

Unleashing the Potential of Young People to Harness the Demographic Dividend in Botswana

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* Cover and interior photos: 2016 All Schools Debate Tournament
* Back photos: Launch of 2011 Month of Youth Against AIDS (MYAA)

"Critical youth investments needed to reap a Demographic Dividend are those that protect rights, including reproductive rights, improve health, including sexual and reproductive health, and provide skills and knowledge to build young people's capabilities and agency".

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United Nations Population Fund

Delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled

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Botswana

What is a Demographic Dividend?

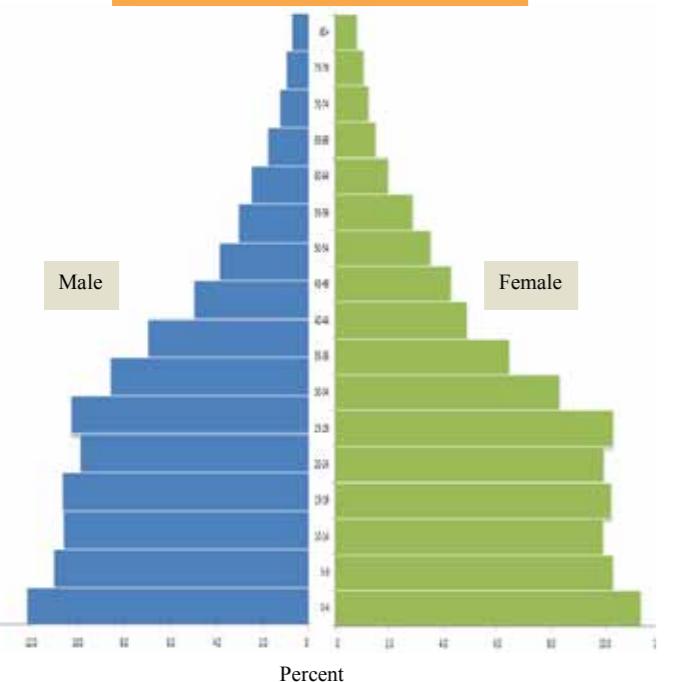
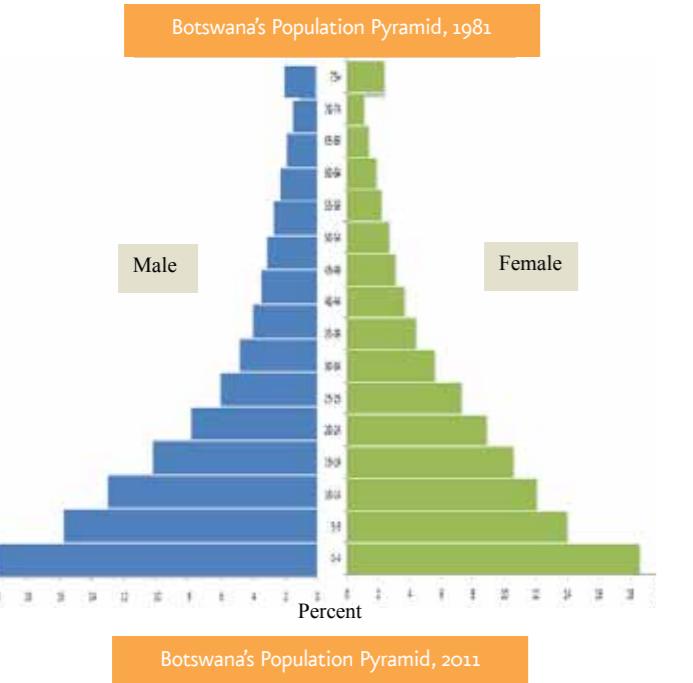
A Demographic Dividend (DD) refers to the accelerated economic growth that begins with changes in the age structure of a country's population as it transitions from high to low birth and death rates. As a country's Total Fertility Rate (TFR, the average number of children per woman) drops, the proportion of the population under age 15 begins to decrease relative to the adult working-age population (generally ages 15 to 64—the child dependency ratio). The decline in this ratio sets the stage for smaller families, who now have more resources to invest in the health, education, and well-being of each child. With fewer people to support, a country has a 'window of opportunity' for rapid economic growth if the right social and economic policies are developed and investments made.

