



# NBS NEWSLETTER

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**NBS: "A ONE-STOP CENTRE FOR OFFICIAL STATISTICS IN TANZANIA."**



# Editorial Board



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**Statistician General**

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# Impact of coronavirus on Production of Statistics:



*The Statistician General Dr. Albina Chuwa addresses participants during one of Statistical forum held at Takwimu House NBS Conference Hall in Dodoma (Picture from NBS File).*

*The world is grappling with the impact of corona virus pandemic which has caused devastating effects on the humankind and activities, statistics operations are no except. In this interview, Statistician General Dr. Albina Chuwa discusses various issues from the impacts of the pandemic to measures taken by the national statistics office to mitigate those impacts.*

***Q: Measures taken by governments to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus--***

***have impacted all sectors including production of official statistics. Can you tell us how much this crisis impacted National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) ability to produce and publish official statistics?***

**A:** Due to the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Tanzania like many other governments around the globe has taken measures to contain spread of the disease caused by coronavirus. Some of the measures are: closing--

schools; introducing a fourteen-day mandatory quarantine for international arrivals; restrictions on international travels; encouraging the practice of social and physical distancing; and restrictions of non-essential movements of people and public gatherings.

These restrictions have had impact on the normal conduct of statistical operations, particularly activities which require gatherings such as--

training of enumerators and supervisors for surveys and censuses, technical groups working sessions and face-to-face interviews as a method of data collection. Moreover, expected non-responses and missing cases in surveys as a result of the restrictions may result into more complex analysis techniques. In addition, data collection methods and means of dissemination of statistical results will need to be adapted, as safety and health of our stakeholders are of paramount importance.

*Q: Which necessary measures has NBS been taking to minimise/limit as much as possible the impact of COVID-19 on its activities on the long term?*

A: NBS, like many other National Statistical Offices around the world, has developed short-term and long-term strategies to minimize impacts of COVID-19 on statistical operations. However, it should be noted that, diversity of statistical operations entails the use of different methods and techniques in all stages of production cycles. For instance, approaches which could be used in production of routine statistics are different from those for conducting surveys and censuses. Therefore, in order to ensure continuity of statistical operations, NBS has opted to leverage--

on technology and prioritise activities outlined in the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework for Financial Year 2020/21.

*Short-term measures to minimise impacts of COVID-19 pandemic and ensure continuity of statistical operations include: -*

- ✓ Establishing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between NBS and Data Producers to facilitate smooth data sharing protocols, including agreed timelines, frequency, formats, coverage, level of disaggregation and other data quality criteria;
- ✓ Use of online or electronic questionnaires;
- ✓ Use of Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI);
- ✓ Use of online meeting platforms such as WebEx, MS Teams and Skype;
- ✓ Use of mailed questionnaire method for data collection;
- ✓ Implementing data modelling techniques;
- ✓ Strengthening collaboration with stakeholders such as the private sector and higher learning institutions which will provide data solutions such as data modelling, and data sharing mechanisms; and
- ✓ Focusing on production of key economic, social and environmental statistics and indicators which can quickly inform policy making on progress of implementation of different development programmes.

*The long-term strategies include: -*

- ✓ Strengthening the Electronic Population Registration System (ePRS);
- ✓ Strengthen the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS);
- ✓ Strengthening compilation of administrative data;
- ✓ Continuing with the use of Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) whenever possible; and
- ✓ Continuing conducting and holding meetings online.

***Q: Which official statistics have been or are likely to be mostly affected by this crisis?***

A: The extent of impacts of COVID-19 on statistical operations may differ depending on type of statistics, methodologies and means of dissemination and communication of the statistical results. Surveys and censuses activities could be most affected because methodologies used require gatherings during both training and data collection.

***Q: Under present circumstances, don't you think it is wise for NBS to set clear priorities and concentrate the resources available on the timely provision of statistics that reflect short-term economic activities?***

A: NBS has opted to leverage on the use technology and prioritise on activities outlined in Medium Term Expenditure Framework for Financial Year 2020/21 to ensure that, statistical operations continue. NBS has also--

managed to put in place proper measures at every stage of Statistics Business Processing Model to ensure the produced statistics meet the required quality.

***Q: If the situation remains the same for months, do you think the statistical releases will be published as planned?***

A: NBS has developed short and long-term strategies to ensure continuity of statistical activities. These strategies will remain in place for the whole period we strive to contain the spread the pandemic. However, there could be some changes on a number of statistical releases. This will depend on time implications of adaptive measures implemented to respond to COVID-19.

