolments, teachers and schools, the education system is far larger than the one inherited in 1966. This is due to the priority that has been given to the development of education by Botswana Government. Consistent with the United Nations Declarations, the Government of Botswana adopted the Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE) in 1994. Specifically, the Policy seeks to:

- (i) Increase access and equity in education and training through both formal and non-formal means;
- (ii) Effectively prepare students for life, citizenship and the world of work;
- (iii) Develop a responsive and relevant training geared to the needs of the economy
- (iv) Improve and maintain the quality of the Education System
- (v) Enhance the performance and status of the Teaching Profession
- (vi) Provide an effective management of the Education System
- (vii) Ensure cost effectiveness/Cost sharing in the financing of education

The adoption of the RNPE was a landmark in the provision of education as a right to all children in Botswana. This commitment is further reinforced by the Country's Vision 2016 which provides a long term strategy within which education and training plays a pivotal role. The Vision calls for transformation of Botswana into a nation which is 'educated informed', 'prosperous, productive and innovative', 'compassionate, just and caring', 'safe and secure', 'open democratic and accountable', 'moral and tolerant' and 'united and proud.

Through its pillar of, "An educated informed nation, the Vision views education as a vital mechanism for empowering citizens in economic and social participation. It

envisages school products that can generate economic growth and employment through enhanced productivity and venture creation.

The goals of the RNPE and the ideals of Vision 2016 are realized through the National Development Plans which provide a framework for the country's development. Although the NDP 9 plan is coming to an end in March 2009, it aims at;

- Increasing access and equity at all levels to provide Botswana with the opportunity for continued and universal education;
- Improving quality and relevance with the view to providing an education that is appropriate and competitive and that will enable learners to achieve their full potential, secure employment relevant to the local and global market needs, and live meaningful lives;
- Developing information communication and technology (ICT) to enable students acquire key skills of computer literacy and to improve monitoring of the development of education and training;
- Maintaining standards of teaching, examinations and research in tertiary education through Tertiary Education Council and establishment of the Botswana Examinations Council to develop relevant assessment procedures;
- Strengthening the response to HIV and AIDS by promoting behavioural change, prevention and mitigation;
- Improving productivity and service delivery; by adopting innovative measures such as the Performance Management System.
- Strengthening partnerships with the private sector and other stakeholders to complement government efforts in the provision of education.

These objectives have been achieved through a number of strategies that were put in place to develop the necessary learning skills, competencies and achieve social participation.

2.0. Major reforms and innovations introduced

2.1 Organizational, Structure and Management of Education System

The structure of the Ministry was based on an Organization and Methods Review Exercise of 1992. This structure had nine departments and four divisions. However, current developments and demands for specialised skills in specific areas of the economy led to a review of the structure and functions of the Ministry in order to streamline those functions and improve service delivery.

The review which began in 2006 was completed with the adoption of a new structure of the Ministry of Education and Skills Development that was approved by Parliament in March 2008. This was a response to the massive expansion and growth which required enhanced management and supervisory structures at regional level and more focused monitoring and evaluation by the Ministry. The increased enrolments and number of schools; the expanded mandate of the Ministry to include pre-school education and the high demand for out of school education placed considerable strain on its structures to provide quality education.

The Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE) recommended integration of emerging contemporary issues such as HIV and AIDS, environmental education, gender awareness, population and family life education, life skills education and ICT in the curriculum. In order to implement these recommendations effectively, the Ministry needed a consolidated structure that would comprehensively address these issues through various strategies.

The Ministry of Education has in the past adopted decentralization of its structures and functions to the regions, as one of its strategies to improve efficiency and timely service delivery to its clientele. However, decentralization has not been effective in delivering the Ministry's mandate as it was not well coordinated. There were inconsistencies in the manner in which the regional structures were organized. For example, Department of Primary Education had six regions while Departments of Secondary Education and Teacher Training had five and twelve regions respectively. These regional structures were not even aligned to the local authority administrative structures (District Councils). Besides some responsibilities were overlapping, resulting in duplication of functions among departments. These challenges and many others that have not been mentioned here have compelled the Ministry to re-align its functions in order to position itself to provide inclusive education as well as attain the Millennium Development Goals.

In line with the Revised O&M, the responsibilities and functions of the Ministry of Education and Skills Development have been rationalized and streamlined into four major groupings, namely, Basic Education; Regional Operations, Education Support Services ; and Cooperate Services. These groupings will enable the Ministry to use its resources more efficiently as well as improve the quality of services to its customers.

2.1.1. Basic Education

The government's main objective is to make basic education accessible to learners of all age groups; create opportunities for lifelong learning so that individuals could attain their full potential and contribute to the economy and technological development of the country. These will be achieved through the acquisition of basic skills, knowledge and attitudes essential for lifelong learning.

In order to provide a sound basic education, it was necessary to group the following departments under basic education.

- Pre-Primary and Primary Education
- Secondary Education;
- Out of School education and training;
- Technical and Vocational Education
- Curriculum Development and Evaluation

The first four departments will be responsible for policy development, coordination and implementation and monitoring at their respective levels while Curriculum Development and Evaluation will provide leadership and coordination in designing, monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum as well as curriculum research and provision of appropriate curriculum support materials.

2.1.2 Regional operations

As indicated earlier, the expansion of the system has imposed tremendous strain on the administrative and management capacity of the education system. This has called for a revision of the organization and procedures as well as strengthening of the existing decentralization system by developing an integrated regional structure, aligned to local authorities. This arrangement is meant to improve coordination of regional activities and to enable the Ministry to discharge the professional services of the various departments of the ministry at local level effectively. It is also meant to give the regional structures some power and authority to make certain decision without having to seek authority from the head office.

Each region will be headed by a director who will supervise all the Ministry's departments at regional level. The regional structures will play a crucial role in

the development and delivery of education by supervising and coordinating all functions at regional level relating to curriculum implementation, delivery of out of school programmes, special support services as well as the technical services.

