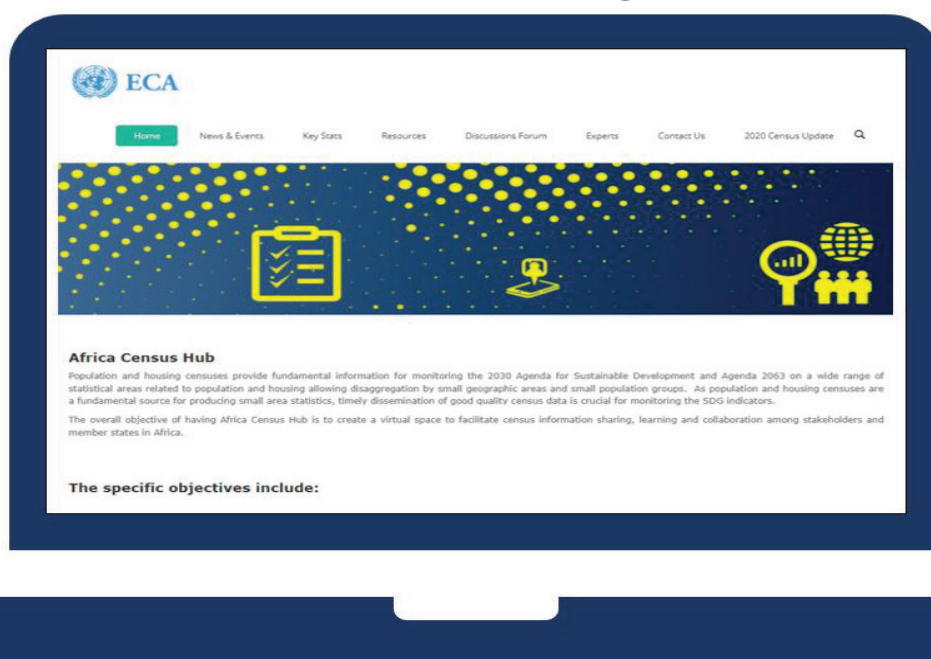


CENSUS catch up

February 2022

African Population and Housing Census Knowledge Hub



A new website will improve censuses across the continent by sharing innovations to boost efficiency, timeliness of results and accuracy.

The Census Hub site created by the African Centre for Statistics (ACS) aims to facilitate census information sharing, learning, and collaboration.

It will bring together best practice guidance and information on the latest tools and technologies for digital census taking. It will also help coordinate assistance available to statistical offices from partnering agencies.

As well as supporting improved use of technology in the 2020 census round, it is hoped the hub will provide a wealth of information that will help member states in planning censuses for the 2030 round.

Molla Asmare, an ACS statistician who led the launch of the Census Hub said: "We created this virtual space because there was a lack of continent-wide networks of professionals and information sharing to ensure African countries build continually the capacity to adopt new methods and tools. "Only when such networks exist and coordinated approaches to African statistical

capacity-building are entrenched will there be continent-wide collective progress in census taking."

The Census Hub will feature information on a range of topics including but not limited to census planning, mapping, questionnaires, good practices, fieldwork management, communication, dissemination, capacity building, innovating tools, data processing and archiving.

This launch comes as nations across the continent begin making use of tablets and smartphones to undertake their first digital censuses. Such a shift in census taking requires retraining, mobilising resources and partnership with national stakeholders such as telecom operators and international organisations for innovation and cooperation.

ACS has also organised a series of workshops on various areas of census operation areas to support this shift and strengthen the capacity of census agencies to share experiences for adopting new technology, best practices. However, this new collaborative platform can only be a success with participation and collaboration from member states and stakeholders working across Africa.

To find out more and register, visit:
ecastats.uneca.org/africacensushub

Ghana census workshop shaping the future

Experts from across the continent came together to share census lessons and plans. More than 60 delegates from 16 nations took part in a four-day workshop organised by Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), ECA and the UK's Office for National Statistics.

The event aims to shape the remaining 2020-round censuses and those for the 2030 census round. Discussions included collaboration between countries, sourcing computer tablets or smartphones for data capturing, questionnaire design, ensuring software works across different devices, capability, online recruitment and online training.

ECA will use findings from this and similar workshops to develop guidance on good practice to support countries in planning their censuses. This guidance will form a baseline for preparations for the 2030 round of population and housing censuses.

During the event, GSS also released its latest census results. It follows Ghana's first digital population and housing census in June last year. It is one of four countries represented at the workshop that made use of Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) technology in its last census, enabling results to be published in record time.

GSS, Egypt's Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics,

and Malawi's National Statistical Office were able to share experiences of using this technology to support countries planning to hold their first digital censuses in the near future.

For more information about the workshop or how ECA can support an upcoming census, email ecastats@un.org or visit <https://ecastats.uneca.org/africacensushub>

Note – Lesotho's last census was 2016



Census monitoring Dashboard

A special new digital tool developed by the UN will provide real-time information for census managers in charge of the all-important switch from paper to computerized censuses.

