



Government of Pakistan
M/o Planning Development & Special Initiatives
Pakistan Bureau of Statistics
21-Mauve Area, G-9/1
Islamabad




No. Census. PD&SI (1)/2020

Islamabad dated 22nd April, 2021

Subject: **MINUTES OF THE SECOND MEETING OF COMMITTEE
CONSTITUTED FOR RECOMMENDATIONS & ADOPTION OF BEST
PRACTICES FOR UPCOMING POPULATION CENSUS**

Kindly find enclosed herewith duly approved minutes by the Chairman of the Committee (Mr. Mohammad Jehanzeb Khan, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission) of the 2nd meeting held on 26th March, 2021 at 10:00 AM in the Committee Room at 1st Floor of M/o PD&SI for information please.


(Muhammad Sarwar Gondal)
Member / Secretary

Distribution: -

1. Mr. Muhammad Ahmad Zubair, Chief Economist
2. Professor Dr. Muhammad Nizamuddin, Independent researcher
3. Dr. G. M. Arif, Independent researcher, Ex Joint Director, PIDE
4. Mr. Usman Jawaid, DG(Operations), NADRA,
5. Dr. Zeba A. Sathar, Demographer, Country Director, Population Council, Islamabad
6. Dr. Syed Muhammad Arif (Retd). Professor, University of Balochistan
7. Dr. Durr-e- Nayab, Demographer, Joint Director / Director Research, PIDE
8. Dr. Ayesha Shiraz, Demographer, Senior Fellow, NIPS
9. Dr. Sanam Wagma Khattak, Demographer, University of Peshawar
10. Khawaja Mazhar Jamal, GIS / Geography specialist

Copy for information to:

- SPS to Deputy Chairman Planning Commission, Islamabad.
- SPS to Secretary, M/o PD&SI, Islamabad.
- SA/JS to Minister, M/o PD&SI, Islamabad.
- Member (Census & Surveys), PBS, Islamabad for appropriate action on the decisions of the meeting.

No. Census.PD&SI(1)/20-
Government of Pakistan
M/o Planning, Development & Special Initiatives
Pakistan Bureau of Statistics
Islamabad

Subject: **MINUTES OF THE SECOND MEETING OF COMMITTEE CONSTITUTED FOR RECOMMENDATIONS & ADOPTION OF BEST PRACTICES FOR UPCOMING POPULATION CENSUS**

In compliance to Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives (PD&SI) Notification No. Census/PD&SI (1)/20 dated 29th December 2020 & 22nd February 2021 regarding constitution of committee for **“Recommendations & Adoption of Best Practices for upcoming Population Census”**, second meeting of the Committee was held under the Chairmanship of Mr. Mohammad Jehanzeb Khan, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission (DCPC), in the Committee Room at 1st floor of Ministry of PD&SI on **26th March, 2021** at 10.00 am. List of participants is at **Annexure A**.

2. Meeting started with the recitation of few verses from the Holy *Quran*. After brief introduction of participants' chair requested Mr. Muhammad Sarwar Gondal, Member (Support Services/ RM), PBS to apprise participants about the progress on the last meetings decisions. Member (SS/RM), PBS informed that there were two main decisions to be implemented regarding TOR 1:

- Committee will be expanded to give broad representation by inclusion of demographers/researchers from provinces /relevant institutions.
- Chief Economist will lead in preparation of key issues / questions raised on Census 2017 with PBS while using the record from, minutes of technical committee meetings of committee constituted for Census 2017, International observers report, PBS own evaluation reports and questions raised by independent researchers through print media/electronic media.

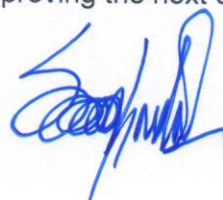
He informed that as per decisions, the committee has been reconstituted with broad representation. Prominent demographers & researchers have been included from relevant institutions / provinces. Notification, accordingly, has been issued on 22 February 2021 with approval of worthy chairman. Further PBS has prepared all material as decided in the last meeting. Five files have been provided to Chief Economist for review and collating. He further informed that today's meeting agenda is to brief all participants on the Census 2017 methodology and the updated status of the Census 2017 results. Further if the Chair permits, issues identified by PBS in accordance of the decision of the first meeting regarding Census -2017 from the available record will be presented.

