

UNFRIENDLY NEIGHBOURS:
CONTEMPORARY MIGRATION
FROM ZIMBABWE TO BOTSWANA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Although Zimbabweans have often crossed into Botswana for various reasons, the numbers involved escalated dramatically after 2000 as Zimbabwe entered a prolonged economic and political crisis from which it has still not recovered. While considerable research and policy attention has been given to the migration of Zimbabweans to South Africa, their movement to Botswana has a much lower profile, except when the two countries engage in charges and counter-charges over issues such as the building of electrified fences between the two countries or the corporal punishment of Zimbabwean migrants in Botswana. At such moments, relations between these two close neighbours are anything but friendly. This paper sets out to examine the nature and consequences of contemporary migration from Zimbabwe to Botswana. The analysis is based on a survey in 2010 of migrants who had entered Botswana for the first time within the previous five years. The survey was conducted in Gaborone and Francistown and supplemented by in-depth interviews with 50 migrants. The paper also uses official statistics from the Government of Botswana to track volumes and flows of migrants who cross the border through official border posts.

Official statistics show that the number of people legally entering Botswana from Zimbabwe more than doubled from 477,000 in 2000 to over 1 million in 2008. More than three-quarters of the traffic between the two countries comes through the road border at Ramokgwebana with another 5-10% entering at Ramokgwebana by rail. The only other significant entry point is at Kazungula in the far north of Botswana where the numbers tripled from 19,000 in 2006 to 63,000 in 2008. The vast majority of Zimbabwean migrants give “visitor” or “holiday” as their purpose of entry, which gives them up to 90 days legal stay in Botswana. In practice many stay for much shorter periods, especially those who cross the border to shop or to trade. The numbers entering for “business” purposes rose from around 12,500 in 2005 to over 40,000 in 2008. The number who said they were entering for employment increased from 4,110 to 13,586 between 2005 and 2008 but remained relatively unimportant as a proportion of total entries. By contrast, 43% of the migrants in the survey gave “seeking work” as their primary reason followed by 14% who came “to take up a job”. These figures are similar to those of Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa except that a greater proportion of responses of those who went to South Africa related to the search for work (33% versus 23%).

Botswana is also a stepping-stone for migrants who then move on to South Africa, their ultimate destination. Eighteen percent of the migrants interviewed for this study said they intended to proceed to South Africa to live and work there, with the most likely destinations being Johannesburg, Cape Town and Pretoria. A companion study conducted in Cape Town

and Johannesburg found that 19% of migrants had been in Botswana prior to coming to South Africa. In the three years from 2006 to 2008, however, more Zimbabweans entered Botswana from South Africa than the other way round (75,322 Zimbabweans arrived in Botswana from South Africa and only 59,721 left Botswana for South Africa.) This suggests either that returning home via Botswana may be easier for some or that Botswana is seen as a better option, having experienced South Africa and its xenophobic population.

Botswana also records and publishes data on departures from the country. Over time, the number of temporary arrivals and departures should even out. However, some Zimbabweans enter Botswana legally, say as a visitor or on holiday, and then find a job and stay for more than the 90 days allowed by their temporary residence permit. In the three years from 2006 to 2008, a total of 2,376,807 Zimbabweans entered Botswana through legal border posts and 2,354,842 left, a difference of only 21,965. In 2006 the number of departures even exceeded the number of entries by 95,000. In other words Botswana's own migration data suggests that the vast majority of Zimbabweans who enter legally also leave.

Although Zimbabweans in Botswana come from all strata of society, Botswana was able to take particular advantage of the brain drain from Zimbabwe after 2000. The number of skilled and professional Zimbabweans given work permits increased from 1,177 in 2003 to 8,779 in 2009. Over this same period, the proportion of work permit holders from Zimbabwe rose from 20% to 46% of the total. At the same time, many migrants complain that they are discriminated against in the Botswana labour market and that it is virtually impossible to get a job in the public sector, with the exception of health and education.

The survey revealed the following profile of recent migrants to Botswana:

- Fifty-five percent of the sample was male and 45% female. The majority of the migrants (over 60%) were under the age of 40. However, there was distinct gender difference within the sample with female migrants generally being younger than male. Only 4% of the men were under the age of 25, compared with 12% of the women. Thirty percent of the men were under the age of 30 compared with 42% of the women. The majority of men (57%) and many of the women (46%) were married. Almost half (49%) of all males were heads of household in Zimbabwe and 40% of all females were spouses of household heads.
- Most (59%) had work permits while about a quarter possessed other official documents. Only 3% were permanent residents in Botswana. About 14% were irregular migrants (with slightly more males than females). There was a significant difference between male and female holders of official travel documents: 68% of males

and 48% of females had work permits. Almost three-quarters of those with work permits had been professionals in Zimbabwe.

- The majority of the migrants (78%) were employed, with 81% of those in full time employment. Men dominated the ranks of full-time employees while most part-timers were women. Amongst the self-employed, there were more males than females. About 30% of the migrants had established businesses in the formal and informal sectors in Botswana since they arrived. Almost 45% of the migrants earned extra money from a second occupation.
- Just over half (51%) of the migrants had monthly incomes between P2,500 and P14,999 while 30% earned less than P2,500. There was a significant association between income and education as well as immigration status.
- Most are circular migrants, returning home relatively frequently. Around 13% return to Zimbabwe at least once a month and another 24% every few months. Over 80% return at least once a year. Only 9% had never been back to Zimbabwe.
- Zimbabwean migrants in Botswana are regular remitters: just over 80% had remitted money home during the previous year. Nearly a third (32%) remitted at least once a month and another 35% a few times a year. There is a clear relationship between the frequency of remitting and length of time in Botswana. For example, 35% of those who had been in Botswana for less than a year had never remitted, compared to 16% of those who had been there for 1-2 years and only 1% who had been there 3-5 years.
- SAMP's recent study of Zimbabweans in South Africa found that 66% of migrants used informal transfer channels for remittances. In contrast, only 35% of Zimbabweans in Botswana use informal mechanisms (including 22% using personal transfer). In contrast to South Africa, 64% of migrants in Botswana use formal remittance channels: 51% remit through formal money transfer agencies (e.g. Western Union and Money Gram) and 13% use banks.
- The vast majority of migrants (90%) said they intended to return eventually, though most wanted a change in Zimbabwe's political system to occur before making plans to return. At the same time, half said it was likely or very likely that they would return home for good within two years. There was a clear relationship between educational level and intention to return with the more educated and skilled less likely to foresee an early return to Zimbabwe. The lack of enthusiasm for an early return to Zimbabwe was reflected in the comparisons that migrants made between the two countries. On virtually every economic/livelihood measure, Botswana was judged to be superior to Zimbabwe.

