

The Status of NEET in Botswana

A Quantitative Analysis of Youth Not in Employment,
Education or Training (NEET) (15 - 24 years old)

Country Report



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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ALMP	Active labour market policies
ESA	Eastern and Southern Africa
GDP	Gross domestic product
ILO	International Labour Organisation
NEET	Not in employment, education or training
PPP	Parity purchasing power
QMTS Q1 2020	Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey: Labour Force Module Q1 2020
SDG	Sustainable development goals
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
UN DESA	United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UN Population Division	United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UN Women ESA-RO	UN Women Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNW	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

1

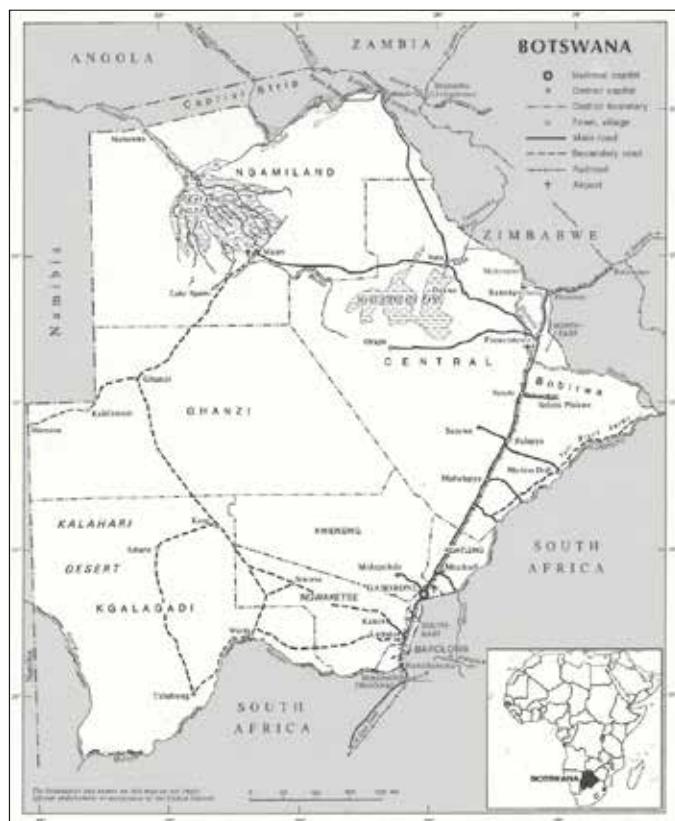
INTRODUCTION

Neither good quality education nor productive employment is universally available to the world's youth and reducing the number of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) is target 8.6 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN DESA 2021). The ILO, in their *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020* estimate that:

One-fifth of young people currently have NEET status, which means they are neither gaining experience in the labour market, nor receiving an income from work, nor enhancing their education and skills. Clearly, their full potential is not being realized, though many may be contributing to the economy through unpaid work, which is particularly true of young women. (ILO 2020a)

The NEET indicator, which measures the percentage of young people who are not in employment, education or training, is an important concept that captures a broad array of vulnerabilities among youth. Touching on issues of early school leaving, unemployment and labour market discouragement, NEET status also highlights the issues of youth who are engaged in family labour for own consumption or family domestic and care work and thus not employed¹. The consequences of high NEET rates are twofold. Firstly, on an individual level, absence from both education and employment increase the risk of poverty and a permanent disengagement from the labour market. Secondly, on a country level, high NEET rates are a loss in terms of unused labour supply, lower productivity and lower GDP output.

Young women in East and Southern Africa are disproportionately affected by NEET status. Leaving school early, marriage, assisting with subsistence



UN GIS 2020

¹ This report uses the definition of work and employment from the 19th ICLS (ILO 2013). See Section 3 for more detail.

farming, unpaid domestic work, taking care of family members and fewer opportunities to take up work which may be seen as inappropriate or unsafe for young women, all play a role in the NEET status of young women. NEET status is also more likely to become a permanent state for young women. The NEET rate in many developing countries declines very little for young women between 15 and 24 years old when ten years later the cohort is between the ages of 25 and 34 years (ILO 2020a).

According to data analysed in this report, Botswana has a youth NEET population of 42% which is equally balanced between men and women. Increased education provision has meant that the 15- to 19-year-old population is almost universally accessing and attending the first three years of secondary school. The NEET rate for this age group is 37%, with a NEET rate of 35% for young women and 38% for young men. 16% of the 20 to 24 age group is still in education and 36% are employed. The NEET rate for this age group is 48%, with women having a NEET rate of 48.2% and men of 48.6%².

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have led to job losses and increases in poverty – especially in the urban centres. Schools and educational institutions have also been closed for extended periods. Development initiatives, healthcare services and nutrition levels have all declined since 2020 (UN Women 2020a). Young adults whose place in the labour market is often informal, temporary, and tenuous at best have seen greater job and income losses than their parents. Increased numbers of young adults are likely to be lost to the education system. Young women are more vulnerable to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Interrupted education, economic and food insecurity, disruptions in services, unplanned pregnancy, all increase the risk of early marriage (UNICEF and UNFPA 2021).

To ensure that recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic also impacts on reducing the number of youth NEET, especially young women, the UN Women Eastern and Southern African Regional Office has commissioned a quantitative research report on the status of youth NEET in nine East and Southern African countries.

This Botswana country report is part of the larger quantitative research report and is structured to describe Botswana's economic and social development context, including the status of women. It then presents a descriptive and a statistical analysis of the data from the Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey: Labour Force Module Q1 2020. The statistical analysis will look at the determinants of NEET by developing a logistical regression model that estimates the probability of being NEET. The last section of the report will reflect on the findings of the determinants of NEET in the light of country policy on gender equity and youth development as well as international literature on youth employment.

² Unless otherwise referenced, data in this report is from the Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey Labour Force Module 2020 (QMTS Q1 2020). Extractions from the microdata and calculations are those of the author.

The report is structured as follows:

It will first give an overview of the economic, demographic and gender context of Botswana. Growth prospects and employment opportunities will affect strategies to address the lack of opportunities for paid work available to young people.. However, these are affected by the projected size of the youth population and their current socioeconomic status. The interaction between poverty, access to social services and gender norms frequently lead to young women leaving school and into marriage and childbearing before accessing employment (UNICEF and UNFPA 2021).

Using the country's survey data, the next section of the report gives a description of youth by status - NEET, employed or in education. This data is disaggregated by age group and sex. Methodological and definitional issues surrounding the calculation of the NEET rate and the definition of employment used in the survey is discussed in this section.

The third section of the report presents analytical statistics and the determinants of youth NEET. Logistical regression models are used to calculate the probability of young women having NEET status depending on their circumstances. The variables tested for their effect on NEET status are age, marriage, highest level of education attained, time spent in unpaid family agriculture or enterprise, family structure, urban or rural residence.

The fourth section of the report is the conclusion and recommendations that arise from the data analysis. Most of these recommendations reinforce the country's current development agenda and the work done by committed stakeholders and development agencies.

2

SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The country context plays a determining role in the prospects for young people's ability to attain good quality education and enter the labour market. Economic development, demographic growth and societal attitudes towards young women affect whether the youth can contribute to overall development and to reductions in poverty which have been eroded by the impact of COVID-19.

Botswana is an upper-middle income country with a transformation agenda of being a high-income country by 2036. Keenly aware that its prosperity has been reliant on minerals – most particularly diamonds but also copper, nickel, coal, iron ore and silver – the Botswanan government is prioritising economic transformation that will increase employment (World Bank 2021). Prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, growth in youth employment was greatest in the IT, tourism and services industries. Young women's employment has been concentrated in the tourism and services industries which have been the most affected by the pandemic – especially the informal service industries such as food and sales which still employ the majority of young women (AfDB 2021).

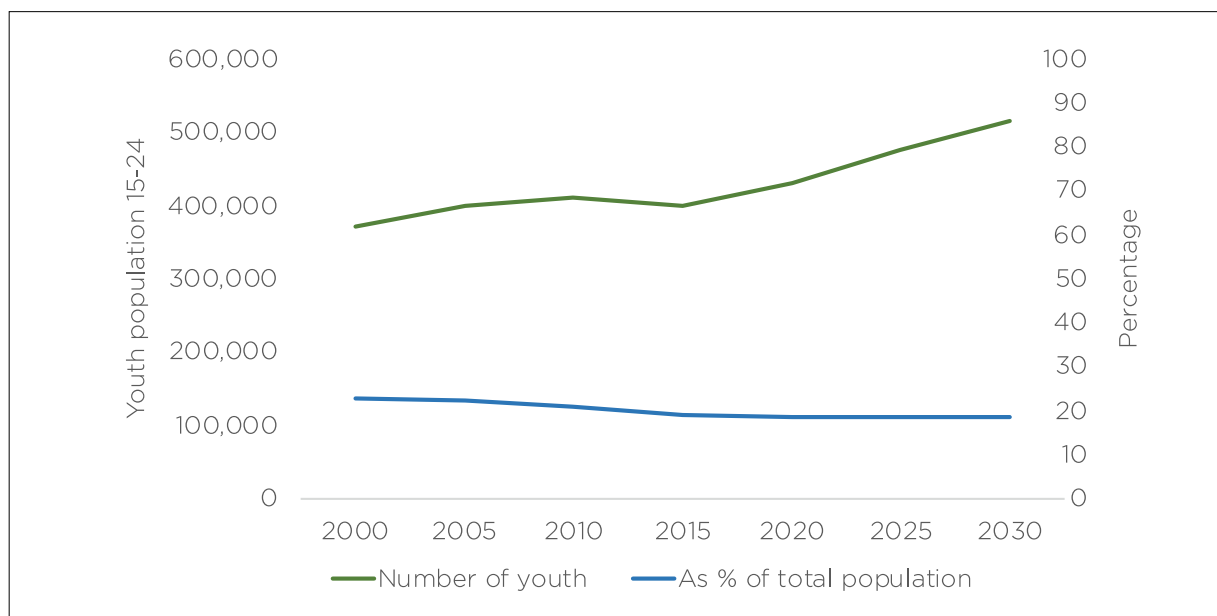
This section gives a description of Botswana's economic growth prospects in terms of GDP growth and GDP per capita; it presents the projected growth of the youth population; the impact of poverty on young women and the gender dimensions of development in Botswana. Issues related to education and employment are considered as central to the NEET analysis and are discussed in more detail in Section 3.

