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**THE CURRENT STATUS OF VITAL STATISTICS
AND CIVIL REGISTRATION SYSTEMS
IN BOTSWANA**

BY

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COUNTRY REPORT ON THE CURRENT STATUS OF VITAL STATISTICS AND CIVIL REGISTRATION SYSTEM

I. General Background

1.1 The Country

1.1 The Republic of Botswana is a land-locked country occupying an area of approximately 582,000 sq.km. with an average altitude of 1,000 metres above sea level. Much of the country is relatively flat with gentle undulation, and occasional mountain ranges. It shares boundaries with Namibia in the West and North West, Zambia in the North, Zimbabwe in the North East and South Africa in the East and South.

The country's climate is classified as arid or semi-arid. Rainfall is generally low, erratic and unevenly distributed. It ranges from less than 250 millimetres in Kgalagadi region to more than 650 millimetres in the North East. Over 90% of the rain falls during the summer season between the months of November and April. Temperature extremes can reach 43°C in the hot summer month of January and below 5°C in the winter month of July.

There are very few perennial rivers, pans and lakes. As a result the country depends heavily on underground water systems. It is only recently that dams have been built to collect water from the rivers during the rainy season and have water treated for home consumption (Housing conditions In Botswana ,1991 Census Analytical Report).

1.2 The economy

Botswana was classified among the least developed countries at independence in 1966. The economy of the country was dependent largely on beef industry and small scale coal and manganese mining. Employment was provided mainly through migrant labour system to the South African mines and to other neighbouring countries. The discovery and exploitation of diamond and copper in the 70's came as a big jab of life to a country prone to spouts of droughts and unreliable rainfall. The country's economy is currently dependent on diamond mining and beef industries both of which contribute substantially to the GDP.

1.3 The Political Set-up

After 80 years as a British Bechuanaland Protectorate, the country became the independent Republic of Botswana on September 1966. There is an independent Elections Office which supervises the electoral process under the Electoral Act. Its Chief Executive is the Supervisor of Elections.

In addition to the National Assembly, there is the House of Chiefs whose function is to advise government on matters affecting Tswana custom and tradition. It is composed of all the Paramount Chiefs and Regents/Tribal Authorities from various ethnic groupings. The House is constituted by 15 members, three of which are specially elected by the Minister of Local Government, Lands and Housing.

There is an independent judiciary composed of the High Court, the Magistrates' Courts and Customary Courts. The High Court, presided over by the Chief Justice, is the supreme Court of Appeal for both branches. The Customary Courts are presided over by traditional leaders in accordance with customary law. Still a part of the judicial system, is the Customary Court of Appeal, presided over by the President of the Customary Court of Appeal.

1.3.1 The Administrative Structure

The country is administratively divided into ten rural districts, six towns and a city.

They are the City of Gaborone - the Capital City of Botswana and the six towns of Francistown, Selebi-Phikwe, Lobatse, Orapa, Jwaneng and Sowa Town. Gaborone City is administered by a City Council with a City Clerk as the Chief Executive. Similarly, all the six towns are administered by Town Councils with Town Clerks as Chief Executives.

The ten districts are Ghanzi, Central, Kgalagadi, Kweneng, Kgatleng, Southern, North-East, South-East, Ngamiland and Chobe. The districts have three administrations all coordinated by the Ministry of Local Government, Lands and Housing but organised in a way that their different responsibilities are complementary to each other. Each district has a District Council, with similar modes of operations as a town council. A Council Secretary is the Chief Executive. Exceptions are the Chobe and Ngamiland Districts which are served jointly through the North-West District Council in Maun. The councils are responsible for all administrative and developmental matters at local government level. The second type of administration is the Tribal Administration headed by the Chiefs or Tribal Authorities. It is responsible for the administration of tribal matters of customary and traditional nature. There is also the District Administration led by the District Commissioner. This Administration is a direct representative of Central Government in the districts or at local government level. Among other things, it provides a working link between Local Government Administration and Tribal Administration; and between them and Central Government.

The District, the City and the Town Councils have directly elected councillors, responsible for policy matters. However in addition to the elected members, there are additional members who are selected by the Minister of Local Government, Lands and Housing as provided for in the Constitution.

