

**Seminar on recent experiences in Population and  
Housing Census**

**THE 2007 MOZAMBIQUE'S CENSUS AND ITS  
ORGANIZATION**

by

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## ***Introduction***

The Census activities started in 2004 by the drafting of the 2007 Census Global Plan and in 2005 the Census Cartography Updating began and ended (unfortunately) close to the enumeration day (1<sup>st</sup> of August) due to lack of funding. Mozambique benefited from international assistance (UNFPA and Bureau of the Census) in both activities in short term consultancy fashion.

Also, with strong support from UNFPA Country Team, the dialogue with cooperating partners and Government started in order to gather the required funds for the Population Census operation. This exercise took us more than two years, holding bilateral meetings as well as donors' conference led either by National Institute of Statistics (INE) or by the Government.

The enumeration was conducted from 1<sup>st</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> August 2007. The 2007 Census is the third Population and Housing Census since the independence of Mozambique in 1975. Near to fifty thousands enumerators, seventeen thousand supervisors and fifty thousands guiders were involved in the data collection exercise.

According to the Census Global Plan a Post Enumeration Survey was conducted from 16 to 30 of September 2007 which showed that the undercount was below three percent at national level.

The 2007 Census preliminary figures were delivered to the public in a special event organised by INE under the African Statistics Day – 18<sup>th</sup> of November celebration. The event led by INE's Presidency was attended by some members of Parliament, members of Cabinet, Diplomatic Corp, Heads of Lusophone National Statistical Offices, political leaders, trade unions, media, among others invited persons. The preliminary showed that in 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2007 Mozambique had 20.45 million inhabitants.

Validation and data entry using traditional key entry is taking place hoping that the final Census data for 6 out 11 provinces will be released this year and by November 2009 the process will be completed.

This paper tries, in the following sections, to present briefly the Mozambique's experience on the 2007 Census and organization set up to conduct this major endeavour.

## ***A brief review of Mozambique's NSS***

In response to the changes occurred in the Mozambican society in the 90s a National Statistical System was created by an Act passed by the Parliament in 1996<sup>2</sup>, which established a kind of centralized statistical system in Mozambique. The ten UN principles for National Statistical System<sup>3</sup> were adopted by the new Statistical Act.

The National Statistical System of Mozambique was defined as the set of competent institutions to perform the official statistics activities, which means to say concept and methodological harmonization, compilation and dissemination of official statistics. This approach covers not only its executive body, but the entire system as well.

The mission of National Statistical System of Mozambique is to deliver and disseminate reliable and timely official statistics information to suit needs of planning, social and macroeconomic management and the users in general.

INE was created by a Presidential Decree<sup>4</sup> in the same year (1996), as the executing agency of the NSS and an independent body, reporting to the Cabinet. The INE is in charge of data collection and dissemination of the country's official statistics and coordination of the entire NSS. The Census Act empowers INE to carry out Census and Surveys in any part of the country and seek support/ assistance from all public and governmental institutions. In Mozambique, Population and Housing Census are held every 10 years.

## ***Mozambique's Census - organization***

The Census organization defined by the Mozambican Population Census Act is: the Population and Housing Coordination Council (CCRGPH) and the National Institute of Statistics.

The CCRGPH is chaired by the Prime Minister and comprises by other nine ministers (Planning & Development, Finance, Housing & Public Works, Agriculture, Education, State Administration, Transport, Defense, Interior), the President and Vice President of INE (Demographic Area). The CCRGPH mandate is to guide and supervise the entire Population and Housing Census process and this body interacts with the Cabinet. Two years before the census day, by a Cabinet Resolution this NSS organ resumes its work holding regular meetings. Apart of supervision/ overseeing of all Census process, the major tasks of this organ is to approve and monitor the Census Work Plan, Census Budget, the objectives of the Census and the Census questionnaire content.

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<sup>2</sup>Law nr 7/96, of June

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Statistical Commission, Report on the Special Session (11-15 April 1994), Economic and Social Council, Official Records, 1994, Supplement 9

<sup>4</sup> Presidential Decree nr 9/96, of August

At INE was set up a Census Bureau (GCR) led by the INE's President and having the Vice President of INE for Demography and Social Statistics as his deputy. The staff of GCR comprises of 178 professionals seconded by the Ministries of Housing & Work, Planning & Development, Finance, Education, Interior (Police), Defense, State Administration, Agriculture, Eduardo Mondlane University and INE organized under 7 Commissions. GCR was sworn in by the Prime Minister and works in a fulltime regime. The Census Bureau will be dismissed after completion of the national release of Census final data (18/11/2009). The dissemination of Census results will be done by INE provincial branches following a specific program approved by INE Headquarters.