2.1.3. Education Support services

In order to avoid duplication and overlapping responsibilities, the Support Services has been organized such that all the support services' functions that were performed by the various departments have been brought under the Education Support Services. This function will be performed through the following departments;

(i) Tertiary Education financing, responsible for post secondary education financing, in particular, student loans and recovery.

(ii) Department of Special Support Services, responsible for coordinating, monitoring and implementation of support programmes relating to guidance and counselling, special education, HIV and AIDS, sports and safety which include boarding and nursing services. Through this department, the Ministry aims to provide inclusive education.

(iii) Education Technology and Media services, has consolidated the functions of education broadcasting, educational library services, ICT, material development and publications which were initially performed by Division of Special Education, Non-Formal Education, Teaching Aid Production Unit of the Curriculum Department and the ICT Component that was coordinated by the Division of Planning Statistics and Research (DPSR). It is responsible for the production of all educational support materials.

(v) Department of Planning and Research Services, which was initially Department of Planning, Statistics and Research (DPSR) has consolidated all

the research functions that were performed by other departments. The Department is responsible for guiding policy implementation by coordinating all the Ministry's research efforts.

(vi) Department of Technical Services has been established to carry out all the Ministry's functions relating to development and maintenance of physical facilities of junior secondary schools that were initially carried out by different departments and Boipelego Education Unit of the Ministry of Education. It seeks to address the public concerns about lack and poor maintenance of schools.

2.1.4 Corporate Services

The functions of Teaching Management and the Ministry management have been grouped under the Corporate Services. This was in realization of the fact that, although these departments are using different Employment Acts, they are basically performing the same functions, that of recruitment and personnel management. The Corporate Services will be composed of two directorates and departments that fall within these directorates are:

(i) Civil Service Personnel, responsible for human resources and office operations; strategy management and corporate communications, information communication and media services; development, financing and procurement.

(ii) Teaching Service Personnel, responsible for teaching manpower planning; compensation and benefits; teacher recruitment and development.

2.1.5 Other developments under the Ministry's Structure include the establishment of;

(i) Tertiary Unit

The Tertiary Act, 1999 gave the Tertiary Education Council among others the responsibility to formulate and coordinate tertiary education policy. Although the O&M review established that most of the functions of TEC were relevant, it nonetheless noted that the Ministry was not participating effectively in tertiary education as it was not involved in the formulation and development of the policy. As a result, the Ministry has been given the responsibility to develop and coordinate tertiary education policy through the Tertiary Unit.

(ii) Inspectorate Unit

The O&M has recommended establishment of an Inspectorate Unit as an autonomous body to oversee all issues of quality assurance in schools. This is in line with the RNPE which recommended an independent inspectorate unit. The major advantage of this development is that the Unit will now focus on quality assurance, maintenance of standards for basic education, through development and coordination of policy. Unlike the previous arrangement where the Inspectorate Unit played two contradictory roles of supervision and at the same time inspections of schools, the Unit will no longer be responsible for supervision of schools. The Bill to establish this Unit has been submitted to Parliament for consideration.

2.2 The Aims and purpose of education at each level

The aims and purpose of education are as stipulated in the RNPE. The overall objectives of the policy is to raise educational standards at all levels and

particular emphasis is made on the development of science and technology; making further education and training more relevant and available to large number of people; improving partnership between school and community, providing life-long education to all section of population; assuming more effective control of the examination mechanisms in order to ensure that the broader objectives of the curriculum are realized; and achieving efficiency in educational development. At school level, the specific aims as articulated by the RNPE is to;

- a) Improve management and administration to ensure higher learning and achievement.
- b) Improve quality of instruction.
- c) Implement broader and balanced curricular geared towards developing qualities and skills needed for the world of work.
- d) Emphasize pre-vocational orientation in preparation for a strengthened post-school technical and vocational education and training.
- e) Improve the response of schools to the needs of different ethnic groups in the society.

2.3 Curricular policies, educational content and teaching and learning strategies

Government policy on curriculum development is summarised in two related documents; the Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE, 1994) and Vision 2016. Both documents define the roadmap along which curriculum development should proceed in the middle to long term. The RNPE demands the development of a curriculum that is vocational in orientation, has a broad number of practical subjects and emphasizes foundation skills applicable to the world of work (RNPE 1994, Item 7.3). The Policy further emphasizes that whatever curriculum is developed, it must relate to the world of work in the form of curricular activities that espouse the processes and organisation of production and demands of

working life. On the other hand, Vision 2016 views education as a vital mechanism for empowering citizens in economic and social participation. The Vision emphasizes development of entrepreneurs who are capable of creating employment through the establishment of new enterprises.

Both basic and post basic education in Botswana aims at providing young people with a broad based education that prepares them for life, society, work and further occupational learning. Consistent with this pronouncement, the lower primary standard 1-4 curriculum has been recently reviewed and revised to take cognisance of the current societal and economic aspirations of Botswana. The curriculum has been repackaged to include, in addition to the traditional subjects of Languages and Sciences, new learning areas such as Cultural Studies, Creative and Performing Arts and Environmental Science. In essence, the curriculum at lower primary is aimed at providing a platform that promotes a holistic growth of individuals who are in line with the society in which they live. At the upper primary level, the curriculum is further diversified and increases the learning areas to provide a broader knowledge base that prepares the learners, not only for life but for the world of work. The post primary curriculum has also been closely aligned to the basic curriculum such that there is ease of transition between the different levels.

