



# 50/50 POLICY BRIEF BOTSWANA

## NOVEMBER 2019



Voters in a queue at St Bernardette Catholic Church Polling Station, Botswana, Gaborone.  
Photo: Mboy Maswabi

### Key facts

Parliamentary and local government elections took place in Botswana on the 23 October 2019, to elect 57 members of the country's unicameral parliament, and 490 members of local government. The elections were conducted through the First Past The Post electoral system.

Table 1: Results of the 2019 Elections

	Last election	Next elections	Electoral system	No of seats	No of women elected	% of women elected
<b>Local government</b>	2019	2024	FPTP	609 <sup>1</sup>	111	18%
<b>National Assembly</b>	2019	2024	FPTP	63	7	11%
<b>Cabinet</b>	2019	2024	Appointment by the President	24	6	25%

Source: IEC, 2019 Botswana General Elections Results<sup>2</sup>

## Synopsis

This policy brief analyses the recent elections (National assembly and Local Government) that took place in Botswana in October 2019 and sets out key issues and options for the increasing representation of women in politics.

The issue is critically important given:

- The current electoral system in Botswana - the constituency or First Past the Post (FPTP) system - and how this affects women's representation in political decision making;

<sup>1</sup> 490 are directly elected and 119 are specially nominated by the Minister of Local Government and Rural Development.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.iec.gov.bw/index.php/election-results/election-results-2014.html> (accessed 16 December 2019).

- The lack of legislated quotas for increasing women's representation in political decision making;
- Lack of political party funding and funding for women candidates;
- Political parties' role in ensuring equal representation of men and women as candidates in elections.

## Constitutional provisions

The Constitution of Botswana (1966) provides for equality and non-discrimination in Section 3, which stipulates that every person in Botswana is "entitled to the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual that is to say, the right whatever his race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex to life, liberty, security of the person and the protection of the law; freedom of conscience, of expression and assembly and association; and protection for the privacy of his home and other property and from deprivation of property without compensation".

Section 15(3) prohibits discrimination on the basis of political opinion. It defines discrimination as, "affording different treatment to different persons, attributable wholly or mainly to their respective descriptions by race, tribe, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex whereby persons of one such descriptions are subjected to disabilities or restrictions to which persons of another such description are not made subject or are accorded privileges or advantages which are not accorded to persons or another description."

Section 67 provides for, and specifies, who has the right to register and vote in the national assembly plus the local government elections. The section refers to citizens who meet the set criteria; citizens here implies both men and women. This section therefore, provides rights for women to register and vote in all elections.

## Electoral system and quotas

Botswana uses the First Past the Post (FPTP) electoral system where the winner needs a simple majority to win the election. This system has been criticized that it does not allocate seats in the proportion of the popular votes for each party. The electoral system has also not worked for the marginalised groups including women and other

electoral systems have been seen as more favourable to these groups (Lowe-Morna, 1999; Somolekae, 2000, 2006).



St Bernardette Catholic Church Polling Station, Botswana, Gaborone.  
Photo: Mboy Maswabi

Botswana laws do not provide for a quota for women's representation in either the National Assembly or Local Government. There are no legal provisions obliging political parties to have quotas for gender representation in their parties. The law does not provide for affirmative action for any disadvantaged groups including women. This is left to the will of different political parties. Even within these parties, intra-party processes do not encourage women to contest for candidacy.

## Political parties

In the 2019 elections, political parties made commitments towards promoting equal representation in political leadership positions through their party manifestos.

The Alliance for Progressives (AP) stated that they would set up a quota system through the review of the constitution in their manifesto, while none of the other party manifestos mentioned any.

The Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) indicated that if they won the elections they would reserve at least two thirds of the positions of specially elected members of parliament and councils for disadvantaged minorities, women, youths and other marginalised groups.

The ruling party Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) manifesto mentioned that the party will undertake a Constitutional review where all discriminatory provisions will be removed in favour of more inclusive provisions. From the BDP manifesto statement one could deduce that the party will

not necessarily set up a quota for women's representation; as the law is not necessarily discriminatory but rather fails to assist those that have been previously disadvantaged.

