

MEDIA RELEASE

(Update on 2021 Population & Housing Census)

26 JANUARY 2022

For immediate release

UPDATE ON 2021 POPULATION & HOUSING CENSUS

1. The Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) is hereby updating the nation on the 2021 Population and Housing census. The 2021 Census had been postponed last year and is currently planned for this year in August 2022. The postponement was mainly due to competing priorities such as the COVID-19 budget prioritization.
2. Section 7 (2)(d) of the Namibia Statistics Act prescribes that the Agency must cause a population and housing census to be taken every 10 years on a date determined by the Minister by notice in the Gazette, unless the Minister, on the advice of the Statistician-General and by notice in the Gazette, determines otherwise.
3. A census is conducted every ten years and is essentially just the total process of collecting, processing, analysing, publishing and disseminating of demographic, socio-economic as well as spatial data of the population during a specific period of time. Essentially it provides information on how many people are in the country, their characteristics (who they are) and where they live. The census is the only data source that provides information at the smallest geographic areas and for small population groups.
4. To be specific, the main objective of a population and housing census is to provide information on population and housing characteristics of the country in order to guide development planning, decision making as well as to monitor and evaluate developmental progress. The population and housing census is also used to develop a sampling frame for conducting relevant and representative socio-economic surveys between censuses as well as to provide data for the Delimitation Commission. A census helps communities get its fair share for schools, hospitals, roads, and public works as it helps the government to decide how to distribute funds and allocate resources across the society.

5. The major output of a census are its Census Dataset, Thematic reports, Population Projections, National Sampling Frame (Master Sampling Frame), a National Dwelling Unit Frame (National Housing Database), a Statistics Business Register frame, Digital Maps (Admin maps and EAs) as well as a Census Atlas. Other derivatives from the census are the subject specific thematic reports such as the Population Projections, Regional Profiles, Fertility Report as well as Mortality and Migration Reports.
6. A census is implemented in three main phases namely the Pre-census activities (2017-2021), Census enumeration (2022) and then the Post-census activities (2022-2025). The Pre-census activities include planning, Census mapping, questionnaire design and testing, as well as the carrying out of the Pilot census and Pilot Post-enumeration survey. The Main census consists of the Main enumeration and the Post-enumeration survey. On the other hand, the Post-census activities include data processing, analysis, report writing and disseminations.
7. At this stage, the NSA has completed the Census Mapping, Pilot Census as well as the Pilot Post-enumeration Survey. The NSA had recruited 517 unemployed young people to visit and verify 955 037 built-up structures countrywide during the Census Mapping project at a cost of about N\$ 101 million. NSA also recruited around 266 young unemployed people to conduct the pilot census as well as the Pilot Post-enumeration survey. In total NSA has spent around N\$ 137 Million to complete the Pre census activities. The census pre activities were conducted in line with Covid-19 protocols and requirements.
8. In August 2022 Namibia will conduct the second-phase of the Population and Housing census, namely the census enumeration and post enumeration survey. This literally means that NSA enumerators will visit each and every household in Namibia, during a two week period, in order to count and collect demographic and social statistics information. Section 44(1) of the Statistics Act prohibits the disclosure of information to third parties as well as to unauthorised persons to ensure confidentiality; therefore all our field enumerators and all census personnel, including NSA permanent staff, sign an Oath of secrecy when they are employed as NSA staff. The information collected is anonymised and processed in order to be in line with the provisions of the Statistics Act in terms of adhering to confidentiality.

9. The original census budget estimates for the complete phases which spans from 2017-2025 was estimated to be in the region of N\$ 1.1 Billion. In line with Government budget processes, the census budget has been revised during every Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) period. During budget revisions, cost effective ways of undertaking a national census were considered thus including collaborations with other Government institutions where possible.
10. In terms of the initial budget of N\$ 1.1 Billion, for the Financial Year 2017-2021 the Pre-census activities were estimated at N\$ 159 million for activities such as the development of the census questionnaire, development of the census electronic tool (Computer Aided Personal Interviewer or CAPI application), acquiring of census equipment, Census mapping project, procurement of satellite images for the mapping project, development of the Mapping data collection tool, census mapping data collection from every structure that exist in the entire country, Pilot Census and Post-enumeration Survey data collection from sampled households, data processing and development of data cleaning tools, Pilot data analysis, the remuneration of field staff and technical staff, transport of field staff and international experts, Census consultations with all stakeholders in the country.
11. For the Financial Year of 2022-2023, the main enumeration was initially estimated to cost NSA an amount of N\$ 950 million, where over 11 500 staff will be recruited, over 2 400 vehicles to be hired, and 11 500 tablets to be purchased for the use of data collection during the Census.
12. Although the Main enumeration (during 2022-2023) was estimated to be N\$950 million, NSA was able to adopt measures that will further reduce this budget amount to about N\$606 million. Currently indications are that the NSA will be allocated about N\$500 million to the Main enumeration phase for the 2022-2023 Financial Year.
13. For the Post-Census phase in the Financial Year 2023-2025 the budget is slightly above N\$ 12 million which is allocated to Census data cleaning, processing, main report and thematic reports production.

