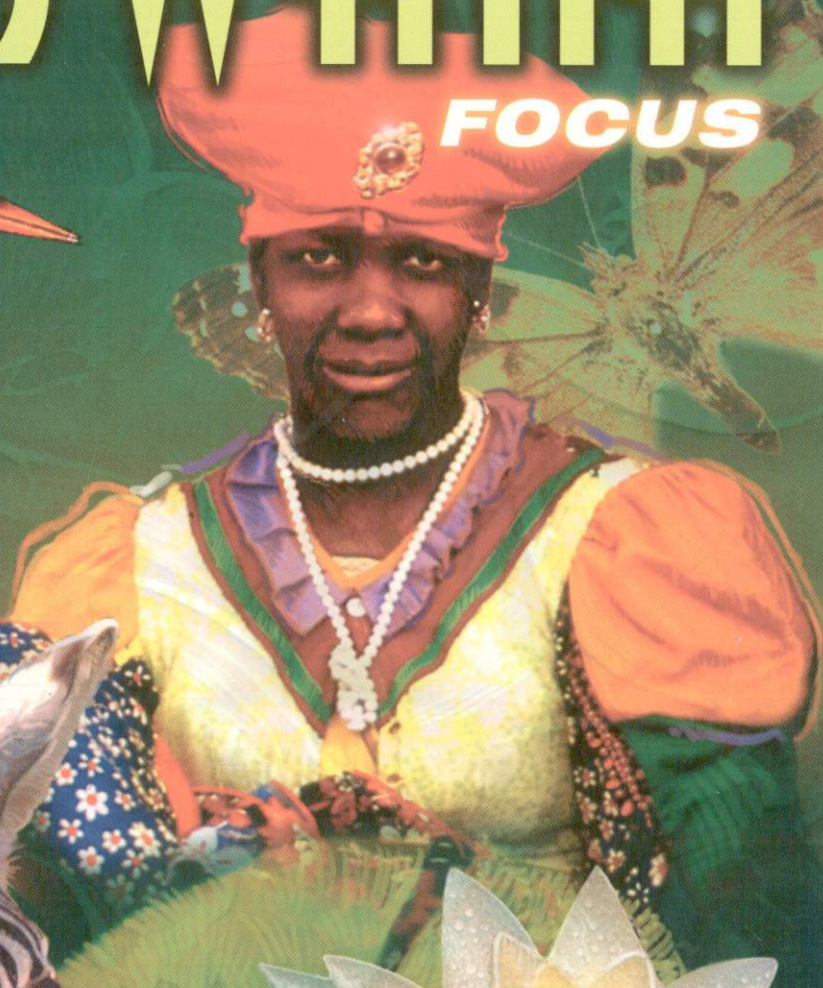


BOTSWANA

FOCUS



2000 Edition



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Contents

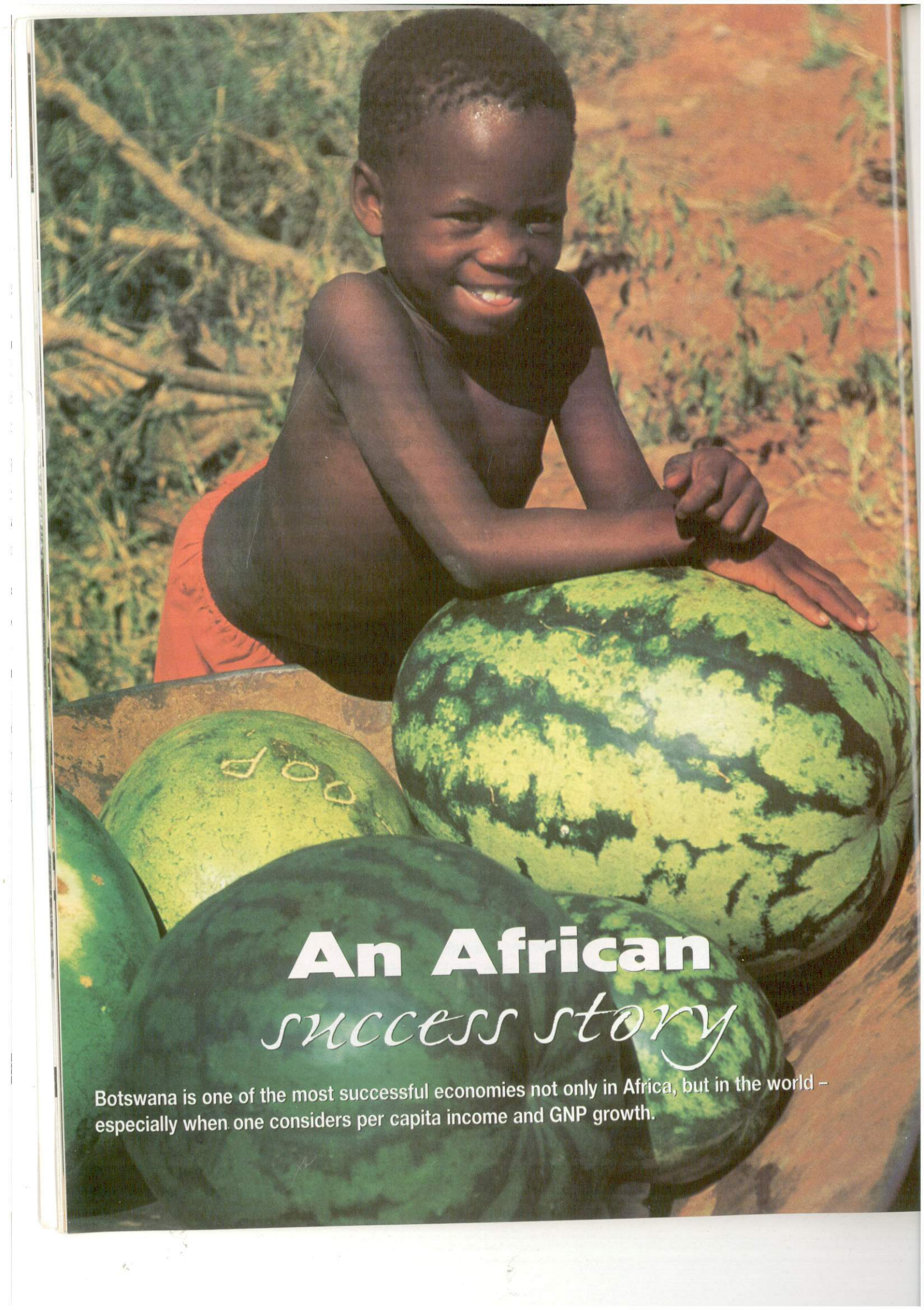
- 1 Introduction**
- 8 Information**
Essential facts and figures
- 12 The Botswana economy**
A model for Africa
- 18 Conference**
The ideal work environment away from the office
- 23 Gaborone**
Thriving heart of the nation
- 30 The Tuli Block**
Unspoiled wilderness of the east
- 35 The Kalahari**
Semi-desert splendour of southern Africa
- 40 The Makgadikgadi Pans**
Barren landscape of unrivalled vistas
- 45 The Okavango Delta**
Botswana's aquatic treasure
- 54 The Chobe**
Prime game-viewing destination
- 62 Maps**
Detailed area maps of the country
- 70 Listings**
Comprehensive guide to local services
- 77 Classifieds**
- 80 Malaria**
Necessary precautions

CONTENTS

BOTSWANA FOCUS

3



A young boy with dark skin and short hair is smiling broadly, looking towards the camera. He is shirtless and wearing a red cloth around his waist. He is sitting on the ground, leaning over a large wooden bowl filled with several large, green watermelons. The watermelons have dark green stripes. The background is a dry, reddish-brown landscape with some sparse vegetation.

An African *success story*

Botswana is one of the most successful economies not only in Africa, but in the world – especially when one considers per capita income and GNP growth.