The junior secondary programme has been organised around two broad areas; a core area that is done by all students comprising the orthodox languages and sciences and optional groups including Humanities, Sciences and creative Technical and Vocational subjects and enrichment subjects. In addition to the conventional subjects, a whole range of practical subjects has also been included. The increased number of practical subjects is meant to help students to develop an understanding and appreciation of technology, manipulative skills and familiarity with tools, equipment and materials. Through these, children will develop competence, and confidence in the application of computational skills,

entrepreneurial skills, critical thinking, interpersonal and enquiry skills in order to solve real life problems and work challenges. The Ministry of Education has continued to ensure that the curriculum is relevant to the children's lives by ensuring that foundation skills such as decision making, problem solving, self presentation, team work and computation form an integral part of the curriculum. These skills are transferable to a whole range of careers such as communication, word processing, programming, creative writing and instructional designing.

Furthermore, the post primary curriculum (both junior secondary and senior secondary curriculum) takes on board emerging societal issues such as HIV and AIDS, environmental issues, disaster management and civic responsibilities through infusion and integration. This approach allows the curriculum to maintain the sanctity of its learning areas while at the same time addressing social ills and expectations. The curriculum also addresses the psycho-social ills by providing skills for Life support materials. The main objective of these materials is to impart knowledge, develop healthy attitudes and instil skills for healthy decision making. The materials reflect such skills as problem solving, critical thinking, communication, decision making, creative thinking, self awareness, empathy and stress management.

A significant area where the Ministry of Education and Skills Training has had some success is in broadening and diversifying the curriculum at the senior secondary school level. The Ministry has developed a broad, practically oriented curriculum that provides opportunities for learners to develop technological skills that are related to the world of work; pays attention to the development and acquisition of attitudes, values and skills required for economic development in a rapidly changing world and provides opportunities for learners to develop information technology skills, develop basic prevocational knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable them to acquire and sustain jobs. The programme is diversified to include academic, technical and commercial subjects thus

accommodating a wide range of abilities and interests. In addition, the programme links with industry and the private sector, to prepare learners for the world of work.

The new Senior Secondary school programme has a strong Guidance and Counselling component that is meant to assist learners with life skills and in the choice of subjects. In order to ensure that learners are prepared for the world of work, curricular and co-curricular activities have been developed to provide an awareness and understanding of the world of work and appreciation of the values and attitudes towards all types of work. This includes knowledge about the economy, the processes and organisation of production and the demands of the working life. Hence the curriculum includes such subjects as Commerce with planned co-curricular activities like structured visits to companies, work simulations such as mini enterprises, productive activities such as school gardens and community projects. Hands on experiences and a direct involvement of people from industry are central to the development and nurturing of work related values and attitudes.

The post primary curriculum has a strong element of Career Guidance. The rationale for the inclusion of this aspect is that students need to understand the range of occupations available and to identify their own potential areas of interest and aptitude. Careers' Guidance is therefore offered as a way of equipping students with the necessary skills and knowledge to enable them to make informed decisions about occupational development and the labour market. It emphasizes consistency between the students' real abilities, values and interests and not preconceptions, parental or societal expectations that may be at tangent with the students' aptitude.

2.4 The legal framework of education

The Ministry of Education derives its mandate from the Education Act Cap: 58:01 Section 3(i) which mandates the Minister of Education to promote primary and post primary education. The Act was amended in 2002 to incorporate Tertiary Education and to give Botswana Examinations Council the authority to conduct the examinations as an independent authority. The Revised National Policy on Education gave the Ministry the responsibility to coordinate pre-school education. The Education Act is being reviewed and will take on board the new developments and to enable the Ministry to address the new challenges that have emerged such as the expanded mandate of the Ministry.

3.0 Main policies, achievements and lesson learnt

3.1 Access to education

3.1.1 Pre-School Education

The RNPE has given the Ministry of Education the responsibility to provide pre-school education. However, this responsibility is limited to provision of an enabling environment by providing policy direction, curriculum development and support materials; teacher training and provision of grants to support Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community Based Organizations (CBO's) demonstrating commitment in this service

Through this policy initiatives, the Early Childhood Care and Education Policy was developed in 2001. The Policy sets out a framework for registration and inspection of all early childhood education facilities. It emphasizes the inclusion of children with special needs into the pre-school education as well as the need for the establishment of pre-primary units, Day Care Centres and Baby Care

units to be run as separate facilities with a clear demarcation between the three services.

A comprehensive approach to early childhood education has been adopted by developing an integrated early childhood care development (IECD) programme. This programme target children from diverse backgrounds including children with intellectual disabilities; hearing and visual impairment. The programme ensures a holistic development of children by integrating health, nutrition, water and environment and sanitation as vital components for child education and protection. The programme has successfully been piloted in two districts of Ghanzi and Mahalapye. Plans are underway to evaluate the programme and the outcome of the evaluation will inform its future implementation.

A pre-primary curriculum framework for the 4-6 year group has been developed. Based on the integrated model of early childhood development, the framework has emerged as a response to the RNPE, the Early Childhood Care and Education Policy (2001) and the NDP9. This policy documents is consistent with international frameworks such as the Jomtiem World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) 1990, which in article 5 specifically calls for early childhood care and education and the Dakar Framework of Action (2000) which emphasises the expansion and improvement of early childhood care and education.

Access to pre-school education still remains the greatest challenge for government. However, the participation rate has increased from 10 percent in 2003 to 17 percent in 2007. This is attributed to expansion of pre-schools which increased from 453 to 477 over the same period. The expansion though minimal, has gradually enhanced the participation of children with special needs, since 129 disabled children were enrolled in pre-schools in 2004/05. Equally important is the fact that the number of teachers has increased by 126 percent from 690 in 2001 to 1587 in 2007 of which 51.6 percent are trained. The government grant

which is provided to communities to encourage them to set playgrounds has also enhanced participation at this level.

