Botswana is widely regarded as one of Africa’s most stable countries and is the continent’s longest continuous multi-party democracy. Significant mineral wealth, robust governance, prudent economic management and a relatively small population have helped Botswana’s development since independence in 1966 and reduced poverty. Botswana’s transformation agenda also aims to turn it into a high-income country by 2036, underpinned by economic diversification and continuing political stability. While the country is widely perceived as a development success story, challenges persist. Economic transformation in particular has been sluggish and the economy still relies heavily on the diamond trade.

Unemployment, particularly amongst the youth is a persistent and pressing issue, as is social inequality and the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which has had a significant impact on Botswana. These issues are also likely to be further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and adverse climate events, which are likely to increase as a result of climate change, in Botswana’s drought and flood-prone plains. While Botswana is generally considered a peaceful country, not currently affected by armed conflict or high-levels of insecurity, successive governments have increased investment in the defence sector. Botswana’s Defence Forces’ (BDF) budget has increased significantly since 2015 and the Ministry of Defence, Justice and Security received the second largest budget allocation in 2020. However, it is vital that increases in spending are accompanied by a corresponding strengthening of defence governance processes to avoid waste, corruption and abuses of power. As things stand, external control and scrutiny of the defence is extremely limited, public engagement in the sector is low and parliament’s role is restricted. Financial and budgetary transparency have decreased in recent years and arms procurement is particularly secretive. On the other hand, the passing of a whistleblower law in 2016 is a positive step but needs to be backed up by effective implementation in the defence sector.

### Member of Open Government Partnership
- No

### UN Convention Against Corruption
- Accession in 2011

### Arms Trade Treaty
- Accession in 2019

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**East & Southern Africa**

Two of the most stable regions on the continent, the Eastern and Southern African regions have nevertheless had to contend with a series of significant challenges in recent years. Instability in the Horn of Africa continues to present protracted security challenges in the region, including the growth of Islamist movements, such as Al-Shabaab. Civil unrest and protests have increased dramatically in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Kenya amongst others, and have been fuelled by anger at police brutality and poverty, which have increased significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Recent elections in Tanzania and Uganda have been mired in violence, while the upcoming Kenyan elections in 2022 could lead to significant unrest. Elsewhere, Sudan’s democratic transition remains in danger of stalling and armed conflict and endemic corruption continue unabated in South Sudan. In response to these challenges, states have increasingly sought to deploy the military to respond. This has increased attention on weak governance standards within the defence sectors across East and Southern Africa, which continue to contend with very limited transparency, poor external oversight and limited anti-corruption controls for personnel. The result are defence forces that are frequently unaccountable to the public, whose financial management and acquisitions are largely hidden from scrutiny and where corruption vulnerabilities are pronounced, heightening the risk of abuses of power.

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Overall scores
The size of the colour band corresponds to number of countries that fall into that category.

 BOTSWANA SCORE
HIGH RISK
D
39

Risk Comparison

BOTSWANA
REGION AGGREGATE
INDEX AGGREGATE

POLITICAL

FINANCIAL

PERSONNEL

PROCUREMENT

INDEX AGGREGATE

REGIONAL AGGREGATE

39

29

A • 83–100 VERy LOW
B • 67–82 LOW
C • 50–66 MODERATE
D • 33–49 HIGH
E • 17–32 VERY HIGH
F • 0–16 CRITICAL
Botswana’s constitution makes a clear delineation between the three main branches of government, ensuring de jure strong separation of powers. In practice, while this separation is relatively clear, the executive remains dominant and its functions can overlap with the legislature in particular, which can influence the system of checks and balances. One of the areas where legislative oversight is particularly limited is defence, where a combination of restricted formal rights and poor effectiveness mean that parliamentary control over defence issues is pioecemeal. The National Assembly is empowered to legislate on matters of defence and security and to approve the budget, but beyond this its powers are limited, particularly as Botswana does not have a defence policy. At the committee level, the Foreign Affairs, Defence, Justice and Security Committee is empowered to oversee defence matters, although its powers are somewhat unclear. For instance, there is no clarity on the committee’s role in relation to personnel and policy planning, and its power to call witnesses is undermined by the fact that it is not clearly stipulated and can only be inferred. In practice, the committee is generally limited to merely reviewing the budget and related matters, and there is no evidence of the committee conducting long term investigations into specific areas of defence despite it having the formal right to do so. In parallel, financial oversight is also undertaken by internal and external auditing bodies. The BDF has an internal audit unit, however its reports are not made public and there is little available information on its functioning or effectiveness. Similarly, the Auditor General conducts annual external audits of defence, but there is little evidence of it conducting defence audits and its assessments rarely cover defence issues. Even where the Auditor General makes recommendations, it is not clear if the Ministry of Defence takes any appropriate remedial action as there is no clear follow-up mechanism.

