

Settling In Amid Fiscal Challenges:

An Assessment of the
Government of Botswana's
First Year in Office

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DEBSWANA
JWANENG MINE



A Historic Transition

This report analyzes the Government of Botswana's performance from November 2024 to November 2025, following the historic victory of the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) that ended 58 years of Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) rule.

Using the Botswana Citizens Watch Tracker, we examine 171 promises from the UDC manifesto across five key sectors: Economy, Social Services, Governance, Corruption, and Climate Change. This assessment follows our 100-day report published in February 2025.

The new government, led by President Duma Boko, inherited significant fiscal challenges including declining diamond sales, depleted foreign reserves, and an unemployment rate exceeding 27%.



Methodology

Where do the promises come from?

171 Promises are extracted from the UDC Manifesto for 2024 Botswana elections.

These promises are grouped into five key sectors:

1. Economy
2. Governance
3. Corruption
4. Climate Change
5. Social Services.



**INCLUSIVE GROWTH
QUALITY LIVES**

UDC MANIFESTO FOR 2024
BOTSWANA ELECTIONS

Methodology: Tracking Performance

To track and assess the Government of Botswana’s performance, we utilised a combination of data-driven analysis and independent research to create the Botswana Citizens Watch Tracker. Policy promises were extracted from the official UDC election manifesto and categorised into five key sectors.

01

Data Collection

Actions tracked using government sources, national assembly records, local and international media, and international organisations.

02

Verification

All reported actions triangulated and fact-checked across multiple sources before being recorded on the tracker.

03

Scoring System

Each promise assigned a status: Implemented (14 points), In Progress (1-13 points), or Broken/Not Commenced (0 points).

04

Sectoral Analysis

Average scores calculated by sector, enabling comparison and highlighting areas of strength or weakness.

Key Principle: We record only published developments. If the government has done something but did not publish it, our tracker will not have knowledge of the action.

OVERVIEW OF GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

The 2025 Barometer reveals an overall implementation score of 13%. While 0 promises were fully delivered and 23 are in progress, 0 were broken and 148 remain not commenced. As of end November 2025



