



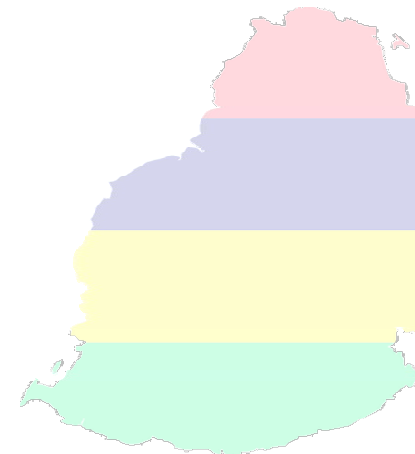
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# “Botswana’s Ipelegeng Programme as a Strategy for Employment Creation for Vulnerable Groups: A Model for Africa?”

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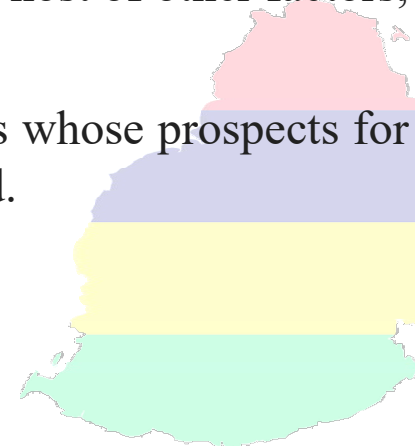
# Organisation of Paper

- Introduction
- Brief Overview of Botswana's political economy
- Unemployment trends: Botswana
- The Concept of Ipelegeng
- Implementation of Ipelegeng
- Challenges Encountered
- Conclusion.



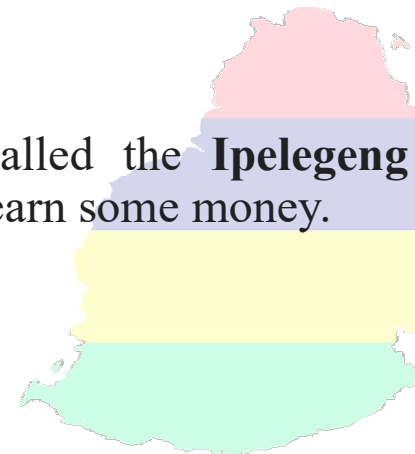
# Introduction

- Unemployment is a major cause for concern especially among the poor in Africa.
- Many governments in Africa have found it difficult to create an environment conducive for attracting FDI, opportunities for employment generation have continued to be limited.
- Commentators have explained that the environment has been further poisoned by a host of other factors, including the economic meltdown, globalisation, etc.
- Education institutions in Africa have continued to churn out ill-equipped graduates whose prospects for employment are limited, thus in the process swelling the figures of the unemployed.



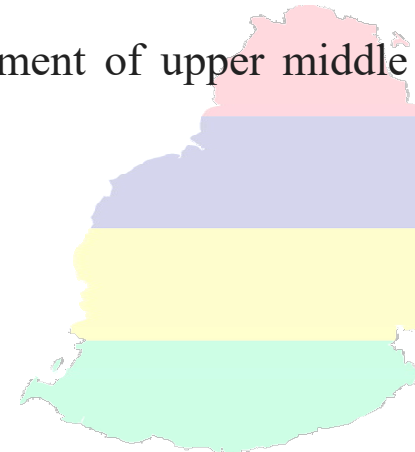
# Introduction (Continued)

- Many governments in Africa seem to be at a loss as to how this perennial and nagging challenge of unemployment can best be tackled.
- However, a few governments have come up with innovative strategies for employment creation, which include promotion of a novel version of public works programmes.
- The Government of Botswana has over the years promoted an initiative called the **Ipelegeng Programme**, which has given thousands of unemployed people an opportunity to earn some money.



