

WELCOME REMARKS BY DEPUTY STATISTICIAN GENERAL
ON THE OCCASION OF THE BOTSWANA DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY
DISSEMINATION SEMINAR

AVANI HOTEL – 19TH DECEMBER 2018

- The Statistician General Dr Burton Mguni
- **Senior Government Officials**
- **Heads of parastatal Organisations**
- Representatives from the private sector
- Representatives of Development Partners
- Heads of departments, Statistics and Demography in UB
- Representatives from various Ministries
- Members of Botswana Demographic Survey Technical Working Group
- Staff of Statistics Botswana
- Members of the Media

- Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning

1. It is my great pleasure to welcome you here to this seminar on the dissemination the Botswana Demographic Survey 2017 results. This forum comes at an opportune time when the global agenda depicts data availability as a resource, hence the renowned slogan *Open Data, Open Knowledge, and Open Solutions*. The ongoing data revolution, meanwhile, provides societies with the potential to leverage

new data sources and better tools for data production and utilization, offering opportunities for broader application of data necessary for stronger evidence-based decision-making. This forum is meant to share our national and official statistics on the Demographic Survey and as we interact our hope that this event will contribute towards building closer working relationships with data users.

Director of Ceremony

2. The seminar is a historic one as we celebrate a milestone in closing the population data gap. It provide us with an opportunity to forge ahead in ensuring that the country's development is responsive to the dynamic characteristics of the population. Since then, and especially since the sustainable development agenda, there has been greater awareness of the importance of statistical information for planning, implementing and evaluating development programs. This survey results play a pivotal role in evidence based decision making. The generation of relevant, accurate and timely statistics ensures efficient management of economic, social and political governance of a country.
3. The Botswana Demographic Survey represents the principal source of comprehensive statistical information as a bridge between the conduct of Population and Housing Censuses. Data on population is updated, thereby providing a wealth of information on the number of persons and households together with a wide range of their demographic, social and economic characteristics, and also on their living

arrangements. Data and statistics are at the centre of the full implementation and review of the national agendas – the vision and NDP. The need for data and statistics is widely recognized by decision makers in their requests for new and better data to ensure evidence based decisions. The time is now and mature for making lasting changes in improving the national statistical system. The demand for development data has never been higher.

4. Given the value of demographic data is an indispensable basis for effective development planning and programme monitoring, conducting such a survey is therefore a national investment. I understand that once again, a significant number of key stakeholder organisations are represented here today by their experts making this dissemination truly national forum on official statistics. I know that Statistics Botswana has gained over the years through its hard work considerable professional credibility and is recognized as the leading body of the national statistical system. To retain this lead position, Statistics Botswana must, however, remain relevant. In other words, we need to be responsive to the national and global policy issues, and at the same time nurture the community of official statistics.
5. The recent summit on the 2018 World Data Forum held in Dubai is a reminder of why good and quality statistics are needed. The Forum was hosted with support from the Statistics Division of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, under the guidance of the

United Nations Statistical Commission and the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Dubai declaration resolved to ensure that quality, relevant, timely, open and disaggregated data are made available and accessible to all users; and to Undertake key actions under the six strategic areas of i) New approaches to capacity development for better data ii) Innovations and synergies across data ecosystems iii) Leaving no one behind iv) Understanding the world through data v) Building trust in data and statistics and vi) How far have we come?

Distinguished delegates

6. For Statistics Botswana this occasion provides an opportunity to reflect on what we have achieved and what still needs to be done. It is worth noting that we are fortunate, and we are grateful that our statistical outputs in the form of sources and methods, principles and recommendations and methodological guidelines follow international standards and guidelines that we find very relevant in our work.

7. In 2012, six years ago SB was established. It is our sincere wish that the importance of good statistics be widely recognized. The importance of investing in statistical capacity is now accepted by policy makers, and the place of statistics at the core of the results agenda is well established. Much more, however, remains to be done. We need to

widen and to deepen our databases to address new and emerging development issues. And we need to increase our efforts to improve the statistical capacity in the different sectors. Above all else, though, we must ensure that the statistics are used by policy makers and politicians, and also by entrepreneurs and investors, by local development workers, and by citizens themselves. New technologies such as the internet, mobile telephones, and social networks create opportunities for unlocking the power of our data and translating statistics into knowledge and action.

8. The World Bank took an important step toward unlocking the power of data through the Open Data initiative. They did offer technical support to the Botswana Demographic survey, the results of which are disseminated today. We have to recognize that different users of our statistics have different needs and different capacities both to access information and to employ them. Our current tools and ways of disseminating data serve existing users well – and they will continue to improve with advancing technology – but we must still reach out to new users.

9. As the Open Data Initiative is rolled out and as more data become available, we must make sure that we maintain the trust of users in our data. High standards, professionalism, being open with the data, therefore, we must ensure that we are also open and transparent about the methods and procedures that have been used to generate

them. It is obvious, that the contribution of your professional community is crucial in this context. An informed policy debate can only take place if it is supported by timely, consistent and relevant data at all levels.

10. Lastly, as Statistics Botswana we would like to call for recognition of the commitment made in this deliverable by the development partners, key stakeholders such as the University of Botswana and government departments in statistical support and capacity building.
11. It is now my sincere honour to welcome you all to the seminar on the dissemination of the 2017 Botswana Demographic Survey results.

Thank you and a Merry Christmas to you all.