

A newsletter from East View highlighting census data from around the world

COLONIALISM'S IMPACT ON CENSUSES, HISTORICAL AND MODERN

Colonialism instituted and maintained certain practices of conducting a census, going far beyond just a simple enumeration of a population, to act as tools of authority, resource management, and social manipulation. Kenya is one country of many that has been impacted by this colonial legacy when it was under British rule. British-assigned tribal groups are still used today and have a tangible impact on census results. In the 2009 and 2019 census, for instance, Kenyan authorities' fear of a fast-growing Somali population led to accusations of an intentional undercounting compared with other records of population counts such as voter registration.

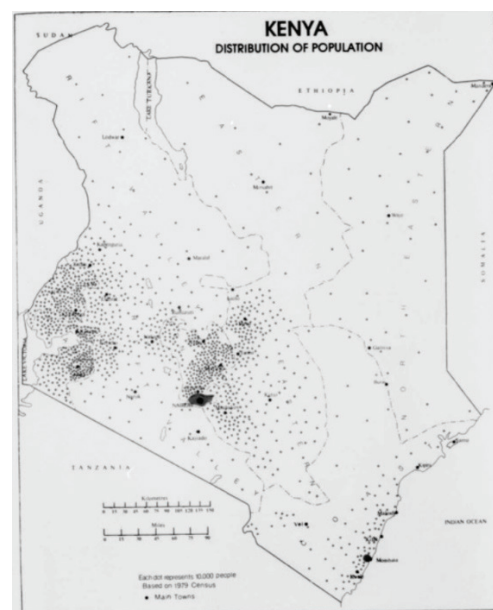
Censuses were important for colonial authorities in marking territories, imposing taxation, and enforcing government directives. They were also used to categorize populations along racial, ethnic, or tribal lines, almost exclusively done from the perspective of an occupying power ignorant of local customs and culture.

How Can the Global Census Archive Simplify Research?

The Global Census Archive presents census data and publications using a simple and intuitive interface that makes discovery easy. A researcher who is interested in Kenya can jump straight to the Kenya country landing page, which contains all East View-collected censuses that were conducted by Kenya or the British colonial authorities. Every publication is then organized within its associated census year to further enhance discoverability. This makes it incredibly easy to identify and jump to a single country year landing page to view all materials associated with, for instance, Kenya's 1962 census, the last to be conducted by the British before Kenya's independence. Searches can be applied to all Kenya publications or limited to a specific census year.

Also, a researcher can do a broad search of the entire Global Census Archive. By searching "Kenya" across the entire platform, results contained within publications from the British Empire or from adjacent colonies and countries can yield additional insights.

Read on below for more information on GCA's coverage of Kenya.



From the Kenya 1979 Population Census: Volume II: Analytical Report: Map displaying the population distribution and main towns of Kenya in 1979. 1979 Population Census: Volume II: Analytical Report. First Publishing Date: 1981.

Kenya's Story Told Through Publications

Within the Global Census Archive, the 40 tribes used by the British colonial authorities are readily apparent in tables and text. In the *Kenya Population Census, 1962: Tables: Volume II*, a table of all 40 tribes is presented. This can be compared directly with a document from the 2009 census, *Population and Household Distribution by Socio-Economic Characteristics*, where the same tribal groups are often used, but Kenyan authorities now provide far more tribal sub-groups to recognize the true diversity of the country. Maps found within the Kenyan censuses also help tell the story of the country by presenting historical visualization of variables such as fertility rates, population distribution, sex-ratios, and more. The rapid population growth experienced by Kenya has brought the current population to almost 48 million people as of the 2019 census. Areas of population growth can be seen by looking at a population map from 1979 and identifying which regions have seen a notable increase, whether through natural fertility rates or migration.