3.1.2 Basic education

The government of Botswana has taken a decision to make basic education which comprises seven years of primary and three years of junior secondary, accessible to all learners and to create opportunities for lifelong learning so that individuals could attain their full potential and contribute meaningfully to the development of the country. As a result, significant progress has been made in ensuring that all children have access to, and complete basic education. This is evident in the net enrolment rates (NER) for children aged 7-13 and 6-12 which stand at 97.8 and 89.6 percent respectively. Equally important is the fact that Gross Enrolment Rates has consistently been more than 100 percent since 1994. These achievements are attributed to expansion of primary schools which increased from 770 in 2003 to 790 in 2008; provision of boarding facilities in the remote areas supported by the flexible policy on admission also enabled children in the remote areas and other vulnerable groups to easily access education. Additional special education units, provision of assessment facilities and special education services as well as sponsorships for children with special education needs have also contributed to the increased participation in education.

Another notable achievement is the increase in the number of children especially boys, who re-enter the primary school system following drop out. Thus whilst the boys' dropout rate is higher than that of girls at primary school level, the number of boys who are readmitted into the cycle are higher than that of girls. There is also evidence of decline in the overall dropout rate from 1.9 percent in 2001 to 1.4 percent in 2005. This is partly attributed to the provision of boarding facilities which have reduced the distance travelled by children from home to school especially in remote areas settlements which are far from villages where schools

are located. Another factor which has impacted on the reduction of dropouts is the improved school feeding programme.

A high percentage of 96.6 of learners at primary are able to transit to junior secondary education. Similarly, the transition rates from junior to secondary school increased from 49 percent in 2004 to 66.7 percent in 2008. These achievements are influenced by the introduction of double shift programme, the expansion of secondary schools which amount to 277 including 44 private senior secondary schools.

3.1.3 Vocational Education and Training

The issue of access is being addressed in a variety of ways. At vocational and tertiary education emphasis has been on expansion and upgrading of facilities; provision of relevant training programmes; the provision of government sponsorship to cover private institutions and the implementation of equal opportunity and liberal admission policies.

(i) Development of New Programmes

As reported in the last report, the Ministry of Education has developed a new programme known as Botswana Technical Education Programme (BTEP). The programme among others aims to;

- Improve access to, and quality of vocational education and training for learners including people with disabilities through specially designed programmes,
- Produce graduates who are trainable, employable or have the ability and initiative to start their own businesses and to

- Provide a flexible system which offers an open career route to further and higher education and training.

This programme complements existing programmes such as the apprenticeship scheme, which is more trade specific and designed for those already in employment. The focus of the programme is to enable the individuals to learn in the context of a broader vocational area such as engineering, hospitality and tourism. Initially the programme was offered at four different levels namely, Foundation, Certificate, Advanced certificate and Diploma level. However, it has been expanded to include the “Fresh Start Programme” to give candidates with no or limited formal qualifications as well as those with varying ages, abilities and mild disabilities the opportunity to enter vocational education and training, to acquire generic skills and gain practical experiences in vocational areas which may improve their employment prospects, encourage them to enter into self employment or increase their chances of continuing their education and training. A new programme referred to as “Access Programme” for students with disabilities is being developed to start in 2011. The Programme will enable students with disabilities to access the BTEP courses.

(ii) Construction and expansion of colleges

The construction of additional technical colleges, the upgrading of seven brigades and the expansion of some vocational and technical colleges education to include new centres for special education have contributed immensely in increasing enrolments in vocational and technical education from 6,208 in 1996 to 13,027 in 2005.

3.1.4 Tertiary Education

The Tertiary Education is responsible for contributing to the socio-economic needs of the country by developing a highly skilled and competent human resource, capable of securing employment in the formal sector locally or internationally or generates employment for themselves or others. One of the major developments at this sector has been the establishment of the Tertiary Education Council (TEC) to drive tertiary education and skills development in this sector. The TEC is responsible for the promotion, coordination, determination and maintenance of standards of teaching, examinations and research in tertiary education. Since its inception, the Tertiary Education Council has facilitated expansion of tertiary education. The number of private tertiary education institutions has increased. Furthermore, the Government sponsorship has now been extended to these institutions, enabling more students to access Tertiary education and training.

Through the TEC, the education sector has developed the following;

- (i) The Tertiary Education Policy to guide implementation of tertiary education in the country in terms of coordination and management of educational institutions.
- (ii) The National Qualification Framework to address problems of quality, accreditation, articulation, coordination and to enable learners to transfer easily from one programme to another.
- (iii) The National Human Resource Development Strategy (HRDS) to guide future training and the development of the country's human resource strategy. It will match skills with the labour market and the needs of the economy as well as realising individual potentials to contribute to their personal growth and social development.

(iv) A comprehensive unit cost study has also been undertaken. The study has helped to design a draft funding model to help determine the unit cost of programmes at tertiary level so that a more rational and objective budget process can be established for funding tertiary education and training.

The Botswana International University of Science and Technology (BIUST) is being established to increase access to Tertiary Education and redirect Botswana's human resources development to skills and competencies that would promote research and innovation, support economic diversification and create high-value employment opportunities. BIUST will seek to partner with industry, local and international institutions, establish links with employers and the private sector to facilitate exchange programmes, work attachments and experience for both staff and students and ensure relevance to the world of work.

3.1.5 Actions taken to reach children, Youth and adults that are currently excluded.

Government efforts in meeting the learning needs of young people and adults has been focused on the transformation of the adult literacy programme; expanding educational opportunities at vocational and tertiary education, provision and expansion of distance and open learning opportunities; as well as the promotion of partnerships in education..

The Botswana National literacy Programme has continued to address the varied needs of out of school youth and adults. The Programme has been transformed into three new programmes namely, adult basic, giving adults the opportunity to complete primary education equivalence of basic education, out of school children's programme also providing primary education equivalence of basic education, and the skills training programmes for both adults and out of school

children. This is a sequel to the recommendation of the National Commission on Education which calls for the establishment of such a programme.

