

A Brief Overview

History

Botswana Workcamps Association (BWA) is a non-governmental, non-profit making youth voluntary organization, started in 1979 in Mochudi and was registered with the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs in April 1980 under societies act. It is also known as “Lekgotla La Baithaopi” in our Setswana, which means a voluntary organization.

Its first president was Chief Linchwe II of the Bakgatla Nation in Botswana & South Africa, who was responsible for publicizing organizational events and other meetings that generated awareness about BWA.

Location

Its Headquarters are based in Boseja North Ward, Mochudi, Botswana. BWA is a member of the Southern Africa Work camps Cooperation (SAWC) and affiliated to Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service (CCIVS), founded in 1948 to assist and promote work-camps throughout the world.

Botswana is the safest country with the best democracy record in Africa. The country had never experienced any civil or political war since its occupation by people originating mostly from South Arica. Botswana has one of the best economic images in the world boasted by stable currency-Pula.

Why volunteer with BWA?

BWA had committed itself to develop communities and institutions through effective voluntary service locally and internationally.

The volunteers who had volunteered with BWA before describe our organisation as an ideal institution to work with and most importantly the effective running of workcamps projects modeled on a team work principle makes the participation worthy taking with valuable contribution and difference made to the community.

BWA offers quality and effective voluntary service through its friendly, charming, supportive management, members and partners.

Who we work with

BWA has partner organizations worldwide. They work together on international exchanges as well as projects, seminars and conferences.

We also work with local NGOs and Community Based Organizations in Botswana to aid national development through the promotion of a spirit of self –help.

Organizational Structure

BWA is led by a National Executive Committee of eleven people who are responsible for policy-making and executive decisions for the association as well as the employment of the BWA secretariat. The Executive Committee is accountable to the BWA general membership, who through the Annual General Meetings, make decisions about matters that affect the association

It also has the national council which has representatives from all branches of BWA. Its main responsibility is to decide on policy matters before being passed to the Executive Committee.

Institutional Framework for Botswana Work camps Association (BWA)

BWA is governed by an Executive Committee, comprised of a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary General, Recording Secretary, Treasurer and Additional members. They are responsible for ensuring good governance and providing leadership in accordance with Constitution of the Society which stresses accountability, transparency and democratic, principles. The Executive Committee assures oversight and policy and is actively involved in mobilizing funds and resources for the sustainability of the project.

A management committee, comprised of a Chairperson, Secretary General and Treasurer, meets on a monthly basis with BWA staff and advises the Executive on the design and implementation of activities.

BWA is a member of the Botswana Council of NGOs (BOCONGO) and the Botswana National Youth Council (BNYC). It networks with relevant departments and institutions of higher learning and research in the country. Few donors remain committed to funding for projects in Botswana due to the perception that Botswana is a wealthy country. However, it has one of the highest income gaps in the world. The impact of this reduction in developmental aid means that NGOs struggle to survive. As a result of limitations to institutional support, some operate on a survival budget; others are forced to cut down on staff and others are on the brink of collapse.

Government Support Analysis

BWA has representatives that enjoy the support of the Department of Youth and Culture and many other government departments.

BWA is held in high esteem by the Government of Botswana and the staff at BWA is often consulted about programming and planning in all areas that affect national youth.

Under the “planning and strategy for Development” chapter of the National Development Plan 8 (NDP8) it is stated “Non governmental Organizations” (NGOs) and the community institutions will increasingly be involved in the co-ordination of rural development activities”. In general, there is a growing trend for key government officials to see NGOs as valuable partners and debate has started as to the extent that government should fund the work of NGOs. Various NGOs have and are receiving in-kind support. This comes to the fore in the Community Based Strategy for Rural Development policy paper released by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) in February 1997 in conjunction with the release of NDP8. It states:”there is a need and a potential to substantially expand efforts to provide NGOs in rural development. This will require greater efforts to provide NGOs with opportunities for assisting in rural development activities, together with provision of training and support for institutional strengthening of NGOs”.

RAPID SOCIAL CHANGE

The development process in Botswana has taken place very quickly and has generated rapid and dislocating changes in family and relationships outside the family. The fact that many men and women, youth and children have not been adequately prepared to understand and cope with tensions arising from intergenerational conflicts and the interaction between Tswana and foreign cultures means they are experiencing role conflicts or debilitating identity crisis. Unemployment and other existential problems are causing youth to lose confidence and sense of direction. As a consequence, there is role confusion, feelings of powerlessness, hopelessness and self rejection which cause many youth to resort to the use of the following destructive coping mechanisms:

committing suicide, abusing alcohol and drugs, physically abusing women and other men deserting families.