Table 2: Gender analysis of the political party manifestos

PARTY	GENDER SPECIFIC REFERENCES	GENDER MAINSTREAMED IN MANIFESTOS
<p><b>Alliance for Progressives (AP)</b></p>	<p>Propose to “Introduce a hybrid electoral system that will enable the introduction of a quota system to enable marginalised groups such as women, youth and people with disabilities to participate at high levels of state decision making”.<sup>3</sup></p> <p>To establish a Human Rights Commission, Youth Commission, Arts Council, and Gender Commission, all reporting to Parliament.<sup>4</sup></p> <p>Goal: “To empower women as a way of empowering the nation as this creates a ripple effect that yields multiple benefits, not only for individual women, but also for families, communities and our country:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eliminate multiple forms of discrimination against women through a substantive legal and regulatory framework to guarantee equal opportunity.</li> <li>• introduce a hybrid proportional representation system and introduce quotas in the public service.</li> <li>• ratify and implement local and international instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination (CEDAW) and the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.</li> <li>• ensure that all women have the tools to fully participate in the economy by investing in women's organizations and cooperatives to strengthen their visibility and representation.</li> <li>• to prioritize asset development including capital, to secure land, and to support skill building programs, including financial literacy and management skills.</li> <li>• effectively educate and sensitize the nation to strengthen advocacy campaign strategies to combat culturally entrenched attitudes that discriminate against women”.<sup>5</sup></li> </ul>	<p>The AP manifesto mainstreams gender; there is a gender analysis of the different challenges facing the country and in its promise to the nation, the AP provides gender mainstreamed solutions.</p>
<p><b>Botswana Democratic Party (BDP)</b></p>	<p>Botswana has high levels of gender-based violence (GBV). The BDP led government believes that GBV must be prevented before it happens, and where it unfortunately happens, strict punitive penalties must ensue.</p> <p>BDP promises:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Review relevant legislation to toughen sentences for perpetrators of gender based violence;</li> <li>b. Develop strategies which will reduce instances of gender-based violence;</li> <li>c. Train the police and provide the necessary resources to enable them to better deal with cases of gender-based violence;</li> <li>d. Provide facilities for counselling victims of gender based violence, as well as the rehabilitation of perpetrators of gender-based violence; and</li> <li>e. Introduce a sex offenders and paedophile record and identification system</li> <li>f. Review policies and conduct research to identify the root causes of GBV and develop appropriate interventions to curb it”.<sup>6</sup></li> </ol> <p>“The BDP therefore commits to a comprehensive review of the Botswana Constitution with an aim to aligning it to international standards. All discriminatory provisions will be removed in favour of more inclusive provisions”<sup>7</sup></p>	<p>The BDP manifesto focuses on GBV and how the party intends to address that; the manifesto also highlights that they would undertake a comprehensive Constitutional review which will remove all discriminatory provisions in favour of more inclusive ones.</p> <p>The manifesto however, in presentation of the various issues does not offer a gender analysis, or a view from the party on how these issues affect different genders and as such in their promises and solutions the manifesto offers blanket approach to addressing these challenges.</p>

<sup>3</sup> AP Manifesto, 2019, p7

<sup>4</sup> Ibid p8

<sup>5</sup> Ibid 15-16

<sup>6</sup> BDP Manifesto, 2019, p43

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p49

PARTY	GENDER SPECIFIC REFERENCES	GENDER MAINSTREAMED IN MANIFESTOS
<b>Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC)</b>	<p>Provides for enhanced inclusion of women, youth and disadvantaged groups in representative leadership</p> <p>“Use special nomination to empower under-represented constituencies: A UDC government will reserve at least two thirds of the positions of specially elected members of parliament and councils for disadvantaged minorities, women, youths and other marginalised groups”.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>The manifesto takes a human rights approach and promotes social equality, human dignity and social inclusion. It acknowledges that not recognising the special needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, children, youth, poor people and women and girls make it difficult for them to access development processes, services and opportunities.</p> <p>It proposes to integrate human rights into development processes, including issues of ethnic minorities, gender, youth and marginalised groups.</p> <p>It proposes a life cycle approach to human development that includes building the capacity of institutions to ensure effective implementation of the Children's Act and effective monitoring and evaluation thereof.</p> <p>It acknowledges that poverty, unemployment and exclusion are pervasive, across geographical and ethnic boundaries and that there are populations that are excluded from policy discourse, especially the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI) community.</p> <p>It proposes a review of the Pensions Act to facilitate early retirement in the interest of job creation for the youth and young women.</p>	<p>The UDC manifesto has mainstreamed gender. The manifesto provides a gender analysis of the issues they would want to address as a party and how these affect different groups. The manifesto therefore, offers promises that take into account the different needs of the different marginalised groups.</p> <p>The manifesto further recognises the need to address the needs of the LGBTIQ population who have been left out of policy making.</p>
<b>Botswana Patriotic Front (BPF)</b>	<p>The Manifesto proposes a President's Advisory Councils for the youth, women, people living with disabilities, workers (private and public) and Dikgosi (Chiefs or Traditional Leaders), that meet quarterly.<sup>9</sup></p> <p>It will “strive to improve representation for women and youth in all decision-making bodies of the country”.<sup>10</sup></p> <p>It will “invest in women, child and cancer health care services”.<sup>11</sup></p>	<p>The BPF to a certain extent mainstreamed gender in their manifesto. The mainstreaming is however, found in certain issues and not others.</p>
<b>Real Alternative Party (RAP)</b>	<p>RAP proposes to “eliminate all forms of discrimination in the areas of education, career advancement, employment, leadership and power sharing, reproduction, household and care work, access to digital, financial, and property assets”.<sup>12</sup></p> <p>RAP proposes to “eliminate disparities for children, teenagers and adults who identify as transgender. Children who are pre-pubertal and assert an identity of transgender will benefit from the same level of social acceptance as consistently as their developmentally equivalent peers who identify as cisgender”.<sup>13</sup></p>	<p>The RAP manifesto mainstreamed gender in its analysis of issues and its promises to the electorates. The RAP manifesto goes further to recognise gender beyond men and women and caters for the needs of other groups such as the LGBTIQ people.</p>