While Botswana has long been among the top-ranking African countries in terms of good governance and transparency, in recent years, its military transparency has diminished. Official budgetary reports have become increasingly difficult to obtain and little to no information has been divulged on arms procurement or defence policy. With regards to the defence budget specifically, the published document is highly aggregated and does not contain a breakdown of expenditure by functions nor does it include substantial explanations. In fact, in recent years, the only publicly available budget document has been the budget speech, with other government issued budget documents not available. Information on military expenditure is also reported inconsistently, with discrepancies between the official allocation and the information contained in budget tables, raising questions as to the accuracy of official documents. Moreover, no reports on actual spending during the financial year are published by the Ministry of Justice, Security and Defence or the Ministry of Finance. As such, there is no clarity regarding how budget funds are utilised and how this compared to the original allocations as outlined in the budget. A key issue remains the weakness of access to information mechanisms for the defence sector. While the right to access government information is enshrined in the constitution, there is no overarching FOI law and gaining access to financial information in defence remains extremely limited. This increases reliance on government-issued data, which in a context of reduced financial transparency, means citizens and external oversight bodies have less information to make decisions on. Nevertheless, Botswana does have effective controls over off-budget spending. Such expenditure is prohibited under the terms of the Finance and Audit Act, and there is no record or evidence of defence spending being conducted through off-budget funds as a result. Equally, there is no evidence that the BDF or the Directorate of Intelligence Services have beneficial ownership of commercial businesses, including businesses associated with natural resource exploitation.
Ethics standards and anti-corruption frameworks for personnel in Botswana’s defence sector are relatively robust, helping to mitigate corruption risk to a certain extent although there remain areas where significant improvement is needed. For instance, military personnel are not subject to a clear code of conduct. Values are instead loosely outlined in other documents, but with very little focus on anti-corruption. Civilian personnel on the other hand are subject to the General Public Service Principles and the Public Service Code of Conduct, which outline the behaviour expected with regards to bribery, conflicts of interest and corruption. However, neither of these documents is available to the public and it should be noted that the code of conduct does not apply to the security services. There is also a significant gap in relation to anti-corruption training for personnel. While some training is provided for civilian personnel by the Directorate of Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC), there is no evidence of any such training being delivered to military personnel. In relation to whistleblowing, Botswana passed the Whistleblower Protection Act in 2016. The law is applicable to defence personnel and provides legal protections for those reporting corruption and wrongdoing, including protection of identity, against retribution, reversed burden of proof and waiver of liability. The law itself is relatively robust, its implementation in defence remains a work in progress. There is still no unit within the Ministry of Justice, Security and Defence that deals with whistleblower protection and which processes reports. Training also remains piecemeal and inadequate and there is no evidence of any awareness raising campaigns within the defence sector to help educate personnel on their rights.

19 Republic of Botswana, Public Service Act, Chapter 26:01.
22 Republic of Botswana, Whistleblower Protection Act, Part IV.