INTRODUCTION

Although migration between Zimbabwe and Botswana has a long history dating back to the colonial period and even before, contemporary movements between the two countries are unprecedented in their scale and scope.¹ Since Botswana's independence from Britain in 1966, there have been four main phases of migration to the country from Zimbabwe.² The first occurred during the Zimbabwean independence war in the 1970s when an estimated 210,000 refugees and exiles fled into neighbouring countries.³ At one point, around 20,000 Zimbabwean refugees were housed at the Dukwi Refugee Camp outside Francistown and in Selibe Phikwe. The camps were 'closed areas' and refugee movements were restricted. The majority of the refugees returned home after Zimbabwean independence in 1980. The second phase occurred in the 1980s when the Zimbabwean government's Fifth Brigade (trained by North Korea) launched an anti-dissident campaign in southern Zimbabwe (known as the Gukurahundi). Over 5,000 ethnic Ndebele fled to Botswana to escape persecution.⁴ The third phase started in 1990 and was largely driven by economic factors such as Zimbabwe's Economic Structural Adjustment Programme and rising unemployment. Most of the emigrants were either cross-border traders or highly mobile professionals whose skills were in demand in Botswana.⁵

The number of Zimbabwean migrants moving to Botswana escalated dramatically after 2000 as Zimbabwe lurched from one economic and political crisis to another.⁶ The Zimbabwean economy shrank by 50% between 2000 and 2008, unemployment rose to over 80% and runaway inflation decimated the livelihoods of most households. By 2009, the purchasing power of ordinary Zimbabweans had fallen to levels not seen since the 1950s. With its stable economy, high standard of living, reputation for safety and peace, and geographical proximity, Botswana became a major destination for Zimbabweans seeking a livelihood outside the country. The new migrants included professionals but also many with less formal education and lower skill levels. Amongst those crossing the border were growing numbers of informal traders who travelled regularly to buy and sell goods, as well as grocery shoppers who returned home immediately after purchasing food in neighbouring Botswana.⁷

This report focuses on understanding the nature and implications of the most recent phase of movement from Zimbabwe to Botswana. The first section of the report examines the evidence for the number of Zimbabweans in Botswana. As in South Africa, the numbers are frequently exaggerated by the media and in official pronouncements. However, arriving at a precise number is impossible. Botswana does keep good migration statistics and these provide insights into changing forms of legal movement between the two countries but the numbers of undocumented migrants

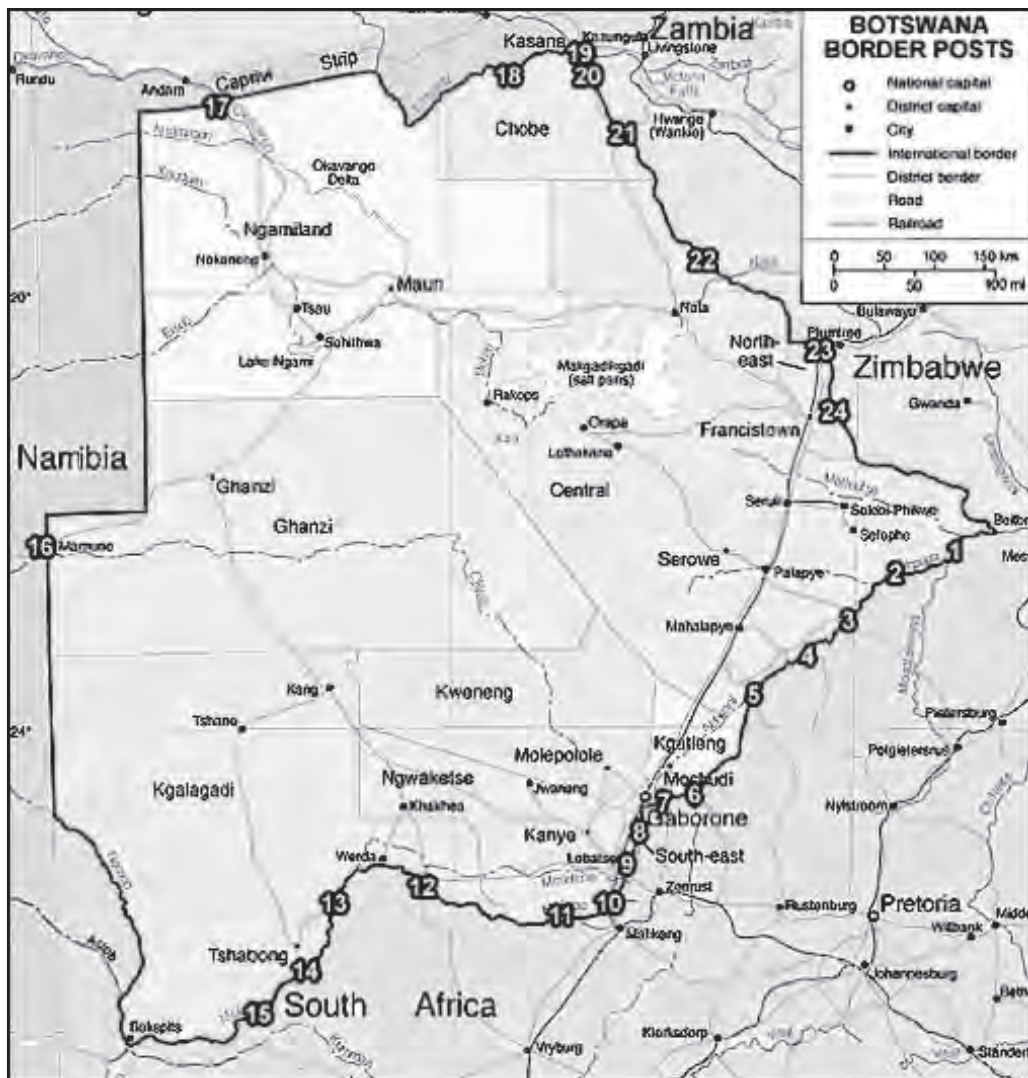
are unknown. The following sections of the report examine the nature of contemporary migration between Zimbabwe using data from a SAMP survey of Zimbabweans in Botswana conducted in 2011. In addition to a profile of the migrants, issues such as migrant employment, circular migration and remitting behaviour are examined. The report then turns to the treatment of Zimbabwean migrants in Botswana from the perspective of those migrants, complementing earlier SAMP studies of Botswana attitudes to migrants.⁸ The report provides evidence that many migrants have been badly treated but, at the same time, the majority retain a favourable impression of Botswana and its people. Finally, the report examines whether large-scale migration from Zimbabwe is likely to continue and what the prospects are for return migration in the future.

