

GHANA STATISTICAL SERVICE

IPUMS – Country Report: Ghana

• Introduction

- The Population Census is the single most important source of data on the population and its characteristics in the country.
- It provides information on the size, growth, composition and distribution of entire population, and for subpopulation; as well for the geographical areas, to the lowest levels, i.e, such as localities, villages and settlements, and residential areas in the municipal areas.

- **History of census taking**

- **Pre-independence censuses**

The first census of the population in Ghana was taken in 1891, and further censuses were taken in each tenth year until the series was interrupted as a result of World War II but was resumed in 1948.

- Chiefs were asked to carry out the counting which, in accordance with native custom at the time, was done by heads of families placing in a bowl or other receptacle a cowry for each female or a grain of corn for each male member of the family.
- The cowries and grains were counted and the numbers of each communicated to the District Commissioner by the chief but this practice was gradually discontinued in later years

- The 1931 census was the first in which the entire population was individually counted; either by enumerators who counted and recorded village population on a form or by means of forms delivered to households in which the head of the household or occupier inserted particulars of each individual.

- A feature of the 1931 census was that whereas on previous occasions an *ad hoc* enabling ordinance had been enacted for each census, on this occasion a definite ordinance was enacted which was intended to be permanent.
- For the 1948 census, a temporary Census Office was formed under the direction of a Census Commissioner from which all forms and instructions were distributed and to which all completed forms were sent after collection for tabulation.

Pre-Independence Population of Ghana

Year	Total
1891	764,613*
1901	1,549,661*
1911	1,503,911*
1921	2,486,392
1931	3,457,282
1948	4,501,218

* Exclude data from the Trust Territories (Togoland)

- Post-Independence Censuses
 - The 1960 Census was the first to be undertaken since Ghana achieved her Independence on March 6, 1957.
 - It was also one of the first censuses taken in Africa as part of the World Population Census proclaimed by the United Nations.

- The 1960 Ghana Census has since been acclaimed as the first modern Census on the African continent and aroused interest not only in Africa but also in several other parts of the world.
- The second post-independence census was conducted in 1970, with the expectation that a decennial census programme would be maintained.

- The 1970 Population Census also had all the essential features of a modern population census, as set out in the “Principles and recommendations for the 1970 Population Censuses” issued by the United Nations.
- The third post-independence census was conducted in 1984 (reference date – 11th March) due to circumstances beyond the control of the statistical organization.

- The 1984 census data were the first to be captured, processed and stored electronically. Data processing of the census information was undertaken using a Wang VS-80 Main-frame computer which was linked to micro computers.
- The forth census which was expected to have been conducted in 1994 was re-scheduled to 2000 (reference date – 26th March).

Post-Independence Population of Ghana

Year	Population		
	Male	Female	Total
1960	3,400,270	3,326,545	6,726,815
1970	4,247,809	4,311,504	8,559,313
1984	6,063,848	6,232,233	12,296,081
2000	9,357,382	9,554,697	18,912,079

- 2000 Population and Housing Census (PHC)
 - The 2000 PHC was the first time Ghana conducted a Population and Housing census as one operation and reactivated the maintenance of major data collection programmes and provided data required as a basis for the design and development of socio-economic and population policies and programmes.

- Census Preparatory Activities
 - Two major activities undertaken at the planning stage of the 2000 PHC were the preparation of census instruments and the trial census.
 - These instruments which included the questionnaire, instruction manuals, code lists, and enumeration forms were prepared and tested during the trial census.

- Main Census

- Field work took three weeks to complete with a reference day (26th March, 2000) as the census night. The enumeration was done by enumerators recruited and trained by Statistical service.
- The census was a de facto count and each person present in Ghana, irrespective of nationality, was enumerated at the place he/she spent the census night (26 March 2000).
- The data gathered during the 2000 PHC was processed electronically through the scanning technology.

- Availability of Data
- Access to census data has normally been through the following:
 - published reports (printed)
 - published reports (on tapes and CD-ROM)
 - verbal dissemination (press briefings, media discussions, briefing at official meetings).
 - request

END