3. After that, with permission of Chair, Member (SS/RM) gave a detail presentation on the census, methodology, result preparation, approval of results & issues of 5 % validation. He informed the participants that Council of Common Interest (CCI) in its meeting held on 27-05-2018 decided that 5 % validation is not possible at such belated stage. Further as already 24th Constitutional Amendment has been made on basis of the provisional results of census 2017, therefore approval of the final census results may be placed before incoming government, as it may create legal complications. He further informed that case of approval of final results of census 2017 was submitted to the government. Keeping in view the sensitivity of matter, as census results will form basis of future public policy decisions having far reaching ramifications, a Committee of the Cabinet consisting of five members was constituted on 11th February 2020. The Terms of Reference of the Committee were to deliberate and make recommendations for finalization of the results of Census – 2017 for submitting the same to CCI being the competent forum for final decision. The Cabinet Committee held six meetings wherein PBS and other relevant stakeholders presented their point of view. After detail deliberations, the Committee submitted its recommendations on 12th November 2020. The Committee recommended that final results of 2017 be published in the greater national interest. However, it recommended that next census

be conducted as early as possible by adopting best practices including electronic data collection for minimizing the chances of omissions and errors. The report of the Committee was approved by Cabinet in its meeting held on **22nd December 2020** for forwarding it to CCI for final decision. It was informed that next meeting of CCI is scheduled to be held on **7th April 2021**. **"Notification of Census Results"** is on its the agenda.

3. The worthy Chair while initiating the discussion apprised esteemed committee members that the Cabinet Committee recommendations regarding finalization of Census-2017 results is before the CCI for final decision. The CCI will now deliberate and decide regarding the matter. **However, the mandate of this committee is to critically review the whole Census-2017 process including, planning, field operations, data processing, mode of data collection etc. for recommendations for improvement and devising best practices for the next Census.** He was of the view that Population census is crucial national exercise linked with provision of data for key policy making matters regarding development programs, political representation & resource allocation which have far reaching impacts. Being a critical exercise, it will always invite close scrutiny and critique. It is, therefore, duty of the Government to minimize apprehensions by involving all stakeholders, including elected representatives, in the whole process for confidence building and acceptance of results. *He highlighted that it is responsibility of the committee to evaluate the whole documentation and process of Census 2017 in positive spirit by keeping in view the fact that no exercise is 100% accurate / perfect.* This will be helpful in devising the roadmap for bringing transparency & credibility for the next Census. He then opened the floor for discussion and requested the respected members to present their point of view.

- **Dr. Durr-e- Nayab, Demographer, Joint Director PIDE** appreciated the government for taking steps in right direction for devising mechanism for conduct of next census in a transparent manner. **She informed that PIDE, after census 1998, had done extensive critical analysis of the whole questionnaire & data and published special report on every aspect in separate chapters. In the same way thorough data analysis of Census 2017 must be done for data quality which will help in identification of problems in enumeration & process.** She highlighted the fact that the linkage of NFC award with population size is one of the cause of controversies. The formula incentivizes the provinces with higher population growth rate and penalizing the provinces which are controlling the population. This matter may be also being looked upon for minimizing controversies regarding census results.
- **Dr. Muhammad Arif, Retd. Professor University of Balochistan and member Governing Council of PBS** apprised the honorable members that, despite some apprehensions, successful completion of field operations of census 2017 keeping in view the ground situation especially in Balochistan and tribal areas is indeed a huge achievement. He added that during Census 2017, effective field monitoring was not done. Provincial authorities did not use appropriate mechanism for monitoring the coverage & quality of data. He was of view that country is highly politically polarized. Whatever methodology is adopted, it will be criticized, keeping in view the importance of census data for vital decisions **Therefore, there is strong need to work on the reliability and acceptability of results by involving all the relevant stakeholders and adopting comprehensive communication strategy**
- **Dr. Zeba Sathar, Country Director, Population Council, Islamabad** thanked Chairman for inclusion in the very important committee. She was of the view that census is a pivotal national exercise which has long term ramifications on future decision making. Financial constraints should not hamper the conduct of census. **She apprised the committee that Census 2017 can be regarded as 'fairly good'. One of the main apprehensions raised from provinces, however, was regarding transparency of the process. There is thus strong need for adoption of procedures for bringing transparency to whole procedure by effective communication measures for confidence building of all stakeholders.** She appreciated the minutes of last meeting and *strongly support the role of involving of universities, academia, provincial departments and other relevant stakeholders for creating awareness and bridging the communication gap.* She was of view that it is time to move forward for improving the next census by