2.1 Demographic profile by sex and age

Intrinsic to wealth is population growth. This impacts at a macro level in per capita terms, in the labour absorption capacity and in the state's ability to provide services. Those countries whose population growth rate has slowed down "are much better placed to achieve economic take-off and middle-income status" (Bryceson 2018).

Botswana is at the point where the youth population as a percentage of Botswana's total population has declined due to decreases in the fertility rate which is now at 18%. The youth population as a percentage of the total population is projected to level-off and remain at its current rate of 18% (UN Population Division 2019). Figure 1 shows the estimated number of youth projected to 2030 and the number of 15- to 24-year-olds as a percentage of the total population, projected to 2030.

Figure 1: Number of youth (aged 15 to 24) and youth as a percentage of the total population from 2000 projected to 2030



Source: UN Population Division (2019), author's calculations.

2.2 Economic growth and structure of the economy in Botswana

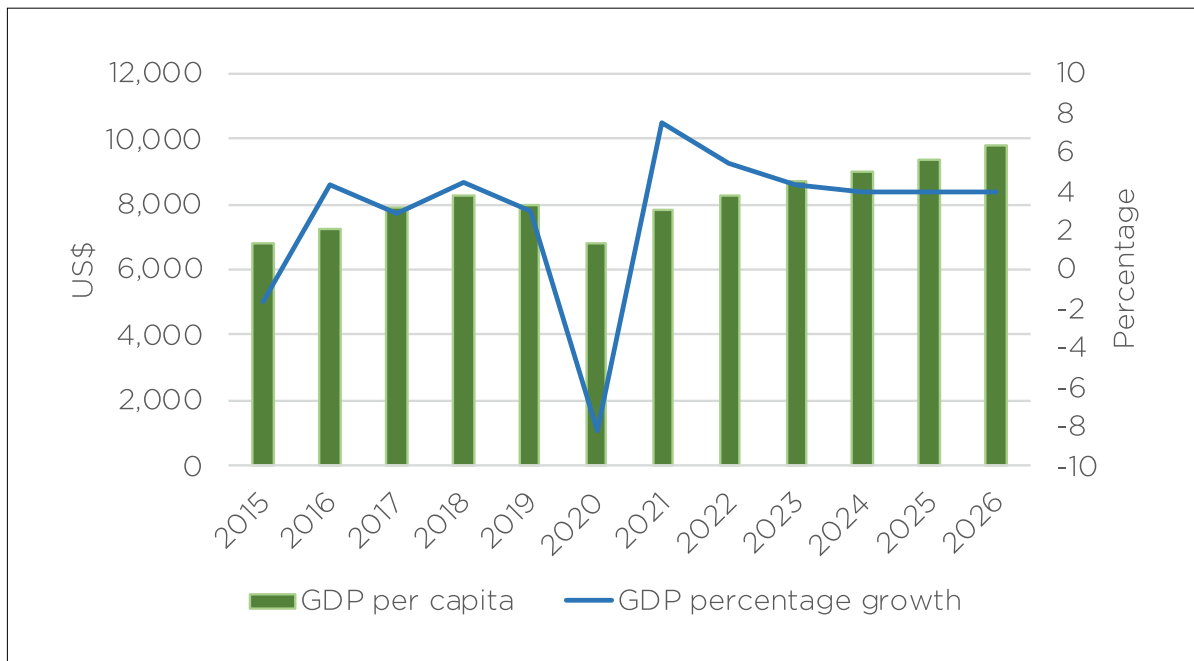
Botswana has the highest GDP per capita in the sub-region at US\$ 79,79³00. Based predominantly on diamond mining and more recently on the exploitation of other precious metals, the economy has seen some limited growth in more employment intensive sectors such as tourism and services. Prudent management of government resources and spending on human capital development has led to a human development index rank of 101 out of 189 (World Bank 2021).

The impact of COVID-19 on Botswana's economy was a contraction of an estimated 8.9% in 2020, mostly due to world demand for diamonds virtually coming to a standstill. All other sectors declined but hardest hit was the tourism sector which had contributed 8.9% of the GDP in 2019. GDP growth is projected to increase to 7.5% in 2021 and then 5.5% in 2022 (Figure 2).

Botswana is planning to develop more employment intensive industries and in the budget speech, the Minister of Finance and Economic Development (2021) identified unemployment, especially among the youth, as one of the major developmental challenges facing the country. The Minister outlined several ongoing and new initiatives to boost youth employment. In addition to investments in improving the quality and relevance of education and training, there are several industry level initiatives to boost youth employment such as internship programmes, information on job availability and a Young Farmers Fund.

3 In constant 2017 US\$ prices, PPP. IMF World Economic Outlook Database (2021).

Figure 2: GDP per capita and GDP growth rates projected to 2026

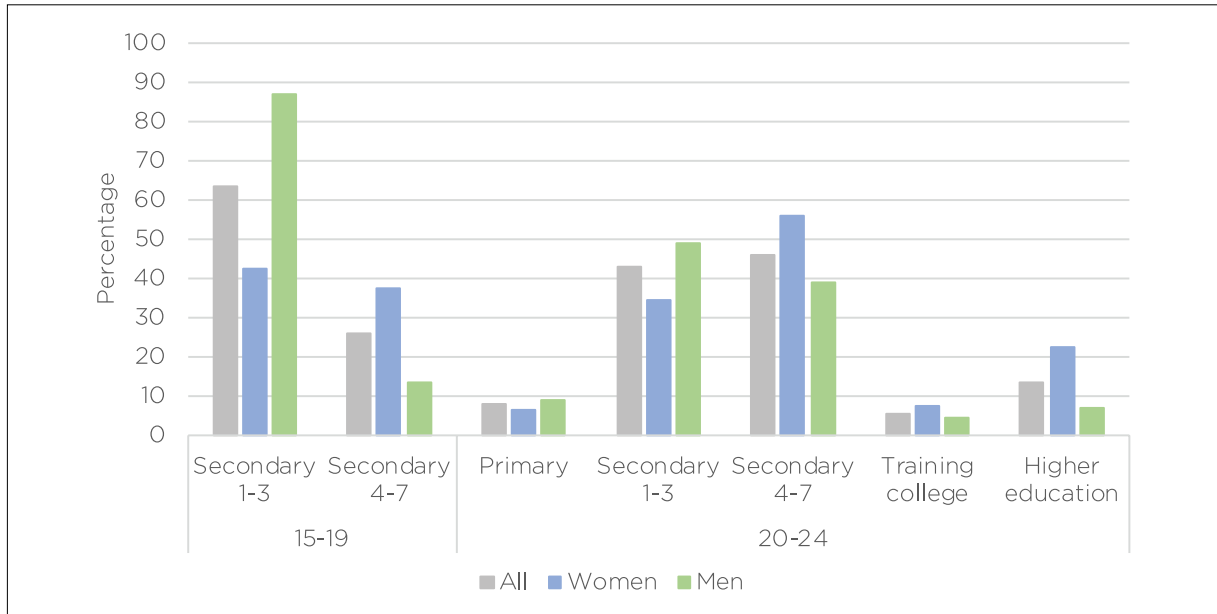


Source: IMF World Economic Outlook Database (2021).

2.3 Poverty profile by sex and age

Despite having upper middle-income status with one of the highest GDP per capita on the continent, wealth in Botswana is unequally distributed. As seen in Figure 3, 13% of the population still lives in extreme poverty of below US\$ 1.90 per day – this is 15% of women and 11% of men. There is a slightly lower disparity in poverty between women and men between the ages of 15 and 24 (Figure 4) (UN Women 2020b). However, there is a disparity in wealth between urban and rural households with over 40% of rural households being in extreme poverty (UNICEF and Statistics Botswana 2021). While the Botswana government has numerous poverty relief and social grant programmes such as feeding schemes, free secondary education and old age pensions, young people who are out of education and not employed will often fall outside of the criteria for poverty relief (Government of Botswana and UNFPA 2021).

