



Mpala, Ke Botlhokwa



Key Note Address

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Statistics Botswana Board Chairperson

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Salutations!!

- Director of Ceremonies;
- Reverend Dimpho Mantu
- Deputy District Commissioner, Ms. Keba Tsie;
- Vice-Chairperson of Statistics Botswana Board, Ms. Olebogeng Mokgware and fellow

Board Members;

- Acting Statistician General,

Dr. Lucky Mokgatlhe;

- National Census Coordinator,

Ms. Phetogo Zambezi;

- Invited Guests;
- Members of the Media;
- Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good Morning!!! Dumelang

1. I am honoured to stand before you today to officiate this significant event, organised by Statistics Botswana in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to disseminate the full results of the 2022 Population and Housing Census under the theme, “Botswana’s First Digital Census, a Touchstone for Mindset Change and Sustainable Development”.
2. Ladies and Gentlemen, the theme captures the transformative potential of data from Botswana’s inaugural digital census, as a catalyst for long-term socio-economic sustainable development. It represents Botswana’s commitment to leveraging technology, promoting inclusivity, and harnessing data for the collective prosperity and well-being of its citizens. Furthermore, this theme signifies a shift in mindset towards embracing data-driven decision-making, transparency, and accountability.
3. Allow me to emphasise that a statistic is not only a number – it tells a human story. It speaks of people’s health and well-being, problems and prospects, and socio-economic circumstances. When collected and analysed well, statistics can advance sustainable development, identifying those at risk of being left behind. With better data, we will have a better understanding of the challenges people are facing and how much progress we are making as government in improving their lives and protecting their rights. Fortunately, technology is exponentially increasing the possibility of statistical analysis that helps us understand and act on existing issues and emerging trends. From a mindset change perspective, the census results serve as a rallying point for challenging existing paradigms, promoting evidence-based inclusive and equitable policymaking and development planning.
4. Statistics Botswana has aligned itself with the national “reset agenda” priorities by embracing digitalisation to enhance the effectiveness of its core mandate.
5. This commitment was evident in the conduct of the 2022 Population and Housing Census (PHC), which fully integrated Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) throughout the various stages entailed in a census. A key innovation involved the complete digitalisation of the mapping exercise. This digital foundation provided crucial data for the subsequent census enumeration process, such as navigation tools and digital maps to guide fieldworkers. Additionally, the census leveraged Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) technology for data collection.
6. Director of Ceremonies, the adoption of Smart Census and use of Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing has not been without challenges, stemming from network connectivity and inconsistent application of data capturing systems, necessitating unexpected prolonged period of verification.

7. Statistics Botswana and the Government at large only stand to learn from these challenges as the country moves towards a Smart Botswana.
8. The 2022 Population and Housing Census has yielded a comprehensive dataset encompassing a wide range of demographic indicators. These data include details on population distribution across geographic areas, gender and age composition, living conditions, and key socio-economic characteristics. This rich repository of information serves as a foundation for informed decision-making at both national and sub-national levels.
9. Moreover, data from the Census has garnered significant anticipation from various stakeholders. It serves as a cornerstone for development planning by empowering policy makers to formulate effective national strategies.
10. The Census data will also facilitate businesses who can leverage the data to conduct market analysis, identify target demographics, and tailor their products and services accordingly. The detailed information gathered from the census will be instrumental in formulating effective sub-national strategies that contribute to the realisation of national SDG targets, while also providing crucial evidence on progress towards achieving national and international development frameworks.
11. Ladies and gentlemen, at a glance, the census results show impressive progress on achievement of key development goals, reflecting success of government policies and programmes, while calling for review of interventions in areas where there is evidence of a decline in the quality of life.
12. The life expectancy at birth has slightly increased from 68 to 69 years between the 2011 and 2022 censuses at national level.
13. However, indications are that life expectancy declined from 68 down to 66 years for males while there is an increase from 70 to 71 years for females. The decline in life expectancy for males calls for health investigations and interventions for the group.
14. Infant mortality rate declined from 43 to 20 deaths per 1,000 live births during the period 2011 to 2022. Although this is a significant achievement, there is still a lot that needs to be done to bring down the Infant Mortality Rate to the average infant mortality rate in developed countries, which is less than 5 deaths per 1,000 live births. It is the country's intentional investments in healthcare, improvements in maternal and child health services, and the concerted efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, which have enabled the country to achieve this remarkable success.
15. It is pleasing to note that census data shows that the Under-Five mortality rate, has significantly declined from 61 to 28 deaths per 1,000 during the period 2011 to 2022. Under Five Mortality Rate is one of the most widely used indicators for assessing child health and survival. This achievement reflects the Government of Botswana's prioritisation of child health not only in recognition of the need to uphold children's rights, but also as a smart investment towards the country's future. Improved healthcare services, increased access to vaccinations, and enhanced maternal and child health programmes implemented by Botswana's health sector have indeed yielded positive results.
16. Ladies and Gentlemen, the downward trend in fertility over the last decades has ensued. The Total Fertility rate, which is the average number of children that would be born to a woman during her reproductive life if she were to experience the prevailing age-specific fertility rates dropped slightly from 2.8 to 2.7 children per woman between the 2011 and 2022 census years. While the country's estimated replacement fertility rate of 2.1 children per woman, has not yet been reached, it goes without saying that Botswana should carefully monitor and manage this critical demographic indicator and implement policies that enable the country to benefit optimally from its total fertility rate. The household size also show a downward trend.

