



Republic of Botswana

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY SPEECH

ORGANISATION 3500

BOTSWANA PRISON SERVICE

BY

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MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

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I. INTRODUCTION

- 1. Mr. Chairman,** it is my singular honour to present to this Honourable House the budget proposals for the Botswana Prison Service for the 2026/2027 Financial Year as well as to give an account of both Recurrent and Development budgets allocated to the Prison Service for the financial year 2025/2026.
- 2. Mr. Chairman,** effective from the next financial year, the Botswana Prison Service will operate independently from the Ministry. This independence is expected to improve efficiency, strengthen accountability, and enable more focused planning and resource management to enhance service delivery.
- 3.** This presentation will be preceded by an overview of the Botswana Prison Service, followed by a review of the performance of the Service during the 2025/2026 Financial Year. The presentation will finally outline the proposed budget for the 2026/2027 Financial Year covering both Recurrent and Development Budgets.

II. OVERVIEW OF THE BOTSWANA PRISON SERVICE

- 4. Mr. Chairman,** The Prison Service is created by the Prisons Act, section 5 (Chapter 21:03 of the Laws of Botswana). It is defined as a disciplined force under section 19(1) (c) of the Constitution of the Republic of Botswana and, as such, it is regulated under disciplinary law. Its mandate is to provide safe custodial and rehabilitation services for prisoners, and

reintegration of ex-prisoners into their respective communities after release.

5. Mr. Chairman, Botswana Prison Service operates twenty-two (22) Prisons and a Centre for Illegal Immigrants. The carrying capacity of these facilities is Four Thousand Three Hundred and Thirty-Seven (4 337) inmates.

6. Mr. Chairman, as of 18th March 2026, the prison population stood at Four Thousand Four Hundred and Fifty-Seven (4 457) prisoners including Two (2) children accompanying their mothers. This figure translates to **2.8%** above the authorized capacity of the facilities reflecting overcrowding within the facilities. Overcrowding places pressure on our resources and stifles efforts to maintain a humane and rehabilitative environment.

7. Mr. Chairman, provision of custodial services is a core function of the Botswana Prison Service. It consists of security, safety and humane treatment of offenders. Thus, the Service is required to maintain secure and orderly operation of facilities to ensure integrity of institutions conducive for rehabilitation.

8. Another core function is rehabilitation which focuses on transforming offender behaviour by supporting personal development during incarceration structured rehabilitation, psychosocial interventions, education, and vocational skills programmes. The programmes aim to

assist offenders to attain leading positive behavioural change offenders are guided towards positive behavioural change and to them being responsible citizens. Critically, these efforts are intended to build up to successful reintegration of offenders on release into society for long term public safety.

9. The culmination of rehabilitation is reintegration which is anchored on collaboration and support communities more especially community based reintegration committees. So far there are Five Hundred and Twenty-Eight (528) community-based reintegration committees formed across the country. The committees have received Two Hundred and Forty-Three (243) ex-offenders during the reporting period. Of this number, Eight (8) ex-offenders reoffended, and readmitted into prison while One Hundred and Seventy Six (176) are currently engaged in various forms of employment. This statistics demonstrates the positive impact of community involvement in supporting successful reintegration.

III. REVIEW OF THE 2025/2026 FINANCIAL YEAR

Prison Food Security Strategy

10. **Mr. Chairman**, the Prison Service continues to implement its Food Security Strategy to ensure food sufficiency and to equip inmates with practical hands-on training in farming, animal husbandry and agro-enterprise management. In this sense, agricultural activities play a vital role skills training, food production and cost recovery.

11. Mr. Chairman, A total of 110 906.2kg of vegetables valued at P1, 280,969.95 were produced and issued as prisoners' rations between April 2025 and January 2026. Furthermore, a total of 6,180kg of maize meal valued at P43 260.00, 2, 240kg of samp valued at P15 680.00, 2,220kg of sorghum meal valued at P13 320.00 and 80kg of cowpeas valued at P1 200.00 were produced from the 2024/2025 ploughing season. The harvest produced was processed and issued to prisons kitchens.

Vocational Training & Rehabilitation Success

12. Mr. Chairman, a total of three hundred and sixty-six (366) inmates are enrolled in various vocational training programmes. Of this number, seventy-three (73) inmates have already been trade-tested and certified in Dressmaking, Welding and Fabrication, and Air Conditioning and Refrigeration. In addition, one hundred and six (106) inmates are booked for trade testing at the Madirelo Training and Testing Centre between 2nd March and April 2026. Thirteen of them are already undergoing the test.

13. Mr. Chairman, some ex-offenders, through the skills they acquired during incarceration have secured employment and are depending on them for livelihoods. Mr. Chairman, in addition, ten (10) ex-offenders were assisted with starter packages by Anglican Diosece Botswana to establish various income-generating ventures in Manicure and Pedicure, Carpentry, Upholstery, Brick moulding, Vegetable Production and Tuck-shop businesses. These success stories, **Mr. Chairman,** highlight the transformative impact of rehabilitation and skills development initiatives.