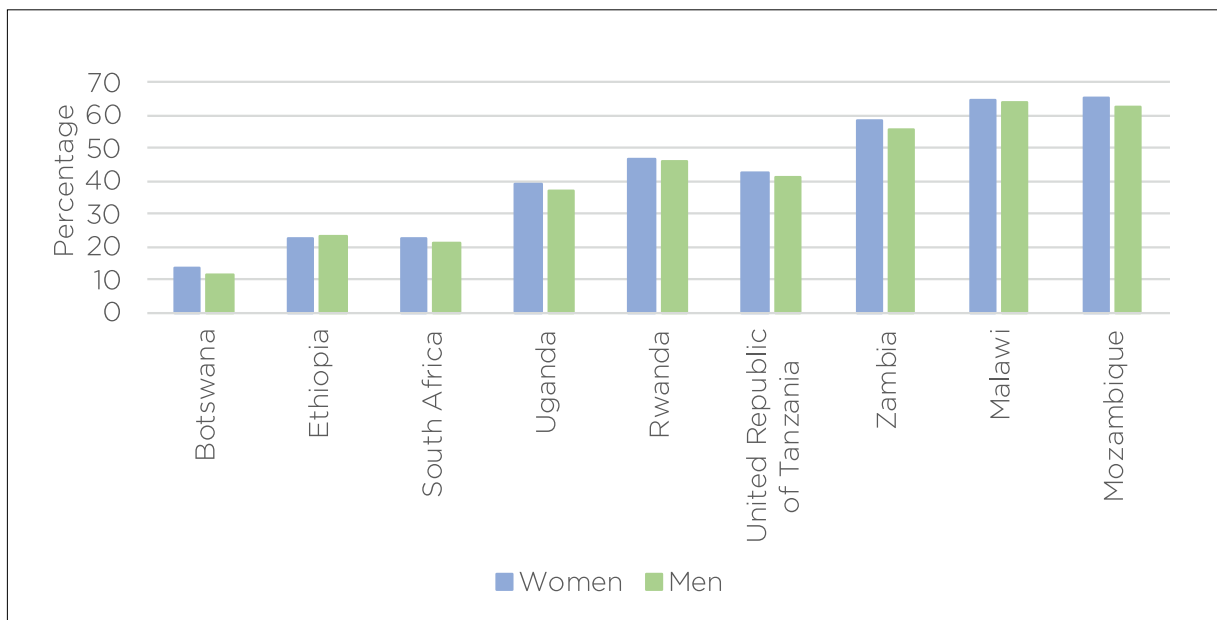
Figure 3: Percentage of population living in extreme poverty in selected East and Southern African countries by sex and age



Note: Extreme poverty is below US\$ 1.90 per person per day in 2011 parity purchasing power (PPP).

Source: UN Women et. al. (2020b) Annex 4: Estimates and Forecasts of Extreme Poverty by Sex and Age - Population aged 15 to 24.

Figure 4: Percentage of youth living in extreme poverty by sex (15 to 24)



Note: Extreme poverty is below US\$ 1.90 per person per day in 2011 parity purchasing power (PPP).

Source: UN Women et. al. (2020b) Annex 4: Estimates and Forecasts of Extreme Poverty by Sex and Age - Population aged 15 to 24.

3

THE BOTSWANA GOVERNMENT'S QUARTERLY MULTI TOPIC SURVEY- LABOUR FORCE MODULE Q1 2020: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

This section of the report gives a description of youth between the ages of 15 and 24 with a focus on youth not in employment, education and training. It uses data from the Botswana Government's Quarterly Multi Topic Survey: Labour Force Module Q1 2020 (QMTS Q1 2020) which was conducted in the first quarter of 2020. The QMTS Q1 2020 includes a sample of 3 240 households and 10 753 individuals. For the purposes of this description the number of youth and the percentages were calculated from the sum of the weighted total.

"Youth NEET are a highly diverse group and reasons for being NEET vary. There are many reasons why a young person may leave school and not actively be seeking a job. They may face particular obstacles; have other demands on their time such as assisting in family own use farm or enterprise production; they may be disabled, and/or there may simply be (or perceived to be) no suitable jobs available" (ILO 2020b).

The relative number of youth NEET in a country is affected by how many 15- to 24-year-olds are able to access education or employment. To understand the drivers of NEET, it is also important to look at the prospects for youth in both of these areas. This section gives the definition of NEET and employment as well as an explanation of the difference in the NEET rates that might arise depending on the definition of employment that is used. The section has an overview of youth NEET, in education, by highest education level, employed by type of employment and engaged in unpaid family farming.

3.1 Definition of NEET

Across East and Southern Africa, the NEET rates are affected by the precise definition of employment captured in the various household survey instruments – which may differ slightly by survey and by country. Many countries are still in the process of updating household and labour force surveys to reflect the definition of employment as revised at the ILO 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) in 2013 (ILO 2013).

The major revision in the definition of employment in the 19th ICLS is that it *excludes* "own use production work comprising production of goods and services for *own final use*" (ILO 2013). In East and Southern Africa NEET rates using the definition of employment from the 19th ICLS standards are substantially higher than the NEET rates using the 13th ICLS (1982) definition of employment (ILO 2013). The removal of "production of goods and services for *own final use*" from the definition of employment effectively increases the numbers of NEET youth – especially in largely subsistence agricultural countries where

young people assist with family agricultural production for own final use. There may also be more youth currently engaged in family production for own use that now become defined as unemployed – hence also potentially raising the youth unemployment rate.

The process of updating household and labour force surveys to reflect the 19th ICLS standards takes time and care needs to be taken with the design of the survey questionnaires, so they reflect the standards as defined. Measuring the differences in work for pay or profit (and therefore employed) versus work for production of goods and services for own final use (and therefore not employed) can be particularly sensitive to questionnaire design – especially amongst groups in less formal employment such as youth and women. In a review by the ILO and the World Bank in Sri Lanka more detailed and carefully structured survey questions find differences in the numbers and hours of paid employment – including increased numbers of women engaged in small enterprise activities. They also find greater hours worked than previously reported in unpaid family work. (Discenza 2021).

A detailed review of employment data in household surveys by the World Bank finds that household and labour force surveys that do not have questions designed to elicit the revised definition of employment tend to collect data that overstates employment in both youth and women (Desiere and Costa 2019). Klasen (2018) points out that there is likely to be a discontinuity in comparisons of NEET before and after countries implement changes to the 2013 19th ICLS standards. In addition, countries are likely to have different timescales for the implementation of the new standards. Care should be taken with both inter-country and in-country comparisons over time.

Definition of NEET

Youth not in employment, education or training is the indicator of the Sustainable Development Goal 8, Target 6: “By 2020 substantially reduce the proportion of youth aged 15-24 not in employment, education or training”. According to UN DESA (2021) the youth NEET rate differs from the youth unemployment rate as it includes the discouraged work seeker category as well as those who are outside the labour force and not in education or training (ILO 2013).

The NEET rate is calculated as follows*:

$$\text{NEET rate (\%)} = \frac{\text{total number of youth aged 15-24} - (\text{number of youth aged 15-24 in employment} + \text{number of youth aged 15-24 in education or training})}{\text{total number of youth aged 15-24}} \times 100$$

It is important to note that the indicator is composed of two different sub-groups – unemployed youth (actively seeking work) not in education or training as well as youth outside the labour force (not actively seeking work) not in education or training. Unemployed youth who are in education and training who should not be counted as NEET.

**Education* is formal or non-formal education (institutionalised, intentional and planned by an education provider).

Employment is defined as all persons of working age who, during a short reference period (one week), were engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit. This specifically excludes work in family agriculture or family enterprises for own consumption and it excludes unpaid domestic and care work.

Training is a non-academic learning activity through which a person acquires specific skills intended for vocational or technical jobs. (UN DESA 2021)

Implications of the 19th ICLS definition of the labour force for NEET rate calculations

This report uses the Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey: Labour Force Module Q1 2020 (QMTS Q1 2020) for analysis of youth NEET. The published report on the (QMTS Q1 2020) follows 19th ICLS protocol (Statistics Botswana 2020a p4). However, the age range of “youth” used by Botswana in the (QMTS Q1 2020) analysis is from 15 to 35 years of age (QMTS Q1 2020). In this regard it is not possible to make direct comparisons between the youth NEET rate in this report and the QMTS report published by the Statistics Botswana (2020a). Nevertheless, the NEET rate in the QMTS report is disaggregated by age groups as shown in Table 1.

Using the 19th ICLS standards, this report shows a NEET rate of 31% for both women and men between 15 and 24 years old; a 36% NEET rate for women and a 26% NEET rate for men; whereas the ILO *Modelled Estimates* in the ILO Data Explorer which use the 13th ICLS standards show a 6.7% youth (15 to 24 years) NEET rate for women and a 4.7% NEET rate for men (<https://ilostat.ilo.org/>). Table 1 shows the three different NEET rates.

Table 1: NEET rates from Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey: Labour Force Module Q1 2020 (QMTS Q1 2020) data analysed in this report and ILO Modelled Estimates

Data source	Age	Women and Men (percentage)	Women only (percentage)	Men (percentage)
QMTS Q1 2020 country report (Statistics Botswana 2020a)	15-17	20	21	20
	18-19	61	55	66*
	20 to 24	49	47	51*
QMTS Q1 2020 data analysed by author	15 to 19	37	35	38*
	20 to 24	48	48	49*
ILO Modelled Estimates (ILO Data Explorer)	15 to 24	-	40	30

* Note: Botswana is the only country in this study where the NEET rate is lower for women than for men.