POVERTY

Talk about Botswana is often about its enviable economic performance. However, the country is characterized by gross socio-economic inequalities: there is great concern over the uneven development as exhibited by rising unemployment, HIV/AIDS pandemic, persistent poverty and widening income inequality. The poverty study carried out in 1997, revealed that close to 50% of Botswana are living below poverty datum line.

The incidence of poverty is more pronounced in rural areas and affects youth more severely.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE

Alcohol abuse appears to be on the increase in the country. It is cited in the Botswana Police Report on Rape as one of the factors contributing to juvenile delinquency, crimes rape and related offences. The report of the Proceedings of the National Symposium on Alcohol Use and Abuse in Botswana has also identified social problems emanating from drinking, family disruption, marital discord, child, spouse abuse, child neglect, child development problems, school, drop-outs, mental disorder and poverty.

CULTURE AND SOCIALIZATION

The process of patriarchal socialization in our society contributes to the subordination of youth in the youth in the society. Our culture conditions children and youth and society as a whole to think

In some communities in Botswana, the cultural practice of early child marriages is still been practiced. Young girls in some communities are removed from school and forced into marriage. By denying these girls a chance to go on with their education, their parents are effectively curtailing their chances of success in the future. Similarly, the high rate of teenage pregnancy contributes to the feminization of poverty. The BWA would like to implement a communication intervention for the empowerment of young people so that they can become ambitious and avoid any activities that might hinder them from achieving education and personal development.

GENERAL RISE IN CRIME

There is a rise in crime which is sign of the increasing levels of social conflict. This rise in crime comes with an increase in violence against women. This is so because increase in criminal activity suggests that many frustrated individuals end up being aggressive.

2.0 Physical location of BWA headquarters

BWA is located in a village named Mochudi, Botswana, Africa .It is just around 35Km Northwest of Gaborone, the capital city of Botswana. It is easily accessible by bus transportation at the interval of 30 minutes.

To access our office In Mochudi, it is Boseja Northward, near Cheap site Shopping Complex. The mini-bus (taxi) route is: Route 11 and ask to go off at BWA. Make sure you communicate to the taxi driver well in advance to avoid inconveniences

3.0 TYPES OF PROJECTS FOR INTERNATIONAL CAMPS

The International volunteer projects that BWA offers, brings together individuals from around the world for 2 weeks work camps. Participants work together as an international team on different kinds of projects, including:

Environmental: Tree planting, improving nature trails in parks, recycling, refuse removal, soil erosion prevention and maintenance of footpaths.

Construction: public toilets, classrooms, community halls, irrigation channels, clinics, paving and brick molding

Renovation: historical monuments, archaeological sites, cultural centers, community centers, old bridges and any other related work

Social Work: with/for children, refugees, people with disabilities, women groups and play schemes for children in difficult circumstances

Others: solidarity camps, cultural camps and debushing (cutting of trees)

4.0 WHEN DO WORKCAMPS TAKE PLACE

The work camps run between set dates for two-three weeks in length. The weather conditions are as follows:

Summer: November, December, and January

Autumn: February, March, April

Winter: May, June, and July

Spring: August, September, and October

The work camp program for each year is available at the beginning of the year and it is given to all partner organization around the world

Who are work camp participants?

An international work camp is made up of volunteers from different nationalities worldwide. Volunteers normally do not know each other until they arrive. They are usually from partner organizations of BWA around the world.

Skills of the individual volunteer

- Commitment of volunteers; Project or work camps are not just cheap holidays; hard work and full participation is required.
- *Specific motivation may be required for some projects.*
- ENGLISH is the medium of communication in work camp. Participants who are not good in English are also accepted to participate as BWA encourage non discrimination.

Enthusiasm and flexible approach.

TRAVEL TO BOTSWANA

Volunteers are responsible for their own travel arrangements organizing their own transport and passports. It is usually advisable to check out travel prices before deciding on a particular placement. BWA is not a travel agency, but will help where possible. We communicate with other partner organizations and with the person who wish to come either by fax, telephone or e-mail with regular update regarding the work camp.

When using South African route, participants can take an intercape bus from Johannesburg in South Africa to Gaborone, Botswana or they can also the Air Botswana flight and/or South African Airline.

The website for Intercape Bus: www.intercape.co.za.