SHARED BORDERS

Botswana and Zimbabwe share a long, and largely unguarded, border some 500 km in length. In 2002, in an attempt to put a stop to what it believed to be mass irregular migration and clandestine border crossing, the Botswana government built a new electrified fence along sections of the border between the two countries.⁹ The fence inflamed tensions between the two governments and led Botswana to declare that the fence was not, in fact, an anti-immigration measure but was rather built to stop the spread of foot-and-mouth disease. Most commentators believe that it was a reaction to human not animal migration although the controversy had the beneficial effect of ensuring that the power was never turned on.¹⁰

The volume of unofficial border-crossing from Zimbabwe is not known.¹¹ However, because Zimbabwean migrants find it relatively easy to cross legally into Botswana through the five official borders, and because those crossing points are on major transport routes, the numbers are probably not excessive (Figure 1). The number of people legally entering Botswana from Zimbabwe more than doubled from 477,000 in 2000 to over 1 million in 2008 before falling slightly again in 2009 (Figure 2). More than three-quarters of the traffic between the two countries comes through the road border at Ramokgwebana with another 5-10% entering at Ramokgwebana by rail (Table 1). The only other significant entry point is at Kazungula in the far north of Botswana where the numbers tripled from 19,000 in 2006 to 63,000 in 2008.

Figure 1: Botswana Border Posts



Botswana-South Africa

1. Pont Drift-Mashatu
2. Platjan
3. Zanzibar
4. Groblersbrug-Martins Drift
5. Parr's Halt-Stockpoort B
6. Sikwane-Derdepoort B
7. Tlokweng Gate-Kopfontein
8. Ramotswa-Swartkoppie
9. Pioneer Gate-Skilpadshek
10. Ramatlabama
11. Phitshane Molopo
12. Bray

13. Makopong
14. McCarthy's Rust
15. Middleputs

Botswana-Namibia

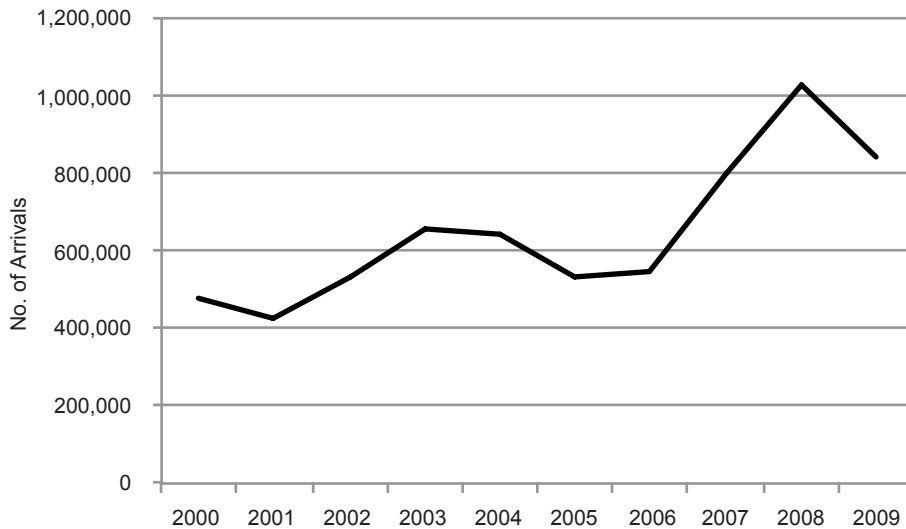
16. Mamuno/Buitepos–
Trans Kalahari
17. Muhembo/Shakawe
18. Ngoma Bridge
19. Impalila Island

Botswana-Zambia

19. Kazungula Ferry

Botswana-Zimbabwe

20. Kazungula Road
21. Pandamatenga
22. Maitengwe
23. Ramokgwebana
24. Matsiloje-Mphoengs

Figure 2: Legal Arrivals in Botswana from Zimbabwe**Table 1: Zimbabwean Arrivals by Port of Entry, 2006-2008**

Year	2006		2007		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
*Ramogwebana Road	421,980	77.0	589,860	73.5	788,940	76.8
*Ramogwebana Rail	37,000	6.7	73,990	9.2	57,130	5.6
*Kazungula Road	18,960	3.4	34,530	4.3	63,550	6.2
*Matsiloje	17,450	3.2	21,600	2.7	29,190	2.8
*Maitengwe	12,990	2.4	21,620	2.7	36,500	3.6
Tlokweng	8,020	1.5	23,290	2.9	8,940	0.9
Mamono	6,850	1.2	8,630	1.1	9,000	0.9
Ngoma	5,640	1.0	7,770	1.0	7,000	0.7
Martins Drift	5,280	1.0	7,200	0.9	9,760	1.0
Ramatlabama Road	3,430	0.6	2,690	0.3	3,160	0.3
Sir Seretse Khama Air	2,500	0.4	2,680	0.3	2,690	0.3
Kazungula Ferry	1,770	0.2	3,610	0.4	4,820	0.5
Pioneer Gate	1,670	0.2	1,480	0.2	1,990	0.2
Parrshalt	1,040	0.2	470	0.1	740	0.1
Mohembo	600	0.1	930	0.2	2,070	0.2
Ramotswa	520	0.1	380		320	
Sikwane	370	0.1	220		190	
*Pandamatenga	325	0.1	242		430	
Other**	1,213	0.2	785	0.1	737	0.1
Totals	547,632		801,998		1,027,177	

* Border Posts between Botswana and Zimbabwe
** 21 Other Border Posts

The vast majority of Zimbabwean migrants give “visitor” or “holiday” as their purpose of entry, which gives them up to 90 days legal stay in Botswana (Table 2).

Table 2: Total Arrivals from Zimbabwe by Stated Purpose of Entry, 2005-2008

	Returning Resident	Prospective Resident	Seeking Employment	Employment	Visitor	Holiday	Business	Student	Other*	Total
2005	2,161	25,901	1,627	4,110	268,490	63,121	12,557	300	151,451	529,719
2006	4,984	35,289	2,630	7,672	331,733	31,075	13,225	412	120,612	547,632
2007	8,726	31,880	2,893	9,229	561,654	54,082	27,135	601	105,798	801,998
2008	8,842	48,960	1,825	13,586	640,583	82,364	41,970	380	188,667	1,027,177

* In Transit, Diplomat, Other and Not Stated

In practice many stay for much shorter periods, especially those who cross the border to shop or to trade. For example, between 2006 and 2009 Botswana had over 300,000 “day visitors” per annum, most undoubtedly from Zimbabwe.¹² In addition, the collapse of the public health system in Zimbabwe has meant an increased movement across the border to seek short-term medical treatment in Botswana.¹³ The numbers entering for “business” purposes rose from around 12,500 in 2005 to over 40,000 in 2008. The majority of these were probably informal economy entrepreneurs. The number entering for employment increased from 4,110 to 13,586 between 2005 and 2008 but remained relatively unimportant as a proportion of total entries. However, this was higher than the number of Zimbabweans with official work permits in Botswana (6,947 in 2008).¹⁴ What is clear is that Botswana was able to take advantage of the brain drain from Zimbabwe after 2000.¹⁵ The number of skilled and professional Zimbabweans with work permits increased from 1,177 in 2003 to 8,779 in 2009 (Figure 3). Over this same time period, the proportion of work permit holders from Zimbabwe rose from 20% to 46%.