Central Government is composed of the Office of the President, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs, The Ministry of Local Government, Lands and Housing, the Ministry of Mineral Resources and Water Affairs, the Ministry of Transport and Communications and the Ministry of Health. Each of the Ministries is headed by a Permanent Secretary as the Chief Executive and within each there are departments specialising in various fields, in accordance with the portfolio responsibility of the ministry.

1.3.2 International Links

Botswana is a member of various international organisations, including the United Nations Organisation (UNO), the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of countries covered under the Lome Convention, the Commonwealth, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the African Development Bank (ADB) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The headquarters of SADC are in Gaborone.

2.1 Demographic Situation

According to the 1991 Census of Population and Housing, the population of Botswana was 1,327,000. Out of this 52% were females while 48% were males. The sex ratio implied by this composition was 92 male for every 100 females. This may seem low to some countries, but for Botswana it is an improvement over the 1981 census sex ratio of 89 males per 100 females.

The age composition of Botswana population is still youthful with 44% of the population below age 15 years and only 5% of the population aged 65 years and over. The annual growth rate for the population of Botswana was estimated as 3.5 % per year between 1981 and 1991. This was a decline over the growth rate observed during 1971 -1981 intercensal period of 4.7%. This growth rate has not been evenly distributed. The urban areas experienced the highest rate of growth at about 13.8% while the rural areas experienced a negative growth rate of -0.7%.

At the national level the decline in the death rates and the continued high fertility rates(though declining) contribute directly to the growth rate. The estimated total fertility rate from the 1981 census was 7.1. The estimate from the 1991 census is 5.3. Infant mortality rate also decreased from 78 infant deaths per 1000 live births in 1981 to 48 per 1000 in 1991 according to the 1991 census. International migration of both Batswana and Non-Batswana also play a part. During the 1981 census 42,029 Batswana were enumerated as being out of the country; this figure declined to 38,606 in 1991. On the other hand, the non-Batswana population increased from 15,677 in 1981 to 29,557 in 1991. At the sub-national levels, part of the difference between the growth rates in urban areas and the growth rate in rural areas can be explained by the reclassification of some large villages as urban areas, though most of it can be explained by rural to urban migration.

2.2 Population Distribution and Settlement Patterns

The population distribution in Botswana shows high concentration of the population in the eastern part of the country where about 87% of the population is accommodated, though the area itself covers only 25% of the total land area of the country. This concentration is due to the fact that, the area is more arable and has better water reserve than the western part where the Kgalagadi desert stretches. It also have better physical and service infrastructure.

A large proportion of the population (46%) live in urban areas. The population that lives in the officially designated urban centres (there are 7 of them) is approximately 24 percent of the total Botswana population and 47% of the total urban population. The rest of the urban population is found in other urban centres.

The settlement pattern of Botswana is generally migratory in the sense that a typical Motswana has three homes; the village where most of the social activities take place and is also where most people are during the slack period in agricultural activities; lands area where arable farming takes place, and the cattle post where the pastures are. Even with modernization and urbanization, this system is still very strong - it is a way of life for a typical Motswana.

3. Civil Registration System

The Civil Registration System in Botswana dates back to the 19th century when the registration was compulsory for Non-Africans only. The African population, was not required by law to register the vital events. The law was amended in 1968 to cover all races. There are two main objectives of the system; namely to:

- (1) extend birth and death registration facilities to the entire population in a phased way;
- (2) establish an efficient system of births and deaths registration records for the entire population.

3.1 Legal Frame of the System

The system is covered by two related acts: The Marriage (Act CAP 29) of the Laws of Botswana covers all marriages solemnized in Botswana except marriages contracted under Customary Law. There is no legal provision for the registration of customary marriages just as there is no legal provisions of registering a divorce regardless of whether the divorce took place under the customary law or civil law. The law stipulates that no marriage shall be valid unless solemnised by a marriage officer. In terms of

section 13 of Marriage Act, a marriage officer will keep a register of marriages solemnized by him/her.

The births and deaths are registered under "Births and Deaths Registration" CAP 30:01 of the Laws of Botswana. This Act makes provision for compulsory and voluntary registration of vital events for the entire population. The schedule provided in the Act specifies under section 5, 8 and 14, the districts and/or areas where registration shall be compulsory. Provision is also made for the addition or deletion of any such district or area from the schedule by the Minister of Labour and Home Affairs.