QMTS Q1 2020 data processing on work and employment

Detail on how the QMTS Q1 2020 data on work and employment was processed is given in Table 2. It should be noted that the small percentage point difference in the NEET rate seen in Table 1 between the Statistics Botswana report and the data analysed in this report likely due to the interpretation of the survey question which asks if the respondent *works* or *helps* in a non-farm household business. In terms of the 19th ICLS, both categories are considered employment if the proceeds are for sale. However, it appears that the Statistics Botswana analysis that the Statistics Botswana report considers “helps” in non-farm household business to be NEET. In any event, the survey data does not distinguish whether the product of the household business enterprise is for sale or own consumption. The analysis done in this report assumes that the product is for sale and therefore even those who *help* in the family business for no pay are considered employed.

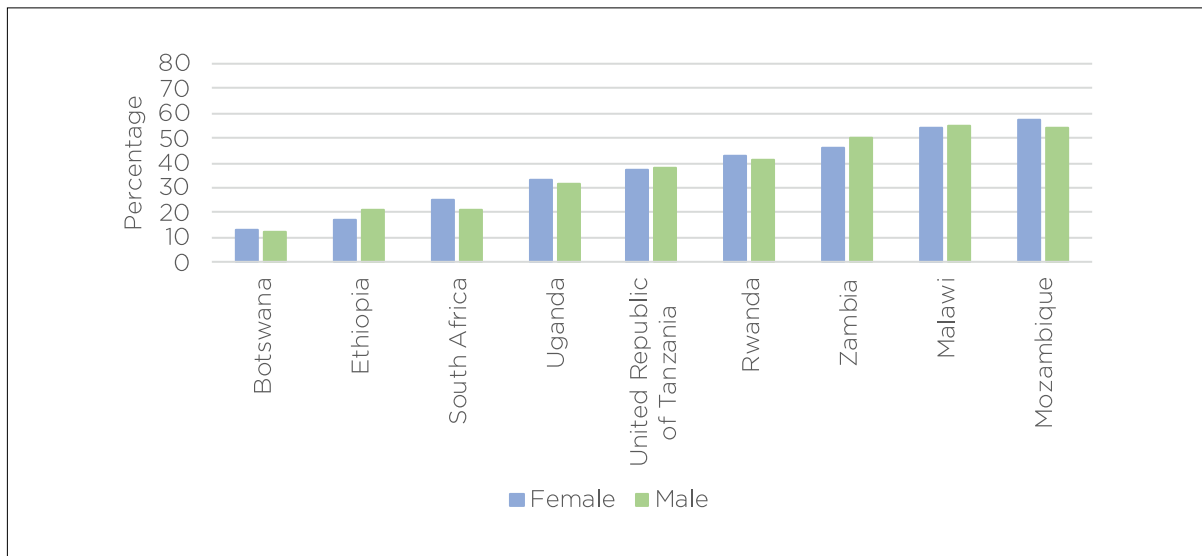
Table 2: QMTS Q1 2020 data processing on work and employment according to the 19th

Country and survey used	ICLS standards used in survey	Implication for calculated NEET rates in this report
<p>Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey (QMTS): Labour Force Module Q1 2020</p>	<p>ICLS standards used: The Statistics Botswana (2020a) report on the results of the QMTS Q1 2020 states that the survey data collected follows the 19th ICLS resolutions most especially that “persons are considered employed only if they work for payment and/or profit or gain. This implies that persons engaged in subsistence farming are not considered to be in employment. Activities of producing goods and services mainly for own final use by households are not included under employment” (Statistics Botswana 2020a p4). However, there may be some ambiguity since own use production of goods is not specifically asked in the questionnaire.</p> <p>Agriculture: Clearly stated if for own use or sale.</p> <p>Other household production of goods and services: Not explicitly included in the survey.</p> <p>Non-farm household business (or enterprise): No distinction asked between own use or sale. Separate questions ask if respondent works or helps in a non-farm household business. In terms of the ICLS both categories are considered employment, however, it appears (from the small percentage point difference between this analysis and the Statistics Botswana report) that the Statistics Botswana report considers “helps” in non-farm household business to be NEET.</p> <p>Unpaid domestic labour: No data collected on any other own use family work.</p>	<p>Employed if in the last 7 days:</p> <p>1) Employed for salary or wage</p> <p>OR</p> <p>2) Works or helps in non-farm household business (see note in middle column on definition of “helps” in non-farm household business)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>3) Works or helps in household agriculture for sale</p> <p>OR</p> <p>4) Is absent from any of the above but plans to return</p> <p>Not employed if:</p> <p>Works or helps in household agriculture for family own use</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Apprentice or volunteer for no pay.</p> <p>NEET rates calculated may be affected by ambiguity in definition if some non-farm household business is for own use only. In which case actual NEET rates may be slightly higher than those calculated in this report (approx. one percentage point).</p>

3.2 Population of youth by sex and age (15 to 24)

Figure 5 shows the number of young people in the QMTS Q1 2020 who were living in the household at the time of the survey. The sample when weighted gives a total of 404 926 youth between the ages of 15 and 24, 198 649 women and 206 278 men. 214 989 young adults are between 15 and 19 years old and 189 937 are between 20 and 24 years old. The gender parity index for 15 to 19 year-olds is 0.97 and for 20 to 24 year-olds is 0.95.

Figure 5: 15 to 24 year-olds living in the household by sex and age group (15 to 24)



Source: Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey (QMTS): Labour Force Module Q1 2020. Author's calculations.

Table 3: Percentage of women and men in the survey by age (15 to 24)

	Women (Per cent)	Men (Per cent)	Ratio of women to men
15 to 19 years	49	51	0.97
20 to 24 years	49	51	0.95
Total	49	51	0.96

Source: Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey (QMTS): Labour Force Module Q1 2020. Author's calculations.

3.3 Overview of youth by activity status

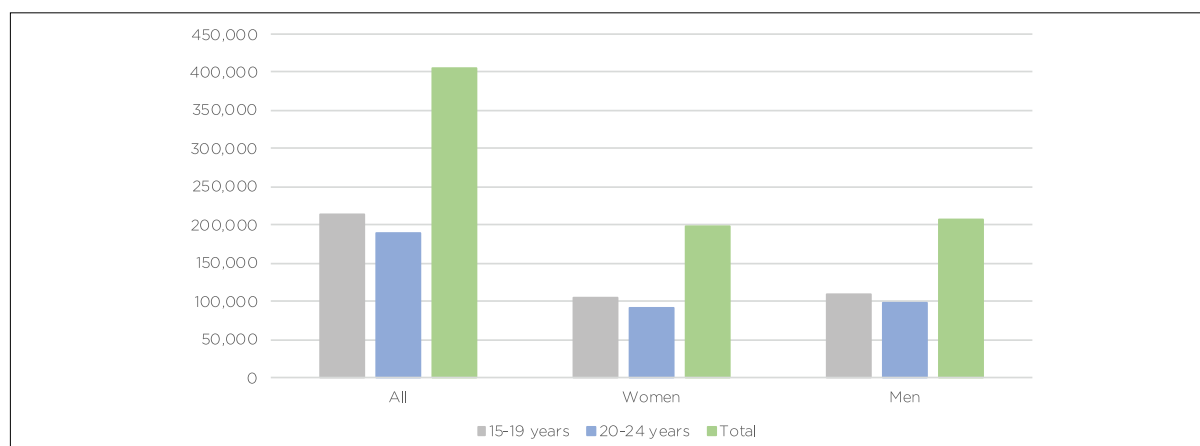
Botswana has a total of 170 571 youth NEET. The gap between women and men NEET is small but there are more men than women NEET in both age groups. In total 41% of women and 43% of young men are NEET. When disaggregated by age group, 35% women and 38% men are NEET in the 15 to 19 age group; and 48% women and 49% men are NEET in the 20- to 24-year-old age group.

In the 15- to 19-year-old age group the difference in NEET status is predominantly reflective of there being more young women enrolled in secondary school than young men (Statistics Botswana 2017). Very few youth in this age group are employed, namely 3% women and 4% men.

The number of youth NEET in the 20- to 24-year-old age group is 92 081 with 48% women and 49% men NEET. Employment in this age group is 35% in total, with 31% women and 38% men in employment. Some of the difference between women and men employment rates are due to the nature of employment available to young men. Young men may be more likely to leave home to seek work in the informal sector which might not be considered suitable for young women.

Education enrolment in both age groups is relatively high with students progressing through the system without the high numbers repeating as are seen in other SSA countries. Botswana stands out as having one of the most effective education systems in SSA and with the highest representation of women (Lewin 2011).

Figure 6: Percentage of youth (aged 15 to 24) by activity status - NEET; employed; employed and in education; and in education only, by sex and age group



Source: Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey (QMTS): Labour Force Module Q1 2020. Author's calculations.