2025/2026 Budget Utilisation

14. Mr. Chairman, during the 2025/2026 financial year, Botswana Prison Service had both the recurrent and development budgets amounting to **Eight Hundred and Sixty Six Million Three Hundred and Fifty Eight Thousand Two Hundred and Forty Pula (P866, 358, 240)** and **Sixty Million, One Hundred and Thirty Nine Thousand Five Hundred and Twenty Seven Pula (P60 139 527)**, respectively.

15. Mr. Chairman, as at 17th March 2026, the recurrent budget expenditure stood at Eight Hundred and Twenty Nine Million Seventy Three Thousand One Hundred and Thirty Four Pula (**P829 073 134**) against the allocated budget of Eight Hundred and Sixty Six Million Three Hundred and Fifty Eight Thousand Two Hundred and Forty Pula (**P866 358 240**). This translates to **95.7%** of the budget. On the other hand, Fifteen Million Two Hundred and Twelve Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety Three Pula (**P15 212 793**) had been spent under the Development budget translating to **25.3%**.

Mr. Chairman, the performance under the Development Budget was not good, and we commit to improving it in the coming financial year.

16. Mr. Chairman, Botswana Prison Service implemented several development projects aimed at improving infrastructure and operational efficiency.

Refurbishment works were undertaken across selected prisons, with electrical works at Boro Prison successfully completed, improving security and lighting. Refurbishment of staff houses in Machaneng, Gaborone and Moshupa is ongoing, though progress has been slowed by contractors' financial challenges.

17. Mr. Chairman, under the farming infrastructure, replacement of farm fences at Mahalapye and Molepolole Prisons was completed. On the other hand, construction of poultry houses at Letlhakane remains in progress. It experienced delays owing insufficient project management by contractors. We will be improving performance in the next year. Completion of these projects is critical as they are meant to enhance yields under Food Security strategy.

18. There has been success in the installation of standby generators at Serowe Prison and the Divisional Command North Office in Francistown and procurement of three vehicles under the Fleet Expansion. This success has greatly improved operational efficiency.

19. Mr. Chairman, some of the Prison Service projects were not implemented owing to financial constraints. The Public-Private Partnership projects, the Development Manager Model, and refurbishment of Central Prison in Gaborone.

Botswana Prison Service would request for funds to carry out these projects.

IV. PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE 2026/2027 FINANCIAL YEAR

20. Mr. Chairman, the proposed budget allocation for the Botswana Prison Service for Financial Year 2026/2027 amounts to **P906, 692,740** for the recurrent budget and **P38, 520,000** for the development budget.

Recurrent Budget

21. Mr. Chairman, it is with great honour that I present to this esteemed House the Recurrent Budget proposals for the financial year 2026/2027 for Organisation 3500: Botswana Prison Service.

22. Mr. Chairman, I request this Honourable House to approve a total of **Nine Hundred and Six Million, Six Hundred and Ninety-Two Thousand, Seven Hundred and Forty Pula (P906, 692,740)** Recurrent Budget for Financial Year 2026/2027. This budget has an increase of 4.7% over the approved 2025/2026 Budget. The funds will be utilized to cover personal emoluments, inmates welfare, operations and rehabilitation of inmates.

Development Budget

23. Mr. Chairman, I seek approval of a Development Budget of **P38.52 million** for the 2026/2027 Financial Year, reflecting a 35.9 percent reduction from the previous year.

24. The Prison Service prioritises **P12.7 million** for Refurbishment of Prison Facilities, **P8 million** for Farming Infrastructure and Equipment to strengthen food security, and **P1 million** for Public-Private Partnership initiatives, which include the proposed Rehabilitation Centre at Lobatse, Construction of Prison Headquarters building and Staff Houses in Gaborone.

25. Mr. Chairman, The remaining **P16.82 million** will fund procurement of vehicles, support and maintenance of the Prison Information Management System, and settlement of outstanding accounts for standby generators.

V. CONCLUSION

26. Mr. Chairman, this concludes my presentation for the 2026/27 Recurrent and Development Budget proposals for **Botswana Prison Service**. I now move that the sum of **Nine Hundred and Six Million, Six Hundred and Ninety-Two Thousand, Seven Hundred and Forty Pula (P906, 692,740)** under the recurrent budget for Organisation 3500 be approved and stand part of the Schedule of the Appropriation (2026/2027) Bill, 2026 (Bill No.1 of 2026) and that sum of **Thirty-Eight Million, Five Hundred and Twenty Thousand Pula (P38, 520,000)** under the development budget for Organisation 3500 be approved and stand part of the estimates for the financial year 2026/2027.

27. I thank you, **Mr. Chairman.**