From the Mozambique's Statistics Act, a high profile is given to statistics in general and to INE, in particular. Therefore, the Census Bureau was empowered to run the entire Census process (although decentralised<sup>5</sup>) and interact with provincial and district governments. It is worth to mention that INE Presidency is composed of 3 members, all appointed and sworn in by the President of Republic. This makes easy contacts between INE and the top leadership of the Country. During the Census crucial period this "fulltime open door" was extremely important for the smooth management of the Census process.

Similar organization was set up at provincial level 4 months before the Census Day having a lifespan of 6 months. The provincial Coordination Body comprising of 10 provincial Directors led by the Provincial Governor having as his/her deputy the Provincial Permanent Secretary. At INE provincial branch a Provincial Census Bureau was set up having the Head of INE Provincial Branch as its leader. Ten officials from different provincial Departments were seconded to this Census Unit.

Two months before the Census Enumeration 148 Census Offices were established to run the Census process at District level (both rural and urban). These offices operated for 4 months. The District Governor was appointed as the head of the District Census unit.

Including the field staff and office members, the 2007 Census involved around hundred and thirty persons and the total budget is just over thirty-five million US Dollars, from which the Government contributed with 11% of this amount. Therefore, the costing per capita is, at this stage, 1.75 US Dollars.

### ***Interaction with politicians and public during the Census process***

The Cabinet, apart of setting the Census Day, decided to consider the 2007 Population and Housing Census a National Priority for 2007, side by side with the provincial Elections 2007. This means that the Census 2007 was placed at the top of national political agenda in Mozambique.

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<sup>5</sup> Each territorial level was responsible for the success of the Census (complete enumeration complying with the methodology and plan defined by GCR, good budget management and provide required logistics) within its area

It is also import to mention that the 2007 Census activity was included in the 2003-07 NSS Strategic Plan and also Government main documents i.e. Socioeconomic Plan, PRSP and National Budget.

According to the Census Plan approved by the Census Council a strong publicity campaign was conducted by all Census Organs countrywide. Apart of a common publicity campaign done via media, a couple of sensitization meetings and events were conducted involving youth, churches, NGOs, political parties, trade unions and members of Cabinet. The topics of these well attended events were basically about the objectives of the Census, main questions, expected outputs and main Census milestones.

Also to the members of Cabinet was given a very sort training on Census organization and questionnaire in order to be able to conduct “political” supervision missions to provinces and districts. A week before the enumeration period and a week into that period, members of the Cabinet were deployed in all provinces implementing the TOR set up by the CCRGPH and endorsed by the Cabinet. During the mission these members of the Cabinet were wearing a special Census T-shirt. Also, during their mission, the members of the Cabinet were asked by the TOR to report daily (via sms) to the President of INE their findings, impressions about the process, problems and solutions adopted. The Prime Minister, was deployed to the largest and more complex province of Mozambique – Zambézia, for a week during the enumeration phase. After been at Zambézia province, she went to more 2 provinces for another week for similar job.

The provincial Governors also went to their districts during the enumeration phase to supervise and monitor the process at district level. Provincial directors were deployed fulltime at district level during the period of Census enumeration. The assignment given at District Census organs was that “*no one left out from the Census enumeration*” which put on them a very strong commitment to the endeavour. This assignment was voiced by the President of Republic in his Census Presidential Appeal. All provincial and district Census officials took it very seriously.

At rural areas the quasi chiefs were also deeply involved in the Census undertaking, explaining the objectives of the Census to their people, making sure that their territories were completely covered and all households interviewed by the enumerators assigned to their constituency /area.

As the media do not cover the entire country, the backbone of the publicity campaign of 2007 Census was pears-to-pears publicity and sensitization. Therefore, members of Civil Society were involved mobilizing their pears for the Census exercise and objectives. The role of these elements was very important for the success of the Census 2007. Political leaders wearing Census publicity T-shirt, including leaders from opposition parties, went throughout the country talking and creating awareness about the Census.

