

RELEASE OF POPULATION PROJECTIONS STATEMENT BY DR. JOHN STEYTLER STATISTICIAN-GENERAL

Windhoek – 2 October, 2014 – Release of Namibia Population Projections

Information about the future population is important for objective and realistic development plans and decision making by the Government and Private Sector. The size of the future population is useful for the estimation of the future demand for food, housing and social services. For example:

- Education authorities may want to know the number of children in the coming years in order to assess the future demand for education, particularly at primary level.
- Health administrators maybe interested in knowing the future population of children under the age of five for the delivery of immunization services to protect children against childhood diseases.
- Private companies and investors are interested in future age structures as an indicator of consumption patterns.

Today we are releasing population projections for a period of 30 years, 2011 to 2041. At the outset, it should be noted that nobody can predict with certainty the future population of a country. Hence population projections are made on the basis of assumptions relating to the future behavior of the levels of fertility, mortality and migration. These are the most important factors that affect population change.

Our projections show that in a most like scenario the population of Namibia will increase from a census count of 2.1 million in 2011 to 3.4 million by 2041; an increase of 63 percent. In a lower case scenario the population will increase to 3.3 million, while in a higher case scenario, could reach 3.6 million. During the period 2015 to 2030, the population is projected to grow from 2.3 to 3.0 million, or by 30 percent. In other words, over the next 15 years the Namibian population will increase by 700 thousand.

In the case of the Khomas region, where this press conference is hosted, the population will increase from 340 thousand at the census count in 2011 to 645 thousand by 2030 that is an increase of 304 thousand. We also know that the bulk of the population of the Khomas region stays in Windhoek.

The policy implications are obvious. But let me highlight three in the form of questions:

- Where will everybody stay and what will be the implications for housing delivery and house prices;
- How will the existing physical and social infrastructure of Windhoek cope with the higher population; and
- What will the loss of productivity due to traffic congestion be?

It is assumed that recent patterns of migration will continue into the future, hence the number of people living in rural areas are expected to shrink gradually, while those living in urban areas are projected to increase sharply by 2041. The share of the population living in urban areas is projected to increase from 43 percent in 2011 to 67 percent in 2041. It is projected that over a third of Namibia's population will live in the Khomas and Erongo regions by 2041.

Furthermore, due to a projected fertility decline, over the next 15 years, the share of the population under age 15 will decline modestly from 36.4 to 33.7 percent. In contrast, the proportion of the population at age 65 and above is expected to remain fixed at about 4.5 percent. The total fertility rate (expected births per woman) is expected to decline from 3.9 in 2011 to 2.4 by 2041. Life expectancy at birth is projected to rise by 11 years for men and 12 years for women from 2011 to 2041.

In conclusion, I would like to extend my gratitude to our development partners, stakeholders in the Namibia Statistics System and the staff of the NSA for their support and inputs in the population projections. I hope that the findings in this report will be turned into practice, in order to ensure that our national development issues of concern are addressed productively.



JOHN STEYTLER
STATISTICIAN-GENERAL

