Botswana is a land-locked country which came into being on 30 September 1966. The British colonizers granted political independence to the country on this date, and beyond the euphoria of independence the identification of instruments for the development of the young nation soon became the prime preoccupation of its pioneer leaders. Education was identified as being important. Consequently, after the first decade of its independence, Botswana, in 1976, laid the foundation of the first true national policy on education with the then president commissioning a National Commission on Education that was charged with the responsibility of endowing the young nation with an educational policy which reflects values that are distinctly Batswana (Letshabo, 2000; Maruatona, 2007).

This first national educational template was published in 1977 and it was christened the National Policy on Education (NPE). Its development was guided by the philosophy of Kagisano (education for social harmony), and it was designed to promote both the principles and the practice of democracy, development, self-reliance and unity (Letshabo, 2000; Maruatona, 2007). Almost two decades later and owing to the fact that a lot had changed within Batswana society, the first NPE was revised with a view to reflecting the new Batswana realities. The Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE) of 1994 addressed the shortcomings of the NPE vis-à-vis expansion of access to education, length of schooling for the attainment of basic education, emphasis on science and technology, and training of teachers (Republic of Botswana, 1994). The RNPE spared no effort in aligning the principles of education in Botswana with those contained within the 1990 Jomtien World
Conference on Education Declaration and in outlining a number of out-of-school education strategies to educate citizens outside the school system (Republic of Botswana, 1993; Letshabo, 2000).

This chapter reviews and analyses recent developments in Batswanan adult education policy. Over the years, ‘adult education’, ‘non-formal education’ and ‘out-of-school education’ have been used interchangeably in Botswana’s official documents. However, for the purpose of the current discussion, the preferred terminology is ‘adult education’.

**National policy environment for adult education**

To better appreciate the state of adult education in Botswana, it is pertinent to begin with a discussion of the sociopolitical environment within which are fashioned policies designed for the promotion of adult education. The promulgation of all educational policies (including adult education) begins with a presidential pronouncement. The officialization of government intention comes with the president constituting a national commission, the task of which is to assess the state of education in the country and produce recommendations that would facilitate the promulgation of the policy document that government has intended. This type of national commission is usually tasked with the responsibility of interacting with civil society organizations, regional educational authorities, opinion leaders and the general public through the *kgotla* across the country with a view to seeking their opinions about government intention and to produce a report with specific recommendations that may guide the government in rolling out any policies on education.

While the country’s constitution empowers the Ministry of Education and Skills Development to oversee and regulate on all matters concerning education in Botswana, within the process of the development and promulgation of educational and adult educational policies, the ministry plays an advisory role to the president. Civil society organizations whose input ought to count are few, and they are structurally and materially weak. Regional educational authorities are yet to mature and find their bearings as they were instituted within the national educational system only with the adoption of the current five-year NDP, which comes to an end in 2016. The contributions of trade unions to adult educational policies would not differ from the official position as the formation, financing and stabilization of these unions benefit significantly from government support and assistance. The highly cherished grassroots symbol of national democracy (the *kgotla*) is made up of persons