

EVIDENCE AND ACTION

Botswana: Piloting the Middle Income Strategy



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MIC Facts

Middle Income Countries (MICs) are countries with a gross national income (GNI) per capita ranging from \$1,026 to \$12,475 (World Bank 2011 classification). The World Bank further divides MICs into Lower (GNI of \$1,006 - \$3,975) and Upper MICs (GNI of \$3,976 - \$12,276). Since the mid-nineties, the group has grown bigger as a result of low income countries moving to the MIC category. MICs account for almost half of the world's population. Despite greater overall wealth, pockets of deep poverty still persist in many of them. According to the World Bank, MICs are home to one third of all people living on less than two dollars a day.¹

While MICs continue to become more influential in world politics, they face different challenges within their borders. Social and technological change accompanying the economic transformation has significantly shifted the development needs of these countries. The United Nations recognized the importance of responding to these new needs and of developing a well-defined agenda that guides its programme content and operations to address the priorities of MICs.



For further information on Middle Income Countries, see Evidence and Action issue 1: "Focus on Middle Income Countries"

In November 2010, UNFPA launched a pilot initiative for sharpening its position on engaging with MICs and identifying ways for efficient coordinated support. The initiative is led by the Programme Division and focuses on three pilot countries: Botswana, Brazil and South Africa.

In October 2011, participants of the UNFPA Middle Income Country pilot initiative met in Gaborone, Botswana, to share their experiences and best practices and to derive lessons. Hosted by UNFPA Botswana, the meeting also involved United Nations partners and key national players, including government officials, civil society representatives and local academics.

Botswana shifted from being a low income to a lower Middle Income Country in the 1980s and moved from being a lower Middle Income Country to an upper Middle Income Country in the 1990s.

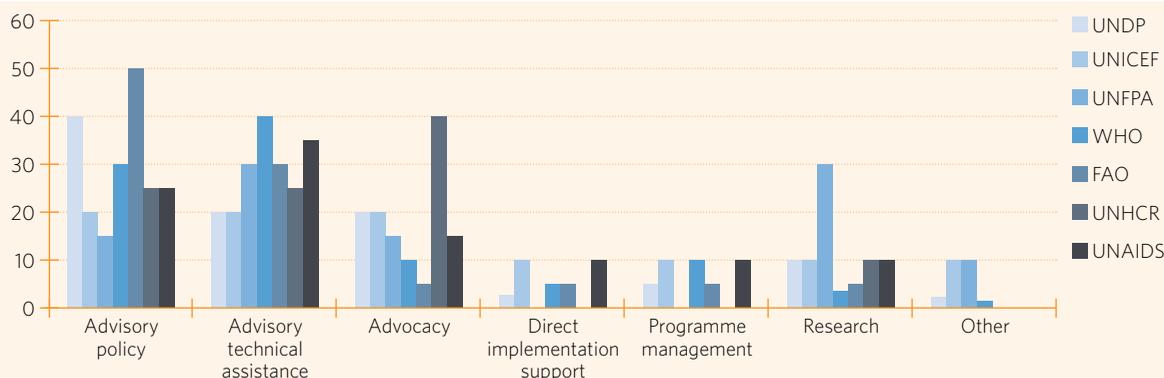
¹ Worldbank

Botswana & the Strategy for MICs

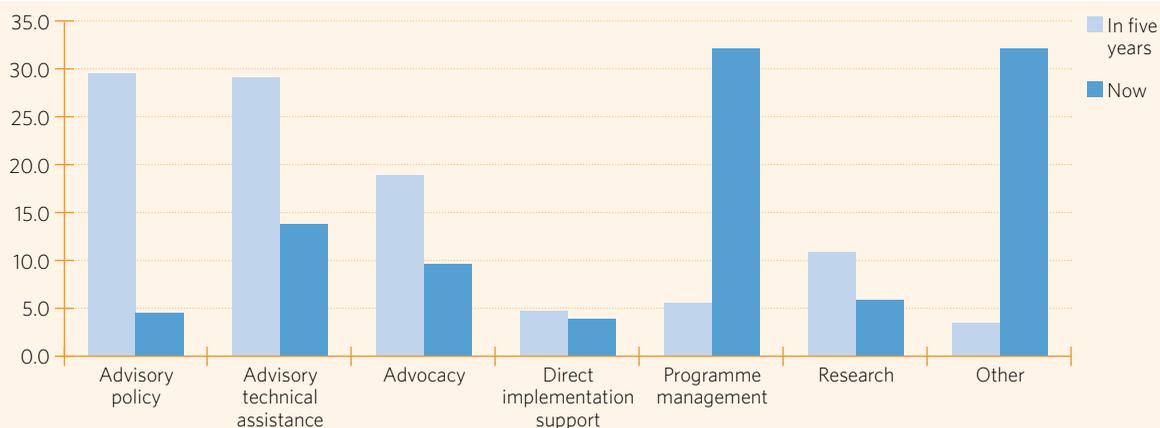
Led by the UNFPA Botswana Country Office, the UN Country Team (UNCT), in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP), commissioned a study to identify the best ways for the UN to deliver coordinated and targeted assistance to Botswana.

The outcome document, United Nations Middle Income Country Strategy: Strategic Plan 2011-2016, presents results of consultations with multiple stakeholders, analyzes the changing environment, needs and interests of Botswana as MIC, and reviews the role of the UNCT and its performance in the country. This strategy document is guiding the implementation of the Botswana/UN Programme of Operation (GOB - UNPOP, 2010-2014) in the spirit of strengthening Delivering as One in the country.