The Botswana College of Open and Distance Learning (BOCODOL) gives the out of school young people and adults who need to improve their academic education and enhance their knowledge, skills and competencies the opportunity to pursue Junior secondary education and localised Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education(BGCSE) as well as the vocational, professional and management courses.

This programme has significantly expanded learning opportunities at secondary level on a nation-wide scale to the extent that the enrolment figures have exceeded the NDP 9 projections of 4 000 students per year and consequently reached a cumulative enrolment of about 25 000 in 2006.

3.1.6 Gender Equality and Empowerment

Female participation accounted for over half the net and gross enrolments at both primary and secondary schools prior to NDP 7. However, current statistics show that percentage of boys and girls is almost the same at these levels. At post secondary level, the access and participation of females used to be very low in the 1990s, but the enrolment trends reflect a gradual increase over the past years. Although vocational education has slightly increased from 29.9 percent in 1996 to 34.3 percent in 2005, generally more males than females are enrolled at this level.

While the College of Agriculture and Vocational and Technical Training centres, have lower participation rates, the colleges of education have a higher participation rate females. In 2005, 59 percent of learners in colleges of

education (secondary) were females. Similarly Colleges of Education (primary) had the highest female participation rate at 60.4 in 2005.

This similar trend has also been observed in the National Literacy programme where the enrolments trends from 2000 to 2007 reflect that the programme is more popular among females. The first National Literacy Survey conducted in 1993, reported a high literacy rate among females. It recorded a national literacy rate of 68.9 percent with 66.9 and 70.3 percent for males and females respectively. The second National Literacy Survey of 2003 reported an increase of 12 percent in the literacy rate from 68.9 percent in 1993 to 81 percent. The gender disaggregated data reflected a female adult literacy rate of 82 percent compared to 80 percent for males.

3.1.7 Learning outcomes, particularly concerning the efforts to improve learning achievements

The Botswana Examinations Council was established by an Act of Parliament in 2002. It mandates the Council to conduct primary, junior and senior secondary education and any other examinations as required, with emphasis on maintaining standards appropriate for each level of education. The Council also conducts research to inform its work and the progress of education in general.

There is a Standard Four Assessment Programme in which the Council prepares question papers for Setswana, English and Mathematics and sends to schools to administer to pupils completing standard four. Each school is provided with a marking guide for scoring the responses of the pupils. The school uses the scores they obtain from these tests in conjunction with their continuous assessment marks for making a decision about the performance of learners. Other than that, there is no national information on how the pupils are performing on this programme. The Council has taken a sample of schools in the 2007

assessment to establish the level of national performance. The report is currently being prepared.

At primary school level the emphasis is to generate diagnostic information for improving the quality of education. There are now seven subjects examinable at the PSLE. Each subject has the examination content that can be placed into dimensions of cognitive performance. Results are issued indicating how each pupil performed in each dimension. There is a detailed item analysis report to further bring out learning areas where pupils are weak and where they are strong.

The main thrust in the Junior Certificate Examinations (JCE) is to produce results that are dependable for the selection of students to proceed into senior secondary education or other training programmes. Grading is currently norm-referenced, but pilot work is being done to change the procedure into a more criterion related grading.

The Cambridge School Certificate Examinations (CSE) has been localized to the Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE). The emphasis here is to create an examination programme that maintains the same standard as that offered by the Cambridge School Certificate Examinations and the International General Certificate of Secondary Education.

The general performance of learners reflects that girls continue to perform better than boys at Primary and Junior Secondary examinations. This trend is beginning to be reflected at the BGCSE as well.

The BEC in collaboration with the Division of Special Education continue to develop strategies to ensure that children with special needs are able to access the curriculum and examinations. As a result, the standard four attainment tests,

primary school leaving examinations and the Junior Certificate are adapted and modified to make them accessible to visually impaired learners. This is in response to the RNPE policy which seeks to provide equal opportunities and makes it possible for learners with special education needs to access all forms of formal assessment and in particular final examinations. BEC has created a special education unit to link up with our partners in the other departments for betterment of the service.

As a quality initiative, Botswana participates in several regional and international surveys that seek to compare the performance of students at different levels with those of other countries. Such surveys include the Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality(SACMEQ) for the standard (grade) 6 learners; the Teacher Education Management Study for teachers of Mathematics. The results of these surveys will inform curriculum development and teacher preparation as well as help to improve the quality of education.

3.1.8 Teacher Education

(i) Pre-service and in-service training

As reflected in the last report, teacher preparation is one of the areas that have been given considerable attention in the Revised National Policy on Education. One of the major developments has been raising the entry requirements of teachers in primary schools to a minimum of COSC/ O level and upgrading the teacher qualifications to a three year Diploma programme. Teacher preparation has also been improved to provide subject specialization at primary level. Teacher Training Programme also prepares teachers to handle adequately some of the new innovations such as guidance and counselling, special education, remedial teaching, innovative methods of teaching reading and various subjects.

On the basis of the RNPE policy recommendations, serving primary school teachers are offered the opportunity to upgrade their qualifications to a minimum of diploma level either through full time or part-time training. These policy initiatives have increased the number of teachers with diploma qualifications by 54.7 percent from 3,822 in 2005 to 5 912 in 2008.

(ii) Programmes/Projects

In recent years, a number of projects have been carried out to improve the quality and competencies of teachers. Entrepreneurial Education known as “Know your Business” has been introduced with the support of International Labour Organization (ILO) as a programme for trainers and teachers in secondary, vocational as well as higher education to equip the Youth with skills which can prepare them for the world of work, and to equip learners with life skills. The programme is expected to contribute to the realization of vision 2016, of a prosperous, productive and innovative nation” The programme will train teachers to impart entrepreneurial skills to their students through infusion of the modules in various subjects.

Two important studies were undertaken with the view to inform the system about the future training of teachers. A study on Teacher and Demand Supply for both primary and secondary education was undertaken by the Department of Teacher Training and Development. The aim of the study was to inform policy initiatives and the development of a ten year master plan for training teachers. The study will also help the Ministry to align training to the needs of the education system.