The table above presents a summary of commitments made by the political parties through their manifestos. The table indicates that the AP, UDC and RAP manifestos have mainstreamed gender. The other parties BDP and BPF mention gender

issues in certain areas, but their manifestos do not comprehensively take gender into account.

<sup>8</sup> UDC Manifesto, 2019, p28  
<sup>9</sup> BPF Manifesto, 2019, p5  
<sup>10</sup> Ibid  
<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p8  
<sup>12</sup> RAP Manifesto, 2019, p3  
<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p4

# Elections outcomes over the last two elections

Table 3: Election results for the last to elections

Year	Parliament			Cabinet			Local government		
	Total	Women	% women	Total	Women	% women	Total	Women	% women
2014	63	6	10%	24	4	17%	605	117	19%
2019	63	7	11%	24	6	25%	609	111	18%

Source: SADC Gender Protocol Barometer, 2016: 82

Table 3 shows that the number of women representatives in Parliament and Cabinet has increased slightly from the 2014 elections. The increase is attributable to the decision taken by the ruling party (BDP) to nominate more women as Specially nominated members of Parliament and appointments to Cabinet. In 2014, four women and 53 men were voted to the national assembly. The President nominated two women to parliament bringing the number of women in parliament to six out of the 61 Members of Parliament. In 2016, Section 58 of the Constitution was amended and the number of Specially nominated Members of Parliament was increased by two from four to six; and members of parliament from 61 to 63. Honourable Bogolo Kenewendo was nominated as one of the two new Specially nominated MPs. Unfortunately in 2016, Honourable Bathokae passed on leaving the female MPs still at six. In 2019, three women and 54 men were voted to Parliament. The President nominated four women to the national assembly bringing the number of women in parliament to seven out of the 63 members. The nomination by the President of four women helped increase the number of women in parliament slightly. The President further appointed six women to cabinet.

Going into the 2019 election no political party had set a quota for female representation as candidates. It is therefore not surprising that all

political parties had very few female candidates contesting the elections.

For the national assembly the ruling BDP had the highest number of female candidates with four females for the Parliamentary elections, followed by the BMD with three female candidates and the AP and UDC who each had two female representatives. The BPF had one female candidate for this year's parliamentary elections. In all there were 12 female candidates out of 210 candidates (6%) in the 2019 national assembly elections. This is a drop from the 2014 general elections where 192 candidates contested for election and 17 were women (9%), (IPU, 2014).<sup>14</sup>

## Local Government

The local government elections were held the same time as the national assembly elections using the same electoral system. There were 490 wards that were being contested for. Of the 1747 candidates 235 (13%) were women and 1512 (87%) were men. Of these candidates 418 (86%) men and 71 (15%) women won the different wards during these elections. One constituency did not produce a winner with two candidates tied with the same number of voters. The by-election for this ward will be held in January 2020.

The Minister of Local Government and Rural Development specially nominated 119 councillors across the 57 constituencies as per the requirements of the Local Government Act. Of these 119; 40 women (34%) and 79 men (66%) were nominated. This brings in total 609 Councillors across the country with 111 (18%) of them being women and 497 men (82%). The by-election for this ward will be held in January 2020. As with the national assembly elections, a few women contested and an even fewer women were elected.