MAJOR GROUP	TRIBE				
Central Bantu	Kikuyu	TAVETA	20,828	JUMBU	3,274
	Dahy	TESO	338,833	MUNYOYAYA	1,611
	Meru	THARAKA	175,905	MYITA	1,471
	Moro	TURKANA	988,592	NGARE	1,636
	Kamba	LUHYA	5,338,666	PATE	1,419
Western Bantu	Tharaka	LUHYA (SO STATED)	578,583	SIU	3,829
	Luhya	BAKHAYO	124,555	VUMBA	1,890
Coastal Bantu	Kisii	BANYALA	273,198	WACHANGAMWE	2,607
	Mijikenda	BANYORE	310,894	WAFAZA	487
	Pokomo / Riverine	BATSOTSO	121,518	WAKATWA	172
	Taveta	BUKUSU	1,432,810	WAKILIFI	711
	Taita	IDAKHO	170,720	WAKILINDINI	699
	Swahili / Shirazi	ISUKHA	217,327	WAMTWAPA	299
	Bajun	KARRAS	252,761	WASHAKA	289
	Boni / Saayo	KISA	137,268	WATANGANA	644
	Luo	MARACHI	155,341	WATIKU	281
	Nilotic	MARAGOLI	618,340	KALENJIN	4,967,328
Nilo-Hamitic :	MARAMA	152,427	KALENJIN (SO STATED)	95,842	
Kalenjin-speaking	SAMIA	124,952	ARROR	25,099	
Other Nilo-Hamitic	Marakwet	TACHONI	118,363	BUNG'OMEK	3,704
	Pokot	TIRIKI	209,814	CHEKANGANY	15,956
	Saboti	TURA	30,388	DOROBO	35,015
	Tugen	WANGA	309,407	EL MOLO	2,844
	Nandi	MJIKENDA	1,960,574	ENDO	6,058
	Samburu	MJIKENDA (SO STATED)	6,156	KEIYO	313,925
	Turkana	BONI	7,602	KIPSIGIS	1,916,317
	Iteso	CHONYI	148,806	MARAKWET	180,149
	Mbaroto	DAHALO	2,398	NANDI	949,835
	Njempo			OGIEK	78,691
Western Hamitic :					
Kenillie & Galla-speaking					
Eastern Hamitic :					
	Somali-speaking				

The Global Census Archive platform provides researchers with a valuable tool to discover important historical documents that help explain the legacy of colonialism on specific countries and how these same countries are forging their own paths as sovereign nations.

From the *Kenya Population Census, 1962: Tables: Volume II* and the *Kenya 2009 Population and Household Distribution by Socio-Economic Characteristics*: A split view of two tables from the 1962 (left) and 2009 (right) censuses showing the similarities and differences in tribal groupings. *Kenya Population Census, 1962: Tables: Advance Report of Volumes I & II*. First Publishing Date: 1964. *Kenya 2009 Population and Household Distribution by Socio-Economic Characteristics*. First Publishing Date: 2010

Further reading on Kenya's complex relationship with censuses and colonialism:

- The Myth, Consequences And Benefits Kenya's 42(+) Tribes
<https://ids.uonbi.ac.ke/myth-consequences-and-benefits-kenyas-42-tribes>
- Population numbers: Somalis race to join big four
<https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001275101/population-numbers-somalis-race-to-join-big-four>
- Somalis rubbish census results, claim higher figures
<https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2020-02-23-somalis-rubbish-census-results-claim-higher-figures/>
- Kenya defends tribal census figures
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-11143914>
- Counting groups left behind: a stellar step for inclusion in Kenya
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2019/11/counting-groups-left-behind-stellar-step-inclusion-kenya>



The East View **Global Census Archive**® (GCA) is an innovative program to collect official data and publications issued by the national census authorities of more than 175 countries, from the early 19th century to the present day, providing a key resource for scholars and analysts to find current and historical census data to support critical research into our changing world. GCA provides a single platform experience to explore the world's census publications: all countries and regions, the complete depth of published census materials, including original census publications in e-book form, as well as modern tabular data in Excel format and GIS files for advanced users.