171 Promises

Extracted from the Opening Speech to Parliament and the MTDP

23 Promises

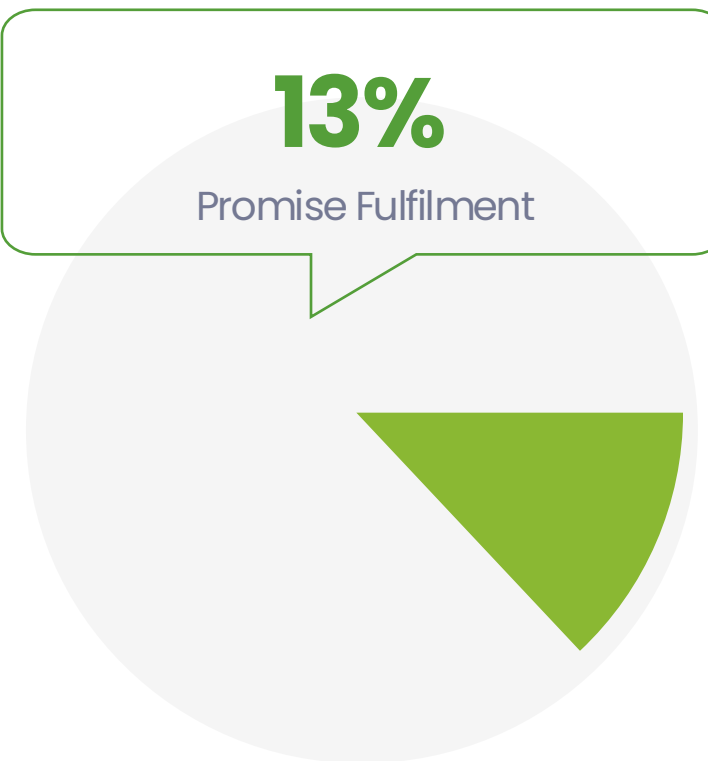
13% of Promises are in progress

0%

0 Promises Implemented

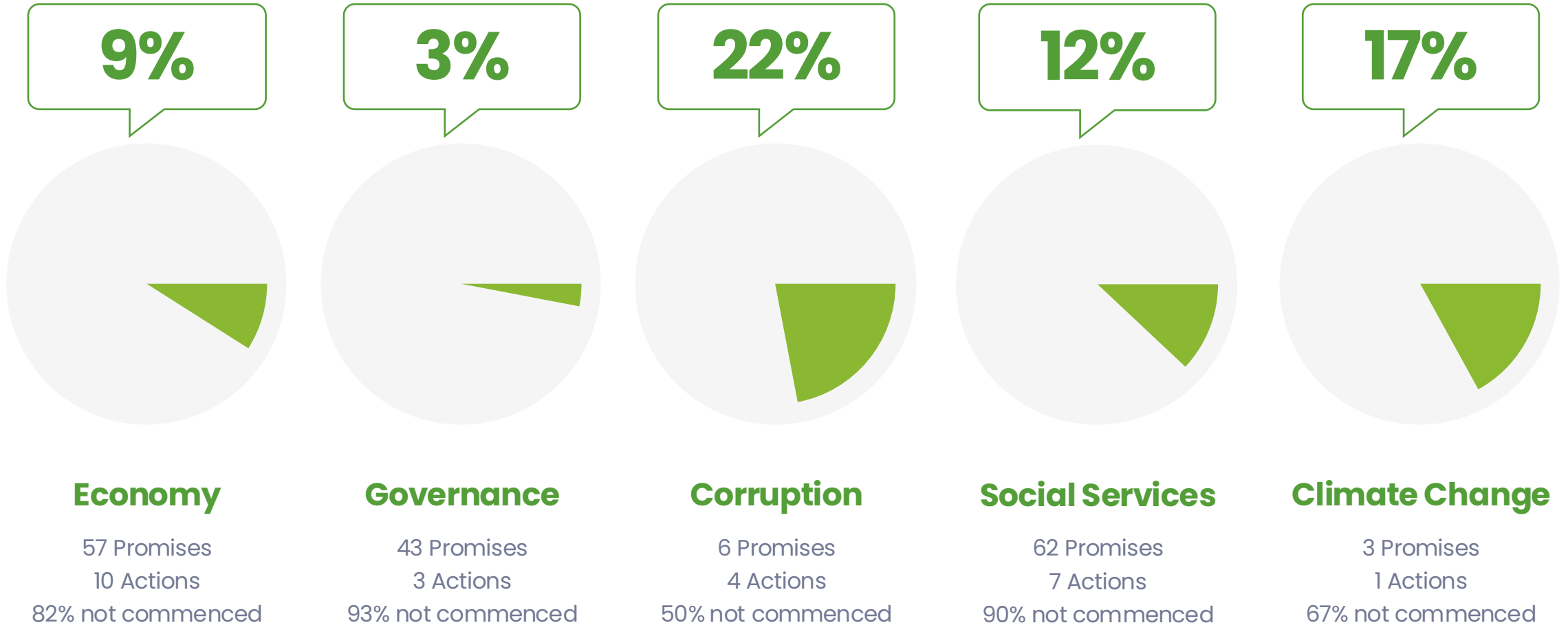
13%

Promise Fulfilment



GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

Sectoral Analysis



12%

Social Services

Botswana differs from the other tracked countries in that most UDC promises fall under Social Services rather than the Economy. This sector accounts for 62 promises, representing 36% of the manifesto, reflecting both the BNF's socialist orientation and Botswana's state-led approach to social protection. However, implementation has been limited.