formulating effective strategies and process after reviewing the whole Census 2017 documentation including PBS evaluation report. She further added that objective of census is to count people (whether national or alien) living in the particular place for policy making. It is not civil registration and, therefore, should not be linked with CNIC.

- **Professor Dr. Muhammad Nizamuddin, renowned demographer**, appreciated the view of the worthy chairman regarding adopting positive approach for critique regarding Census 2017 process. He was of view that census has been conducted and it's provisional results already used for important decisions. It is, therefore, imperative to release the final results of Census 2017 for technical purposes. ***He further added that working and planning for devising recommendations for improving next census in line with international standards may be initiated by designing work plan with proper timelines for completion of tasks.*** He also added that procedures that contravene the international standards must not be used. New principles and recommendations for conduct of population census published by United Nation Statistics Division (UNSD) for 2020 census must be consulted for designing the methodologies for the upcoming census.
- **Muhammad Sarwar Gondal, Member (Support Services/RM), PBS** was of the view that for taking all provincial stakeholders in confidence regarding the ongoing work of improving upcoming census, meetings of the committee may be held at provincial headquarters and representatives of provinces may be invited for their inputs about census processes. He further proposed to constitute working groups on all six TORS for preparation of consolidated recommendations in form of reports and these recommendations may be presented in seminars where representatives of all relevant stakeholders including universities/ researchers/academicians may invited for feedback. ***Further for adoption of digital technologies for upcoming census including electronic data collection, it is advisable that study visits of those countries which have successfully implemented the electronic data collection mode (like Iran, Turkey, Egypt etc.) may be made with the help of UNFPA.*** He proposed that as committee can request any relevant person as co-opted member. Mr. Asif Bajwa Ex. Chief Census Commissioner may be invited for explaining the ground realities at time of Census 2017 and reasons for apprehension regarding the census results.
- **Khawaja Mazhar Jamal, GIS specialist** appreciated the decision of worthy chairman for broad based involvement. He was of view that this approach will serve as confidence building measure. ***He further added that some of the reasons for apprehensions on the Census 2017 results was due to non-conduct of Post Enumeration Survey (PES), blocks with zero population, non-administration of Form 2A (which is conducted on sample basis and collect data on fertility, mortality & migration) and census data collection methodology. He was of view that in the next census data must be collected electronically through tablets, as done by PBS for all their regular surveys. Efforts must be made to address the above mentioned issues for reliably and acceptability of the census results.***
- **Mr. Muhammad Ahmad Zubair, Chief Economist, Planning Commission**, informed the committee members that as per decision of last meeting, PBS has prepared comprehensive report on issues raised on the last census by using the International Observers Report, minutes of the subcommittee of governing council constituted for census, Minutes of the provincial technical committees, Press clippings and PBS own evaluation report. ***He highly appreciated the PBS work and proposed that these technical issues may be shared with all committee members for their review and input for avoiding these problems in the next census. He further proposed that there is need for documentation of the whole process which can be presented to parliamentary forums / seminars, for valuable input. This will not only reduce communication gap but will also build ownership of the whole process.***
- **Dr. Sanam Wagma, Demographer, University of Peshawar** was of view that there is dire need of exclusive trainings to enumerators for capturing the data of females. Such data is underreported due to socio-cultural context of areas especially for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and newly merged areas of erstwhile FATA.