14. To date the NSA has received total funding of N\$ 209.7 million (N\$ 179.4 million from Government via National Planning Commission (NPC) and N\$ 30.3 million from other Government institutions) towards the census over two financial years covering Pre-enumeration activities. To date NSA spent about N\$ 137 million on Pre-enumeration activities. The Development budget ceiling to carry out the Main census in 2022-2023 Financial Year as communicated by the National Planning Commission currently stands at N\$ 500 million, reduced from N\$ 606,9 million as earlier communicated in the previous Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), which represents 18% reduction in the Development budget. The N\$ 500 million will cover the Main Census enumeration and the largest allocation is towards the required workforce and transportation. The budget ceiling for Post enumeration activities planned for 2023-2024 stands at N\$ 2 million.
15. In order to make up for the shortfall, the NSA held a resource mobilisation conference in February 2021 and received pledges worth over N\$ 40 million in both cash and in kind from various Government Offices, Ministries and Agencies as well as the Private sector. The N\$ 30 million cash contribution was mostly earmark for the production of National housing database and the acquisition of the Government wide satellite images license to support census mapping data collection while the majority of the in-kind pledges was towards venues, staff, internet services and a few Government vehicles. The high resolution satellite images required to generate excellent maps to guide field enumeration have already been acquired through a national Government-wide use license at a much lower cost than originally budgeted.
16. Namibia will for the first time conduct a spatially-enabled and digital census enumeration. The NSA will be recruiting around 11 500 unemployed persons, train and equip them with the knowledge and ability to undertake a census statistical collection. The resources that will be required, and the main costs drivers for this massive exercise, include field staff remuneration, computers for data analysis, vehicles use acquisitions, fuel and insurance costs, field personnel uniforms, data encryption software, hiring of training venues and catering, as well as publicity or advocacy costs. Resources will also be needed for health, safety and security of the field staff and assets especially given that we are faced with the COVID-19 pandemic.

17. It is our wish that through Government and private sector support, NSA will be able to further reduce the cost of the census significantly if many of these services and facilities are provided to the NSA. What we mean when we say the Census is a national project, all stakeholders will benefit from the data that will be collected from the Census in the sense that Government will be able to plan better and private sector will also benefit by having the characteristics of the market they serve.
18. In efforts to further cut costs, the NSA is in the process, through a South-South cooperation, to negotiate with the Kenyan National Bureau of Statistics to make use of their 12 000 electronic tablets and their accessories. These tablets will go through the entire process of data security upon receipt and return. The Statistics Act requires data confidentiality and complying with this is the absolute core of the Namibia Statistics Agency.
19. Statistics Agencies assisting each other is nothing new as the Central Statistical Agency (CSA) of Ethiopia requested technical assistance from NSA to lend to them a total of 220 Personal Digital Assistants (PDA's) Juno SB devices for use in their Census Mapping pilot and the Main project in preparation for Ethiopia's 4th national population and housing census in 2017. NSA had also availed two Geo-Information System (GIS) experts from its Division of Spatial Data and National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) Coordination to train the Ethiopian CSA staff on census mapping using the devices during a 10 day pilot project. To that effect, a memorandum of understanding was signed between Ethiopia CSA and the NSA on the 4th of June 2015.
20. Due to the magnitude and the cost involved in this national project, the Census, it is only fair to explain why the NSA conducts a head count, amongst others, to arrive at our population total count. The databases available in the country to where the NSA could obtain administrative records is rather not sufficient. Namibia is not at the stage of using administrative data for census as Namibia still do not have a mandatory National Address system where everyone can be linked to an address. Namibia's population database (or Population Register) is still under construction and NSA is hence left with no choice but to conduct a head count in the context of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB). The population and housing census also does not only count people but collects more than 80

variables (on socio-economic factors) that are necessary in all the spheres of national planning.

21. Enumerators and infrastructure which will be deployed will be sourced locally. The Census will require personnel from each community, no matter how remote they are.
22. The economic empowerment gains of the census are not limited to the census period as they boost the income of thousands of households and local service providers. The huge logistics required, can mobilise many men and women into action. Beyond these economic gains, the nation stands to derive enduring capacity building benefits for future surveys and censuses. Yes, we agree statistics collection is an expensive exercise especially primary data collection, but imagine how much more expensive it would be to plan without statistics. We shall endeavour to further cut costs where possible and to ensure that the NSA effectively and efficiently run a modern digital census which is a first for Namibia.
23. It goes without saying that the NSA truly appreciates the assistance rendered by all households in Namibia for our past surveys, censuses and mapping exercises. It is only through the cooperation of our fellow Namibian citizens that we are able to collect data and provide statistics for national development.
24. The NSA therefore would like to say: Thank You to the Namibian nation for availing yourselves to our enumerators in the past and kindly urge you **TO DO YOUR PART AND BE COUNTED WHEN THE POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS COMMENCES IN AUGUST 2022.**

I thank you.



ALEX SHIMUAFENI

STATISTICIAN - GENERAL & CEO

About Us

Namibia Statistics Agency is mandated with collecting, producing, analyzing and disseminating official statistics. Find us at www.nsa.org.na

Issued by:

lipumbu Sakaria

Manager: Corporate Communications

Namibia Statistics Agency

Post Street Mall

P O Box 2133

Windhoek

Tel: +264 061 431 3200

Fax: + 264 061 431 3253

Email: isakaria@nsa.org.na

info@nsa.org