Botswana also records and publishes data on departures from the country. Over time, the number of temporary arrivals and departures should even out. However, some Zimbabweans enter Botswana legally, as a visitor or on holiday, and then find a job and stay for more than the 90 days allowed by their temporary residence permit. While the numbers who do this cannot simply be “read off” from the difference between arrivals and departures, the figure does provide a general sense of how many Zimbabweans (both legally and with expired documentation) are in Botswana at any point in time. The numbers do not, of course, capture those migrants who enter Botswana at unofficial crossing points and without documentation. In the three years from 2006 to 2008, a total of 2,376,807 Zimbabweans entered Botswana through legal border posts and 2,354,842 left, a difference of only 21,965 (Table 3). This figure is equivalent to only 1% of

the total number of Zimbabweans who entered the country in these years. In 2006, the number of departures even exceeded the number of entries by 95,000. In other words, Botswana's own migration data suggests that the vast majority of Zimbabweans who enter legally also leave.

Figure 3: Work Permit Holders in Botswana

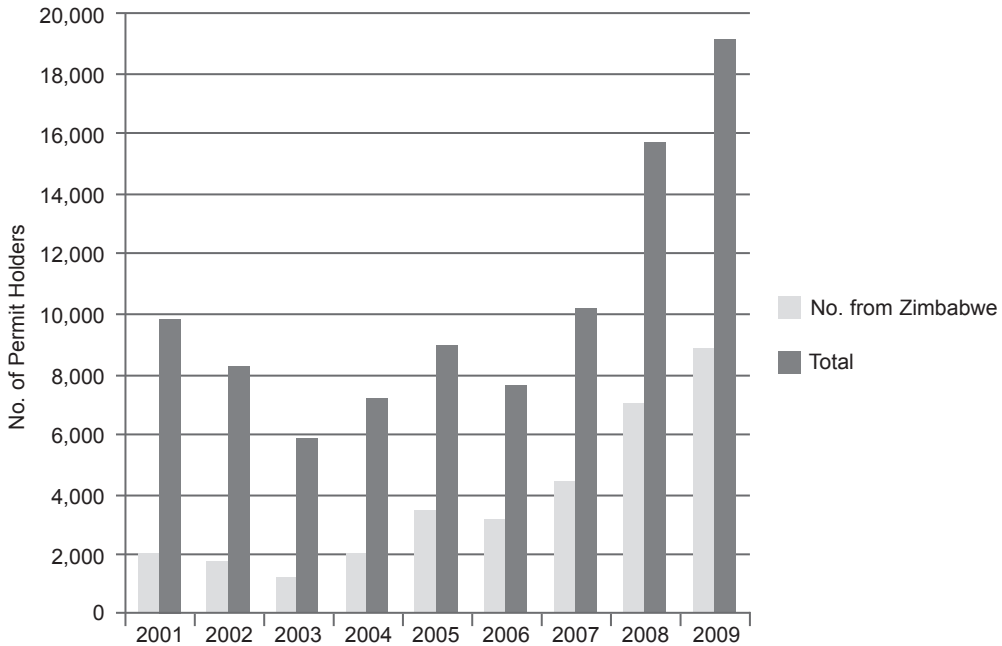


Table 3: Legal Entries and Departures of Zimbabweans

	Entries	Departures	Difference
2006	547,632	642,770	-95,138
2007	801,998	730,534	71,464
2008	1,027,177	981,538	45,639
Totals	2,376,807	2,354,842	21,965

Migration between Zimbabwe and Botswana does not only involve these two countries. Botswana is also a stepping-stone for migrants who move on to South Africa, their ultimate destination. Eighteen percent of the migrants interviewed for this study said they intended to proceed to South Africa to live and work there, with the most likely destinations being Johannesburg, Cape Town and Pretoria. A companion study conducted in Cape Town and Johannesburg in 2010 found that 19% of migrants had been in Botswana prior to coming to South Africa.¹⁶ The official data on border-crossing between South Africa and Botswana reveals that it is far from being a one-way movement, however. In both 2006 and 2007,

more Zimbabweans entered Botswana from South Africa than vice versa (Table 4). In the three years between 2006 and 2008, for example, 75,322 Zimbabweans arrived in Botswana from South Africa and only 59,721 left Botswana for South Africa. This unexpected pattern suggests either that returning home via Botswana may be easier for those working in North West Province or that Botswana is seen by some as a better option, having experienced South Africa and its xenophobic population.

	Arrivals in Botswana from South Africa	Arrivals in South Africa from Botswana
2006	18,088	14,279
2007	34,423	21,215
2008	22,811	24,227
Total	75,322	59,721

METHODOLOGY

The fieldwork for this study was conducted in Gaborone and Francistown in October and November 2010. Although Zimbabwean migrants are scattered all over the country, the majority live in these two cities. Sampling migrants in a country like Botswana presents considerable challenges. The last national census was in 2001 and the Zimbabwean population has become much larger and far more geographically dispersed since then. Migrants easily blend in with the local population, making them more difficult to identify. As a result, it is almost impossible to develop a sampling frame, even at the community level. In order to overcome this challenge, the survey adopted a “snowball” sampling strategy to identify respondents. This involved the use of respondents to identify other respondents through their own networks. The process began by identifying migrants as initial sampling points. Considerable effort was made to ensure that these points were of varied backgrounds in terms of age, occupation, gender and legal status. Given the “mixed” nature of Zimbabwean migration to Botswana, the aim was to identify and interview as heterogeneous a sample as possible. However, the findings of this survey are therefore indicative rather than representative.

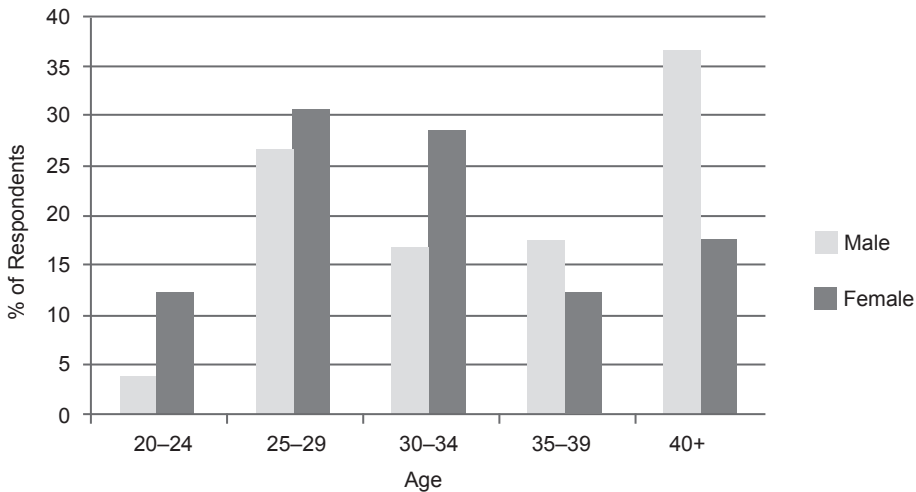
The survey used two major data collection methods: a structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews. A total of 202 structured questionnaires were administered, 153 in Gaborone and 49 in Francistown. Fifty in-depth interviews were also carried out in the two cities: 25 in Gaborone and 25 in Francistown. Two of the field researchers spoke the major Zimbabwean languages while the third had close and positive relationships with Zim-

babweans. The respondents had all come to live in Botswana for the first time in 2005 or later.