An evaluation of Teacher Education Programmes is ongoing to determine how well the programmes are responding to the needs of the system. The exercise will focus on evaluating the content of the secondary and primary education

diploma programmes, examine the framework of the curriculum to determine their effectiveness in producing teachers with desirable qualities; determine the relevance and effectiveness of the curriculum; review the credentials of and qualifications of lecturers to determine their levels of competence in facilitating acquisition of content, professional knowledge, skills and attitudes to teacher trainees.

(iii) Recruitment and Selection of Teachers

The recruitment procedures have been improved to ensure that the most suitable and appropriate candidates are recruited to serve in the teaching profession. This entails the development of selection criteria, and conducting selection procedures including screening and short listing of candidates. In this regard, the candidate's performance forms the basis for appointment decisions.

(iv) Transfer Policy for the Teaching Service

Following Recommendation 109 (1) of the RNPE, a Transfer Policy was developed to afford teachers an equal opportunity to serve in all parts of the country on a fair rotational basis. In an effort to address the many complaints that were often associated with the administration and management of transfers, the policy has been reviewed and a new policy which became effective in 2006 has created separate transfer boards for primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. Inter-regional Transfer Boards have also been established to deal with transfer across regions. In order to ensure consistency and uniformity in the application of this policy, guidelines have been developed to assist the boards in this exercise.

4.0 The role of education system in combating poverty

The goal of Vision 2016 is to reduce the proportion of the population living below poverty datum line to zero by the year 2016. Education is viewed as a vehicle for achieving this milestone by adopting an education system that promotes economic development, political stability, cultural advancement and the overall quality of life. .

5.0 Inclusive Education

5.1 Approaches, scope and content

For Botswana, the RNPE and Vision 2016, provides a roadmap for provision of inclusive education. Both policies mandates provision of education to all people including children with disabilities, children from poor socio-economic background, orphans due to HIV and AIDS, Remote Area Dwellers, child labourers, girl child in mainstream schools. Therefore, in line with these policy documents, inclusive education refers to the education system that ensures that all;

- (i) Children in the neighbourhood attend the same regular school and classroom, regardless of their differences in their learning needs as well as their disability, health, social and economic background.
- (ii) Children receive an appropriate quality education in effective schools and are assisted to achieve their potential irrespective of their physical and economic condition, sex and learning needs.
- (iii) Key stakeholders in the community, especially teachers, parents, pupils, staff, other Ministries and departments provide support and conducive learning environment and views inclusion as an important component which should be incorporated in the planning process.

5.2 Public Policies

It is estimated that, some 10-15 percent of school going age children are still not in schools, the majority of whom are children with disabilities, those with learning

difficulties, orphans, child labourers and street children, girl child, remote area dwellers and those from poor families. Consequently, the Ministry has developed policies and programmes to ensure that education for all objectives are attained.

The RNPE has intensified government efforts to increase access to education for disabled children. The policy ensures that all citizens including those with special education have equality of education opportunities. The policy also advocates for social integration of disabled in ordinary schools as well as the community; early identification and intervention to ensure maximum success for rehabilitation; provision of a comprehensive assessment and individualised instruction to provide maximum support to children.

Flexibility in the admission policy has been maintained to enable children from the remote areas dwellers to start school at a later age than other children of the same age who enter school system at the official entry age of six years. The lay off period for re-admission of girls who fell pregnant during the process of schooling has been reduced from 12 to 6 months to enable the girl child the opportunity to continue their formal education.

In the past females were under represented in vocational education. This was mainly due to the socialization process and restrictive policies that excluded the female learners from taking some programmes that were traditionally designed for males. This practice has been transformed by the application of the equal opportunity liberal policy which is being applied in vocational education and training to increases access. The introduction of the access programmes such as the hospitality and retail business targeting disabled children in vocational education is also a demonstration of the government approach to equity, equal opportunities and human right approach to education.

Other policy initiatives aimed at ensuring that disadvantaged children are not excluded from the school system include provision of; free basic education, transport for disabled to and from school; sponsorship for disabled learners to access programmes that are not available in the country as well as the social support programmes for children from poor families and other vulnerable children.

The Ministry of Education has started mainstreaming child labour into policies and programmes in order to increase access and retention of working children and those at risk of child labour. Some interventions and strategies have thus been identified to address child labour. This among others include working collaboratively with other relevant ministries to harmonise Children's Act with labour laws and harmonization of Settlement Policy with the Education Act, mainstreaming child labour in education, raising public awareness on child labour as a barrier to inclusive education, and strengthening existing out reach programmes.

Gender equality and empowerment is being promoted and concretized through mainstreaming and establishment of monitoring structures. For example, the Ministry of Education has established a Reference Committee comprised of representatives from different departments, to ensure mainstreaming of gender into the policies and programmes of the Ministry.

5.3 Learners and teachers

Inclusive curriculum in Botswana is perceived as a curriculum that is accessible to all learners irrespective of their ability, sex, race, ethnicity, colour or creed. It is a curriculum whose interconnected components; curriculum design, language of instruction, selected content , teaching/learning approaches and instructional support materials cater for learners of diverse socio-economic and cultural

contexts. The initiatives that have been developed by the Ministry of Education and Skills Development under the auspices of the Department of Curriculum Development and Evaluation have largely focused on curriculum adaptation, support materials development and teaching methodology.