Table 4: Percentage of youth by activity status - NEET; employed; employed and in education; and in education only, by sex and age group

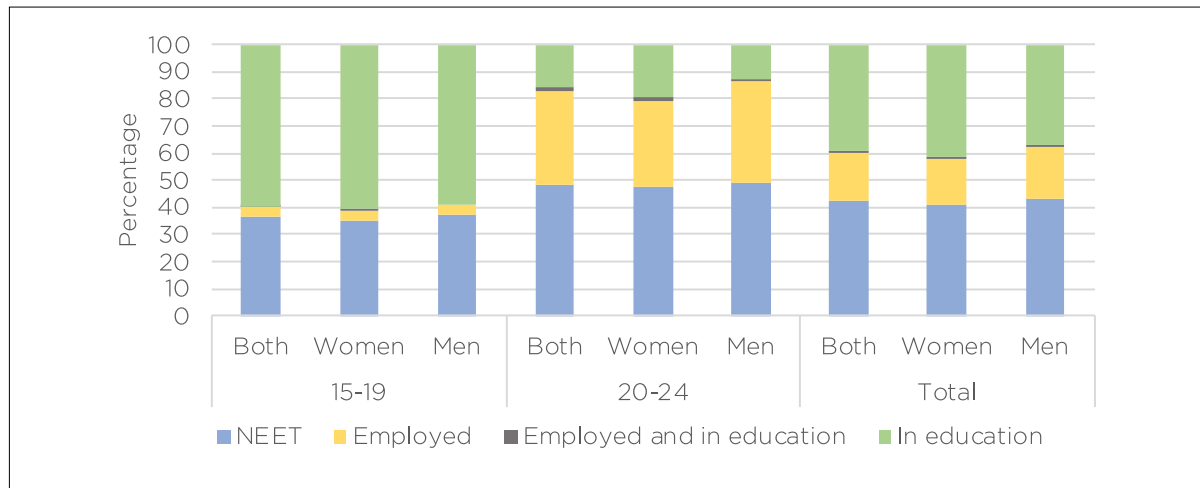
	Age Group	Women Per cent	Men Per cent
NEET	15 to 19	35	38
	20 to 24	48	49
	Total	41	43
Employed	15 to 19	3	4
	20 to 24	31	38
	Total	16	20
Employed and in education	15 to 19	1	0
	20 to 24	1	1
	Total	1	0
In education	15 to 19	61	59
	20 to 24	20	12
	Total	41	37

Source: Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey (QMTS): Labour Force Module Q1 2020. Author's calculations.

3.4 Profile of youth NEET

Figure 7 below shows the percentage of NEET youth by highest level of education. Given the almost universal enrolment in secondary school in Botswana, most youth NEET have either lower secondary or upper secondary with women NEET being more likely to have upper secondary as their highest level of education than men.

Figure 7: Percentage NEET by highest level of education, sex and age group (15 to 24)



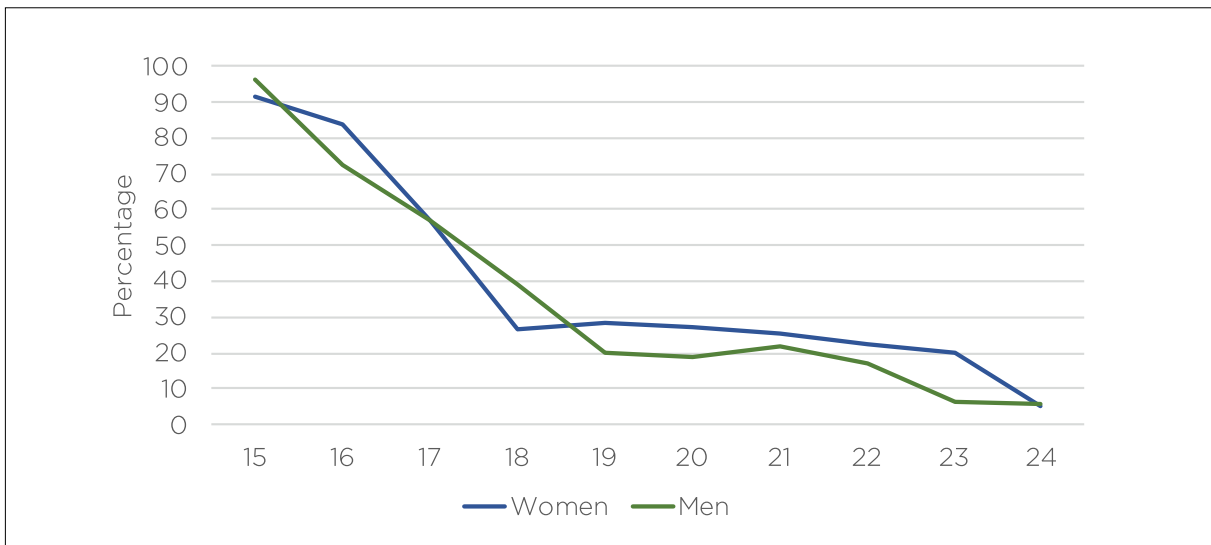
Source: Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey (QMTS): Labour Force Module Q1 2020. Author's calculations.

Figure 8 shows the number of unemployed youth as a percentage of all youth by age group and by only those economically active. The unemployment rates are high for 15- to 19-year-olds, these 12 022 youth are actively looking for work and available to take up employment. It is important to note that they are a small proportion of the total age group.

Of the 20- to 24-year-olds, just over 40% of men and women are unemployed, while this is a significant number and is much higher than the unemployment rates in East Africa, it does signify that young people in Botswana have the resources to be actively seeking work which is not the case in low-income countries where “open unemployment is usually low... because it is both futile and unaffordable. Most households have limited savings to finance a job search, and there are few wage jobs to be found” (Fox and Ghandi 2021). Upper middle-income countries in Sub-Saharan Africa follow the pattern experienced internationally which is:

“of higher unemployment among more educated youth [since] the demand for labor with intermediate skills (e.g., completed secondary education) has not grown as fast as the supply of this labor—educational attainment has risen faster than labor demand. Related to this trend is the increased capital intensity of manufacturing, which has meant that the types of jobs that people with this level of education used to take are now less common all over the world (Rodrik, 2015). Once countries reach high income stage, the average unemployment rate drops substantially as the quality of education improves, the supply of job opportunities (labor demand) relative to labor supply comes back into alignment, and education and post-school training and job assistance systems do a better job of helping match employers and job seekers” (Fox and Ghandi 2021 p19).

Figure 8: Unemployed youth as a percentage of all youth and of economically active youth only by age group and sex



Source: Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey (QMTS): Labour Force Module Q1 2020. Author's calculations.

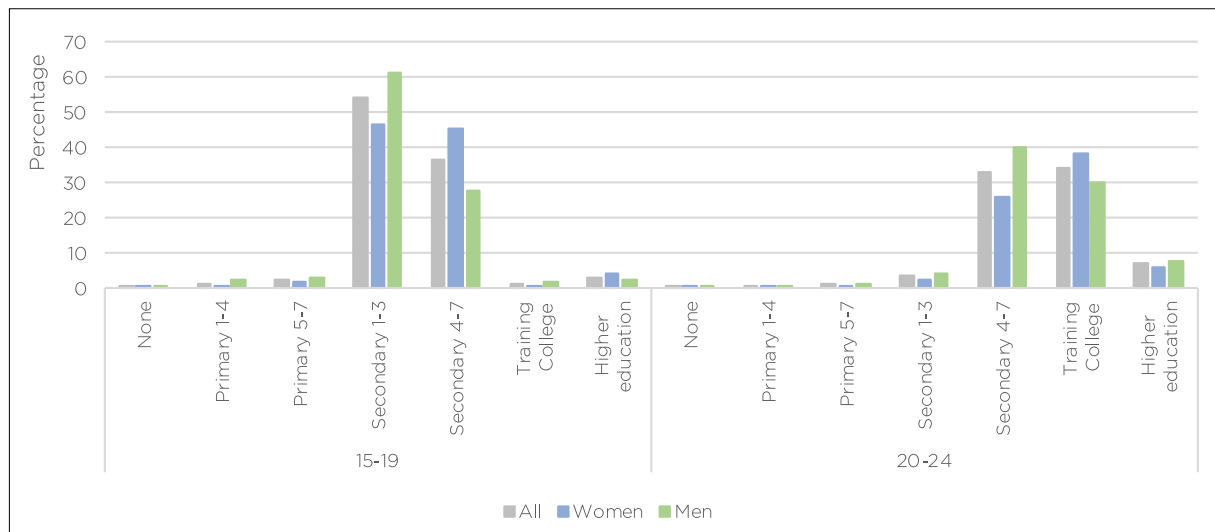
3.5 Education profile of youth

Despite much public rhetoric to the contrary, Botswana has achieved a level of education attainment and quality that is significantly higher than any other country on the mainland of Sub-Saharan Africa (Government of Botswana 2021, Lewin 2011). Improving the education and training of youth has been a priority for the Botswana government for the past decade and the Minister of Finance, in his budget speech (2021), announced the review and overhaul of the education system as one of the country's four priorities.

QMTS Q1 2020 shows that the cohorts between the ages of 15 and 24 have reached gender parity across all levels of education and are seeing the gender parity index exceed 1 in both secondary school and higher education. It must be noted that when disaggregated by sex and age group the samples become too small to be definitive, however, data collected by the school and higher education system also shows this trend (Statistics Botswana 2017 and 2020b).

Figure 9 shows 91% of women and 96% of men aged 15 are enrolled in education. The percentage of women enrolled in education drops below the percentage of men, however, the official age of school completion is 17 years old and the lower percentage enrolment at 18 is most likely due to women repeating fewer grades and moving on to enrolment in tertiary education.

