

# From Quality Providers to Quality Assured Provision: The Case for Botswana Cross-Border Tertiary Education

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## Abstract

The Botswana Government recognises the role of human resource in the development of the country's economy. The Botswana National Development Plan 9 of 2003-2009 (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 2002) and 10 of 2009-2016 (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 2007) emphasise the importance of quality education as an important ingredient in achieving economic growth. Most of the non-governmental institutions set up in the country offer programmes/courses from cross-border tertiary institutions. For example, Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning (BOCODOL) offers programmes from Zimbabwe and London, Limkokwing University for Creative Technology from Malaysia and BA ISAGO University College offer courses from University of South Africa (UNISA), and Boston University in USA. The increase of cross-border Tertiary Institutions was due to the demand by both government and community for more tertiary education. In the Botswana Gazette of 23 May 2012, Grace Muzila, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education and Skills Development (MoESD), explained that "the Ministry will with immediate effect start sponsoring learners who failed Form Five but managed to sponsor themselves for certificate courses." Some Botswana in cross-border Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) were and still concerned that some programmes are not up to standard and may not have much impact on the country's development. Graduates are often told that their training is not recognised as programmes and

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methodologies are neither adequate nor relevant. Cross-border HEIs are steadily increasing while their outputs are being questioned. Challenges faced from these programmes have made some people and employers question their relevance. This is a worrying situation because the key mandate of the Ministry of Education and Skills Development (MoESD) is “providing efficient, quality and relevant education and training that is accessible to all” (The Vision Council, Government of Botswana, 1997). For the MoESD not to have much control on the programmes offered is a setback for the country’s human resource development. Currently, there is a widespread understanding throughout the country of the need to get the training accurate and more meaningful. The country is calling for more quality assured provision and to ensure that the private HEIs are value for money in line with Government thinking that “The quality of our insight in making the correct policy decisions is not only important in terms of the effectiveness of the tertiary education system that will evolve over time but is also critical to the future of Botswana” (Government of Botswana, 2009).

**Keyword:** Bench Marking; Quality; Quality Assurance; Quality Provision; Tertiary Education; Cross Border Education