5.3.1 Curriculum Adaptation

A curriculum can be structurally exclusive by nature of its design. For instance, the earlier curricular designs at both primary and secondary levels in Botswana tended to target the mainstream “average” learners. This meant that the attainment objectives set were primarily focused on the “average” learner. This model had the disadvantage of excluding all the learners who were either fast or slow. It also excluded all other learners with special needs. It should be noted that because of this focus on the average learner, most learners could not access and progress through the curriculum. To make the curriculum more inclusive, the Curriculum Development Division has adopted a universal design of learning (UDL) which offers differentiated activities that take on board learners of different abilities. The curriculum design at the primary level is also spiral allowing for constant revision and a gradual development of concepts. This particular model allows for ease of re-arrangement of content for learners in multi-standard classes in remote and mobile communities.

Botswana has been grappling with the issue of ensuring that learners in remote areas access the curriculum. Some communities have small populations and schools that are situated in distant villages. This has resulted in young children, in some cases, being taken to boarding schools. This arrangement leads to cultural isolation where the children are removed from their culture and community. To address this exclusion, the curriculum is being adapted to suit learners in marginalized remote areas through multi-standard learning and

teaching. The syllabuses will have to be re-organised and made more flexible and new support material developed.

Another feature which tended to make the curriculum exclusive was subject packaging. The subjects in primary schools tended to be biased towards academic subjects. In 2002, when the syllabuses were reviewed practical subjects, in the form of creative and performing arts (CAPA) were taken aboard. This was meant to allow children who may not be academically inclined a chance to excel. At Junior Secondary level, the curriculum has been made more flexible allowing for a broader choice of subjects. The Senior Secondary curriculum has also been broadened and allows for a broader choice of subjects to cater for different interests and abilities.

5.3.2 Language of Instruction

Language of instruction can be a hindrance to accessing and progressing through the curriculum. Although Setswana is a national language, Botswana enjoys a diversity of languages used in different communities. Thus to ensure inclusiveness and access into the curriculum, the Ministry of Education and Skills Development, which has just developed a pre-school curriculum, encourages the use of the mother tongue at pre-school and primary levels up to Standard 2. Furthermore, the spiral curriculum allows learners to learn from their community and gradually broaden to other communities. Learners at lower primary level also study Cultural Studies which focuses on their culture. This ensures that children are not excluded from learning because of their language and culture. In addition, a contextual study has already been undertaken to identify feasibility and modalities of introducing other languages into the school curriculum.

A group of learners, who for many years have found it difficult to access and progress in the curriculum, were the deaf and hearing impaired learners. Very

limited numbers were able to progress up to junior secondary school level. A study carried out by the Ministry of Education and Skills Development in 2002 showed that the deaf had no standardized sign language in Botswana as the signs varied from region to region. The Ministry through the Department of Curriculum Development and Evaluation embarked on a project to develop a handbook for Botswana sign language that will be used as a recorded standard sign language for the whole country. The use of the standardized and recorded sign language will allow for a more effective inclusion and access into the curriculum as the learners will be able to access a documented reference point for their signs. It is expected that this will also increase competency in the sign language by its users.

5.3.3 Content Selection

A key element that can determine the inclusiveness or non inclusiveness of a curriculum is the content to be taught in the school subjects. If the curriculum content, for instance, leans heavily in favour of urban communities, it can, in essence exclude learners in rural areas. To ensure a balanced selection of content, the Curriculum is developed through broad based national panels. These are either individuals or representatives of stakeholder institutions selected from different parts of the country. The panels therefore, represent different communities and geo-political and cultural settings. On the same vein, teachers who serve in the panels represent schools from a variety of geographical and economic contexts. In addition to the diverse national representation, the department consults nationally ensuring that the whole national, ethnic, gender, religious, cultural spectrum is covered. The content selection subsequently subsumes a national character.

Content selection can also be exclusive in terms of levels of difficulty and relevance of the curriculum. To ensure that the content is of the right level,

curriculum developers benchmark with other regional and international curriculum. They also apply the learning theories to ensure appropriateness of the content and adherence to the cognitive, psycho-socio and effective stages of child development. Curriculum content selection, in this case, is closely informed by the current learning/ teaching theories and best practices. At classroom level, differentiated activities allow for the inclusion of learners with special needs, interests and abilities. Relevance is ensured through increasing where necessary, local content for individual subjects.

5.3.4. Teaching Learning Approaches in Inclusive Curricular

The most crucial stage in the implementation of the curriculum is what happens in the classroom. It is in the classroom that the curriculum is transformed from the ideal to reality. The implementation kingpin is invariably the teacher's knowledge, attitudes and skills. An underpinning indicator is the subsequent methodology that the teacher uses to negotiate the curriculum in the classroom.

For inclusive education to be realized, it is imperative that the teaching approaches be clearly defined. Effective inclusive education is predicated on the recognition that children differ in terms of emotional, physical and cognitive development. Curricular documents such as the curriculum blueprints and syllabuses for the primary school emphasise the use of the child centred method of teaching. In order to ensure inclusive curriculum, teachers have been trained to reduce dependence on "chalk and talk" and increase the range of instructional strategies that they use. They could adopt such strategies as peer instruction, cooperative group work and independent self study as well as changing the way in which the classroom is organised by increasing access to self study areas such as classroom libraries and promoting more group work independent of the teacher.

5.3.5. Instructional and Support Materials

In the early 90s, consistent with the development of curricula programmes at primary schools, instructional materials were largely written for the average learner. Consequently, they were designed to suit cognitive grade levels to be delivered by the teacher to the children. These were and are often exclusive of learners who fall outside the parameters of the average learner. To address the issue, currently, the Department of Curriculum Development and Evaluation recommends books that are strong on learner material interaction and high syllabus coverage. The department also encourages a lot of competition among publishers so as to have a broad pool of materials for selection into the requisition list. The Ministry of Education and Skills Development is also developing libraries that may create a reading culture particularly in remote areas

The Department of Curriculum Development and Evaluation has also provided materials to schools that have children with special needs. The department has also worked in collaboration with the Central Resource Centre for Special Education in the development of training equipment for special needs children. The training equipment developed includes:

- toilets for toilet training
- balance training apparatus for those with difficulty balancing
- shoe templates-practice lacing
- wooden mountains/stairs-climbing exercise and training
- different size circles/loops movement
- sewing pads for sewing

Schools with visually impaired students are regularly supplied with items such the styluses, reading stand/boxes and brail lent boxes which they use for teaching

and learning. Other schools are supplied with various assistive devices to access the school curriculum.