***Q: On staff safety. Which measures are being taken by the NBS management to protect staff members from coronavirus and maintain production of statistics in important domains?***

***A: NBS has taken--***

***several precautions to protect members of staff from COVID-19 including the following: -***

- ✓ Suspend all trainings and workshops which were in progress;
- ✓ Raising awareness through emails and NBS website on self-protection measures recommended by health authorities;
- ✓ Putting in place hand washing and sanitizer facilities for staff;
- ✓ Testing body temperature for staff and visitors visiting NBS Offices at the main entrance;
- ✓ Practising social and physical distancing by rearranging sitting plans in all offices; and,
- ✓ Introducing staff shifts to some of the sections which are congested.

***Q: Any word to NBS stakeholders?***

COVID-19 is real, let us continue to work hard while duly observing the recommendations and preventative measures against infections as articulated by WHO.

## Census Geographical Work on Track, NBS confirms

Preparation of the 2022 Population and Housing Census (2022 PHC) is on the right track, says Statistician General Dr. Albina Chuwa.

She made those remarks during a meeting with the cartographic team which is in Chemba District implementing the 2022 PHC geographical work.

In a meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> April, 2020 at Chemba District Commissioner's office, Dr. Chuwa reminded the team about the importance of working according to the programme as already the outbreak of coronavirus seemed to somehow interfere with some of the census' activities.

Statistician General emphasised to the team to ensure, while on duty as well as on their personal undertakings, they observe and adhere to health measures as directed by health authorities regarding safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Whilst we are performing our duties, we should be aware of the pandemic hence we need to take extra care by thoroughly observing health guidelines and other directives from relevant health authorities,” she emphasised.

She added that the team should work closely with Chemba District leadership to keep themselves--

abreast with COVID-19 developments as the former receives daily updates from the higher authorities.

The Statistician General informed the team, which comprised of members from NBS and OCGS Geographical Information System (GIS) units and officers from other government institutions that she was satisfied with the work so far covered in the district and expressed her optimism that it would be completed according to the schedule.

Benedict Mugambi, the team leader and head of Geographical Information System (GIS) Unit, told *NBS Newsletter* that the team was reviewing and--

and updating the 2012 PHC geographic census frame to be used in the implementation of 2022 PHC.

“What we are really doing here and other districts is to update the 2012 PHC frame including improving Enumeration Areas boundaries based on prominent features and socio-economic facilities to avail it for 2022 PHC implementation,” Mugambi explained.

He added that with updated census's framework, enumerator's work will be friendlier as the Enumerated Areas (EAs) will contain various key spatial information which will assist him or her to easily identify it.



*Statistician General Dr. Albina Chuwa (right seated) in a meeting with GIS team held at Chemba District commissioner's office when she visited the team early in April to discuss progress of the on-going census cartographic work in the district. On her left is NBS head of GIS unit Benedict Mugambi.*

## NBS Governing Board Approves NBS Annual Budget and Adopts Institution's COVID-19 Intervention Programme



***NBS Governing Board Chairperson Dr. Amina Msengwa (centre) in a file photo with Board members. From left to right Edward Furaha, Statistician General Dr. Albina Chuwa, Dr. Said Gharib Bilal, Dr. Frank Mkumbo, Mr. Yudica Saruni and Zanzibar Chief Government Statistician Ms. Mayasa Mahfoudh.***

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) Governing Board has approved bureau's annual budget for the year 2020/2021 and also adopted COVID-19 intervention programme for the national statistics body.

In its extraordinary session, under its Chairperson Dr. Amina Msengwa, the board discussed and endorsed NBS COVID-19 intervention programme to mitigate impacts of the pandemic as far as the institution's statistical operations are concerned.

"It was an extraordinary session convened to discuss two urgent matters; our Medium-Term Expenditure Framework for financial year 2020/21 and impacts of COVID-19 pandemic and how we, as an institution, can address it without affecting our statistical operations," Statistician General Dr. Albina Chuwa told *NBS Newsletter*.

On measures to mitigate effects of novel coronavirus, Dr. Chuwa said the intervention programme contains a number of initiatives and measures to be taken to ensure routine statistics operation

are implemented as usual while staff safety remains a priority during such operations.