Figure 9: Percentage of youth aged 15 to 24 enrolled in education, by sex



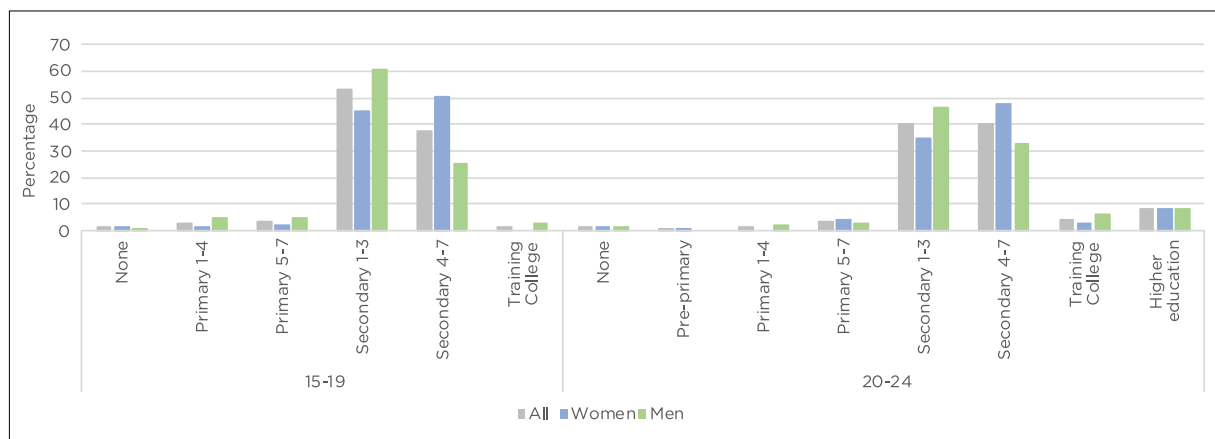
Source: Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey (QMTS): Labour Force Module Q1 2020. Author's calculations

Education attainment in Botswana is high with most youth reaching secondary school by the time they are in the 15 to 19 year-old age group. Figure 10 shows the percentage of youth by highest grade of education attained. At first glance it appears as if women are under-represented in secondary education due to fewer women attaining Secondary grade 1-3 as their highest level of education. However, gender parity favours young women in terms of highest grade of education attained with a gender parity index of 1.57 in Secondary grade 4-5 in the 15 to 19 year-olds and 1.21 in the 20 to 24 year-olds (Table 4).

Higher education also has more women enrolled than men with a gender parity index of 1.56. However, as noted in the report on tertiary education there are fewer women enrolled in the maths science and technology fields (Statistics Botswana 2020b).

The only area of education attainment where women are under-represented is in training – with 441 women and 2 161 men between 15 and 19; and 5 763 women and 7 671 men between 20 and 24 having attained or are enrolled in training as their highest level of education.

Figure 10: Highest level of education attained as a percentage of youth (aged 15 to 20) by sex and age group



Source: Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey (QMTS): Labour Force Module Q1 2020. Author's calculations.

Table 5: Percentage of youth (age 15 to 24) by highest level attained and gender parity by sex and age group

		Women	Men	Ratio of women to men
15 to 19	None	1	0	1.53
	Primary 1-4	0	2	0.20
	Primary 5-7	2	3	0.64
	Secondary 1-3	47	62	0.74
	Secondary 4-5	46	28	1.57
	Training college	0	2	0.20
	Higher education	4	2	1.70
20 to 24	None	1	1	0.71
	Primary 1-4	0	0	0.63
	Primary 5-7	1	1	0.60
	Secondary 1-3	3	4	0.61
	Secondary 4-5	26	40	1.21
	Training college	38	30	0.75
	Higher education	6	8	1.56

Source: Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey (QMTS): Labour Force Module Q1 2020. Author's calculations.

3.6 Employment profile by sex

The Botswana government has had a proactive approach to women's employment and over the past decade has increased the number of women employed in government service at both the central and local level. There is also a public works programme (more commonly known as Ipelegeng) that actively includes women in the programme. In 2019 women constituted 80% of Ipelegeng workers. The private sector employs more men than women with only 46% of the private sector being female. However more men are employed in "piece jobs" which is informal, temporary work and in total only slightly more men than women are employed in Botswana - 49.5% women and 50.5% men (Statistics Botswana 2020a).

The proportion of young women and men employed has a different profile to that of the broader population. Table 5 shows the percentage of youth employed by sex and age group. The percentage of 15 to 19 year olds in employment is minimal with 3.8% women and 4% men employed. The age group 20 to 24 has 25.8% of women employed and 35.5% of men employed. However, there are more young women in this age group still enrolled in education.

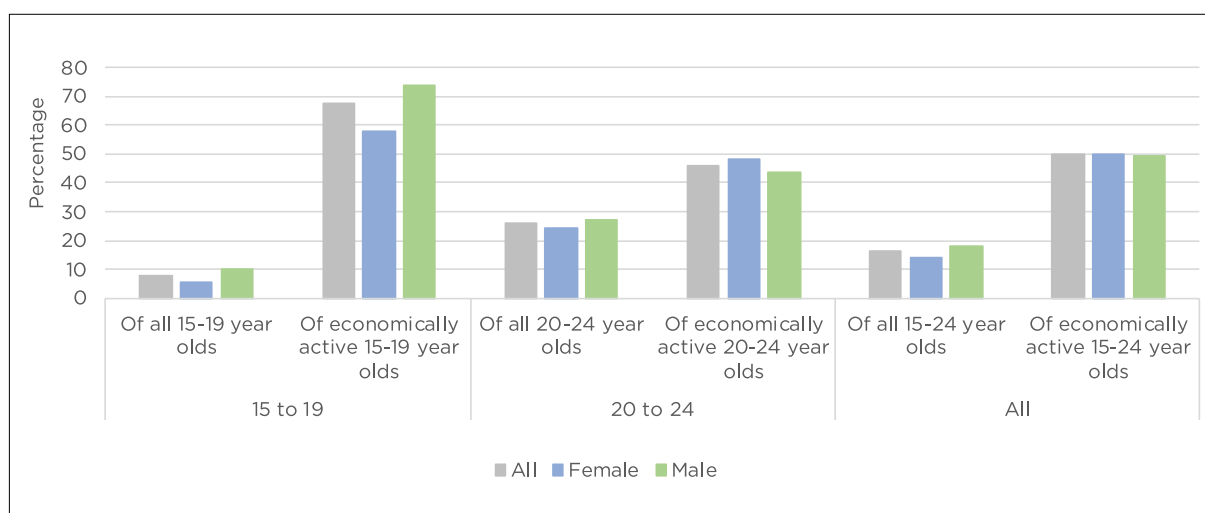
Table 6: Percentage of youth employed by sex and age group

	Women	Men	Ratio of women to men
15 to 19 years	3.8%	4.0%	1.09
20 to 24 years	25.8%	35.5%	0.73

Source: Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey (QMTS): Labour Force Module Q1 2020. Author's calculations.

In Botswana young women attain higher levels of education than men. Figure 11 shows the percentage of youth employed by highest level of education. It is interesting to note that 56% of women and 39% of men, in the 20- to 24-year-old age group with Secondary 4-5 as the highest qualification, are employed. However, there are fewer women employed in this age group with Secondary 1-3 as their highest grade attained than men, 33% and 49% respectively. As will be seen in Section 3, women attain higher levels of education than men, with men dropping out of school earlier and pursuing employment that may not be suitable or seen as suitable for women. Women in Botswana have historically also had more employment opportunities in jobs that require post school qualifications such as teaching, nursing and social work.

Figure 11: Percentage of youth (15 to 24) employed by highest level of education, sex and age group



Source: Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey (QMTS): Labour Force Module Q1 2020. Author's calculations.

3.7 Unpaid care and domestic work by sex

The Botswana QMTS Q1 2020 does not collect data on the number of hours that each household member might be engaged in unpaid household domestic, care or farming activities. However, it does collect information on how many people are engaged in these activities as their main form of work. Table 6 shows the percentage of women and men engaged in unpaid domestic and care activities, which is 17% of women and 12% of men of the total population. A much smaller proportion of the population is involved in unpaid farming, namely 2% of women and 3% of men. Of the 15 to 19 year-olds, 17% of women and 19% of men are engaged in unpaid domestic and care work while 1% of men are engaged in unpaid farming. In the 20 to 24 year old age group 29% of women and 28% of men are engaged in unpaid domestic and care work and 1% of women and 2% of men are engaged in unpaid family farming.