Fifty-five percent of the sample was male and 45% female. The majority of the sample (59%) had work permits while about a quarter possessed other official documents. Only 3% were permanent residents in Botswana. About 14% were irregular migrants (with slightly more males than females). There was a significant difference between male and female holders of official travel documents. While 68% of males and 48% females had work permits, females exceeded males 3 to 1 among those with other official documents. All of those with permanent residence and refugee status, and almost three-quarters of those with work permits, used to be professionals in Zimbabwe.

The majority of the migrants (over 60%) were under the age of 40. However, there was a distinct gender difference within the sample with female migrants generally being younger than male. Only 4% of the men were under the age of 25 compared with 12% of the women (Figure 4). Or again, 30% of men were under the age of 30 compared with 42% of the women. The majority of men (57%) and many of the women (46%) were married. Almost half (49%) of all males were heads of household in Zimbabwe before migrating to Botswana and 40% of all females were spouses of household heads. About 35% of the total sample were offspring.

Figure 4: Age and Sex of Survey Respondents



Sixty-four percent of males and 49% of females were employed before leaving Zimbabwe. An additional 12% were self-employed. Only 3% had never been employed. Over half (61% male, 54% female) of the migrants interviewed held professional jobs before leaving for Botswana. The unem-

ployment rate among migrants prior to their departure from Zimbabwe was fairly high, especially for women (24% males, 41% females).

MOVING TO BOTSWANA

The main reasons given for migration to Botswana were related to livelihoods. Forty-three percent of the migrants gave seeking work as their primary reason followed by 14% who came to take up a job. Another 11% said their primary reason was that living conditions were better in Botswana (Table 4). When the migrant's top three reasons are combined, the search for work was still the most important (at 23%) followed by overall living conditions (13%), study (11%) and to take up employment (7%). These figures are similar to those of Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa except that a greater proportion of the responses of those who went to South Africa related to the search for work (33% versus 23%) (Table 5).¹⁷ Only a small number of migrants gave political or safety-related motivations for migration. At the same time, greater freedom, peace and democracy do rank more highly for migrants leaving for Botswana than for South Africa.

Reasons	Botswana (%)	South Africa (%)
Economic/Livelihood		
Look for work	23	33
Overall living conditions	13	18
School/study	11	7
To work	7	10
Availability of decent food	5	3
Cost of living	5	2
Opportunity to trade goods	3	1
Decent job	3	1
Decent shopping	1	0
Decent health care	1	4
Political/Safety		
More freedom/democracy	7	1
Greater peace	5	2
Safety of self and family	0	3
Political Asylum	0	4
Family		
Join family or friend	12	4
Decent place to raise children	1	1
Decent schools	1	1
N	236	930

The most common form of transport for getting to Botswana was bus (used by 48% of the migrants), followed by car (37%). Eight percent travelled by aeroplane while 5% came by kombi taxi. Train was the least preferred mode of transportation. Around half (51%) of the migrants said they encountered no difficulty migrating to Botswana. Only 8% found their moves “difficult/very difficult.” The greater the degree of education of the migrant, the less difficulty they faced. This is consistent with the fact that skilled Zimbabweans are more welcome than the unskilled. The two major obstacles for those with less education were obtaining necessary travel documents and money. They also suffered worse harassment at border check points and by the police once in the country.

The majority of the migrants (78%) were employed, with 81% of those in full-time employment. Men dominated the ranks of full-time employees while the majority of part-timers were women. Amongst the self-employed, there were more males than females. About 30% of the migrants had established businesses in the formal and informal sectors in Botswana since they arrived. Approximately 38% of the migrants had purchased goods in Botswana to sell in Zimbabwe. The survey suggested that there was considerable part-time participation in trade by those employed full-time in other sectors. Only 17% of migrants with a high school education were full-time employees compared with 54% of tertiary non-university graduates, 68% of university graduates and 73% of post-graduates.

The challenges of obtaining full-time employment in Botswana were recounted by many migrants during the in-depth interviews:

I am self employed. I do piece jobs but I specialize in carpentry. It is very difficult to get employment because they give first preference to those who have permits and those who reside in Botswana, so it is very difficult. The easy jobs to get are domestic jobs, cleaning the yard, cutting down the trees and any piece jobs, and the difficult ones are those that need qualifications.¹⁸

I am just doing piece jobs for washing. It is very difficult to get a job nowadays because of the impression that Batswana have towards the Zimbabweans because of the high crime rate. They think that if there is a thief, it's a Zimbabwean; they think that all Zimbabweans are thieves. Even these piece jobs that we are working are not easy to get, even to be a house maid, unless you have a friend to connect you with a job. People are refusing to pay us well; they just want us to work for them without payment.¹⁹

One domestic worker claimed that local workers are paid P500 per month whereas she was only paid P350: "I work too much. It is very difficult because I do not have much to say."²⁰

The preference of formal sector employers for Batswana was alluded to by many, even if the Zimbabwean applicant was better-qualified for the job. One self-employed computer engineer noted that many job advertisements specified that only Batswana need apply.²¹ Others said that it was impossible to get a government job, although it is clear that Zimbabwean doctors and teachers are employed in the public sector. A female migrant working in the construction industry noted that "we can only get jobs from companies owned by foreigners."²² Those who do get jobs spoke of the lack of advancement and how they were sometimes supervised by locals with lower qualifications. One health professional even spoke of training a local who then became their boss.²³

Many migrants mentioned the bureaucratic difficulties of getting work permits, renewing them and changing employer:

I have to change a permit to change jobs here. The process is just too much. You have to get a clearance letter from your employer, but sometimes when you want to move from one job to another, your employer is not impressed for you because they would be still needing you. You have to sometimes "cough out" because they will say "We did this for you and this for you in the form of training." You might not even get paid the last month because you need that release letter.²⁴

Working in the country without proper documentation exposes migrants to the risk of arrest and deportation. One woman said she had been deported four times but still felt the need to keep coming back. While there does not appear to be a widespread trade in forged documentation (as in South Africa) some migrants adopt strategies to circumvent the regulations. One respondent noted that the Botswana government had recently started offering work permits to Zimbabweans for farmwork. Some migrants responded by obtaining work permits for farmwork but then not working on farms: "I do not quite understand the system that they use, it makes it difficult and again it supports corruption because everyone wants to stay in Botswana without any problems. That is why most of the people get permits as if they work in the farms whilst they do not."²⁵

Just over half (51%) of the migrants in the survey had monthly incomes between P2,500 and P14,999 while 30% earned less than P2,500. Though there was no significant association between sex of migrant and income, there was between income and education (Table 6). Almost three-quarters (73%) of those who earned less than P2,500 per month were undocumented migrants. On the other hand, three-quarters of those who earned more

than P15,000 per month were permanent residents in Botswana. Almost 45% of the migrants earned extra money from a second job. For the majority (58%), casual work was the secondary source of income. Other sources of secondary income included informal trading, rentals and remittance from families in Zimbabwe.

