

MOVE SEEKS TO TRANSFORM ADOPTION OF REAL-TIME DATA

By Titus Kakembo

The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) last week equipped cultural and religious leaders with computers and tablets, effectively recruiting them into the country's expanding data ecosystem.

This was in a bid to take statistics beyond government offices in Kampala and place them in the hands of leaders who shape everyday decisions in communities.

The digital roll-out forms part of UBOS' broader strategy to decentralise data collection and interpretation. By empowering trusted community leaders to gather, analyse and share statistics, the bureau hopes to strengthen grassroots planning and ensure policies are grounded in local realities.

UBOS executive director Dr Chris Mukiza challenged the beneficiaries to turn their vast constituencies into hubs of evidence-based action.

"You command a huge following. There are over 26,000 churches across Uganda with millions of believers. With data in your hands, preach not only faith but informed action. As people pray for miracles, encourage them to use facts and numbers to transform their livelihoods,"

# UBOS, LOCAL, RELIGIOUS LEADERS TEAM UP ON DATA COLLECTION



Seated: Dr Mukiza (second-left) and the Archbishop of Uganda Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Jeronymos Muzeeyi (second-right), with other religious leaders and officials during an engagement in Kampala last week where UBOS handed over tablets

Mukiza said. He pointed to Buganda kingdom's *Emwanyi Terimba* campaign, which has relied

heavily on statistics to rally farmers around coffee production, as a model of how data can inspire economic

mobilisation. Turning to cultural institutions, Mukiza urged leaders to deploy data in addressing persistent social

and economic bottlenecks. "The Great Lakes region will experience rising food demand as climate change intensifies.

Guide households to use the Parish Development Model resources wisely, to choose the right enterprises, improve productivity and increase incomes," Mukiza said.

Beyond kingdoms and churches, research institutions are reinforcing the message that statistics must inform national transformation.

Dr Swaibu Mbowa of the Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC) emphasised the importance of translating raw data into actionable policy guidance.

**RELIGIOUS LEADERS WELCOME MOVE** Religious leaders welcomed the initiative, describing it as timely in an era where service delivery is increasingly judged by measurable outcomes.

Pr Joseph Serwadda, representing the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda, said faith-based institutions have historically stabilised communities during turbulent periods and remain central to social service delivery.

Dr Steven Masiga, the deputy prime minister of the Inzu Ya Masaba cultural institution, said improved access to statistics would benefit the 2.6 million Bamasaba population spread across 256 sub-counties.