Current vision of focus of UNCT in Botswana²



Comparison of vision (5 years from now) with perceived status³



Note: "Other" includes operations, general management, programme communications, development partner coordination, inter-agency coordination, media/public information, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation, etc.

² Source: Mini-survey of UNCT (n=7)

³ Source: Mini-survey of UNCT (n=7) and of Theme/Support Groups (n=24). Note that latter group was largely programmatic staff.

Development of the MIC Strategy

The UN Botswana MIC Strategy is an initiative to strengthen the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the UN system in Botswana.

Steps in Strategy Development included:

- Extensive review of important literature, including the following: United Nations Development Assistance Framework, UN Programme Operation Plan Common Country Assessment, National Development Plan 10, Vision 2016.
- Conducted internal and external analyses to determine factors that impact the operations of the UN System in Botswana such as developing strong leadership at all levels, attracting and retaining competent staff and enhancing knowledge management.
- Conducted key stakeholder interviews with government, private sector, civil society, development partners and academia.

Various assessment methods applied:

- Analysis of the country's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis) as an MIC country.
- Assessment of the UN country team's (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNIDO) capacity in four areas: people (or organizational capacity), internal processes, financial and stakeholders. This process helps focus the strategic intent, themes, objectives, measures, targets and initiatives that constitute the UN Botswana MIC Strategy.
- Analysis of six focus areas, including vision, organizational culture, internal processes, organizational structure, people and information, to determine barriers and enablers of the focus areas, as well as opportunities for improvement.
- Analysis of external factors influencing the work of the UN in Botswana. This includes desk research and stakeholder interviews, as well as analysis of political, economic, socio-cultural, technological, legislative and environmental (PESTLE analysis) context.



Strategy and Objectives

Following analysis of the findings, the UN identified four strategic themes as the main pillars of the Botswana MIC Strategy.

- ① Promoting high performance culture to drive effective delivery of the UN System in Botswana, such as improving process efficiency, focusing more on advocacy and communication, and diversifying and expanding sources for funding.
- ② Serving internal and external stakeholder expectations by driving operational efficiency and innovation.
- ③ Ensuring diversified sourcing and utilization of financial resources that will sustain operations of the UN System in Botswana.
- ④ Building capacity in evidence-based policy and strategy development, and implementation in key national development priority areas; this will improve institutional capacity and service delivery.

The UNCT shares the vision that by following the Strategy, five years from now there will be a paradigm shift towards upstream work. A large part of what the UNCT currently does is programme management.

Country-driven Approach

Country ownership of the Strategy is essential, both in terms of developing it in a consultative manner and its implementation.

With the support of the Programme Division, the development of the Strategy is country led and country driven.

Centralized Learning

- The MIC strategies developed by the pilot countries as well as the experience gained will inform the review of the current Strategic Plan and the development of the next SP.
- The UNFPA Strategy towards Middle Income Countries will be fine-tuned based on findings and lessons from pilot countries.
- The pilot initiative provides suggestions for the development of a United Nations-wide policy framework for engagement with Middle Income Countries as part of inter-agency discussions, building on the Secretary General's 2011 report on development cooperation with these countries.

"The MIC Strategy provides the framework in which the UN can showcase its added value as a key partner in the development agenda of Botswana and it does reinforce the concept of Delivering as One. It is therefore imperative for ALL of us to embrace this strategy if we as the UN want to continue to be relevant in Botswana."

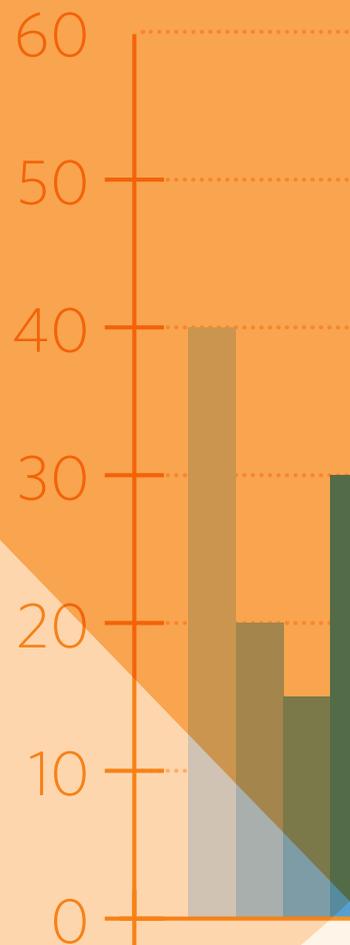
Ms. Aisha Camara-Drammeh
Resident Representative, UNFPA, Botswana

"MICs have particular needs and characteristics that require the UN to modify its terms of engagement to respond to these needs. The UN Country Team in Botswana has decided to develop the MIC Strategy to enable us to improve on our collective effectiveness, efficiency, cohesiveness and responsiveness to the needs of the country."

Dr. Eugene A. Nyarko
Resident Coordinator, a.i. Botswana

"As we move towards 2015, a target year for the MDGs, and 2016, a target year for our National Vision, we look forward to a continued and strengthened partnership that responds to the development needs of the country. Through the MICs initiative, we expect the GOB/UN partnership to bring along innovative approaches where UN-supported programmes are well aligned to government priorities with value added. As a country, we would like to leverage the UN's expertise and enhance our capacity for effective delivery of services to our people."

Mr. Disikalala Gaseitsiwe
Deputy Secretary, Socio-Economic Policy
Ministry of Finance and Development Planning



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