

**Media statement
For Immediate Release**

Census preparations on-going but delayed

LUSAKA, Monday, 17th August, 2020. The Ministry of National Development Planning wishes to inform members of the public and various stakeholders that the Zambia Statistics Agency (ZamStats) is in the final stage of concluding the mapping data collection in the last remaining provinces, namely Central, Muchinga, Northern and Southern, as part of the activities preceding the main Census 2020.

Minister of National Development Planning Hon. Alexander Chiteme, MP, has however clarified that these pre-census activities started a bit late and had to be delayed partly because of the gassing incidents that affected some parts of the country and the breakout of the novel corona virus (COVID-19) pandemic. This meant that a number of planned activities had to be postponed or delayed and these have affected the start of the main 2020 Census.

“The Government of the Republic of Zambia is committed to ensure that we conduct a successful census that conforms to international standards and which will inform our country’s development trajectory among many other undertakings that depend on statistics, is unwavering,” Hon. Chiteme assured. “However, it is also true the that current environment heavily impacted by the novel corona virus COVID-19 pandemic has raised a fundamental question on whether or not it would be safer to conduct the 2020 Census in such atmosphere. It is important for the public and the various stakeholders to understand that the safety of the staff that will be involved in the 2020 Census of population and housing is made paramount and above everything else.”

The recent upsurge in COVID-19 cases in the country raises concerns with regard to the safety of staff, including enumerators. In this regard the Ministry of National Development Planning, as the parent ministry of the Zambia Statistics Agency, is enhancing its engagement with the relevant authorities including the Ministry of Health for guidance on how best to proceed with the 2020 Census. The general public will be kept informed on the outcomes of the consultations in due course.

Issued by

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