- **Dr. Ayesha Shiraz, Demographer, Senior Fellow NIPS** informed the committee members that NIPS being responsible agency for Population Projections appreciated the Census 2017 results as the results are almost in line with revised projections. ***She emphasized that for quality data collection, understanding of concepts/ definitions, better coverage and capacity building of enumerators, rigorous and comprehensive trainings must be designed for upcoming census.***
- **Mr. Mohsin Naqvi, Director NADRA** apprised that NADRA has provided services for checking of 6.5 million CNICs through SMS service during Census 2017. He was of view that evaluation report of that service may be prepared to see its impact of the census data. Further he added that BISP is conducting nationwide census electronically through tablets for poverty score card. Their experiences may be taken in to account for devising strategy for future census by inviting them in committee meetings.

4. The chair thanked all esteemed members for their valued feedback. He added that Census is national activity of paramount importance. It's quality, coverage and timeliness can be improved by studying the best practices used internationally. He advised the committee that UN guidelines on Population Census may be adopted by aligning them according to the local environment and needs for upcoming census for its comparability & credibility. He also highlighted the importance of training to the personnel involved in the census process. The chair observed that success of Population & Housing Census depends on the efficiency, quality and dedication of the census staff. He endorsed committee members view regarding development of effective communication strategy. A robust communication plan may be developed by involving universities, academia, provincial departments and other relevant stakeholders to educate the public. *He was of the view that committee may consider recommending a 'project approach' for conducting census. This would provide systematic application of all steps, including monitoring & evaluation and third party validation.* He further added that key working groups and subgroups shall be formulated for mapping the country, mobilizing training of staff, conducting massive public campaigns etc. He was also of the view that, comprehensive work plan may be formulated with specific timelines for smooth completion of the task.

Decisions: -

- Reports prepared by PBS on key issues raised may be shared with all members for their input and guidance.**
 - Comprehensive work plan would be formulated along with constitution of working groups with Terms of Reference and specific timelines on each TOR of the committee.**
 - Identify themes and prepare outlines for the proposed report for presenting to committee.**
 - Robust communication strategy must be developed for reducing gaps and build confidence of all stakeholders.**
 - Digital technology should be adopted for next census in line with the experiences of countries which already used different digital tools / platforms and innovative hybrid enumeration methods**
 - Mechanism for involvement of Provincial governments / academia in the whole census process for its wider acceptably and ownership may also be devised.**
 - Next meeting may be held in second week of April 2021.**
6. Meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the committee members and other participants from the Chair.



LIST OF PARTICIPANTS OF MEETING HELD ON 26th March, 2021

1. Mr. Mohammad Jehanzeb Khan, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission, (Chairman)
2. Mr. Muhammad Ahmad Zubair, Chief Economist, Planning Commission, (Member)
3. Mr. Muhammad Sarwar Gondal, Member (Support Services/ RM), PBS, (Member/Secretary)
4. Professor Dr. Muhammad Nizamuddin, Independent researcher, (Member)
5. Dr. Zeba A. Sathar, Country Directors Population Council, Islamabad, (Member)
6. Dr. Syed Muhammad Arif, Retd, Professor, University of Balochistan, (Member)
7. Dr. Durr-e-Nayab, Demographer, Joint Director, PIDE, Islamabad, (Member)
8. Dr. Ayesha Shiraz, Demographer, Senior Fellow, NIPS, Islamabad, (Member)
9. Mr. Mohsin Naqvi, Director, NADRA, Islamabad
10. Dr. Sanam Wagma Khattak, Demographer, University of Peshawar, (Member)
11. Khawaja Mazhar Jamal, GIS specialist, Karachi, (Member)
12. Mr. Ayazuddin, Member (Census & Surveys), PBS,
13. Ms. Rabia Awan, Director. PBS, Islamabad