5.3.6 Other Support Services

(i) Guidance and Counselling

Life skills Education is a key component of the Guidance and Counselling lessons with the aim of empowering learners to make informed decisions. School guidance practitioners have been trained to enable them to impart the required outcomes to the learners. Life skills materials have also been developed for primary and secondary schools to impart relevant life skills including HIV and AIDS.

Emotional Intelligence programme has been made part of the teachers' in service training to prepare them to meet a myriad of challenges. They deal with learners who encounter traumatizing experiences leading to some absconding from schools.

(ii) HIV/AIDS Programme

Like other developing countries, Botswana is grappling with the enormous problems of orphans and vulnerable children. The bulk of this problem is the result of the HIV and AIDS epidemic. In order to ensure that children who are affected or infected are not excluded from the school system, the Ministry of Education and Skills Development has embarked on programmes that promote behavioural change, prevention and mitigation. Some of the programmes include;

- a) Circles of support-This is a community and school based, multi-sectoral approach aiming at ensuring that orphans and other vulnerable children remain in or enter schools and fulfil their potential. The programme provides basic needs and psycho-social support to orphans and vulnerable children through a network of support from the school and the community. Initially piloted in one region in 2004 to 2005 through the European Union Funding, the programme has now been rolled to 126 primary schools in 2008.

- b) Talk Back is a weekly Teacher Capacity Building live television programme, conceived as a strategy from Brazil's distance education programme. Introduced in 2003, the programme aims at enhancing the capacities of teachers to implement HIV and AIDS curricula by providing interactive discussions and promoting networking among schools. This programme exists in almost all primary and secondary schools.

These programmes have impacted positively in enhancing the teachers and learners knowledge and understanding about HIV and AIDS as well as reducing the stigma. They have also had the advantage of bringing children back into the school system.

5.3.7 Teacher Preparation

Another strategy through which some learners in particular, those with special needs are supported to participate fully and meaningfully, is teacher training. This is in line with the RNPE which advocates for training on teachers in various disabilities and equipping them with teaching strategies to adequately meet the diverse learning needs of learners including those with special needs, through full time and in-service training. To empower schools to reach all learners, there is now a structure of senior teachers-learning difficulties in schools to assist teachers in addressing the diverse difficulties needs of learners including those with various forms of disabilities. Trained teachers mobilize their schools further

by forming what is referred to as School Intervention Teams (SIT). Through these teams, learners with disabilities are identified, screened and interventions strategies developed according to individual needs. Those who require interventions from Educational Psychologists, Speech Language Therapists, low vision Therapists are referred to the Central Resource Centre for special education for more holistic assessment. Three hundred and forty-two (342) schools of the government schools have intervention teams. The existence of SIT in schools has assisted in reducing false referrals to the Resource Centres for Special Education as well as enhanced retention of special needs learners.

5.3.8 Adaptation and modification of buildings

Lack of paying attention to other important details such physical access to school's facilities may exclude children particularly the disabled from the school system. Through the RNPE the Ministry has taken steps to:

- Modify some existing schools by installing ramps in order to facilitate access for disabled children
- Develop standards for construction of all educational buildings to make them assessable to disabled persons.
- Establish two resource centres for assessment all kinds of disabilities

5.3.9 Pastoral Policy

The Pastoral Policy has been developed as a strategy for addressing indiscipline, poor performance and other behavioural problems which have the likely impact of preventing students from participating fully in the teaching and learning process as well as in the general life of the school. It aims at promoting

accountability, responsibility and patriotism and transparency as well as help students make the right choices and decisions by involving students in school governance and calling for total participation of staff and other stakeholders in the school's pastoral system. This policy is expected to improve retention, discipline and performance of learners.

6.0 Challenges

Although the Ministry of Education has taken several initiatives to ensure that the Education for All objectives is attained, access to pre-school education is still a major challenge. Only 17 percent of pre-school going age are able to access this type of education. Part of the reasons is that government does not have the capacity to provide education at this level. The problem is exacerbated by lack of capacity on the part of pre-schools to provide stimulating environment. Furthermore, many centres lack the capacity to implement the ECCE Policy according to the set standards due to the fact that most of them are owned by the communities and churches which often lack management skills to run the programme successfully.

While the Ministry continues to make efforts to provide educational opportunities for all children, there are children who continue to drop outs of school system for a variety of reasons including child labour and or due to negative cultural practices. The Ministry is reviewing the Education Act to address some of these challenges. The Ministry is also developing inclusive Education Policy to address issues of equity, promote retention and access.

Quality education is also a major problem and the Government has identified it as one of the priorities for improvement in the National Development Plan 10 (

References

Government of Botswana: Ministry of Education 10th Biennial Report 2006/2007

Government of Botswana: Ministry of Education Biennial Report, 2003/2004

Government of Botswana: Draft NDP 10 Chapter 8 & 12

Tertiary Education Council: Tertiary Education Policy, April 2008

Tertiary Education Council: Tertiary Education Annual Report, 2004/2005

Government of Botswana: National Policy on Vocational Education 1997

Government of Botswana: National Development Plan 9, 2003/04-2008/09

Government of Botswana: Education Public Expenditure Review Botswana, Final Report, June 2007

Government of Botswana: Revised National Policy on Education, April 1994

Directorate of Public Service Management: Report on the Organizational Restructuring of the Ministry of Education, Final report 2006

Central Statistics Office: Report on the Second National Survey on Literacy in Botswana 2003

Central Statistics Office: Education Statistics 2005