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REMARKS BY

STATISTICIAN GENERAL

Statistics Botswana

At the

**THE RELEASE OF PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF THE
2015/16 BOTSWANA MULTI TOPIC HOUSEHOLD SURVEY:**

Poverty Module

18th January 2018

Director of ceremonies

Senior Officials from Government and Parastatals

Development Partners here present

Representatives of the media houses

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning

1. It is with great pleasure that I present to you the preliminary findings of the poverty module from the Botswana Multi Topic Household Survey of 2015/16 today. This survey was one of the periodic surveys undertaken by Statistics Botswana in discharging its mandate of providing official statistics, to facilitate evidence based planning and decision making.
2. The survey was conducted over a one year period from November 2015 to October 2016. While there were several modules on different areas, the primary objective of the survey was to provide a comprehensive set of indicators for labour market and poverty.

3. Many of you will recall that on 15th August 2017, Statistics Botswana released findings on the Economic Activity module of the same survey, and committed to further sharing results of subsequent modules, including on poverty. Analysis is continuing on other modules and their reports will be included in the main survey report and disseminated accordingly.

Ladies and Gentlemen

4. Eradication of extreme poverty continues to be a priority area both for this Country and at the International level. You will recall that the Sustainable Development Goals emphasises having “No poverty” and “having decent work and economic growth”.
5. The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, Vision 2036, National Development Plan 11 and the Africa Agenda 2063, all of which put poverty eradication as the first priority, has introduced added demands for data for monitoring purposes.

6. Statistics Botswana as the organization charged with this responsibility of data provision, has been fortunate to get support from partners both within Government and outside. The Office of the President, in particular, demonstrated its support for efforts aimed at monitoring poverty by providing initial financial support for conducting this survey.

7. The World Bank, on the other hand, provided the necessary technical support through its partnership agreement with the Government of Botswana. The Bank assisted in areas of systems and questionnaire development and training. We are assured of a continuation of such partnership beyond the conclusion of this survey. In fact, the Bank is working with Statistics Botswana to start a programme to conduct employment and poverty surveys on a quarterly basis which should serve the needs of our stakeholders with more frequent information.

Ladies and Gentlemen

8. The preliminary results of this survey's poverty module show that, the proportion of people living below poverty datum line has been declining over the years, from 30.6 percent in 2002/3 to 19.3 in 2009/10 and at 16.3 percent in 2015/16.
9. We note that the proportion of people living below one dollar a day (currently \$1.90), has also been declining over the years, from 23.4 percent in 2002/3, to 6.4 percent in 2009/10 and 5.8 percent in 2015/16.
10. On another note, the gender disparity in poverty levels which was observed over the previous surveys still persists. This survey showed that female headed households constituted more than half (55%) of the poor households compared with 45 percent for their male counterparts.

Ladies and gentlemen,

11. The module on poverty addressed a number of issues and the detailed findings shall be shared with you in the presentation which shall be made shortly.

12. In conclusion, **Director of ceremonies**, I wish to appreciate the cooperation we received from Batswana who participated during this survey. The time for interviewing households was often lengthy and questions intruded into some of most sensitive topics like personal income, daily consumption and health among others. Despite these sensitivities, the survey recorded very high response rates of 98.6 percent, which gives us confidence that results are credible and can be used to guide programmes aimed at eradicating poverty and hunger. I also wish to thank survey personnel, partners and stakeholders who contributed to the success of the survey.

13. We shall continue to welcome interaction with users to further clarify the content of our report and get feedback on how we can improve this important product for the benefit of all stakeholders.

14. I thank you for your attention.

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