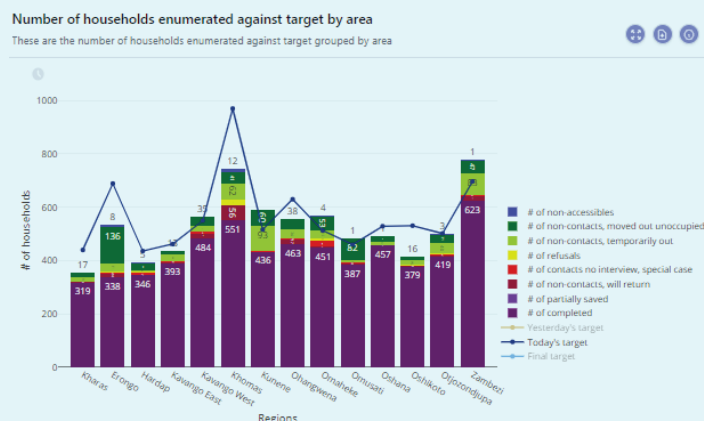
The census monitoring dashboard is a pan-African initiative by the Africa Centre for Statistics (ACS) at the UN Economic Commission for Africa with partner countries in Africa.

The software summarizes census data in real-time, enabling managers to monitor performance and quickly take remedial action, improving the accuracy and reliability of census data.

The dashboard can be customized to each country's specific requirements. It features a number of both national and local indicators such as case statistics, household numbers and demographic indicators such as birth and death rates and population characteristics.

It's attracted overwhelming interest including from Ghana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Seychelles and Liberia. Meanwhile, Zambia, Mauritius and Togo plan to deploy the dashboard in their upcoming censuses.

For more information, contact ecastats@un.org or visit <https://ecastats.uneca.org/africacensushub>



Heard of Census device provisioning?

We can all relate to the excitement that accompanies the unboxing of a new electronic gadget, but we probably do not recall the following long and frustrating hours where we slog through installing and configuring our brand new device just the way we like it.

Now think of all the work you put into your fresh device and try to imagine doing that for thousands or even hundreds of thousands of identical devices!

It is an arduous and time-consuming task to accomplish manually by humans, which is why we here at ECA have built a set of software tools and a workflow to automate this arduous process.

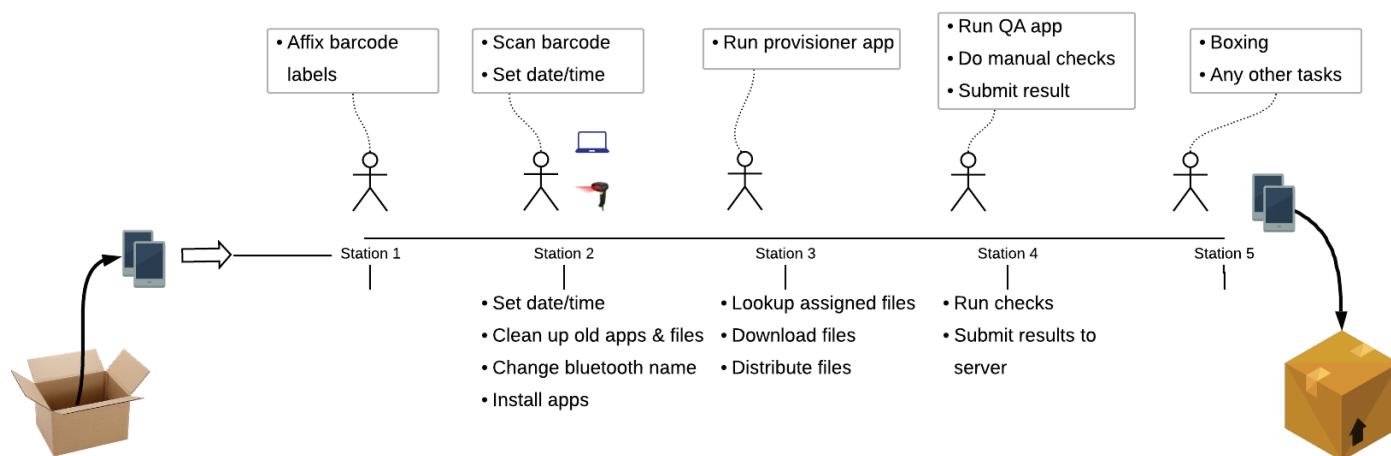
Using experience derived from working with various African national censuses, we have built and now perfected an ecosystem of scripts, web apps, mobile apps, and some hardware that has been proven to get the job done reliably, and in a fraction of the time, it would have taken otherwise.

The problem, if it is not clear already, is getting your devices ready for fieldwork in a reliable and consistent manner. As if the task wasn't already insurmountable, it happens that you usually need to put different

resources (files such as area maps) on each of your devices; this means you can not use 'at factory' methods of mass duplicating the firmware/software of your devices.

Here is a brief and simplified walkthrough of the process. First, we set up a wireless network that connects the computers that hold all the resources (we like to refer to it as payload) destined for the devices. Then we put our agent on the devices and also tell the devices what geographic area they are destined for. The agent will then communicate with the resource stores (via the wireless network) and request all specifically relevant resources, which it will proceed to download and install in all the right places. We will also double-check the expected outcomes of the process and store this information for future reference. This process happens on hundreds of devices simultaneously thereby cutting down on the time it takes to provision all the devices. By the end of this process, you can be sure that your devices are ready for fieldwork.

Using our provisioning solutions, close to half a million tablets have been readied and used in the field successfully across many African countries.



Watch out for next month's edition where you can find out more about:

- Our census support in Tanzania
- Device provisioning application in Zimbabwe
- Our workshop for Post Enumeration Survey (PES) in Rwanda
- Next steps for our census tools

Anyone wishing to subscribe to these newsletters should:

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