3.2 Administrative Arrangement for the System

The Civil Registration System is based in the Ministry of Labour and Home affairs. It is headed by a Registrar who reports to the Deputy Permanent Secretary(registration) in the same ministry. The Registrar is assisted by a Deputy Registrar. At the district levels, the registrar is represented by the District Registrars who report directly to him/her. The District Registrars are assisted by Local Registrars. There are a number of support staff at both national and district levels.

For the registration of births and deaths there are twelve primary registration units in the country excluding the office of the Registrar at the headquarters. These units are situated in the compulsory registration areas. The average population served by each primary registration unit is 38 000. To assist with the registration, thirteen major hospitals have been authorised to register events that occurred in the hospitals to facilitate service to the general public.

To monitor what is going on in the district registration offices, they are visited at least three times a year by Head Office senior staff. The Registrar makes at least one visit every year. At the local level, registration offices have to be visited by the District Registrar on a monthly basis.

3.3 Procedures for Registration

As indicated above, every marriage officer keeps a register of marriages solemnized by him/her. Three weeks before the official registration, banns (notifications) are posted in conspicuous place in the area where one or both parties reside. After the expiry of three weeks, if no objection has been raised regarding the impending marriage, the marriage can be solemnized. Immediately after the marriage has been solemnized, the marriage officer enters in the register the marriage he/she has solemnized. The information entered is the place, dates, names and ages of the two people concerned. The register is then signed in duplicate by the officer and the parties concerned. The duplicate is then sent to the registrar.

For births and deaths, the legal provision for registration in the country applies only to the compulsory areas. The registration of births and deaths under the existing Act is therefore both compulsory and voluntary in country. The compulsory registration only extends to four urban areas of Gaborone, Francistown, Lobatse and Selebi Phikwe; and eight villages namely; Molepolole, Kanye, Serowe, Maun, Kasane, Mahalapye, Gomare and Mochudi.

Only live births are registered. According to the provisions "a live birth is the issuing forth from the mother at any time, of a child who, at any time after being wholly expelled from the mother, breathes or shows any other sign of life, after the expiration of the twenty-eighth week of pregnancy". This definition is a slight deviation from the U.N definition, which stipulates that "a live birth is the complete expulsion or extraction from its mother of a product of conception, irrespective of the duration of pregnancy, which after such separation, breathes or shows any other evidence of life such as beating of heart, pulsating of the umbilical cord, or definite movement of voluntary muscles, whether or not the umbilical cord has been cut or the placenta is attached".

The legal documents used in the registration process of births and deaths are registers (bound books), loose-leaf (A4 size paper) forms and cards (for indexing). Loose-leaf forms are used for the actual recording of the information being given by the informant. This information is then recorded into the registers which are kept at the registration office. Index cards are prepared for each event and filed in specially designed index cabinets. The informant can either make a verbal notice and the registrar fills up the notice, or submit a written notice either in person or by post.

For registration the following documents are required; National Identity Card, Medical Certificate, Sworn Statements from a Commissioner of Oaths and any other documentation which the Registrar might require to facilitate registration of the events.

The place of registration: The place of registration is normally the place where the event occurred, or the nearest registration office.

Cost of registration: Registration of every event is subject to payment of a fee as stipulated in the registration Act. This payment though small has resulted in many people failing to register the events.

Time allowance for registration: The specific time periods for registration of vital events have been set forth by the Act. The limits for registration of the events are as follows:

BIRTHS- within 3 months,

DEATH- within 30 days

MARRIAGE- 30 days

The time limit is aimed at minimizing errors due to memory lapse by potential informant.

Late registration procedures: It is clear that events registered after the expiration of the statutory periods assume different status from those registered on time. In the event of birth or death the Act specifies:

No birth or death shall be registered after the expiry of one year from the date of such birth or death except in accordance with specified provision which stipulates that: " An application for the registration of a birth or death after the expiry of one year from the date of birth or death (hereinafter referred to as an application for late registration) shall be made in the prescribed form (as stated under section 14 of the Act). It should be noted that; ...the Registrar may refuse to register a birth or death under this section until such time as material facts relating to such birth or death have been proved to his satisfaction".

3.4 Local Registrars

The Local Registrars are the District Registrars and their assistants who have been appointed by the Minister of Labour and Home Affairs in the case of births and deaths, but as regards marriages, a District Officer(DO) or District Commissioner(DC) becomes District Registrar on assumption of his duties as DO or DC. The Local Registrar is the middle man between the Registrar's Office and the informant. He is normally a public servant who performs registration duties either as a part-time responsibility or on full-time basis. He/she is expected to be a responsible adult person of good character. In some cases church ministers solemnize the marriages though a formal registration under the Marriage Act still have to be made with the District Registrar.