BEST REASONS TO INVEST

The recently established Botswana Export Development and Investment Authority (BEDIA) has been promoting Botswana as an investment destination with highly successful international trade visits. On these trips BEDIA has cited numerous reasons why Botswana is a sound bet, including:

- Botswana has been the fastest growing economy in the world between 1970 and 1990 with average annual growth of 13 percent.
- In Botswana the corporate tax for manufacturing companies is only 15 percent.
- Botswana has invested massively in economic infrastructure.
- Botswana has remained a politically stable democracy since independence in 1966.
- Botswana is an associate member of the European Union which increases the country's quotas and reduces duties.
- Botswana has an educated English speaking labour force which is readily trainable.
- Botswana has the highest per capita expenditure on education in the world.
- Industrial relations are good and Botswana has never experienced work unrest or strikes.
- Botswana is a cosmopolitan and peaceful place where people of all races live in harmony.
- Botswana is a safe and pleasant place to live and work.



LEFT: One of the reasons that Botswana's economy is one of the most successful in Africa, is a peace-loving and friendly population.

ABOVE: While food production is not Botswana's main source of income, sorghum is grown.

Photo: Illustrative Options
Photo: Illustrative Options

THIS achievement follows from the country's astute financial management and free enterprise policies which have made Botswana very attractive to foreign investors. But the impetus for the economy was the discovery of diamonds in 1967, on which the whole economy has been built.

Today Botswana is the largest single producer of diamonds in the world, and with

the Orapa 2000 project in full production from January 2000, the national output of diamonds will top 22 million carats per year. Yet the government's successful economic diversification policies have ensured that the percentage contribution that diamonds make to the national GDP has consistently fallen over the last five years.

Low taxation and the recent abolishment of

all remaining exchange controls has fuelled the growth of a vibrant manufacturing industry, with a range of previously imported products and components now being locally manufactured, especially in car manufacturing.

Botswana lacks the mineral wealth and diversity of her neighbours, but the country has made good use of what it has. Francistown was the site of Africa's first gold

Makgadikgadi

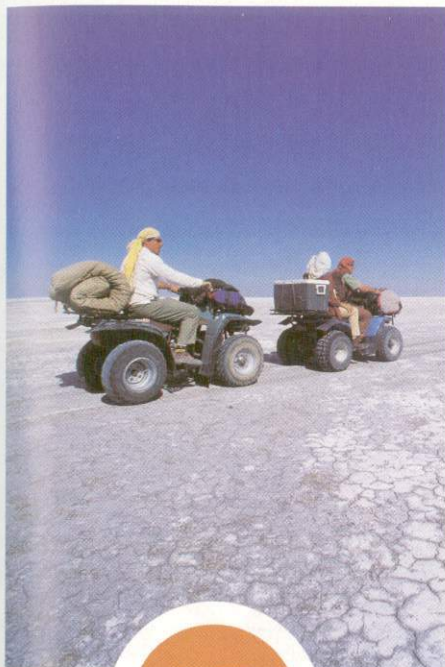
Sounds of silence

This unique area epitomises emptiness, silence and solitude and forms a dramatic contrast – and antidote – for our usually cluttered lives.