Emergency numbers:

Police- 999
Ambulance- 998
Fire Brigade- 997
BTC help line-121

COST OF PARTICIPATION IN A WORK CAMP

The work camp participation fee is US \$200 per participant, which covers simple work camp meals, arrangements for the whole work camp preparation in terms of communication, electronic mailing and transport for meeting with different stakeholders.

BWA organizes transport for participants from the airport in Gaborone to Mochudi (BWA office) ONLY, where the orientation of participants takes place prior to departure to work camps destination.

PLEASE NOTE:

AIRPORT & BUS PICK UP: Participants should know that they will pay for their transport from their arrival places to the BWA office in Mochudi. In this case BWA will arrange reliable transport for the volunteer upon the communication with the volunteer of which at the end the participant will pay the fares there after.

Pick up transport cost from the Gaborone Airport or from the Intercape Bus stop in Gaborone Central to the orientation venue which BWA Administration offices is U\$25.00.

Travel expenses from BWA office after the orientation to work camp places and back are not covered in this U\$ 200 camp fee. Participants are therefore advised to spare a small amount, which is around U\$ 50 for traveling to and from work camp place.

ORIENTATION

An orientation is normally organized a day before the start of the work camp with the intentions of briefing participants about BWA as an organization, Botswana`s socio-economic background, cultural issues etc. As a matter of fact the orientations shall be held on Sundays before departure to the workcamp sites and the participants must arrive on the Fridays or Saturdays to have rest time and also to get to know each other, as well to get knowledge of the host village before the orientation. Participants will also have a chance to go the city, Gaborone from Mochudi to do their necessary travel and camp logistics before they depart for the camp.

IMPORTANT NOTES

To view the amp of Botswana: <http://www.go2africa.com/botswana/map>

To view the map of Botswana http://encarta.msn.com/map_701511258/Botswana.html

GOOD TO KNOW!!!!!!!!!!!!

Banks

The banks in Botswana are open on weekdays from 08:30 till 15:30 and are open on Saturdays at 08:30 till 11:30 and are not open on Sundays and public holidays. There are also some bureau De change which opens 08:30- 16:30 during weekdays open at 08:30 - 13:30 pm on Saturdays. For people arriving at the airport they will find the bank there.

Post offices

Post offices are open weekdays from 07:30 till 16:30 and from 08:30 till 13:30 on Saturdays.

Shopping

In villages, towns and cities there are shops open from Monday to Friday others with lunch break while others operate with no lunch break. Grocery shops are open even on Sundays while other stores like clothing stores are not open/ or only a few are open. On the other hand you will find most of the shops open especially at the big shopping complex like Game city and River Walk malls in Gaborone.

Travelling around Botswana

The main transport mode in Botswana is public transport. Unlike in other countries where train is used as the main transport, In Botswana buses are used for long distance trips e.g. from Gaborone to Mochudi. Mini-buses and taxies are used for local short trips around towns and cities.

Transport cost:

Buses: charges are different as per trip distance.

Mini-buses cost BWP3.00 per trip.

Taxi cost BWP3.60 per trip on normal line service,

or BWP18.00 on door to door trip.

NB: Taxi price is subject to change depending on the distance within the areas.

Important to know

Local currency- **Pulas** and **Thebes** ::: (BWP) Botswana Pula

Languages;

Apart from English and Setswana which are official, there are some other languages which are spoken tribally .e.g. Sekalaka, Seherero, sekgalalagadi etc.

Climate

It is very important to know that Botswana is the semi-desert country and has four seasons; spring, summer, autumn and winter. Spring (August, September, and October), summer (November, December, January,) and Autumn (February, March, April) are hot seasons and cold season is Winter (May, June, July).

Volunteers are therefore reminded to bring required materials as per season, e.g. sun block creams for hot seasons and warmer clothes for winter times.

Important Setswana words to know:

Dumela-: Good morning/ Good afternoon/ Good evening.

Le Kae?-: How are you?

Ke/ Re teng: I/ we are fine.

O ya kae?-: Where are you going?

Ke/ Re ya.._-: I/ We are going to..

Ke/ Re ya kwa-: I/ we are going to...

Ke bokae?-: How much do I pay?

Ke a leboga-: Thank you

Tswee tswee-: Please

Go siame-: Bye

Tsamaya sentle: Go well

Sala sentle-: Stay well

Robala sentle: Sleep well

Ka moso: Tomorrow

Bosigo -: Night

Nako-: Time

Madi: money