There are 12 compulsory registration areas for births and deaths. For marriages, the number of registration offices is the same as the number of district offices headed by a District Commissioner.

3.5 The informant

An informant is the individual whose responsibility, designated by law, is to report to the Registrar the fact of occurrence of vital event, together with certain of its characteristics, and only on the basis of this report may the event be legally registered by the Registrar. Sections 6,7,9 and 10 of the Births

and Deaths Registration Act make provisions on legal informants. For marriages the persons wishing to get married are the informants. For the registration of births, "...it shall be the duty of the father and/or mother of the child, and in the event of death, absence or other inability of the father and mother then any person present at the birth or occupier of the dwelling in which the child is born, within three months after such birth to give the prescribed notice thereof to the District Registrar or to a police officer. In the case of an illegitimate child no person shall be required to give information under this Act as its father concerning birth. "This is according to the Act.

For the registration of death the Act says "...It shall be the duty of every adult relative of a deceased person who was present at his death or in attendance during his last illness or at his dwelling with him, and, in default of such relative, of every adult person present at the death of such deceased person, and if there was no such adult person present, then of the occupier of the dwelling in which the death occurred, or in the case of the death or absence or other inability of such occupier, of every adult inmate of the dwelling, or of any person who caused the body to be buried, to give to the District Registrar notice in the prescribed manner of the death within 30 days thereafter".

Penalty for non-compliance with the Act is a fine not exceeding P200.00 or three months imprisonment, or both. As regards issuance of the certificates, they are issued when the laid down procedure for registration has been followed. There is a minimal fee for registration.

3.6 Civil registration Archives

The civil registration archives are found at both the district and national levels.

3.6.1 Local/District Civil Registration Archives

The civil registration record kept at the district is a bounded book or register. This contains information from the loose leaf record. The records in the register are arranged according to the date of registration. All the loose leaf records are sent to the central civil registration office.

These registers are labelled according to the district and year of registration. They are hard covered to prevent them from wear and tear. The furniture used to store these records are the filing cabinets, and they are kept in the same office used for registration, this is mainly due to the unavailability of office accommodation.

The register and any other document kept by the registrar as per the regulations is almost a public document, open to inspection by anyone, as stipulated in the Births and Deaths Regulations regarding inspection of registers and other documents in the custody of the Registrar of Civil Registration; "Any person shall be entitled, on giving 24 hours notice and on paying the prescribed fee to the Registrar, to search the indices and to inspect any entry in the registers and any document kept in terms of these Regulations in the custody of the Registrar". The only confidential part is the additional information collected for statistical purposes. This information is not available to the public because it does not appear in the registers.

3.6.2 Central Archive of Civil Registration

As it has already been indicated the original registration is made on individual records(notices) which are made on a loose-leaf type register. Upon receipt of the individual records by the central or head office, the information is transcribed into a book-type register, which is identical to the one at district level.

Index cards are then prepared for each individual record. These are filed alphabetically according to the surnames or family names. The cards have a specially designed index card filing cabinet where they are kept. The loose-leaf records are in turn filed away in batches of six hundred in arch-lever files to be put on iron-rack shelves for storage. The records are arranged according to the year of registration.

The design of the registers is the same as the one at district level. There is a separate register for each type of vital event. These registers are labelled according to the year of registration of a particular event.

3.7 Assessment of Civil Registration System

The registration of births and deaths has been found to be far from satisfactory in most cases, as a substantial number of births and deaths still go unregistered. The system is not capable of covering most vital events occurring in the country even in the compulsory areas. As the information is not complete, it is also not capable of generating vital records and statistics useful for planning and administrative purposes. The possibility of duplication can not be ruled out especially with some hospitals authorized to register vital events. However a lot of care is taken to avoid duplication.

The other major problem is that of accessibility of the registration centres to the public, especially in the rural areas where the people have to travel long distances to the registration points and unreliable transport system.

Since the implementation of the Act in 1969 there has not been any substantive legal reforms except for the addition of a few compulsory areas which constitute around 35 percent of the entire population. As such, there is need for a major review of the existing civil registration legal framework so as to extend registration to the entire country and collection of vital statistics be embodied in the civil registration law.