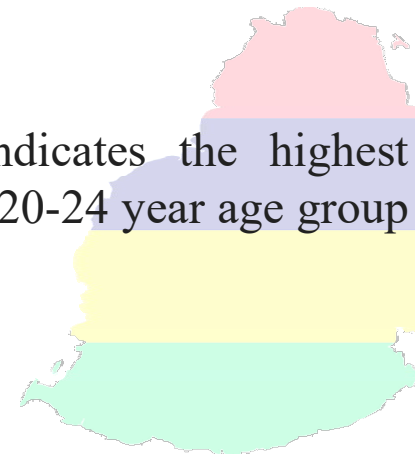
# Botswana: Political Economy

- Botswana is a relatively small country situated in southern Africa, with a population of about 2,1 million.
- At independence in 1966, the country was ranked among the poorest nations on the African continent.
- In the 1970s, the country's fortunes turned for the better following the discovery of diamonds; growth rate and GDP figures gradually shot up.
- Prudent macroeconomic management as well as stable governance resulted in attainment of upper middle income status (Mafela, Maundeni & Mookodi, 2011).
- Yet despite the impressive figures, poverty and indeed unemployment have persisted.



# Unemployment trends

- In the 1990s, and early 2000s, unemployment was estimated at between 20 and 23%, and by 2005 it fell to 17.6%.
- In 2011 the unemployment rate averaged 17.8%, which translated to 126, 349 unemployed persons, in a country with a labour force of 710 600.
- Statistics Botswana (2011:5) lamented that, “The age group distribution indicates the highest unemployment rate of 41,4% is among the 15-19 years age group followed by the 20-24 year age group of 34.0 percent”. (Statistics Botswana, 2011).



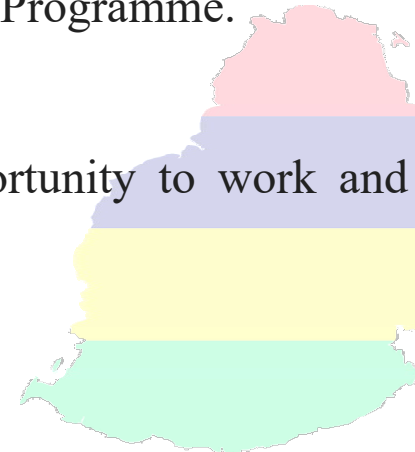
# Unemployment Trends (Continued)

- Available statistics indicate that, nationally the unemployment rate stood at 20% in 2013, while poverty levels stood at 19%. (Youth Summit 2016).
- Youth unemployment was said to account for 20% of total unemployed labour force (World Bank, 2015).
- Two thirds of the unemployed youth in Botswana were said to be under the age of 30 years.



# Ipelegeng Programme

- The Government came up with a raft of measures to stave off the impact of poverty, and these efforts included the launching of the Ipelegeng Programme.
- The initiative, which is designed as a public works programme, is regarded as a safety net scheme and is grouped together with initiatives like Destitute Programme and the Orphan Care Programme.
- The Ipelegeng Programme has seen many unemployed people getting an opportunity to work and receive some wage – even though not on a permanent basis.



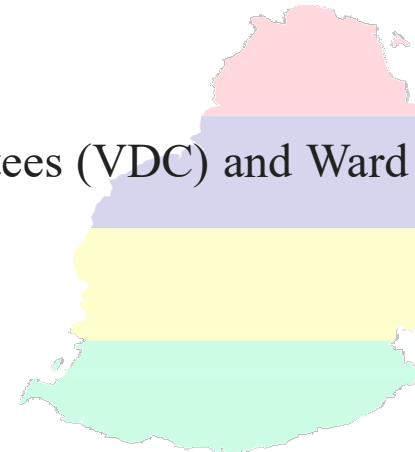
# Ipelegeng Concept

- Ipelegeng literary means “*carry your own weight*”; it is a social protection programme designed to ensure that unemployed able-bodied people do experience work, albeit for short periods.
- The programme was ‘re-launched’ in 2008 through a Presidential directive (CAB 19 (A) /2008), as a permanent, continuous Labour Intensive Public Works programme (NDP 10 2009 – 2016).
- The directive of 2008 did not alter the original format; it simply expanded the mandate and structure particularly with respect to resource allocation (Nthomang, 2018).
- The idea of making it a permanent feature on the labour market was particularly welcomed by many desperate job seekers and their families as an opportunity to earn a bit of income.



# Implementation of Ipelegeng

- Ipelegeng targets unskilled and semi-skilled labour, and it is essentially envisaged as a source of supplementary income (Mupedziswa and Ntseane 2012; 2013).
- The MoLG has responsibility for rolling out of this programme, with local level implementation being left to local authorities, namely rural district and urban councils.
- Applications for employment are launched through Village Development Committees (VDC) and Ward Development Committees (WDC).