Though Botswana rarely contributes to peacekeeping missions and is not engaged in any foreign military operations, strong anti-corruption safeguards for operations are still key to ensuring the BDF’s effectiveness across a range of deployments. Yet, these safeguards are virtually non-existent, exposing Botswana’s military operations to significant corruption risk. At the strategic level, corruption is not considered a strategic issue for the success of military operations. The BDF, for instance, does not have a clear military doctrine that includes corruption. As a result, corruption issues are not included in forward planning processes for military operations, meaning that appropriate mitigation strategies are not developed and deployed should corruption issues be identified. There are also no provisions for pre-deployment anti-corruption training for commanders and the only anti-corruption training is delivered by the DCEC, a civilian agency without the expertise to advise on operational risks. The BDF also does not deploy expert personnel for corruption monitoring purposes, nor does it have a monitoring and evaluation policy for corruption risk on operations, meaning personnel are ill-equipped to identify and address such issues when they arise.
Botswana's increased military spending in recent years is designed, in part, to help modernise the BDF's ageing capabilities, including its fighter jets. This modernisation relies heavily on the procurement of significant quantities of assets and new capabilities. However, gaps in Botswana's defence procurement process significantly heighten the process' vulnerability to corruption and could threaten the effective use of defence funds. Defence procurement is formalised through the Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Board (PPADB) and Regulations, which apply to all public procurement including defence. However, not all BDF procurement is conducted through the PPADB as 'sensitive' acquisitions are exempt under the Act's broad exemption clauses for security-related goods. As such, significant amounts of defence acquisitions are not regulated by the PPADB and are instead deferred to special Procurement Committees, although it is unclear how these committees scrutinise such procedures. Moreover, the BDF's procurement cycle is not fully disclosed and, aside from the information contained in the PPADB, no further information is provided on the subject of needs assessments, contract implementation or sign off for defence contracts. With regards to the decision on procurement requirements in particular, the absence of a defence strategy makes it difficult to link individual purchases to strategic requirements. This increases the likelihood of purchases being ad-hoc and opportunistic in nature, potentially leading to unnecessary or inefficient procurement. There are also issues with the oversight architecture for defence acquisitions. The PPADB does not publish reports on its activities and parliament does not have the expertise or capacity to exercise substantial scrutiny of procurement. As such, the vast majority of defence procurement is not subject to any external oversight and there is little publicly available information on the specificities of most acquisitions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Defence Procurement</th>
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<tr>
<td>Military expenditure (US$ mil) (SIPRI, 2020)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open competition in defence procurement (%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Main defence exports – to (SIPRI, 2016-20)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Main defence imports – from (SIPRI, 2016-20)</td>
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25 Republic of Botswana, PPADB Act Section 63.
# Botswana 2020 GDI Scorecard

## Overall Country Score

**Risk Grade:** D • 33-49 **HIGH**

### Political Risk (D 39)

- Legislative Scrutiny: C 50
- Defence Committee: D 40
- Defence Policy Debate: F 0
- CSO Engagement: E 17
- Conventions: UNCAC / OECD: B 75
- Public Debate: E 25
- Anticorruption Policy: F 0
- Compliance and Ethics Units: D 42
- Public Trust in Institutions: NEI
- Risk Assessments: F 13
- Acquisition Planning: B 67
- Budget Transparency & Detail: C 50
- Budget Scrutiny: E 25
- Budget Availability: C 50
- Defence Income: NEI
- Internal Audit: D 38
- External Audit: C 56
- Natural Resources: B 67
- Organised Crime Links: B 75
- Organised Crime Policing: B 75
- Intelligence Services Oversight: D 38
- Intelligence Services Recruitment: F 8
- Export Controls (ATT): NEI
- Lobbying: F 0

### Financial Risk (C 58)

- Asset Disposal Controls: A 83
- Asset Disposal Scrutiny: A 92
- Secret Spending: F 0
- Legislative Access to Information: E 25
- Secret Program Auditing: C 50
- Off-budget Spending: A 100
- Access to Information: E 25
- Beneficial Ownership: A 100
- Military-Owned Business Scrutiny: A 100
- Unauthorised Private Enterprise: NEI
- Defence Spending: F 0

### Personnel Risk (C 53)

- Public Commitment to Integrity: D 42
- Disciplinary Measures for Personnel: A 100
- Whistleblowing: B 75
- High-risk Positions: NEI
- Numbers of Personnel: D 42
- Pay Rates and Allowances: C 63
- Payment System: A 92
- Objective Appointments: E 17
- Objective Promotions: E 17
- Bribery to Avoid Conscription: NA
- Bribery for Preferred Postings: A 100
- Chains of Command and Payment: A 100
- Military Code of Conduct: E 31

### Operational Risk (F 8)

- Military Doctrine: F 0
- Operational Training: F 0
- Forward Planning: F 0
- Corruption Monitoring in Operations: F 0
- Controls in Contracting: D 38
- Private Military Contractors: NEI

### Procurement Risk (D 38)

- Procurement Legislation: B 75
- Procurement Cycle: E 25
- Procurement Oversight Mechanisms: D 33
- Potential Purchases Disclosed: C 50
- Actual Purchases Disclosed: B 75
- Business Compliance Standards: F 0
- Procurement Requirements: E 17
- Competition in Procurement: C 50
- Tender Board Controls: C 58
- Anti-Collusion Controls: B 75
- Contract Award / Delivery: D 44
- Complaint Mechanisms: B 75
- Supplier Sanctions: B 75
- Offset Contracts: F 0
- Offset Contract Monitoring: F 0
- Offset Competition: F 0
- Agents and Intermediaries: D 38
- Financing Packages: F 0
- Political Pressure in Acquisitions: NEI

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### Key

- **NEI**: Not enough information to score indicator
- **NS**: Indicator is not scored for any country
- **NA**: Not applicable
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