Polling Agents showing empty ballot boxes to the public - Botswana Elections 2019 Gaborone, Botswana. Photo: Keletso Metsing

<sup>14</sup> IPU 2014 "BOTSWANA: National Assembly: LAST ELECTIONS", [www] [http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2041\\_E.htm](http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2041_E.htm) [opens new window] (accessed 11 October 2019).

# Options for increasing women's representation

One of the biggest challenges for women being elected into political decision making is that Botswana uses the First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) electoral system at both the national assembly and local government level. This is a majority/plurality system, in which the winner takes all and has been shown to be disadvantageous for women and other marginalized groups who still face discrimination in society.<sup>15</sup> The Proportional Representation (PR) system on the other hand has been shown to be one of the best for increasing women's representation because it is more inclusive of marginalized and minority groups.<sup>16</sup> Neither the Constitution nor electoral legislation provide for affirmative action measures or quotas.

Electoral systems and quotas have been shown to be critically important for increasing women's representation in politics in Southern Africa. "With an average of 38% women, countries with a PR system and quotas in parliament have almost three times the percentage of women compared to 13% in the First Past the Post (FPTP) system (with no quota)".<sup>17</sup>

One of the best ways to increase women's representation is to have a PR electoral system and quotas. The country should therefore review its current electoral system in order to increase the probabilities of increasing female representation in political leadership positions and conduct a Constitutional review to allow for affirmative actions to be put in place.

ses and election agents; corrupt and illegal practices; elections petitions; offences and miscellaneous. The Act does not mention anything on discrimination on the basis of gender instead the provisions of the Act refers to any person, candidate or voter which could be either female or male.

The Act however, does not provide a Code of Conduct for political parties. The country went to the elections without this Code of Conduct which has been drafted and political parties are to agree on.

The **Chapter 40:01 Local Government (District Councils) Act**<sup>19</sup> provides for the local government election. The Local Government elections are done in line with the National Assembly elections and use the same voters roll and the elections are carried out in line with the Electoral Act. This Act like the Electoral Act does not mention addressing discrimination and gender issues.

There is need to have the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) Act which will expand the provisions in the Constitution for the establishment of the IEC, but should go further to show how gender will be mainstreamed in the nomination of Commissioners and how gender will be mainstreamed in the work of the Commission.

There is also need for the country to finalise the Code of Conduct for political parties that can be used to hold political parties accountable during the election campaigns.

## Electoral laws

The legal provisions that cover elections in Botswana are the Botswana Constitution, Electoral Act and Local Government (District Councils) Act.

The **Electoral Act**<sup>18</sup> **Chapter 02:09** provides for registration of voters and preparation of voters' rolls; appeals, objections and cancellations; supplementary; elections; polling; election expen-

## Campaign Finance

The Electoral Act Sections 80-89 provides for elections expenses and election agents. Section 81 provides that the election expenses for any candidate shall not exceed P50,000. Section 80(2) prescribes what will not be deemed as election expenses.<sup>20</sup> EISA notes that there is no state financing of political parties in Botswana, nor is there any law regulating political party funding or expenditure.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Maitland, R.E. 2005. Enhancing Women's Political Participation: Legislative Recruitment and Electoral systems in Ballington J and Karam A (Eds), Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers, Revised Edition. International IDEA, Stockholm, p93-111  
<sup>16</sup> Ibid p 106  
<sup>17</sup> Lowe Morna, et al (Eds), 2019. Chapter 2 Gender and Governance, in SADC Gender Protocol Barometer, 2013  
<sup>18</sup> Act No. 38 of 1968  
<sup>19</sup> Act No. 35 of 1965  
<sup>20</sup> Botswana Constitution Section 80-89  
<sup>21</sup> <https://www.eisa.org.za/wep/botparties3.htm> accessed 11/2019

## Violence Against Women in Elections

Botswana laws do not specifically address violence against women in elections. VAW is dealt with the existing laws that address violence such as the Penal Code Chapter 08:01 and the Domestic Violence Act Chapter 28:05. Section 114 of the Electoral Act prohibits “acts or incites another to act in a disorderly manner for the purposes of preventing the transaction of the business for which the meeting was convened or has in his possession an offensive weapon or missile”. The Electoral Act does not address violence against women in elections specifically.