MAKGADIKGADI

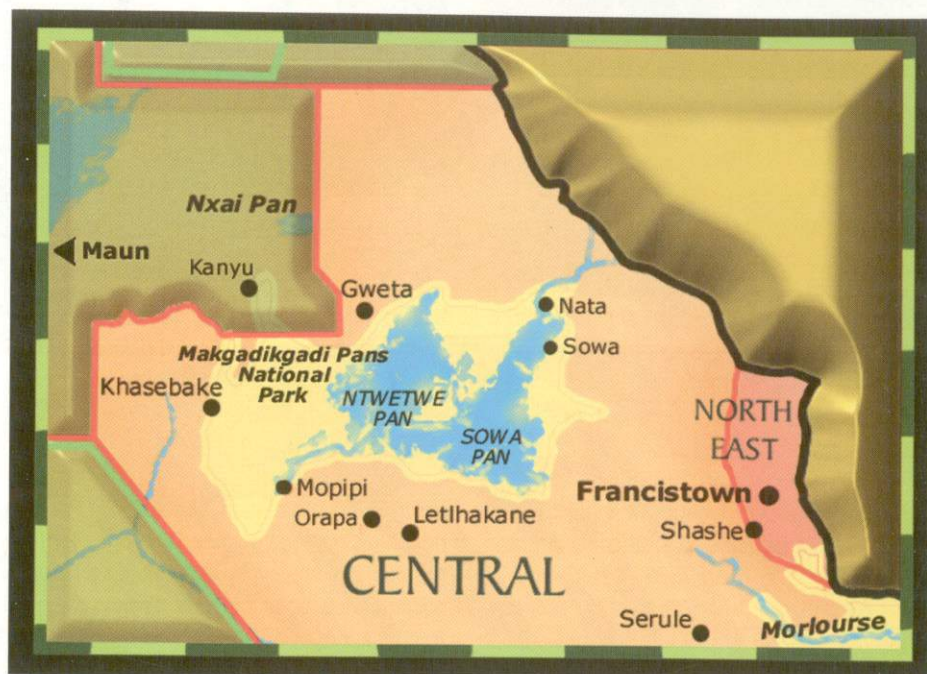
BOTSWANA FOCUS 40



10

BEST REASONS TO VISIT

- The unique experience of being in a landscape of nothing but sand and sky.
- The annual zebra migrations that pass through the area.
- Marvel at the pink-topped waters covered with hundreds of thousands of flamingos and pelicans.
- Quad-bike across the cracked dry pan surface, skimming past the palm-edged islands.
- Explore mystical Kubu Island with its gnarled purple baobabs and ancient stone structures.
- Discover the early explorers names carved on the historic landmark baobab trees that lined the old Missionaries' Road.
- Discover the wealth of birdlife to be seen in the grasslands of the Bird Sanctuary.
- Experience the rewarding game viewing of Nxai Pan.
- Learn about the superlake and discover the archaeological evidence for yourself.
- Learn to trust your GPS.



THE complex of pans that make up the Makgadikgadi is the largest area of salt pans in the world, covering over 12 000 square kilometres of completely barren flatness, and combined with the Makgadikgadi and Nxai Pan National Park, the whole area is almost the size of Portugal.

The vast expanse of flatness that is the Makgadikgadi is in fact the parched bed of a once great superlake which covered much of northern Botswana. But now its cracked saline surface is hazed by fine white whirlwinds, edged by plains of grass and migrating animals under an endless canopy of blue sky.

This complex of pans and grasslands that stretch to the endless horizon is now all that remains of the southern African superlake that once covered over 60 000 square kilometres of northern Botswana and reached a depth of up to 50m in places.

Now there are vast migrating animal herds that traverse the area and in the wet season hundreds of thousands of waterbirds flock to the pans. But even with this diversity of bird and wildlife one can never escape the sense of isolation and freedom which have become almost unknown in our busy urban lives.

OPENING PAGE: Much of the pan area is only accessible by four-wheel drive vehicle, from where you can enjoy the expanse of sand and sky as well as view game.

Photo: Anka Agency International

ABOVE: Experience a surreal adventure as you speed across the flat salty surface on a dune bike.

Photo: Photo Access

There are numerous pans in the Makgadikgadi, but the three major pans that make up this remarkable area are Ntwetwe Pan south of Gweta which is the largest pan in the ancient lake-bed system, Sowa Pan south-west of Nata and Nxai Pan north of the main Gweta/Maun road.

PLACES OF INTEREST

Nata Sanctuary

Sowa is the bushman word for salt, which is an apt description of the vast white expanse of this, the largest complex of natural salt pans in the world. Yet in the wet season the Nata River carries water into Sua Pan which fills the northern part of the pan and attracts a wide variety of waterbirds, including sometimes millions of breeding flamingos as well as pelicans, ducks and teals.

Then in the dry winter months bustards and korhaans can be seen in the grass fringes of the pan accompanied by migratory birds such as kites, eagles and bee-eaters. This wealth of birdlife is protected by the Nata Bird Sanctuary.

This private sanctuary, which is 17km south of Nata village and which covers 230 square kilometres of grasslands and Sowa Pan surface, is a local community project managed by a board of trustees selected from the four nearby villages of Nata, Maposa, Mmanxotae and Sepako.

MAKGADIKGADI

BOTSWANA FOCUS

41