Table 7: Percentage of the population engaged in unpaid household, family and farming activities compared to youth (15 to 24) by sex and age group

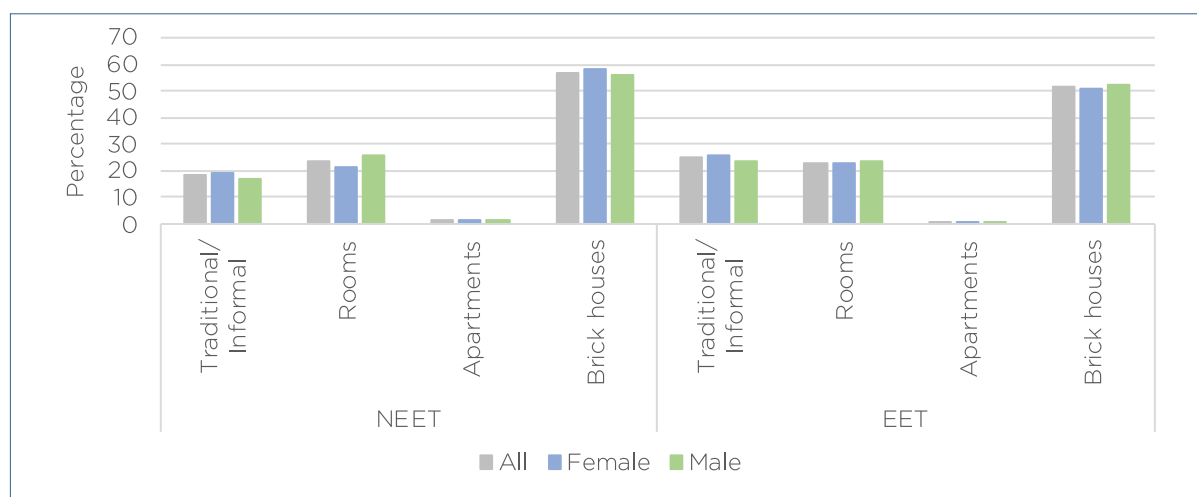
Total population		Women (Per cent)	Men (Per cent)	Ratio of women to men
Household or family responsibilities		17	12	1.5
Unpaid family farming		2	3	0.8
Youth				
Household or family responsibilities	15 to 19 years	17	19	0.9
	20 to 24 years	29	28	1.0
Unpaid family farming	15 to 19 years	0	1	0.4
	20 to 24 years	1	2	0.6

Source: Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey (QMTS): Labour Force Module Q1 2020. Author's calculations.

3.8 Additional characteristics of NEET youth

The relationship between NEET and poverty in Botswana is not immediately apparent from the data in the QMTS Q1 2020. While there is data on income earned from employment and businesses owned by respondents it is not sufficiently constant to be used to measure poverty. The survey report published by Statistics Botswana (2020a) also did not report on income. There is limited information on articles owned so the only potential proxy for wealth might be housing type, however, no significant difference was found in housing type between youth NEET and youth in employment, education or training (EET) youth.

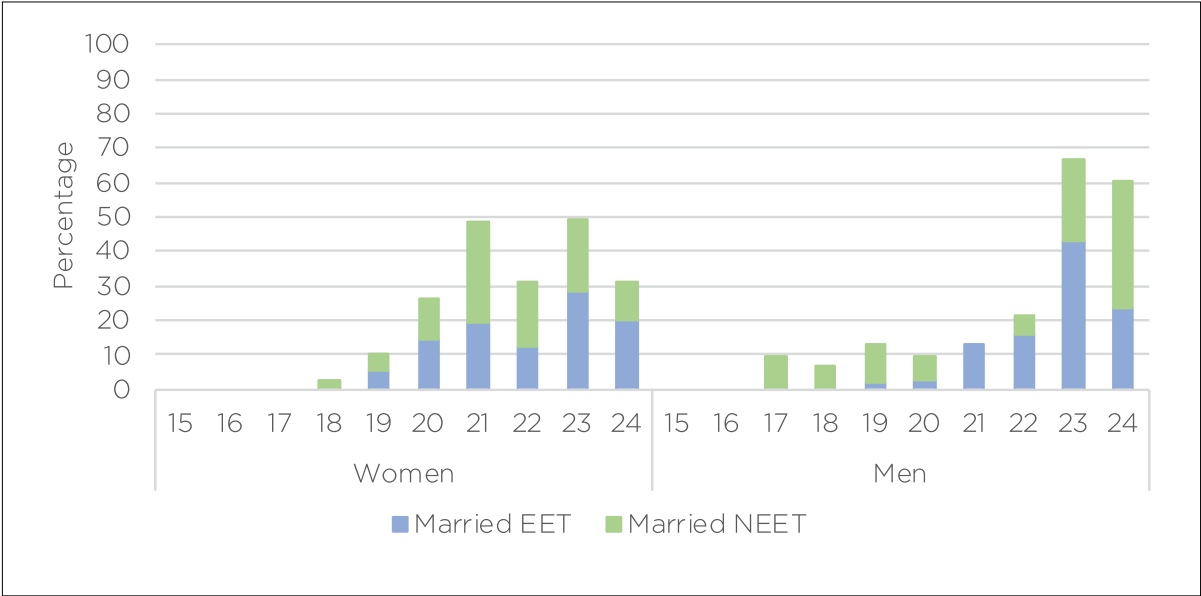
Figure 12: Percentage NEET by housing type



Source: Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey (QMTS): Labour Force Module Q1 2020. Author's calculations.

Another factor that does not appear to be correlated to NEET status in the descriptive data is the percentage of youth who are married. Figure 13 shows the percentage of youth married by NEET and EET status. While there is a general upward trend from 19 years old in the percentage of married youth, the sample is too small to distinguish a difference between married NEET and EET.

Figure 13: Youth by marriage status and age, NEET and non-NEET



Source: Botswana Quarterly Multi Topic Survey (QMTS): Labour Force Module Q1 2020. Author's calculations.

4

DETERMINANTS OF YOUTH NEET

The Botswana context is somewhat unusual in that there are more young men NEET than young women. In total there are 41% of women and 43% of men NEET. When disaggregated by age group, there are 35% women and 38% men NEET in the 15 to 19 age group; and 48% women and 49% men NEET in the 20 to 24 year-old age group. This is partly due to the higher enrolment of women in education and the relatively large labour market for women in Botswana. However, a large percentage of the youth NEET are attempting to find work and the unemployment rate for both women and men is high at 40% of the economically active population. It is important to try and understand what identifiable factors in the Botswanan context might determine NEET status and whether they differ between women and men.

In other research on the individual and household factors associated with the number of years of education attained it has been fairly widely ascertained that socioeconomic status, education levels of parents, availability of learning resources such as books and electricity, time spent on household chores, distance from school and nutritional status are amongst the most important (Bashir et. al. 2018, Karamperidou et. al. 2020 and Lewin 2011). Similar factors are associated with the probability of youth and women's employment (Klasen 2018 and O'Higgins 2017). For young women in particular, early marriage, childbirth and gender norms around the cost benefits of further years of education as well as gender norms around household roles and the suitability of certain employment for women, impacts on both education levels attained and employment (Comblon 2017 and Nieuwenhuis 2018).

In order to ascertain whether there is an association between these factors and the probability of being NEET a multivariate logistic regression model was constructed with NEET status as the dependent variable. Independent variables were tested based on research as mentioned above and the descriptive analysis of the data from the Botswana QMTS Q1 2020 which shows possible correlations between NEET and sex, age group, marriage, highest level of education attained, urban or rural residence and involvement in family farming for own use.

This section of the report is structured as follows: The first section gives the structure of the model and the method used in coding the variables for analysis is given. In the second section the findings of the model are presented and the associations between NEET and background characteristics such as sex, age, gender, marital status, family composition and gender are analysed. Lastly, some limitations of the model are explained.

4.1 Structure of the logistic regression model

A multivariate logistic regression is a widely used statistical method appropriate to the categorical nature of survey data. As well as the dependant variable (NEET status) being categorical, many of the independent variables in the survey data are categorical such as sex, married, highest level of education, urban/rural.

The logistic model is:

$$\log(\pi/(1-\pi))=\beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 \dots\dots\dots$$

where $\Pr(Y=1)=\pi$

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3\dots\dots$ are the Odds Ratios of X_1, X_2, X_3 respectively

The model was run in *Stata* as a weighted sample of the survey set.

Individual level data for all 15 to 24 year olds was compiled from the QMTS Q1 2020 for the regression analysis. The following data from the survey was used: Individual demographic information; individual education data; and individual employment and household composition data. Data was coded as noted in Table 8 which lists the variables used in the model.

Table 8: List of variables used in the logistic regression model and method used for compiling the coding

Variable	Type of variable and code used	Method used to compile codes
Dependent variable		
NEET status	Dummy variable 0 = not NEET 1 = NEET	Labour and time use data was used to establish employed or not; Education data used to establish in education or not.
Independent variables		
Sex	Dummy variable Male = 0 Female = 1	Data on individual respondent.
Age group	Dummy variable 15 to 19 = 0 20 to 24 = 1	Data on individual respondent. Age in years coded as age group
Married	Dummy variable No = 0 Yes = 1	Data on individual respondent.
Household composition	Number of children under 10 years old Number of adult dependents Number of adult wage earners Total number of household members	Data on individual respondent.
Highest level of education	Dummy variable with 7 categories None = 0 Prim 1-3 = 1 Prim 4-5 = 2 Sec 1-3 = 3 Sec 4-6 = 4 Training = 5 Higher Ed = 6	Data on the highest grade attained was coded into none; lower and senior primary; lower and senior secondary; training; higher education; and adult literacy.

There were substantial differences observed in the descriptive data between the age groups and between women and men. This includes the number who are NEET, in education, employed, married and type of household they may live in. In order to establish whether the various factors impact differently on the NEET rate depending on age group and gender two separate models were run as follows:

- All 15- to 24-year-olds;
- Women 15- to 24-years-old.