	# Promises	# Actions	Assessment Score
Land Allocation	5	0	0%
Land and Housing	5	2	11%
Levies and Rates	2	1	50%
Health	8	1	11%
Emergency and Disaster Management	1	0	0%
Electricity	8	0	0%
Education	9	1	11%
Sanitation and Water	3	0	0%
Youth, Sports and Culture	12	1	5%
Pension	1	1	50%
Social Security	8	0	0%

Social Services: Progress and Challenges



Pension Increase

Old age pension raised from BWP830 to BWP1,400 (US\$101), with plans to reach BWP1,800 as economy recovers



Bonno Housing Scheme

Launched in March 2025 targeting 61,000 homes across 61 constituencies, though actual construction shows 34,567 units planned



Sanitary Pads Program

BWP69 million (US\$5 million) allocated for free sanitary pads to all school-going girls nationwide



Health Crisis: President declared a State of Public Health Emergency in August 2025 due to critical medicine shortages. Despite BWP250 million released and international donations, medicine supply remains at only 36%.



Economy

The economy sector shows limited progress under the UDC government, with only 10 actions taken against 57 promises—resulting in a low overall assessment score of 9% and the majority of commitments remaining uncommenced. Ten promises are currently “In Progress” whilst 47 have not commenced yet. While some policy steps have been taken, unemployment—particularly among youth—continues to rise.

	# Promises	# Actions	Assessment Score
Employment	6	1	<div><div></div>5%</div>
Transport	6	0	<div><div></div>0%</div>
Industry	9	3	<div><div></div>17%</div>
Agriculture	19	2	<div><div></div>6%</div>
Budget Allocation	11	3	<div><div></div>17%</div>
Project Management	6	1	<div><div></div>11%</div>



Economic Sector: Navigating Fiscal Constraints

Key Achievements



Sovereign Wealth Fund

Created with BWP76 million (US\$5 million) initial injection for local, continental, and international investments



Progressive Taxation

Expanded income tax brackets to relieve low earners while increasing taxes for high earners



Project Management Reform




Cancelled over 80% of Development Manager Model projects citing mismanagement and financial irregularities

Diamond Deal Uncertainty

New diamond sales agreement signed with De Beers in February 2025. Botswana's Okavango Diamond Company share in Debswana will reach 40% by agreement end, revised from provisional 50%.

Diamond sales fell 50% by end of 2024 with no recovery signs in 2025, severely impacting government revenue and foreign reserves.

Sectoral Overviews

	<p>Governance (3% Progress)</p> <p>President Boko honored human rights promise by allowing burial of San community member Pitseng Gaoberekwe in ancestral land after two years. Commitment to meritocracy demonstrated through cross-party appointments including former BMD president to court of appeal.</p> <p>Challenge: 40 of 43 promises not commenced, including new constitution drafting and intelligence service overhaul.</p>
	<p>Corruption (22% Progress)</p> <p>Highest-scoring sector with trial and sentencing of former Permanent Secretary to the President demonstrating commitment to fair prosecution. However, limited progress in empowering Directorate of Corruption and Economic Crimes.</p> <p>Botswana scored 57/100 in 2024 Corruption Perception Index, ranked 43rd globally but down 2 points from 2023.</p>
	<p>Climate Change (17% Progress)</p> <p>Parliament passed Forest and Range Resources Bill in August 2025, consolidating environmental and forest legislation for improved sustainable management and human-wildlife co-existence.</p> <p>Limited Focus: Only 3 climate promises made, representing just 2% of total manifesto commitments.</p>

Looking Ahead: Lessons and Challenges

Key Lessons Learned

Information Access

Tracking relies heavily on accessible information. Government websites and ministerial platforms slow to publish actions, creating gaps in monitoring.

Launches vs. Action

Confusion between ceremonial launches and actual implementation. Example: school sports restoration launched but not yet operational in schools.

Promise Categorisation

Many promises cut across multiple sectors, making categorization challenging and requiring careful judgment.

The Road Ahead

With 148 of 171 promises still not commenced, the Government of Botswana faces a significant challenge in the remaining 48 months of its term. The ailing economy, driven by poor diamond market performance, has limited implementation capacity.

Despite fiscal constraints, progress on pension increases, housing initiatives, and institutional reforms demonstrates commitment to change. Success will require sustained economic recovery, improved information sharing, and accelerated implementation.

The Botswana Citizens Watch Tracker will continue monitoring government actions with timely reports and live tracking.

Read the full report

The full report with all the findings is found on the SIVIO Institute website (www.sivioinstitute.org/insights)

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