She mentioned routine or core statistics operations as those which include Monthly Consumer Price Index (CPI), Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Quarterly Industrial Statistics, Trade, Transport and Tourism Statistics for financial year 2020/21.

Others are Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS), Tanzania--

Tanzania National Panel Survey (TNPS), Integrated Labour Force Survey (ILFS), and National Sample Census of Agriculture (NSCA).

Statistician General mentioned that measures adopted by the board include mailing questionnaires to respondents, use of online and electronic questionnaires, Computer Assisted Telephone Interview as well as conducting online meetings through video conferencing, Skype and webex.

Other proposed measures and strategies will involve strengthening and use of administrative data, the use and implementation of data modelling techniques and also reduction of sample size.

The programme emphasizes and calls for closer collaboration with other stakeholders, particularly from private sector and higher learning institutions by providing data solutions such as data modelling and other data sharing mechanisms.

Dr. Chuwa told *NBS Newsletter* that while NBS is implementing these measures in the short-term, the bureau is planning long-term measures for Household Budget Surveys and strengthening electronic population registration systems (ePRS) and The Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS).

Like other countries, Tanzania has taken a number of measures to prevent and contain spread of the coronavirus including closing schools, introducing fourteen-day mandatory--

quarantine for international arrivals, restricting international travels, social and physical distancing, restrictions for non-essential movements and public gatherings within the country.

The first COVID-19 case was recorded in mid-March, 2020 and by the end of April, Tanzania had recorded 480 cases among them 167 have recovered while 16 deaths were recorded.



***NBS Governing Board Chairperson Dr. Amina Msengwa and Statistician Dr. Albina Chuwa share a light moment with NBS Senior Publicity Officer Said Ameir (left) at the end of one of the Board meetings. Far right is board member Mr. Edward Furaha. (File photo)***



# April Inflation Rate Slightly Down

The inflation rate for April, 2020 has dropped to 3.3 percent from 3.4 percent recorded in March, 2020.

The decrease of the inflation rate explains that, the speed of price change for commodities in April, 2020 has decreased compared to the speed of price change recorded in March, 2020.

Addressing reporters in Dodoma, acting Director of Population Census and Social Statistics, Ms. Ruth Minja, said, although the inflation rate dropped by 0.1 percent in April, 2020 but the index climbed due to rise of price of some food items and non-food items.

She said the overall index increased to 120.67 in April, 2020 from 120.20 recorded a month earlier.

Some food items that contributed to such increase were fish which increased by 1.4 percent, limes by 5.7 percent, garlic by 3.4 percent, peas by 4.0 percent, potatoes by 4.9 percent and cassava by 5.9 percent.



**Members of the Press at Takwimu House conference hall listening to Acting Director of Population Census and Social Statistics Ms. Ruth Minja (not in the picture) during release of the April Consumer Price Index**

On the other hand, some non-food items that contributed to such increase were garments for women (*kitenge*) rising by 1.5 percent, sewing machines up by 2.3 percent, and charcoal that climbed by 1.6 percent.

Food and non-alcoholic beverages inflation rate for April, 2020 decreased to 4.6 percent from 5.3 percent recorded a month earlier. The inflation rate for food consumed at home and away from home in

April, 2020 also decreased to 5.2 percent from 5.9 percent recorded in March, 2020.

The 12-month index change for non-food products in April, 2020 has increased to 2.5 percent from 2.2 percent recorded in March, 2020 while the inflation rate which excludes food and energy has stagnated at 2.1 percent as it was recorded in March, 2020.

# NBS PICTORIAL NEWS



*Acting Director of Population Census and Social Statistics Ms. Ruth Minja during release of the April Consumer Price Index held at Takwimu House in Dodoma.*



*NBS cartographer Jerve Gasto updating spatial information of Chamwino village when NBS GIS team visited the village to cross check new developments in the village. Looking at him is Chamwino Village Executive officer Abdalla Juma Said.*

# NBS PICTORIAL NEWS



*Statistician General Dr. Albina Chuwa (right seated) in a meeting with GIS team held at Chemba District commissioner's office when she visited the team early in April to discuss progress of the on-going census cartographic work in the district. On her left is NBS head of GIS unit Benedict Mugambi.*



*Chamwino Village Executive officer Abdalla Juma Said shows to NBS staff boundaries of the village when the team went to cross-check new developments at the area. From left is, cartographer, Jerve Gasto, Senior Publicity officer Said Ameir and Emmanuel Mahemba who is also a cartographer.*

National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)

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