

## REPUBLIC OF KENYA



### **THE NATIONAL TREASURY AND ECONOMIC PLANNING STATE DEPARTMENT FOR ECONOMIC PLANNING**

REMARKS BY MR. JAMES MUHATI, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, STATE DEPARTMENT FOR ECONOMIC PLANNING, DURING A VISIT TO KNBS HEADQUARTERS, REAL TOWERS ON 15<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2022.

Economic Planning Secretary

Director General, KNBS

KNBS Directors

Staff of KNBS

Good Afternoon

1. I thank you all for the warm reception you have accorded me. I am pleased to meet the KNBS family soon after taking over the position of Principal Secretary in the State Department for Economic Planning. I have made it a priority to meet my teams both at the State Department Headquarters and in the SAGAs; I view this as an important strategy for my settling down quickly in office.
2. The promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 that brought about significant re-orientation of the Government with emphasis on devolution, underscored the role of KNBS in generating both national and county specific information, necessary for planning and in decision-making. In this regard, I commend KNBS for the statistical products disseminated monthly, quarterly, annually and on an ad hoc basis.
3. I wish to recognize the role statistics plays in policy formulation and planning and indeed, in influencing all major decisions we take as a Country. It is apparent that as we progress in our path of development, the role of statistics

becomes progressively more important. Our Country's reputation is largely pegged on the credibility and transparency of its National Statistical System, and the data or information emanating from that system. The National Statistical System platform will continue to help improve the level of confidence that people and organizations have in the confidentiality of the data KNBS provides; thereby improving both the completeness and accuracy of the data so collected and disseminated.

4. Further, I recognize that KNBS has maintained high standards of integrity in producing and disseminating official statistics. The expertise at KNBS lends the official statistics enhanced national and international credibility and transparency.
5. I am aware of the reduced exchequer budget allocation to fund KNBS activities, which has impeded implementation of key activities as outlined in the KNBS Strategic Plan and in the Kenya Strategy for Development of Statistics (KSDS). We also note that it is not only KNBS that is affected, but the whole government. I urge you therefore, to explore other ways of co-funding statistical activities.
6. I have taken cognizance of the key challenges that KNBS is facing;
  - i. One is that KNBS is headquartered here in Real Towers, a rental building, thereby negatively affecting budgetary allocations to core activities, due to the high rent paid. It is evident KNBS needs a permanent home. During my discussions with your sister institutions namely; KIPPRA and NCPD I noted that they are in the same predicament in regard to the Office Space. It is important that the three institutions have a consultative meeting to chart a way forward on this common problem; the ideal situation should be one where the three institutions are housed under one roof. My office will be at hand to support you in this quest within the framework of the KNBS Board resolutions.
  - ii. Another challenge cited is delay in release of statistical products and publications by KNBS as outlined in the Advance data Release Calendar. I

also note that non-adherence to the Advance data Release Calendar leads to erosion of KNBS credibility, as well as the country's unfavorable rating by the IMF. I urge the KNBS Management to take whatever measures that are necessary to strictly adhere to the Advance data Release Calendar.

- iii. Operationalization of the KNBS approved Organization Structure to ensure optimal staffing levels at each technical operational area is another challenge. I urge you to work with the Board of Directors and within the confines of the Law and regulations to progress this matter. I will be happy to discuss with you any specific challenges that require the intervention of my Office.
  - iv. I noted the challenge raised on the Allocation of resources during the supplementary budget to implement phase II of the Kenya Statistics Program for Results under the Eastern Africa Regional Statistics Program for Results to the tune of Ksh 1.2 billion for Financial Year 2022/23. I believe that this is a matter that should be addressed through the established budgeting process. My Office would be happy to receive further details on the bottlenecks faced with a view of working together toward unlocking them.
7. I wish to appreciate the rich resources and data infrastructure in the custody of KNBS. These include the library, printing press and remaining data collection gadgets used during the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census. I encourage KNBS Management to continue sharing the tablets with Ministries, Departments and Agencies, for effective utilization.
8. As I conclude, I reiterate the commitment of support from the State Department for Economic Planning, and specifically my Office towards the KNBS. I am confident we will enjoy a pleasant working environment as a team.

Thank you