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Government of Pakistan
Statistics Division
Pakistan Bureau of Statistics

Subject: MINUTES OF THE 3RD MEETING OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE OF GOVERNING COUNCIL OF PAKISTAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

The 3rd Meeting of the Sub-Committee of the Governing Council of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics was held on 11th February, 2017 at 10:30 am in the Committee Room of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics under the chair of Dr. Zeba A. Sathar, Chairperson of the Sub-committee and Member of the Governing Council. The list of participants is enclosed.

2. The meeting commenced with the recitation from the Holy Quran. The Chairperson thanked the participants for taking time out from their busy schedule to attend the meeting. She recognized the fact that there is technical expertise in the country. PBS team is well prepared but issues on ground are changing. Thus, census is not being done the way it was envisaged earlier, therefore, such Committee should have been formed earlier.

3. After her opening remarks, she summarized the main issues discussed so far by the census Sub-Committee during previous meetings and summarized points as follows:

- Pakistan is using mixed-up/Hybrid approach (De-Jure and De-facto) for counting which is not unusual, and is close to 1998 Census practice. However, it is emphasized that PBS should ensure that individuals are counted at their usual place of residence. Therefore, a few tweaks on page 9 of the manual of Form-2 are proposed. Similarly, Committee has proposed rewording of last six months to "since last Eid ul Azha" which corresponds with September 2016.
- Next point was about confidentiality of respondent. She informed the participants that Committee has thoroughly debated the merits/demerits of including the CNIC number of the head of household in Form-2 in the first round of census, its verification through NADRA and counting of a household without CNIC. The recommendations are:
 - Recording should be options
 - All households can later be bifurcated by those with IDs or not
 - In no case should the CNIC number be sent to NADRA for checking as it will delay the process

- Chair highlighted that currently media is raising awareness among general masses about census. However, at any time this positivity could go to negativity so it is high time that PBS should roll out census count down on Media.
 - Apart from above, additional things that needs to be accuracy, imputation rules, and data issues-perhaps in a sub-committee.
4. Dr. Muhammad Nizamuddin, started discussion with query about appointment of an expert for population projections / estimates. Dr. Nancy, Consultant, UNFPA informed that her organization is ready to provide services of consultant to PBS. PBS will follow up on this.
 5. Then, members once again discussed merits and demerits of three options regarding CNIC: a) no question should be asked about CNIC b) recording should be optional c) CNIC should be recorded as planned in respect of either Head of household or any member of household.
 6. Dr. Zaman agreed with option a) i.e. recording should be option. Dr. Zeba informed census committee that in some areas of Sindh people do not have ID Cards so there could be under enumeration if we must ask question about ID and Census would be jeopardise. Dr. G.M. Arif, however, contested that this is last item in questionnaire and by this time all the information will have been entered in Form-2. Mr. Fazlullah Qureshi, Former Federal Secretary said that an option should be finalized as time is short. Secretary, Statistics Division, Dr. Shujat Ali agreed with him.
 7. Regarding confidentiality, Dr. Nancy further added that it is unlawful to share any of information of respondent with any other organization and it is not a registration verification exercise. Chief Statistician, Mr. Asif Bajwa clarified that enumerators will not share any information with NADRA, in fact they will access NADRA's database to verify the information provided by respondent in case there is serious doubt about reporting. Dr. Muhammad Farooq, Assistant Professor, LUMS started his argument with explaining the purpose of census which is meant to know how many people are living in Pakistan irrespective of their registration status with NADRA. He asked, how will we establish census numbers for Balochistan, where BNP is asking to wait until Afghan Refugees have gone back to Afghanistan? The issue in hand is political than technical. There could be a separate exercise to know number of Afghans residing in Balochistan.
 8. Dr. Asad Zaman argued that experience shows that error will be very high in certain areas without proper check and balance. Therefore, a Post Evaluation Survey will be inevitable if no check mechanism is in place.

9. Mr. Asif Bajwa, Chief Statistician informed that we are carrying the luggage of 2008 committee decisions as census was delayed due to various reasons. He said that three options are being discussed:

- I. No ID at all
- II. Proposal of Army: checking of information with NADRA software system on spot.
- III. Middle ground, random checks

10. However, he said that there is political angle to all this activity which includes resource allocation, delimitation of electoral roles, and job quota etc. Therefore, these options will be put up for approval of the Finance Minister taking into account various angles.

11. Chair expressed her resentment that many of the recommendations are not being taken seriously and Dr. Farooq had similar concerns. Chief Statistician, however, explained that plan for this census has long been finalized. However, PBS is taking recommendations of experts very seriously and to make his point, he told that Form-2A has been dropped based on recommendation of the Committee and will be conducted later on.

12. Dr. Mehtab Karim, Vice Chancellor, Malir University of Karachi observed that 2008 recommendations are not taken care off. However, Chief Statistician did not agree to his remarks.

13. Participants were informed about 786 form that will be used by Army for cross checking of totals at household level during census operation. One of the participants argued that this appears to be a parallel census. This is an elected Government and census should be done accordingly. It was informed to participants by Chief Statistician that SOPs of army include both credibility and security during this operation. So if there is difference in numbers the households will be revisited. Dr. Farooq argued that people might not trust where Army had active role during army operations. Dr. Mehtab asked where will this data go and what army will do with it. Dr. Zeba said that we should push back on this.

14. To address above concerns, Mr. Fazlullah Quershi, Former Federal Secretary recalled his experience and told that current data collection exercise by army is in line with Census 1998 practice. Army compiled the results and at the time of presentation General Iftekhhar came up with his summary results in a red book. However, we presented our results and like other participants army agreed to our results.

15. Dr. Nancy explained that we should jot down all the potential risks which are associated with the design and implementation plan of Census 2017. She agreed that we should accommodate political side of Census but should not comprise on

technical side as well. It should remain a technical exercise and not a political one. Chief Statistician assured that all the comments of subcommittee will be shared with Minister of Finance.

16. In the end, Dr. Zeba circulated recommendations about two major issues as discussed above: De jure and De facto counts and recording and Utilization of CNIC of Household head in Form 2 of the Census, 2017 with the members of Committee for their signature and shared copies with all. Similarly, signed page 9 of manual for Form-2 with tweaks was also shared with all participants.

17. It was mutually decided that next meeting will be on Friday, 17th February, 2017.

18. Meeting ended with vote of thanks from the chair.
