

# Review of the Tender Assessment Process for Community-Controlled Hunting Areas

## Final Report

Submitted to:

Department of Wildlife and National Parks, MCI, Government of Botswana  
United States Agency for International Development, RCSEA  
BIOFOR Task Order 802

Submitted by:

Chemonics International Inc.

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Prepared by:

Brian Jones

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## Executive Summary

This report examines the policy approach for the tendering of Community-Controlled Hunting Areas (CHAs) in Botswana as addressed in the Joint Venture Guidelines and as revised based on input from the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC). The JV Guidelines provide advice and direction for Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) to enter into business arrangements with the private sector for the use of wildlife quotas or the development of tourism enterprises for hunting and photographic safari purposes. The DCEC has proposed changes to the tender process to combat the potential for corruption or undue influence in the process.

The CBNRM tender process in Botswana has been successful in: 1) enabling local communities to find private sector partners to utilize the wildlife and tourism rights that are leased by the communities from the government; 2) enabling communities to choose their private sector partner by popular vote; 3) increasing the income from wildlands by establishing a market-related value for wildlife and tourism resources; and 4) enabling local communities to accumulate income from their wildlife and tourism resources.

However, it has been less successful in: 1) promoting true joint venture *business* partnerships between communities and the private sector; 2) involving community representatives in assessing tender proposals and building their capacity to choose a private sector partner; 3) helping communities take informed decisions when voting for their partner; and 4) establishing mechanisms to deal with the threat of undue influence or corruption.

There is a tension in the tender process between the objectives of CBNRM and those of preventing undue influence or corruption. Currently the objectives of preventing undue influence and corruption as defined by the DCEC are creating a climate of fear and suspicion in which there is a presumption that irregularities will take place, leading to attempts to foreclose all possible opportunities for them to happen. As a result: 1) it is difficult for communities and companies to negotiate true partnerships; 2) the trend in DCEC thinking is toward abolishing the popular community vote; and 3) guidelines for avoiding undue influence and corruption have been developed but no one appears to have authority or the will to implement them.

The problem of undue influence and corruption in the tender process needs to be taken seriously. There are known unscrupulous private sector operators and competition for valuable and scarce resources, i.e., hunting and tourism rights, is strong. Further, the high cost of initial short-term leases promotes profit taking and the desire to win a tender by whatever means possible.

Alternatives to dealing with undue influence and corruption need to be explored. In addition, there is a need to rethink definitions of corruption and influence and the appropriate role for the DCEC. The report suggests a tender process that aims to deal with these issues. It emphasizes retaining the primacy of CBNRM objectives while addressing corruption. Emphasis is given to tendering as a *process*, where each stage is an important foundation for the next.