



PRESS CONFERENCE
THE 2015/2016 BOTSWANA MULTI-TOPIC HOUSEHOLD SURVEY
STATEMENT TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC

MARCH 22, 2016 1500 HRS

1. Statistics Botswana has embarked on for a 12 months-long Botswana Multi-Topic Household Survey (BMTHS). Data collection for this survey started in November 2015 is due to be completed in October 2016.
2. Having just discussed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, this survey comes handy for providing information that would enable monitoring of goals and targets. Needless to say, this is just one among series of surveys.
3. Besides Botswana's international obligations there are a variety of uses of such data, nationally. Statistics Botswana conducts Poverty and labour force surveys every five years. This year, the Labour Force survey and the poverty (Botswana Core Welfare Indicators) survey have been combined into what is called the Botswana Multi-Topic Household Survey (BMTHS).
4. The broad objective of the BMTHS is to provide a comprehensive set of indicators to :
 - a) monitor and evaluate progress on the National Strategies for Poverty Eradication, including the impact of programmes aimed at eradicating poverty,
 - b) and to provide labour force information (employment, unemployment and labour force profiles) to aid government's efforts in employment creation.
5. The data collection exercise includes interviewing and keeping of expenditure and consumption diaries by households.
 - a) **Interviewing:** Statistics Botswana data collectors interview households through the use of questionnaires, as is normally done in surveys and censuses.

- The BMTHS data collectors ask questions mainly about:
 - Demographic characteristics of the household
 - Education
 - Health
 - Employment
 - Income
 - Expenditure, etc

b) **Keeping of expenditure and consumption diaries:** Households are required to keep a diary of all the daily household expenditures and consumption. The information obtained through the diary is used to come up with a basket of commodities to rebase the Consumer Price Index, and estimate household consumption and expenditure, used in the computation of the Poverty Datum Line (PDL) and Poverty Incidence.

- The household diary records:
 - Daily consumption of food (food consumed) whether bought or own produced consumed, in-kind payment etc.
 - Daily purchase of food
 - Daily purchase of non-food commodities and services

6. Whilst most selected households continue to assist and support Statistics Botswana by allowing our enumerators into their households and responding to our enquiry, there are still some setbacks in the data collection process in the form of refusals, particularly in high income neighbourhoods.
7. Another significant problem encountered is the under-reporting of income, expenditure and consumption. For example, a household will report absolute poverty whereby they indicate that they do not have any income hence no expenditure and consumption when all indications show that the particular household is not as poor as it claims.
8. It has also been noticed that households do not report consumption of food provided at work.
9. While these problems are being addressed by Statistics Botswana Fieldwork quality controllers, all households across the country are urged to provide the required information accurately, and to respond to questions during data and information collection.
10. The BMTHS is a nationwide survey, and all selected households, be it in cities, towns, villages, cattleposts, etc are urged to participate in accordance to the

Statistics Act, which makes it mandatory for individuals to furnish the required information, and to answer questions during data collection.

11. Failure to provide the required information by households has far reaching negative effects to the quality of the indicators that will be produced at the end of this survey and hence inappropriate development of national programmes.
12. Confidentiality of all information gathered is guaranteed. Any person employed to execute any duty under the Statistics Act of 2009 signs an Oath of Secrecy before a Commissioner of Oath.
13. Statistics Botswana requests that selected households for this survey cooperate with the enumerators and provide the requested information. We need to all join efforts and support these national initiatives and all build a better Botswana.