In the same line, as the Government set the Census as a National Priority in 2007, the School Calendar was adjusted by a Ministerial Decree to allow the Census Organization to hire teachers and students (aged 18 and over) as trainers and field staff. The school premises were also made available for the Census organization to host the training sessions, store Census material and accommodate the Census staff.

### ***Public accountability***

The Census Bureau decided to involve the Census major stakeholders (including cooperating partners) from the beginning of the process *i.e.* from the Census Project drafting. During 2007, regular meetings were held with cooperating partners to inform about the all process. Normally these meetings took place after Census Coordination Council meetings, and every 5 days between 15 of July till 20 of August and during post Enumeration Survey. During the enumeration phase, estimates of households enumerated by the census enumerator (in average) in each province, was given to the all main stakeholders.

Similar information at similar intervals was given to the media by the President of INE and the Census spokes person attended interviews and many live programs (Radio and TV stations) answering calls and questions from the public. At provincial level, but with less intensity, Provincial Census Office also passed regular information about the process via media.

In terms of information passed to public, INE also, in a regular fashion, gave data about the Census budget allocated to each province, wages and subsidies paid to the field staff and explained during public rallies in rural areas and media in urban areas.

The Cabinet was informed about the process both via H.E. Prime Minister in her capacity of President of Census Coordination Council and by presentations at Cabinet sessions given by the President of INE.

The interaction, trust and confidence between the field staff (enumerators mainly) and the households was greatly facilitated by the Census guiders. This person (well known by the locals) was picked from the EA and worked there, side by side, with the enumerator, helping in passing advanced notices to the households about the date of interview, sensitizing them for the importance and objectives of the Census and assure them that they are interviewed by a proper enumerator from the 2007 Census organization. The guiders were dressed with a Census publicity T-shirt.

Also the school teachers played a very important role, by explaining to the students and parents, the objectives and other issues related to the Census. A special guideline was prepared by INE meant to provide the teachers with the right knowledge about the 2007 Census and communication tools.

## ***Final remarks***

The Census process was recognized to be a National Priority, therefore no political activity was linked to the Census, and no political leader or political party claimed the activity as theirs despite their strong involvement in the Census publicity activities.

Personal involvement of members of Cabinet in the Census promotion activities, in particular HE Prime Minister leading the Census Coordination Board and going to the field during the enumeration phase and HE President of Republic addressing the people in two very crucial occasions (the Presidential Appeal for the Census enumeration at eve of the Census Day and after the enumeration phase, thanking the people and all Census machine for its participation during the Census enumeration) had a very strong impact to the public, media, civil society in general and the Census operation as a all.

Via media (interviews, press releases and conferences, talk shows, on line and special programs), meetings and rallies, the Civil Society, Government and Cooperating Partners were permanently informed about the Census and they were able to interact with the Census top management at all levels, almost daily during the enumeration phase. The people felt that the Census Executive bodies were accountable to them and brought them into the Census organization and undertaking.

Other issue relevant to the topic of this paper was the professionalism of the team involved in the Census operation and the good records and name of INE within the country. From 1996 up to now, the National Statistical System in Mozambique has been able to undertake a couple of major successful activities, namely the Population and Housing Census 1997, two editions of Household Budget Survey (1996/97 and 2002/03), Agricultural Census (2000), Business Census (2003), Informal Sector Survey (2004), Labour Force Survey (2004), etc..., all of them with response rates close to 100%. The 1997 Population and Housing Census final results was delivered within two years and more than 19 publications was produced and disseminated through out of the Country. With this record, the liaison and confidence between INE and the public was and still being quite strong, helping to build the right environment for the Census undertaking.

A Population and Housing Census is by far in Developing Countries, a statistical operation which is a very special opportunity to call attention of Government, decision makers and other users including ordinary citizens, on the Statistics. It is indeed an opportunity to boost the profile of the National Statistical System in the Country. This is done, by conducting a good Census.

From the all said above it emerges clear that the strategic management and planning of the process together with the political environment of country and high profile given to Official Statistics in the country were crucial to have the political leaders, decision makers and the ordinary public joining INE in this major endeavour which, so far, reached a tremendous success.

**References:**

2007 Census Act, Manuals and Reports (INE, Mozambique, 2007)