# Activities Under Ipelegeng

- Activities include collecting of litter, cleaning of streets, cutting grass, minor construction work, clearing of fields, maintenance of drift fences, community policing, maintenance of buildings and secondary roads (Mupedziswa & Ntseane, 2012; 2013; Nthomang, 2018).
- An estimated 19, 431 people benefitted from the Ipelegeng programme in 2010, compared to 14, 363 in 2008 (MoLG, 2010). Clearly it is expanding.
- As at May 2013 some 56 274 people, 71% of whom were female, were working on the Ipelegeng programme across the country (Nthomang, 2018).



# Ipelegeng activities (Continued)

- In terms of remuneration, in 2011 the wage rates were pegged at P18/day for the casual labourers and P24/day for their supervisors.
- Currently, beneficiaries earn P 480 (approx. \$45) per month, plus P100 (i.e. P5 per meal) for food, making a total wage of P580 per month. (Alternatively workers can be served with food while at work).
- In principle the programme is open to all, (RSVP, 2011). Resources for the Ipelegeng programme are allocated, not by district but based on the size of the Parliamentary Constituency.
- Each of the 57 constituencies receives a determined monthly amount of money from Government coffers for the purpose.



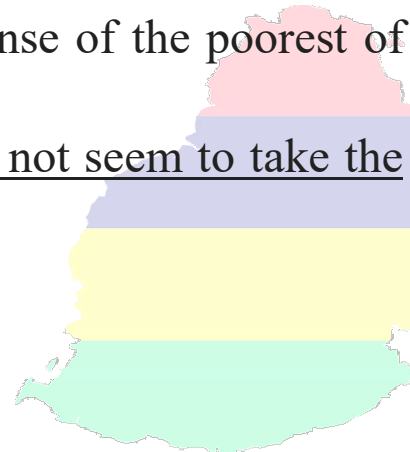
# Ipelegeng activities (Continued)

- In 2010, some P221 million was spent on the Ipelegeng programme, and this translated into P11 384 per beneficiary (RHVP, 2010).
- Expenditure rose from P301 million in 2011/12 to P409 million in 2012/13; when 50 000 to 56 000 people aged 18 – 64 years benefitted (against over 300 000 very poor people).
- In several constituencies officials have resorted to employing the lottery system in the selection process due to high demand (Nthomang, 2018).



# Challenges

- The programme has received **accolades and criticisms** in equal measure, yet on balance the positives seem to far out-weigh the negatives.
- It has been argued that coverage is rather limited, essentially due to resource scarcity. Maladministration and corruption are issues of concern that have been mentioned by critics.
- It is said that in some cases the deserving poor have fallen through the cracks due to implementation challenges which include poor targeting.
- Some have observed that in some cases the better off have benefitted at the expense of the poorest of the poor, suggesting hiccups in implementation (WB & BIDPA, 2013).
- Some critics have also argued that some of those employed on the programme do not seem to take the work seriously, meaning that production levels tend to be comparatively low.



# Conclusion

- Despite the challenges, the programme has benefitted many among the vulnerable in Botswana. Ordinary people are happy to earn an earn an income, though small, and also though only temporarily.
- The fact that the programme is a permanent and continuous feature on the labour market, gives the (potential) beneficiaries hope of making some money fairly ‘regularly’.
- Whatever little (money) they get apparently does go some way in meeting some of their basic needs, such as transport expenses for an essential journey.
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that some beneficiaries have actually used the small earnings as start-up capital to kick-start “more viable” income generating ventures.



# Conclusion (continued)

- The programme has thus given a glimmer of hope – something to look forward to – to otherwise vulnerable groups with little hope for a fairly regular source of income.
- The fundamental difference with public works programmes offered elsewhere is that in the case of Botswana, the scheme has assumed a permanent feature on the country's labour market.
- It is possible that some African governments are implementing different versions of public works programmes; the Botswana model is well worth replicating elsewhere on the continent.
- Elsewhere in Africa, such programmes tend to operate on an ad-hoc basis, being launched only in emergencies, for instance, when certain regions of the given country need emergency relief.

END – THANK YOU !!