The acute shortage of manpower in the civil registration division is another major constraint. The civil registration division has a total staff of 63 employees including those at head office. To assist untrained staff, manuals have been developed to help the registration personnel in the filling up of the forms. Relevant extracts of the Law have been distributed to all registration offices to assist with the legal procedures during registration.

The other problem associated with shortage of manpower is that, there are a number of persons not working directly under the Registrar. This has undermined the supervision and control of all persons performing registration tasks. Consequently, the field staff of other Ministries, especially Local Government, Lands and Housing undertake some of the civil registration functions on a part-time basis, may not devote sufficient time and attention to these duties.

The other problem with the implementation of the system is that, generally there has not been any individual who has been prosecuted or fined for not complying with the regulations, since the inception of the Act. The policy for enforcement of the Act has been rather loose because of the belief in persuasion than force. Experience in other departments where individuals have been taken to court by the government is that the government always ends up losing.

3.7.1 Improvement

The Government of Botswana recognises the need to improve the existing civil registration system in order to establish a viable permanent structure for the collection of vital statistics and generation of information on vital events.

The government having recognized the short-comings of the present registration system, decided to seek technical assistance from United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) with the objective of improving the system of registration of births and

deaths as quickly as possible. Consequently, the government and the UNFPA signed, in October, 1990 an agreement of cooperation to establish, in four areas, a pilot project in which ways and means would be formulated into a comprehensive system through a process of experimentation.

The project had two main objectives; Immediate and Long Term;
Long Term Objectives:

(1) Improvement and strengthening of the existing civil registration system in order to establish a permanent recording of vital events throughout the country.

(2) Production of reliable and timely vital statistics data needed for planning the country's social, economic and health programmes.

Immediate Objectives:

(1) Review of the entire civil registration system to assess shortcomings in order to suggest strategies and methods for improvements.

(2) Select four model areas where the organization, documents, forms and schedules will be tested and developed.

(3) Review of the existing civil registration laws and regulations as well as existing documents to determine their suitability for the expanded program.

(4) Institute a training program for the civil registration personnel both at head office and district offices.

(5) Undertake a campaign program to create awareness of the benefits and usefulness of vital records and vital statistics in order to motivate the public to register their events.

The pilot project was successfully completed in December 1993. At present the recommendations are still being looked into by the relevant authorities. There is hope that the findings and the recommendations will be accepted by government, and implemented during the next financial year.

3.8 Uses of the registration Records

The demand for vital records stem from their value as legal documents. As the society becomes more complex, the demand and use of vital records to prove facts about an event also increase. The main use of the records are to establish a civil status and the factors on which the status is based.

3.8.1 Use by Individuals

Birth record: Records of live birth, death, late foetal death, marriage and divorce are of paramount use to the individual. The basic registration record or a certified copy has legal significance to the person concerned. The establishment of the identity of an individual, that is, the proof of the facts about his birth, is probably the most important of the uses to which a birth record can be placed.

A birth registration is the legal document which will establish ones nationality or, citizenship by birth. The birth record is also used to establish facts on age at entrance of school, age at marriage, to obtain travelling documents such as passport and national identity card.

Death record: The primary use of proof of death registration in urban centres in Botswana is to get a burial permit. Other important uses of proof of death are; settlement of inheritance or insurance claims and remarriage of surviving spouse.

Marriage record: The marriage registration record is used to ensure legal responsibility for family support, to establish rights to inheritance or pensions, to confer legitimacy, and to help prove ancestry and lineage.

3.8.2 By the society:

Birth record: Public health programmes of post-natal for the mother and child have their starting point in the birth register or record. Vaccination and immunization programmes also make use of the birth register for their more effective implementation. Other government and non-governmental agencies which require to use the age of an individual to carry out their programmes usually have their starting point in the birth record, e. g entry in the first grade in school.

Death record: To promote public health in the country and obtain death statistics, Control programmes for infectious diseases with the family and the community depend on the death registration record. Public safety, accident prevention, and crime eradication programmes make use of the death records. Curtailment from National Registers or benefit programmes which terminate at death depends on the death record to be effected by the relevant authorities or organisations.

