

USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN MALAWI CENSUS – A SYNOPSIS



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Malawi Technology Based Census

- National Statistical Office of Malawi conducted its first ever CAPI based census between 3rd and 23rd September 2018
- Conducting a CAPI census requires thorough preparations
- NSO Malawi engaged the US Census Bureau who assisted us with
 - Census Planning and
 - Development of CAPI application
- A questionnaire specification tool was created which specified among others response categories and formats, skip routes, soft and hard checks, error messages e.t.c
- This was followed by CAPI development, a technical iterative process which converted the paper questionnaire into CAPI



Malawi Technology Based Census

- The CAPI questionnaire was pretested thrice and piloted once to ensure efficacy of both the questionnaire and the system
- Prior to the development of the CAPI, we did the Census Mapping using satellite imagery
- The Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD), a South-Eastern Africa regional geospatial body based in Nairobi, Kenya was engaged to provide satellite imagery and technical Assistance
- All the maps were drawn in the GIS lab at the office. Mappers went to the field only to verify the maps



The pros and cons

- The CAPI system of data collection for a census is very good as it minimizes errors due to the inbuilt checks
- Data entry is bypassed as data is entered in the field while being collected
- In this regard, timeliness is a big advantage associated with the technology
- Cost effectiveness as the tablets can be shared with neighboring countries is another advantage. Malawi shared its tablets with Zambia
- However, where internet is not working there is need to come up with methods for sending the data
- There is also need for rigorous pretests and pilots to build meaningful and useful checks
- Maps on the other hand are more accurate when using satellite imagery and can be done faster