In 2014, 824 434 people were registered to vote of these people 456 087 (55%) were women and 368 327 (45%) were men. The figures stayed the same in 2019 - 925 478 people were registered to vote; 505 052 (55%) women and 420 426 (45%) men. In the two elections more 5% more women were registered as voters than men (IEC, 2014; 2019).

## Role of the Media

### Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)

The IEC is established under Section 65A of the Constitution. This Section provides for the appointment of the Commissioners and the Commission Chairperson. There is no mention of the need for gender sensitivity in the appointment of Commissioners. The Constitution further provides for the appointment of the IEC Secretary.

### Code of Conduct for Broadcasting during Elections

The Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority (BOCRA) is mandated with the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Broadcasting during elections. The Code of Conduct provides guidance to Broadcasters on what is acceptable and not acceptable during the election period such as the need for broadcasting media to ensure that there is accurate, fair and balanced political coverage at all times (BOCRA, 2019).

### Voter Registration and Education



A woman casting a vote during the 2014 elections in Bokaa, Botswana.  
Photo: Gender Links

The IEC has the primary responsibility of registering voters and for ensuring that elections are conducted efficiently, properly, freely and fairly which has been interpreted to include voter education. Voter registration is provided for in Section 67 of the Constitution of Botswana.

### Women's representation in the media during elections

The 2019 Botswana elections were highly contested with the opposition the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) mounting a good campaign in the build up to the general elections.

The media coverage of both the ruling party and the opposition parties was good though there was a concern that the state media tend to be biased towards the ruling party. There were a few female candidates that were mostly covered in the media; these include the former Minister Honourable Dorcus Makgatho, Bonnington North candidate Annah Mokgethi and the Gaborone central candidate Mpho Pheko. Their coverage was for different reasons;

Honourable Makgatho was mostly covered by the media because she stood firm against the former President H.E Khama, which most prominent ruling party members did not do; this

therefore got her a lot of media coverage including negative attention from the Khama camp's campaign against her.

Ms. Mokgethi was standing against the party President of the UDC and her coverage was also mostly because she was being compared with the UDC President.

Mpho Pheko from the UDC was tipped as one of the women who stood a chance to win the constituency and she got media coverage because of this and her looks; she was referred to as "Dr Bae" in the build up towards the general elections. Most female candidates did not have a lot of media coverage.

The use of social media platforms, especially Facebook, benefitted women candidates, in that where the mainstream media did not cover them, women's organisations and other people brought them to the attention of the public. The presence of social media in the 2019 election did help to promote women candidates in Botswana.

## Role of civil society

Civil society organisations such as Emang Basadi, Letsema, Botswana Council of NGOs, Botswana National Youth Council, Botswana Council of

Churches and Gender Links are working closely with the IEC on the area of voter education. The Women and gender NGOs are more inclined towards the promotion of equal representation of women and men in politics whereas others have different interests that they advocate for.

Emang Basadi, Gender Links and Letsema are some of the NGOs that have been at the fore front advocating for 50-50 representation of women in political leadership positions. The NGOs have been able to train aspiring female candidates to prepare them for campaigning and contesting the elections.



Counting Ballots at GTC Botswana Elections 2019 ,Gaborone, Botswana.  
Photo: Keletso Metsing

## ***I will die a happy person because I have done something for my country***

*Profile: Keabonye Ntsabane*

After a long career in gender and media activism Keabonye Ntsabane, fondly known as KB, entered local politics in 2014. With limited time to prepare and campaign, mainly because of the costs of campaigning and the challenges of being a woman in politics in Botswana, and in the opposition, she lost the local government elections by a mere five votes.

Four years on, in 2018, she was recruited by the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) to stand for elections in Taung village, Ramotswa.

She was approached by Vice President, now President, who knew of her activism work, "He knows me because he has seen me in his office talking about gender; asking him to do this

and that, he knows that this person can persuade you. I was reluctant but he said, 'you can make it'." She won the primary elections against four men from the BDP and is now one of five women, out of 11, in her council.

Ntsabane became a gender activist working in the area of women in media and the recurring issue was the barrier for women's participation in political decision making. Ntsabane decided to walk the journey herself after witnessing many women losing elections. What she says, is that it is possible, but it's not easy.

One of the main obstacles in standing for elections is finance. Ntsabane tells me that

"There are 2,013 constituents that are scattered across her village, with many working the land, making it difficult to access them during the day. To meet the people you have to have a car and when you bring people together at a meeting they expect you to provide lunch - so you need a car and money for petrol and food, and it all is your own money, but If we work hard with the little resources we have, we can make it."