IV. The National Vital Statistics System.

4.1 The legal frame of the system.

The National Vital Statistics System is maintained under the Statistics Act CAP.17:01. which gives the responsibility of producing and disseminating vital statistics to the national statistics office, known as Central Statistics Office. The commencement date of the Act was 13th October, 1967. The Act stipulates the following:

"An act to make provision for the collection of statistical data. Subject to the provision of this act and to the directions of the minister, statistics may be collected at such times, in such places or areas and in respect of such periods as may be prescribed, in relation to any aspect of all or any of the following matters: Population, housing, vital occurrences, morbidity temporary or permanent migration to, from or within Botswana;..."

4.2 Administrative arrangements of the system.

The recording of the information is done by the registrar's office in the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs. The registered information on births, deaths and marriages is compiled and analyzed by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. Three officers from the CSO are attached to the unit to extract this information. Data entry and analysis are handled by the CSO through the Demography Unit. The vital statistics data entry and tabulation programmes are maintained by the Data Processing Unit of the CSO.

4.3 Procedures For Reporting and Monitoring

Generally, the procedure for reporting are as outlined under section 3.3 of this paper. The monitoring is also done by the unit in charge of registration. Since the system itself is incomplete monitoring proves to be difficult.

4.4 Procedures of Statistical Processing

In the Central Statistics Office, all programs used for processing data, including vital statistics are maintained by Data Processing Unit. The computer software package used for the vital statistics system is the Integrated Microcomputer Processing Systems(IMPS). This software package has an option for the development of data entry applications, the entering, verification and modification of data. The package has also a programmable consistency checking and tabulation.

The coding is done during the data extraction process, while editing is done before tabulation. Manuals and specification for coding and editing are prepared by the Demography Unit of CSO. The staff involved in data entry, editing and coding are given on-the-job-training. There is still need to train the personnel, in order to give them background of the field of vital statistics and also to improve their understanding of the data they are dealing with.

4.5 Publication and Dissemination of Vital Statistics.

4.4.1 Vital statistics data is supposed to be published annually through the Population Report of CSO, but this has not been achieved due to some data processing and related administrative problems. The last issue was for the 1986/87 vital statistics report. This issue covered number of registered births, deaths and marriages, expected number of births and deaths during the years 1986/87. The comparison of registered births and deaths with expected births and deaths, however, showed that the registered births and deaths were far from being complete. For example, registered births constituted about 24 percent of the expected births, while the registered deaths constituted 11.6 percent of the expected deaths.

The slightly better coverage of births over deaths is due to the need of birth certificates for schools, national identity cards etc.

4.6 Assessment of Vital Statistics System

The vital statistics system is closely related to or is a by-product of the civil registration system. As such all problems associated with the civil registration also affect the vital statistics. Apart from that the two fall under two different units which fall under two different ministries and are governed by different Acts. This gives a monitoring problem.

The documents are generally received via the national civil registration office. There is no direct link/communication between the CSO and the districts offices. This means any problem with the completed forms has to be communicated first to the Head Office who would in turn communicate with the local registration offices. The speed of this communication depends largely on the perception of the problem by the Head Office.

The other problem with the system is that there is never any inventory of the number of data analysis sheets sent to CSO. Late registration also poses other problems.

4.7 Uses of vital statistics.

4.5.1 The main users of the vital statistics data are the Division of Civil Registration and Vital Events of the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs; Planning Division of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning; and all other institutions who need information on births, deaths and marriages. Information on vital statistics is supposed to supplement other sources of demographic data collection especially censuses and at the same time satisfy the needs of vital records for administrative and legal uses. However, as a result of the low coverage of the events not much use is made of the statistics except to show the magnitude of under coverage. The users are usually given an opportunity to participate in deciding what to be published and when to publish.

5 Coordinating Among Government Institutions

The main units that have been empowered by law to handle either vital registration or vital statistics are the Registrar's Office and the CSO. To foster co-operation between these two and other ministries which are not directly associated with the activities, an inter-ministerial committee on Civil Registration WAS ESTABLISHED. The committee is made up of the following members; Ministry of Health, Ministry of Housing Local Government and

Lands, Ministry of Education, CSO, Department of Information and Broadcasting and the University of Botswana. Apart from these departments other members can be coopted into the committee, as and when the need arises.

As a result of this co-operation the need to have trained manpower at the middle levels was discussed and the University was requested to develop and offer a targeted training course especially for the Registrar's Office. This course is running and will run until enough personnel have been trained at that for specific purposes.

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