17. Notably the Census results show that the population is relatively youthful, with 32 percent below the age of fifteen, and an additional 30 percent aged up to 35. This suggests a vibrant and potentially growing society, but also highlights the importance of investing in education, healthcare, and employment opportunities to support this youthful demographic. However, the proportion of older adults, aged 65 and above, remains relatively low at 6 percent, indicating potential challenges for elderly care and support systems in the future.
18. About 67 percent of Botswana's population lives in urban areas, which is a 3 percent increase from 64 percent in 2011. The number of urban areas also increased from 52 in 2011 to 61 in 2022. On the other hand, there is a corresponding decline in the proportion of those living in rural areas. In comparison to cities and towns and urban villages, rural areas have more children aged less than fifteen and the elderly population 65 years and above.
19. A country that is characterized by a combination of increased urbanization, accompanied by low fertility and mortality rates leading to a labour force that is growing faster than the population dependent on it, as is the case with Botswana, is deemed to be on the right trajectory towards realizing demographic dividends.
20. Director of Ceremonies, the census findings present a precise depiction of Botswana's present condition, constituting a valuable asset for well-informed decision-making.
21. I therefore implore all stakeholders to utilise these insights for thorough planning, strategic coherence, and policy review.
22. Let us remember that, through the census results, work done in the last ten years can be assessed and work to be completed in the next ten years can be planned for. This census dissemination conference is therefore, an opportunity to increase access to statistical information and encourage maximum use of the same. My Ministry will certainly use the census results to guide the country on matters of policy and indeed budgeting and economic development.
23. Ladies and Gentlemen, the current dissemination conference serves as the initial stage of a continuous data utilization process leading up to the next Population and Housing Census.
24. The rich data repository unveiled through the census indicators will necessitate ongoing research and in-depth data analysis to fully grasp the emerging demographic and socio-economic realities of Botswana.
25. Census data presents a massive dataset covering a broad range of socio-economic issues, and is now available and can be accessed through Statistics Botswana. I therefore urge academia, researchers, and analysts to access this data for conducting comprehensive analyses. Through such endeavours, we can foster the publication of highly informative scholarly papers extending beyond the confines of this conference, thereby optimizing the utility derived from the census.
26. I have no doubt that Statistics Botswana continuously disseminate key indicators in formats that are easy to comprehend such as infographics, storytelling and appealing data visualisations to promote understanding and therefore usage of the census data. A look at their packaging of official statistics available in their website, open data portals and social media platforms gives me confidence that they will do this and even venture into the use of Artificial Intelligence to enhance availability and access to census data.

5.

2022 Population And Housing Census Dissemination

27. Director of Ceremonies, allow me to extend heartfelt appreciation to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for their generous financial and technical assistance during the 2022 Population and Housing Census. The UNFPA is a vital global partner in census endeavours, and Botswana has benefitted immensely from their assistance dating back to past censuses.
28. My sincere gratitude also goes out to the broader UN Family, with special acknowledgment to the UNDP Coordinator and UNFPA Representative, for their invaluable support.
29. The success of the census is contingent upon the collaboration of diverse stakeholders. It is imperative to acknowledge the crucial support extended by local structures and institutions. The 2022 Population and Housing Census flourished as a result of outstanding inter-ministerial cooperation, notably between my Ministry and the Ministry for State President, and in particular the offices of District Commissioners countrywide.
30. As I conclude, I anticipate productive dialogue to ensue among all participants over the next two days. It is my aspiration that these deliberations will offer clear guidance for the Government's development programmes and initiatives. Your constructive engagement will enrich our country's development agenda.
31. To our esteemed guests, attendees, ladies, and gentlemen, it is my great pleasure that I formally inaugurate the dissemination of the 2022 Population and Housing Census Results.

PULA!!!



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