Note: The models were run separately and the effective sample is different for each demographic group and shows the results *while controlling for all other variables* in that model (unless the data is not available in which case it is denoted by n.d.). The *odds ratios* of each variable in each model is shown in a combined table only for convenience of discussing the impact on NEET on the different groups.

4.2 Findings of the model

The odds ratios of the independent variables are presented in Table 9. The odds ratios measure the strength of the association between a variable with the probability of being NEET. An odds ratio greater than 1 indicates that the variable is associated with an increased probability of being NEET. The strength of the association will be the odds ratio times 1. For example, if a variable has an odds ratio of 2 it will be associated with twice the probability of being NEET. If the odds ratio is less than 1 it means that there is a decreased probability of being NEET. The associated value of the odds ratio is again times 1. For example, if the odds ratio is 0.4, the associated probability of being NEET is multiplied by 0.4 or, in other words, has a 60% lower probability of being NEET. An odds ratio of 1 (or close to 1) means that there is little to no association between the variable and the probability of being NEET.

Individual characteristics

The results of the logistic regressions are in Table 9 which show the probability of being NEET. Most of the coefficients were statistically significant at $p < 0.01$. A number of coefficients are retained in the table that have p values greater than 0.1 due to their impact on the probability of being NEET.

The descriptive data in Section 0 showed a greater number and proportion of NEET men – especially in the 20 to 24 age group. The coefficient for gender is not statistically significant. However, being in the 20 to 24 year-old age group increases the probability of being NEET. This is confirmed in the regression run with data on women only – the likelihood of being NEET in the age group 20 to 24 increases by a factor of 2.52 in the case of both genders and 3.38 times in the model of women only.

Higher levels of education attainment reduce the probability of being NEET but due to the relatively universal attainment of good quality secondary education in Botswana these are not statistically significant until the level of higher education and training. Attaining post school higher education and training reduces the probability of being NEET by over 95% and 90% respectively.

Marriage has a somewhat counterfactual result in that being married reduces the probability of being NEET. While not statistically significant in either of the models, these results are supported by the findings of Gaetsewe (2019) who found that being married increased the chances of finding a job. As well as employers having the view that married individuals are more stable than unmarried, this suggests that a married individual has an extended family that offers a greater information network of job opportunities. According to Fox and Ghandi (2021), who cite aggregated data from World Bank enterprise surveys, over 60% of jobs are found through personal networks. Possibly even within families there is a hierarchy as to whose turn it is to be sponsored into the next job available to the family network. This could support the view that married individuals are more stable and that they are more in need of the next available job.

The characteristics of household members yields interesting results with the increased numbers of children under 10 years old appearing to reduce the NEET rates by 50% in the case of the regression run on women respondents only. The result is somewhat counterintuitive as increases in the number of adult dependents and the overall family size increases the likelihood of NEET. While these two factors may be a proxy for both household poverty and the tendency for young women to be retained at home to fulfil domestic and care work, it is not immediately apparent why an increase in the number of children under 10 years old might result in a decrease in the NEET rate of young women in particular.

Table 9: Results of logistic regressions for youth NEET status - all 15 to 24 year-olds and only women 15 to 24 year-olds

Category (omitted variable in parenthesis)		15 to 24	
		All	Women only
	Variable	Odds ratios	
Sex (Men)	Women	1.23	-
Age group (15 to 19)	20 to 24	2.52***	3.38***
Highest level of education (Primary grades 1-4)	Primary grade 5-7	0.29	3.87
	Secondary grade 1-3	0.26	0.84
	Secondary grade 4-5	0.29	0.97
	Training college	0.08***	0.08
	Higher education	0.03***	0.04**
Married (No)	Yes	0.90	0.81
Household members	No. of children under 10	0.85	0.50*
	No. of adult dependents	1.47***	1.47**
	No. of adult wage earners	0.63***	0.74
	Total no. of household members	1.08	1.77
	Constant	4.87**	1.89

Note: Statistical significance indicated as follows: * = $p < .10$; ** = $p < .05$; *** = $p < .01$. Some coefficients with statistical significance of up to $p < 0.3$ where retained - these have no asterisk. Dependent variables tested and removed from the model: socio-economic index; distance to community facilities; urban/rural.

4.3 Limitations of the model

The main limitation of the model is not having data for additional factors that might be associated with the probability of being NEET such as having children, age of first child, access to community employment projects or socio-economic status of the household.

Socio economic status

Prevailing literature finds that the socio-economic status of households has a positive and determining effect on the health, education attainment and employment outcomes for individuals (Deaton 1997). In the absence of detailed calculations of household income or expenditure, a proxy for household wealth is usually possible to construct – such as housing type, access to water and ownership of household items reported by the household (Malpezzi 2002). All these proxies were tested and there was no meaningful differentiation in the impact on NEET – even when controlling for urban and rural location. This in itself may have been instructive if any of the variables were statistically significant and in many cases several of the variable values dropped by *Stata* when running the estimation.

Not only was there no impact on NEET status of this relative poverty index (nor any of the individual components) but it's inclusion in the model created collinearity to the extent that it weakened both the impact and the statistical significance of nearly *all* the other variables – but most especially highest education level attained. While there are certainly various statistical methods to correct for this – most notably by creating interaction terms, it was felt that interpreting the interaction terms would be too complex for the policy reader. (See O'Higgins 2017 pp 179 to 197). In any event, while there is research that shows a relationship between number of years of school attained and socioeconomic status (Bashir et. al. 2018, Karamperidou et. al. 2020 and Lewin 2011), there is less direct evidence of a relationship between women's employment prospects and socioeconomic status (Klasen 2018).

Community wide variables

An array of detailed information is collected in the QMTS from the surrounding community and a multitude of variables are available that could be examined for their impact on households' general well-being and thus that of youth. A few of these variables were extracted and examined for their possible impact on NEET. The extent of isolation was examined by looking at the size of the community, the proximity to road networks, the availability of public transport, proximity to markets, the distance to the closest schools and availability of services such as healthcare. None of these were found to impact on NEET or to be statistically significant.

Education levels

In the case of education, the data was recoded to reduce the number of categories to enhance its statistical significance. For example, the highest grade of education attained was categorised into primary grades 1-4 and 5-7; secondary grades 1-3 and 4-7; and post-secondary had a stronger effect when reduced from two categories to just one. However, Botswana has a substantial post school training provision, and it was felt that it would be important to keep these variables separate.

5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Botswana is in a somewhat different situation to most other East and Southern African countries in relation to women NEET. The NEET rate is high for both age groups and equally high for both women and men. The unemployment rate is also high for both women and men which suggests that the constraints on female labour force participation are different to other countries in this study. These have large subsistence agrarian populations, high NEET rates and relatively low unemployment rates for women.

Analysis of household and labour force surveys found that women in these largely subsistence agrarian countries are not only constrained by a disproportionate amount of unpaid domestic, care and family agricultural work but also lack opportunities for seeking employment due to a lack of resources and a lack of (or perceived lack of) available work. Botswana appears to be in a much better position with regards to a number of these constraints.

5.1 Gender equality

While women in Botswana still experience gender inequality in terms of social norms, leadership positions, greater poverty, employment and wage inequality, the gap in many other gender specific development indicators has narrowed to parity. In some cases, such as education, women's access is greater than men's. Access to education, health and reproductive care, social grants and proactive inclusion in employment creation strategies and public works programmes has led to far greater participation of women in the labour force in Botswana than many other countries.

Youth between 15 and 24 do not run the same risks of permanent exclusion from the labour market as young people in other countries. The number of women employed as a percentage of the age group increases from 34.7% between the ages of 20 and 24 to 53.6% between the ages of 25 and 29 (Statistics Botswana 2020). There are several specific points that emerge from the analysis of the Botswana QMTS Q1 2020 that pertain to NEET women.

5.2 Labour demand

The number of youth and young women in Botswana who are actively looking for work indicates that increasing employment opportunities will be the primary intervention in reducing youth NEET. The Government of Botswana (2021) has economic growth and job creation at the top of its development agenda and has a range of active labour market policies in place to ensure both youth and women's employment opportunities are prioritised. It is beyond the scope of this paper to review the match between skills and labour requirements and an extremely detailed report by the World Bank (2018) has been published in this regard. In brief, the focus of economic growth is in industries such as diamond cutting, transport, tourism and information technology all of which will require a skilled workforce across all skills levels. While the government intends to ensure that training is in place for young people, including young women, it will need to ensure that emphasis is placed on overcoming gender and social norms that may prevent young women from entering those fields (Government of Botswana/UNFPA 2021).

5.3 Education and training

This is one area where young women have higher participation rates than young men. However, as mentioned above, gender norms skew women's participation away from science, engineering, technology and IT fields of study and training (Statistics Botswana 2020b). Given that Botswana still requires technical workers from other countries to fill labour shortages in these areas, it is important to realise that young women already have an excellent education foundation on which to develop these skills.

While destigmatising and creating opportunities for training and developing women's participation in traditionally men's occupations is not the only way in which the labour market can be expanded for young women. However, Botswana has implemented a number of active labour market policies that have increased the labour market for young women and developing skills and employment across all areas of working life is going to be a priority.

6

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