

## 2020 Round of Census in Africa: Progress and Challenges

The 2020 Africa census round is part of the World Programme whose goal is for countries to agree on a set of accepted international principles and recommendation governing the conduct of census at least once, during the period 2015-2024; and to disseminate census results in a timely manner. In Africa, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 2015/10 on the 2020 World Population and Housing Census Programme. Censuses are indispensable tools to Africa's development as they provide data up to the finest level of geographic disaggregation. The generation, availability and utilization of such quality data will also facilitate South-South cooperation and ensure the monitoring of the operationalization of the AU Roadmap on the Demographic Dividend as well as the development and implementation of plans and programmes, at all levels, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the AU's Agenda 2063.

Significant progress has been made in Africa with 47 out of the 54 countries having undertaken censuses during the 2010 Round. The success of the 2010 round of censuses was largely attributable to the major advocacy campaign by Africa Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD) and the supported by AfDB, ECA, AUC, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Statistics South Africa. The World Bank, UNFPA and other bilateral and multilateral development partners played important roles at country levels by providing technical and financial support for conducting censuses. African governments showed strong commitments to censuses by covering most of the census costs.

In the current round, 9 countries have already undertaken their censuses. Between 2019 and 2024, 41 countries will undertake their censuses. Only 4 countries in Africa have not indicated whether they will have a census or not. In order to maintain these high coverage rates, the Africa census programme requires the active support of Member States, working in partnership with the pan-African organizations, the ASSD, RECs, UNSD, UNFPA and other international organizations.

Funding remains a major challenge in African countries for many of the censuses, mainly because it is considered an ad hoc activity conducted only once every 10 years. The use of technology, ranging from cartographic tools at the planning stage to use of hand-held devices, the Internet, Geographic information systems (GIS), cellular telephones at the enumeration and dissemination stages are attractive to National Statistical Offices, but there are risks, especially if there is lack of staff expertise in the use of technology.

As Africa looks at financing its development initiatives, censuses should be given priority as they provide the basis for planning. Censuses should be a part of the national development plan of each country. This will help the census offices to develop a plan much further in advance, to seek an adequate budget from the Government and to mobilize resources from development partners if there are shortfalls. The success of the 2020 round of Censuses will be a major measure of Africa's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, Agenda 2063 and other development frameworks.

**AFRICAN UNION UNION AFRICAINE**

**African Union Common Repository**

**<http://archives.au.int>**

---

Specialized Technical and representational Agencies

AU Permanent Observer to the United Nations - New York Collection

---

2019-03-07

# 2020 Round of Census in Africa: Progress and Challenges

Chinganya, Oliver

---

<http://archives.au.int/handle/123456789/5448>

*Downloaded from African Union Common Repository*