Ntsabane has been working on gender issues for over 20 years and remembers when gender equality was still a new issue in Botswana, "we were still talking about Beijing [the Fourth World Conference on Women in September 1995], questioning what gender equality is and people, even at the government level, were not accepting or understanding what gender equality is". Civil society had to work hard to convince people that gender equality is not about dividing people or that women want to push in. She recalls that it was hard at the beginning but it is easier now, and government and communities are now saying that there must be equal numbers of women at every level - parliament, cabinet, local government.

Ntsabane has witnessed change over the last two decades since Beijing after which people started moving together. At the regional level, when the women's movement were lobbying for the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, it was not easy for heads of state to agree to the targets, but there was a glimmer of hope when countries signed the Protocol in 2008, although Botswana only signed much later. Now gender equality is mentioned as a key issue in the country's 2036 vision.

Ntsabane attributes the progress to the work of civil society in the country. She remembers how few organisations were working in gender issues when she started, now there are many more dealing with issues such as gender-based violence, the role of men and boys, amongst others. GBV is close to her heart and she has established a trust on GBV in her village. Every 16 Days [of Activism against violence against women] the different villages commemorate the 16 Days. Heads of state also take a lead and these are the issues which show the success of all the work done by NGOs.

Through her work with Gender Links and Botswana Association of Local Authorities (BALA) on gender mainstreaming in councils, the work is ongoing. Gender focal points in councils now

take responsibility for the gender activities and also co-fund these with CSOs and sharing of responsibilities, for example 16 days of activism against gender based violence has become an important even on the calendar.

Ntsabane is passionate about gender issues, which she will push in council. She is particularly passionate about GBV, which she established a trust to address. She understands the importance educating people on women in decision making and power sharing to encourage women to stand for election. At the rural level there is more work to be done as much of the work has been focused at the national level, "We need these issue to trickle down from the national level to the grassroots level." In line with this she has managed to reach out to people in villages and has started working with Dikgosi [chiefs/traditional leaders] to sensitise them about gender and GBV, which she will continue to do as an elected councillor. She believes it is her work in the community and her reputation that she is where she is today.

In 2018, Ntsabane was recognised with an Award from the President, nominated by the community because of the good work that she has done for the country. She was also recognised as a hero in the pension fund calendar. She says "I will die a happy person because I have done something for my country".

What is the most important aspect of the job? She says "It is about caring for the community, being passionate about the people and giving them your heart."



Through her work with Gender Links and Botswana Association of Local Authorities (BALA) on gender mainstreaming in councils, Keabornye Ntsabane's work is ongoing.

# Conclusions and Recommendations

Botswana continues to be one of the poorest performers with regard to representation of women in politics at both national assembly<sup>22</sup> and local government. The country is far off from meeting the SADC Gender and Development Protocol of 50% representation of women in political decision-making positions. There is a clear need for the country to address this if it is to meet this target. Key recommendations for the country are as follows:

**Electoral law reform:** Botswana should review the electoral system currently in use and consider either the Proportional Representation (PR) or the Mixed electoral system.

**Quotas:** The Electoral Act should be amended to require political parties to field 50% women candidates at both the national and local government levels.

## Political Parties

- Should set quotas for equal representation of women within their structures.
- Develop a Code of Conduct for political parties that can be used to hold political parties accountable during the election campaigns.

**Election Management Body:** The IEC should:

- Provide gender disaggregated data and advo-

cate for legislative reforms that will ensure equal representation of men and women.

- Develop a Gender Policy to aid its internal operations.
- Advocate for legislative reforms to address violence against women in elections.

## Media

The Code of Conduct for broadcasting should be amended to provide for equal coverage of women and men (voters and politicians) during elections.

**Civil Society Organisations** should work collaboratively to strengthen their monitoring and lobbying and advocacy roles, through:

- Increasing fundraising efforts for lobbying and advocating for the equal representation of men and women in politics.
- Beginning advocacy campaigns and lobbying for quotas and electoral reform well in advance of the 2024 elections.
- Building capacity of women candidates to campaign and take up political decision-making positions.
- Lobbying political parties to implement quotas within their parties.
- Raising the awareness of voters about the 50/50 campaign and the importance and benefits of electing women into political decision making.

<sup>22</sup> Inter Parliamentary Union Botswana is rate 168 in a global ranking of 190, and is rated second last in the SADC region. <https://data.ipu.org/women-ranking?month=10&year=2019> accessed 12/13/2019

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