

# Navigating the Business Ecosystem

*A Mixed-Methods Diagnostic of Challenges and Prospects in Botswana (2000–2026)*

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## ABSTRACT

The business environment in Southern Africa is complex, yet comprehensive, longitudinal studies integrating quantitative and qualitative perspectives remain scarce. This gap limits evidence-based policy and strategic investment, particularly in stable economies like Botswana. This study aims to diagnose the systemic challenges and growth prospects for enterprises in Botswana, developing a holistic model of the contemporary business ecosystem to inform stakeholders. A sequential explanatory mixed-methods design was employed. Phase one involved quantitative analysis of national business survey data. Phase two comprised in-depth, semi-structured interviews with founders, executives, and policymakers to contextualise the statistical trends. Quantitatively, access to finance was the most cited constraint, affecting approximately 62% of surveyed firms. Thematic analysis revealed this was compounded by a pervasive risk-aversion among local lenders and complex collateral requirements, creating a cycle of underinvestment. The business ecosystem is characterised by robust institutional stability juxtaposed with critical, interconnected operational constraints. Sustainable growth requires targeted interventions that address these systemic linkages. Policymakers should develop a tiered loan guarantee scheme and foster financial literacy programmes. Firms are advised to build strategic alliances to mitigate supply chain vulnerabilities identified in the analysis. Business diagnostics, mixed methods, entrepreneurial finance, ecosystem, Southern Africa, strategic management This paper provides a novel, integrated diagnostic framework that synthesises longitudinal performance data with rich stakeholder narratives, offering a nuanced systems-view of the operational environment.

**Keywords:** *Mixed Methods Research, Business Environment, Southern Africa, Longitudinal Study, Evidence-Based Policy, Botswana*

### Article Highlights

- Quantitative analysis identifies access to finance as the primary constraint for 62% of surveyed firms.
- Qualitative findings reveal a cycle of underinvestment driven by lender risk-aversion.
- The study proposes a tiered loan guarantee scheme as a key policy intervention.
- Firms are advised to build strategic alliances to mitigate supply chain vulnerabilities.

### Methodological Note

Employs a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, integrating national survey data with in-depth stakeholder interviews to provide a holistic diagnostic.

*This article synthesises longitudinal data with stakeholder narratives to inform evidence-based policy.*

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