



**WELCOME REMARKS**

**2021 POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS**

**STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP ON CENSUS TOPICS**

**VENUE:** Ba Isago Convention Centre

**GABORONE**

Burton S. Mguni

**Statistician General**

*10<sup>TH</sup> July 2019*

Director of Ceremonies,  
Permanent Secretaries here present,  
Chief Executives of parastatal organizations,  
Chief Executives and Representatives of Development Partners,  
Directors and Representatives of Ministries and Departments,  
Various Specialists,  
Distinguished guests,  
Members of the Fourth Estate,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning,

1. On behalf of all at Statistics Botswana (SB), and indeed also on my own behalf, I wish to take this moment to welcome all of you to this important workshop, the objective of which is to review and agree on the 2021 Population and Housing Census (PHC) Topics.
2. It is gratifying and reassuring to see many of you here this morning. This confirms that you are not only stakeholders and partners but also members of the national statistical family who are always ready and available to make inputs into the national statistical program.
3. As all of you would know, Statistics Botswana (SB) is charged with responsibilities of collecting and disseminating all official statistics in Botswana. The importance of official statistics bearing the traits of

relevance, accuracy, reliability and timeliness is a culmination of vital processes and procedures that derive from the quest to employ scientific methods in producing information to promote and fasten decision making. Official statistics are used to guide development such as, formulation of policies and programs, monitoring and evaluation, as well as for evaluating the country's economic growth, thereby, enabling Botswana to continue in its trajectory of evidence based decision making.

4. Just like its predecessor, the Central Statistics Office, Statistics Botswana (SB) is mandated to conduct decennial population and housing censuses. The Census Act of 1904 and the Statistics Act of 2009 are the legal instruments that provide for census to be conducted. There is also a provision in the Constitution of Botswana relating to the conduct of censuses. The relevant sections of the Constitution in Clauses 64(2)b and 65(1-3).

#### **Director of Ceremonies**

5. I wish to take a moment to say what a census is, and uses of census data, in order to put everyone in the same level. A population and housing census is defined as the total process of collecting, compiling, evaluating, analyzing, publishing and disseminating socio-economic and demographic data pertaining to all persons in a country, and housing characteristics in a country at a specified time. To this end, census data is the primary source of basic statistics on the size, distribution, composition, migration, fertility, mortality,

and other socio-economic and demographic characteristics of a population. It provides universal baseline information for evidence-based decision-making, vis. planning, policy and program formulation, as well as, monitoring and evaluation of Government policies and programs that aim to improving the living standards of the people. For this reason therefore, a census is a vitally important undertaking and also a rewarding exercise.

6. In conducting a census, SB always consults the users and producers of statistics about possible topics for inclusion in this national exercise. Such consultations have proved to an efficient and transparent way of determining the demand for census topics that are required to provide information used in achieving national development goals as encapsulated in the national development frameworks, such as; NDP11 and Vision2036, as well as, regional and international agendas such as Africa Agenda 2063 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
7. Our gathering here today, is one of the processes by which Statistics Botswana consults its stakeholders about census topics to be considered in the forthcoming 2021 Population and Housing Census (PHC). Most of you, if not all, will remember that we conducted the last census in 2011. The frequency of carrying out a population and housing census once in a decade became accepted practice, and thenceforth was set as standard by the UN Statistics Division.

There are however, in Africa still some countries that are not able to conduct censuses every 10 years because of resource constraints or unstable political climate. We are very happy that this failure has never happened in Botswana.

8. Since independence in 1966, Botswana has successfully conducted five (5) censuses (1971, 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011). Therefore, the 2021 Census will be the sixth in series. The Government of Botswana has consistently funded population censuses since the post-independence census of 1971. This is a commendable commitment and it shows the importance that the Government of Botswana attaches to censuses, as the sole provider of baseline data for further statistical inquiries and research, as well as, providing information that enables sustainable production of quality official statistics for evidence-based decision-making.
9. The census topics which are going to be discussed in this workshop, shall feed into the process of questionnaire development. Indicators for national, regional and international development agendas provide a basis for inclusion of new topics or expansion of some of the topics that are already in the list. Following this workshop and the final agreement on the draft list of topics for the 2021 Population and Housing Census, the topics will accordingly undergo the approval processes by the Government.

10. It is important to mention at this juncture, that census being a large scale national exercise that covers all sectors, it follows that the exercise collects information on many topics. As such, it provides baseline data with limited in-depth inquiry. Many of the salient features and emerging developmental issues are followed up through the Statistics Botswana's inter-censal program of household surveys and research undertakings by different institutions and individuals. Such surveys and researches provide a platform for further and deeper inquiries on issues arising from the census data.

**Ladies and gentlemen**

11. The global trend in conducting statistical inquiries is to utilise technological advancements to enhance the quality of data and the speed towards disseminating the results. To this end, Botswana is not lagging behind and for the 2021 Census, Statistics Botswana is already in the right gear we are currently in the field utilizing the Smart Client software for cartographic mapping and the preparations to use Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) for enumeration are ongoing. The cartographical technological processes involve collection of dwelling unit's coordinates and creating digitized spatial information. The CAPI enumeration on the other hand, involves enumeration using handheld devices such as tablets or smart phones and sending data electronically from the field to a server in the headquarters. The CAPI method of enumeration combines data collection, entry, editing and coding; all done simultaneously during the fieldwork. By the end of the

fieldwork, the data would be about 80% clean. This improves efficiency and data quality, as such, as I have already said lead release of the main census results more expeditiously.

### **Director of Ceremonies**

12. At this juncture please allow me to acknowledge the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) for its long term and unbending determination to support census taking in Botswana. I wish to mention that while we have just started preparations for the 2021 Census, UNFPA is already dispensing its support in various ways, among which is, capacity building through targeted trainings and sponsoring attendance of relevant workshops and seminars.
13. On this note, I wish to register my sincere appreciation once more for your attending this consultative workshop. I look forward to your participation and contributions to the 2021 Census topics.
14. Finally, I pronounce this workshop officially opened. I wish you all successful deliberations and I am confident that you will enjoy your moment in the workshop.

**I thank you all.**