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***Botswanan Socioeconomic Growth Faltering***

**Executive Summary**

Stagnation of previously positive social and economic trends within Botswana present opportunity for citizen discontent and cancellation of further growth. Funding for HIV/AIDS and awareness campaigns declined in recent years. Current trends highlight reduced human rights and unfavorable economic conditions for citizens.

**Discussion**

Botswana has the third highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in the world, despite the rate decreasing from 25.4 percent in 2005 to 22.8 percent in 2018.[[1]](#endnote-1) Additionally, over 95 percent of individuals in need of anti-HIV treatments receive them, a number that indicates movement towards the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) 90-90-90 targets.[[2]](#endnote-2),[[3]](#endnote-3) Due to this success, as well as the country’s classification as an upper-middle income country, foundations now provide less funding. The National AIDS Coordinating Agency (NACA) estimates that the cost of response to the crisis will increase from USD 274 million to USD 339 million by 2030.[[4]](#endnote-4) An additional setback includes the implementation of mandatory testing, a measure that is unfavorable among the community.[[5]](#endnote-5)

Botswana recently announced the closure of refugee camps and the removal of refugees from Namibia and Zimbabwe.[[6]](#endnote-6) Many Zimbabwean refugees returned home after years of asylum in the country.[[7]](#endnote-7) Defence, Justice and Security Secretary, Shaw Kgathi, announced the closure of a Namibian refugee camp, a decision facing high criticism from human rights groups as a violation of international law.[[8]](#endnote-8),[[9]](#endnote-9) Domestically, Botswanan Bushmen face removal and relocation into government created resettlement camps. Government reasoning highlights the need for natural resource and ecosystem management, while Bushmen and human rights groups suggest government interest in diamond and mining reserves.[[10]](#endnote-10)

Unemployment in Botswana from 1991-2017 averages at 19 percent.[[11]](#endnote-11) However, the youth unemployment (ages 15 – 35) has increased to 25 percent in recent years, with females as the most impacted group.[[12]](#endnote-12) The government faces criticism from citizens and larger global groups based on its unsatisfactory efforts at job creation, as well as the lack of efforts combating unemployment and economic stagnation.

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