Monthly Income	Level of Education			
	Up to Secondary	Tertiary (non-university)	Tertiary (university)	Post Graduate
<P2,500	73	17	25	7
P2,500–P14,999	27	63	57	46
>P15,000	0	20	18	47
N	33	35	83	28

Once settled, Zimbabwean migrants return home relatively frequently. Around 13% of migrants said they return to Zimbabwe at least once a month and another 24% every few months (Table 7). Over 80% return at least once a year. Only 9% had never been back to Zimbabwe. This pattern is very different from that displayed by recent Zimbabwean migrants to South Africa. For example, only 17% of migrants in South Africa returned at least once every few months (compared to 37% in Botswana) (Table 7). And 46% had not been back to Zimbabwe since going to South Africa (compared to only 9% of those in Botswana). In part the difference could be explained by the proximity of Botswana to Zimbabwe especially compared with Johannesburg and Cape Town. The difference may also reflect the fact that Zimbabweans in South Africa increasingly see the country as a place of longer-term residence while those in Botswana continue to see (and are forced to see) their stay as strictly temporary.²⁶

	Botswana	South Africa
At least once a month	13	8
Once every few months	24	9
Once or twice a year	45	27
Less than once a year	5	1
I have been just once	5	3
Never been home	9	46
I cannot visit home	<1	3
I have no desire to visit	<1	2
N	201	500

REMITTING TO ZIMBABWE

Zimbabwean migrants in Botswana are regular remitters: just over 80% had remitted money home during the 12 months preceding the survey. Nearly a third (32%) remitted at least once a month and another 35% a few times a year. There is a clear relationship between the frequency of remitting and length of time in Botswana. For example, 35% of those who had been in Botswana for less than a year had never remitted compared to 16% of those who had been there for 1-2 years and only 1% who had been there 3-5 years (Table 8). With increased years of employment not only did migrant remitting rise, their ability to remit monthly or several times a year increased as well.

Frequency of remitting	Years in Botswana			Total
	<1	1-2	3-5	
Never	35	16	1	18
More than once a month	2	0	4	2
Once a month	35	12	28	26
Few times a year	23	51	35	36
Once a year	2	2	3	9
Occasionally	2	19	18	15
N	40	43	81	164

In terms of amounts, 29% of migrants remitted less than P2,000 per annum, 27% between P2,000 and P5,000, and 44% more than P5,000 (Table 9). The amount of money remitted was not related to the sex of the migrant nor was there a significant association between remittances and either age or education. However, the monthly income of migrants had a significant impact on the amount remitted (Table 10). Two thirds of those who earned less than P2,500 per month remitted less than P2,000 per year whereas no-one who earned this amount remitted more than P5,000 per year. On the other hand 74% of those who earned more than P15,000 a month remitted P5,000 or more per year. The length of time a migrant had been in the country also influenced the amount remitted, with those who had been there longer tending to remit more.

Annual Amount	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
<P2,000	30	29	29
P2,000-P4,999	27	27	27
>P5,000	43	44	44
N	90	66	156

Monthly Income	Annual Remittances		
	<P2,000	P2,000–P4,999	>P5,000
<P2,500	66	25	0
P2,500–P14,999	16	27	26
>P15,000	18	48	74
N	38	77	27

A recent study of remittance transfer mechanisms takes issue with the conventional wisdom that formal transfers are more efficient and cost-effective than informal mechanisms.²⁷ This critique certainly seems appropriate to Zimbabweans in South Africa who make extensive use of informal channels including personal transfer using friends and co-workers and cross-border operators known as *omalayisha*.²⁸ SAMP's recent study of Zimbabweans in South Africa, found that 66% of migrants used informal transfer channels (Table 11).²⁹ In contrast, only 35% of Zimbabweans in Botswana use informal mechanisms (including 22% using personal transfer). In stark contrast to South Africa, 64% of migrants in Botswana use formal remittance channels: 51% remit through formal money transfer agencies (e.g. Western Union and Money Gram) and 13% use banks. Older, more educated and higher-income migrants made more use of formal channels than their younger, less-educated and lower-income counterparts.

	Botswana (%)	South Africa (%)
Through a bank	13	11
Take it themselves	22	9
With a friend or co-worker	13	27
Formal money transfer agency/post office	51	18
Informal money transfer	0	30
Other means	1	5

Why do Zimbabweans in Botswana remit? Studies of households in Zimbabwe have clearly shown that remittances are used to meet basic household needs in tough economic times.³⁰ None of these studies specifically focus on remittances received from Botswana or the uses to which these remittances are put. This study shows that the motives for remitting by Zimbabweans in Botswana are very similar to those living elsewhere. As many as 57% of the migrants gave the meeting of daily household expenses as their main reason for remitting and another 32% gave it as their second reason. The survey asked specifically about remitting for food purchase:

23% gave it as their first reason and 36% as their second reason. When clothing, transportation, medical and school fees are included, the proportions for household needs are even higher. The very high use of financial remittances for such needs indicates the utility of labour migration from Zimbabwe for the survival of families left behind in the country. Only 7% of the migrants said they remitted in order to start or run a business and even fewer (3%) said that remittances were for savings.

Table 12: Reasons for Remitting to Zimbabwe

	Main Reason (%)	Second Reason (%)
To meet daily household expenses	57	32
To buy food	23	36
To start or run business	7	4
To buy clothes	1	6
To pay transportation	0	1
To pay medical fees	4	8
To pay school fees	2	2
To build or renovate house	1	3
Savings	3	2
Special event	2	5
Other	1	0
N	164	157

Migrants in Botswana also send goods back across the border to their families. Just over 70% said they had sent goods home since coming to Botswana. Goods are remitted less often than money, with the peak frequency (36%) being a few times a year. Twenty-four percent send goods once a year or occasionally. In addition to food, which 65% of migrants had sent home, household goods and appliances were popular items (60% had sent these to their families). Sixty percent of migrants said they took the goods home personally while 24% sent them informally (e.g. by taxi and bus drivers).