Botswana's Youthful Population

Botswana is characterized by a youthful age structure:

- 53% of the population is aged below 25 years and 20% is aged between 15-24 years.
- The proportion of children (0-14 years) to the general population has declined from 47.5% in 1971 to 32.6% in 2011, while the 15-64 years increased from 46.9% (1971) to 64.9% (2011).
- The dependency ratio declined from 113 in 1971 to 93 in 1991 and stood at 60.2 in 2011.
- Total Fertility Rate has declined significantly from 6.6 children per woman in 1981 to 2.7 children per woman in 2011.

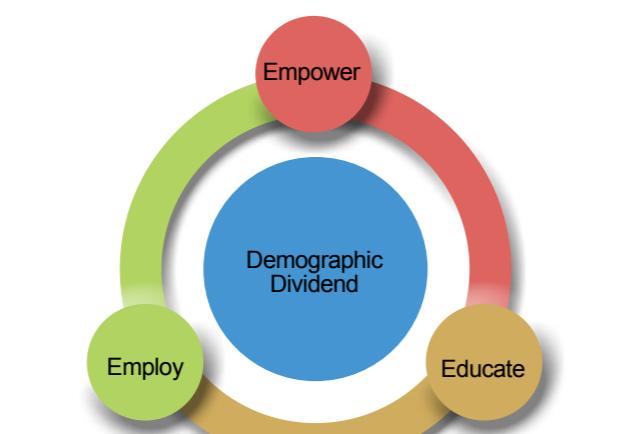
The window of opportunity to harness the Demographic Dividend is temporarily open for Botswana.



How to harness a Demographic Dividend

Realizing a Demographic Dividend requires **multiple intersecting investments to empower, educate and employ** young people.

These investments will build the capabilities of people, and ensure their right to achieve their potential.



Botswana Situation

- HIV prevalence (4.7% for ages 15-19 and 10.3% for 20-24).
- High Maternal Mortality (152 deaths per 100000 births) for a Middle Income Country.
- High teenage pregnancies (9.7%).
- 58% of victims of rape or defilement were found to be between 16 to 35 years of age, with 27% of them being below the age of 16.



Selected DD Facts

- Countries with the greatest potential to harness the DD are those undergoing **fertility decline**, with a large proportion of young people on the limit of working age.
- The DD is **not automatic** or guaranteed even in cases where fertility has declined.
- The **size of the dividend** will depend largely on how those countries **invest in the empowerment of young people** to realize their full potential.
- Realizing a DD requires multiple **intersecting investments** to empower, educate and employ a country's young people.
- The demographic dividend is **time-bound and happens once** in a population's history

Educate

Access to education is an important ingredient in the social and economic growth and development process, thus harnessing the Demographic Dividend. Government needs to:

- Increase equitable enrolments in secondary schooling and higher.
- Enhance quality and diversity in schooling.
- Link training to employment gaps.
- Adopt comprehensive sexuality education through the establishment of global standards and guidelines, to empower young women and men through information.
- Promote equal access of boys and girls to universal primary and secondary education to provide equal opportunities of job security and lifelong learning to adults.

Botswana Situation

- Primary School Net Enrolment Rate (NER) around 90% for both boys and girls.
- Junior Secondary School NER (13-15 years) around 50%.
- Senior Secondary School NER (16-17 year) around 30%.
- Gender disparity almost eliminated in primary and secondary schools. Primary School Enrolment Gender Parity Index was 0.957 in 2012.
- Students/teacher ratio was 1:24 (2012).
- Challenges in education include:
 - High levels of teenage pregnancy and school
 - Lower female enrolment in Sciences, Technology and Mathematics (STEM) at tertiary level.
 - Concerns on quality of education and a mismatch between available skills and the labour market needs.
 - High unemployment among graduates from tertiary level.

Employ

The demographic dividend can only be realized if the **skills developed are deployed in productive activity**.

Private and public sectors jointly need to promote high employment industries that **match the evolving skills and resources**. Government also needs to:

- Facilitate equal pay for equal work**, to empower women to enjoy security of place, formal work and lifelong learning.
- Promote strategies for **youth employment and entrepreneurship** through engagement of young people in policymaking processes.
- Develop strategies for encouraging full, **decent employment** – as opposed to informal employment – through youth **engagement in policy development**.

Why investing in young people is important

Investing in young people provides social and economic benefits at macro and micro levels

The demographic bonus: youth entering in the labour market every year

Young people are potential skilled labour for new and emerging areas of the economy, such as IT, green economy

- Youth unemployment
 - 15-19 years – 41%
 - 20-24 years – 34%
- Poverty
 - 15-19 years – 11.1%
 - 20-24 years – 7.6%
- Limited participation of youth in decision-making processes