TREATMENT IN BOTSWANA

A number of previous studies have examined Botswana attitudes towards Zimbabwean migrants in the country. One group of studies focused on capturing the views of ordinary people through attitudinal surveys.³¹ These studies show that public attitudes in Botswana towards Zimbabweans are not that different from those found in South Africa, where documented levels of xenophobia are extremely high.³² One study has attempted to show that Zimbabweans in Botswana are also xenophobic, something the author describes as “reverse xenophobia.”³³ However, there is no compelling reason why descriptions by migrants of how badly they are treated in

Botswana should be labelled reverse xenophobia. Analyses of coverage of migration issues by the media in Botswana suggest that anti-migrant hostility both reflects and reinforces more general public sentiment.³⁴

There is little doubt that the Botswana authorities and police take a dim view of the presence of large numbers of Zimbabweans in the country. Like South Africa, Botswana has a vigorous policy of arresting and deporting Zimbabweans (called “clean up campaigns”) with expired or no valid documentation. Between 1992 and 1997, Botswana deported a total of 74,582 people, mostly Zimbabweans. After 2000, arrest and deportation procedures became much more systematic with country-wide roadblocks and regular police and military raids on workplaces and residences. A Centre for Illegal Immigrants (known locally as *Teronko ya Ma Zimbabwe* or “a prison for Zimbabweans”) was established in Francistown where deportees are held prior to being bused to the border at Ramogwebana. The numbers of deportees have continued to grow every year, from around 16,000 per annum in the late 1990s to 30,000 in 2004 to 40,000 in 2006. In 2009, the latest year for which figures are available, a total of 48,145 Zimbabweans were deported by Botswana. A typical enforcement operation in 2006 was described as follows:

The Departments of Immigration, Labour and Home Affairs and the police and soldiers have started a joint operation to round up illegal immigrants in Selebi-Phikwe and surrounding villages and cattle-posts and lands. The operation is scheduled to take two days. It started yesterday morning with a house to house search and roadblocks to vet passengers. The law enforcement officers even went from office to office in search of illegal immigrants. The whole of yesterday, there were very few foreigners in town. Usually the foreigners, mainly Zimbabweans gather in the middle of the town waiting for anybody who could offer them piece jobs. When the sun sets, they travel on foot to Botshabelo where most of them reside. Selebi-Phikwe and surrounding villages like Mmadinare have been hit by alarming numbers of illegal immigrants. By yesterday afternoon, the arrested immigrants were gathered around the Selebi-Phikwe police station for screening to identify those who were in the country illegally. The station commander Isaiah Makala stated that those found to have violated immigration and labour laws will get four strokes in the buttocks before they are deported. He said the law has been amended to flog such offenders at the Customary Court.³⁵

The President’s Office maintains that Zimbabweans are not “whipped” because they are illegal immigrants but rather those who are “whipped”

have been involved in criminal activities and received corporal punishment as prescribed in the laws of Botswana.³⁶ Zimbabwean migrants claim, however, that customary courts and the police also mete out corporal punishment on the slightest of pretexts.

In 2008, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) constructed a Reception and Support Centre for deportees at the Zimbabwean border town of Plumtree. Deportees are provided with advice, counselling, food and assistance with transportation to their homes. The Botswana government has also targeted particular professions in their enforcement campaigns. In June 2010, for example, 500 Zimbabwean school teachers were rounded up in raids on schools and private colleges, held in police cells for a week and then deported.³⁷

A number of the Zimbabwean migrants interviewed for this study recounted negative personal experiences with the Botswana police.

We try hard to find jobs but the problem is that the police are always raiding and troubling us, especially at the spots that we market ourselves at. It's like they do not want us to earn a living. The police do not want to co-operate, they are deporting ladies with small kids and take them to the prison, and the child may be affected because of going to prison at a young age.³⁸

The food and accommodation (at the detention centre in Francistown) is not welcoming, We will be packed in the truck and the health conditions were not okay with kids, just like the time when I was deported with my child, I didn't appreciate it, the food was horrible, they treat us like animals.³⁹

Normally when the police come to arrest Zimbabweans, they come drunk and beat us but if the immigration officers are there, then we would know that we are safe, but if it's the police and soldiers alone, we would know that we are in trouble. The only problem is that the police may come at any time and harass you because they want to see the documents. At times when we work for someone, they refuse to pay us because we do not have the right papers. Then they would call the police to come and take us.⁴⁰

The contrast between immigration officers, on the one hand, and the police and army, on the other, was a recurrent theme. As one man observed, "With the immigration and customs, I do not have any problems with them, I only have a problem with the police, they hate Zimbabwe."⁴¹ Claims of collusion between employers and police in the arrest of migrants were also made by more than one migrant. Citizens are also known to

report Zimbabweans to the police: “If they find out that a Zimbabwean is working in a certain company, they will call the police to raid there which is something that is not good and affects our living.”⁴²

As many as 92% of the migrants in the survey said they had had a favourable impression of Botswana prior to moving. At the time of the interview, this had dropped to 65%. The experiences of Zimbabweans in Botswana have been generally positive (according to 69% of the respondents) but this still leaves a third of migrants with an unfavourable view. The respondents were asked to rate the type of treatment they had received from different groups in Botswana. There was a very high approval rating for fellow Zimbabweans and other Southern Africans (77% good/very good in both cases). The poorest approval ratings were given to employers, landlords, government officials and the police. However, the proportion of migrants who complained of bad or very bad treatment was highest for government officials (at 29%) followed by landlords and the police (both 23%).

Table 13: Type of Treatment Received from Various Groups

Group	Very Good	Good	Neither Good nor Bad	Bad	Very Bad
Other people from Zimbabwe	34	43	15	5	1
Other Southern Africans	26	51	16	2	1
Batswana	19	24	34	12	8
Employers	18	26	21	10	4
Landlords	15	31	27	14	9
Government officials	15	25	27	16	13
Police officers	16	28	30	8	15

The shift in Zimbabwean attitudes after coming to Botswana thus seems to be rooted in personal experience. Not only have many migrants run afoul of the police, they note that they have experienced discrimination in the workplace, at schools and at public hospitals:

I always go to the private hospitals because I do not like these government hospitals. I do not like government clinics because they want legal documents, if you do not have them they won't offer services to people who do not have them just like I do not have them. I had them but they were not valid and so they could not help me. I do not feel all that comfortable because they do not like communicating in English, once you start speaking in English to show them that you are a foreigner, they do not focus on you, and they won't treat you

like any patient. The problem starts at the reception, and from there, you don't have any chance going to the doctor, I already have failed at the first stage. The reason why some people do not even bother going to government hospitals is because they just make you wait and call the police while you are sick.⁴³

They do not want to give us medication like N1H1 immunization because they say that it is not for foreigners. Usually I do not go when my child is sick; I go to the chemist and tell them what is wrong. The nurses are a bit harsh to us, even for weight check ups I do not go. I am never going back there, I will only go for the immunization of the baby, but otherwise no. They say that they don't want foreigners. They do not want to help us. I have never gone to private clinics because I cannot afford them, they are too expensive. I will only go to pharmacies to tell them the problem and buy the medication.⁴⁴

In addition, many have been victims of crime. Thirty-seven percent of those surveyed had been robbed since coming to Botswana and 36% had been assaulted. A decade ago, Francistown seemed a more risky place to live than Gaborone. However, this has changed over time. More migrants living in Gaborone (40%) had been robbed than those living in Francistown (29%), and more had also been assaulted (41% and 18%).

RETURNING TO ZIMBABWE

Regardless of the socio-economic status of the migrants, there was general agreement on the issue of returning permanently to Zimbabwe (90% saying they intended to return eventually). The vast majority (84%) wanted a change in the political system in Zimbabwe to occur before making plans to return and 91% wanted to see substantial economic change as well. At the same time, only 54% said it was likely or very likely that they would return home for good within two years which suggested that there is not a great deal of faith that economic conditions will improve in Zimbabwe in the foreseeable future. There was a clear relationship between educational level and intention to return with the more educated and skilled less likely to see an early return to Zimbabwe.

Only 16% of the Zimbabwean survey respondents said that they intended to stay "permanently" in Botswana. Another 17% said they intended to stay "indefinitely." Most (43%) said they intended to stay for a few years before returning home. In other words, exactly one third see an extended period of residence in Botswana as both desirable and likely and another 40% see themselves remaining in Botswana for a few years. There was

no association between income and intended length of stay in Botswana, although the data suggests that migrants who earned lower incomes were more likely than the higher income group to stay for shorter periods. Intention to stay permanently did increase with increasing income. Over one-third of the migrants wished to be permanent residents of Botswana while about one-fifth (21%) desired to become citizens of the country. The desire to be a permanent resident increased with income (from 30% for those earning <P2,500 per month to 51% for receivers of more than P15,000 per month). The desire to become a Botswana citizen may have been prompted by the prospect of benefitting from the economic and other opportunities citizens enjoy. Hence, notwithstanding the expressed desire to be permanent residents and citizens, only 10% of the migrants wished to live in Botswana after they retire.

The lack of enthusiasm for an early return to Zimbabwe was reflected in the comparisons that migrants made between the two countries. On virtually every economic/livelihood measure, Botswana was judged to be superior to Zimbabwe (Table 14). The perceived differences were particularly stark with respect to the availability of decent jobs, overall living conditions, the cost of living, and the availability of food and water. The only major exceptions were the availability of land and treatment by employers (both seen as superior in Zimbabwe). Health care, the level of disease, and crime levels were all viewed as superior in Botswana. Levels of personal safety and security were marginally better in Botswana. On the other hand, Zimbabwe was seen as a better place to access housing, to raise one's family and to send children to school. These answers suggest that migrants are generally willing to leave their children behind in Zimbabwe. Political conditions were viewed as vastly superior in Botswana. In sum, migrants clearly differentiate between the two countries on a whole range of issues, not always to the detriment of Zimbabwe. However, on the issues that really "matter" to migrants (employment, living conditions, the availability of goods in the shops, and peace and security) Botswana is seen as superior to home. While such unfavourable comparisons exist, the "pull" to return home to Zimbabwe is likely to remain relatively weak.

Most migrants (79%) anticipated that their personal socio-economic conditions would be better in a year's time. Over half (52%) said that migration to Botswana had positive effects on their family in Zimbabwe; rather fewer (34%) felt the same about the community at home. The effect of migration on the family was positively associated with income: the proportion of positive responses increased continuously from 40% among migrants with monthly income of less than P2,500 per month to 77% for those earning P15,000 per month or more. The reported positive effects also increased from 34% for migrants with up to secondary education to 69% for those with post-graduate education.

Table 14: Comparison Between Botswana and Zimbabwe			
	Better/Much Better in Botswana	Better/Much Better in Zimbabwe	About the Same
Economic/Livelihood Conditions			
Availability of decent jobs	57	17	24
Overall living conditions	53	20	26
Availability of decent shopping	51	7	39
Cost of living	43	24	29
Opportunities for trade/selling goods	37	35	24
Availability of decent water	34	13	53
Availability of decent food	32	16	51
Availability of land	24	56	30
Good treatment by employers	13	31	52
Social Conditions			
Availability of decent health care	56	9	33
Low level of crime	44	10	40
Low level of disease	36	15	46
Safety of myself and family	36	27	34
Availability of decent schools	29	33	34
A decent place to raise your family	17	36	43
Low level/amount of HIV/AIDS	17	25	43
Availability of decent houses	10	42	46
Political Conditions			
High level of peace	55	11	31
High level of freedom and democracy	53	17	28

CONCLUSION

A recent collection of SAMP papers examining the exodus of Zimbabweans from the country did not address the movement of Zimbabweans to neighbouring Botswana.⁴⁵ This paper set out to rectify this omission. The socio-cultural and geographical proximity of the two countries has made Botswana a popular destination for Zimbabwean migrants fleeing that country's social and economic collapse. The decision to choose Botswana rather than South Africa was influenced by the positive image of that country in Zimbabwe as well as the opportunities it offered to mobilize enough cash income to maintain a better standard of living and to assist the family at home through remittances of cash and goods. Cash is sent mainly to immediate families and is used primarily for domestic consumption.

The reception of Zimbabweans in Botswana has not been particularly positive. While they have not had to endure the xenophobic violence

experienced by their compatriots in South Africa, they do experience systematic discrimination from employers and landlords. Many have also been victims of over-zealous policing including corporal punishment and summary deportation. However, a recent study in Francistown has argued that Zimbabweans are treated very well in that city, receiving considerable assistance from the police and other government officials, which means either that attitudes are softening or that it is unwise to generalise about xenophobia in Botswana.⁴⁶

The Botswana government's position on Zimbabwe has become one of the toughest in SADC since Ian Khama assumed the Presidency of Botswana. Zimbabwe is regarded as an "unfriendly neighbour." While this may be related to Khama's personal views on the political situation in Zimbabwe, part of his concern is undoubtedly related to the influx of Zimbabweans into Botswana and the stresses which this places on his country. A resolution of the Zimbabwean political and economic crisis would, in his eyes, be likely to prompt many Zimbabweans to return home. The logical corollary of a tough political stance, however, should be a more accommodating position on Zimbabwean migrants who are viewed as victims of the policies of the Mugabe government. In part, such an attitude would be self-interested as Botswana has been more than willing to utilise the skills of emigrant Zimbabweans. On the other hand, Khama's accommodation does not stop with the skilled and can therefore be viewed also as matter of principle. What this survey demonstrates, amongst other things, is that tolerance of the reality of Zimbabwean migration has not yet permeated throughout Botswana society and officialdom. There are no signs that Zimbabweans are planning an early return home for good which makes such a process all the more imperative in order to turn unfriendly into friendly neighbours.

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