

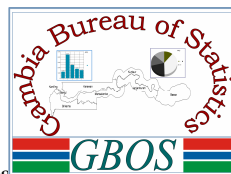
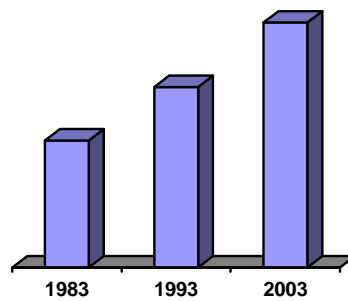
REPUBLIC OF



THE GAMBIA

POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS 2003

HOUSING AND HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS VOLUME 6



Gambia Bureau of Statistics

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| TABLE OF CONTENTS | Page no |
|---|----------------|
| Preface..... | 9 |
| Summary of Key Findings..... | 10 |
| Background of Housing Censuses | 13 |
| Scope and Limitation of Data..... | 13 |
| CHAPTER 1: HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS..... | 15 |
| Introduction | |
| 1.1 Households Tenure of Accommodation..... | 15 |
| 1.1.1 Tenure of Accommodation by LGA | 15 |
| 1.1.2 Tenure of Accommodation and Type of Household..... | 19 |
| 1.1.3 Tenure of Accommodation and Age of Household Head | 20 |
| 1.1.4 Tenure of Accommodation and Marital Status of Household Head | 22 |
| 1.1.5 Occupation of Household Heads and Tenure of Accommodation | 23 |
| 1.2 Housing Conditions | 25 |
| 1.2.1 Main Source of Light..... | 26 |
| 1.2.2 Electricity Use (International Comparison)..... | 26 |
| 1.2.3 Main Source of Light and Tenure of Accommodation | 27 |
| 1.2.4 Main Cooking Fuel by tenure of Accommodation..... | 28 |
| 1.2.5 Cooking Place by tenure of Accommodation | 30 |
| 1.2.6 Toilet Facilities by tenure of Accommodation | 32 |
| 1.2.7 Toilet Facilities (International Comparison)..... | 33 |
| 1.2.8 Bathing Place by tenure of Accommodation | 34 |
| 1.2.9 Source of Water by Tenure of Accommodation | 36 |
| 1.2.10 Inter-Censal Comparison of Sources of Water Supply | 38 |

| | |
|---|----|
| CHAPTER 2: HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS | 40 |
| Introduction | |
| Background and Importance | |
| 2.1 Number of Households by LGA and the Inter-Censal Change in Number of Households | 40 |
| 2.2 Household Size | 41 |
| 2.2.1 Average Household Size..... | 41 |
| 2.2.2 Average Household Size (International Comparison)..... | 43 |
| 2.2.3 Households by Size and Sex of Household Head | 44 |
| 2.2.4 Proportion of Single Person Households..... | 45 |
| 2.2.5 Proportion of Single Person Households (International Comparison) | 46 |
| 2.3 Types of Households | 46 |
| 2.4 Characteristics of Household Heads..... | 48 |
| 2.4.1 Sex of Household Heads..... | 48 |
| 2.4.2 Household Headship by Sex (International Comparison) | 49 |
| 2.4.3 Mean Age of Household Heads | 50 |
| 2.4.4 Household Size by Mean Age of Household Head..... | 51 |
| 2.4.5 Marital status of Household Heads | 53 |
| 2.4.6 Household Heads and Type of Union | 55 |
| 2.4.7 Marriage and Household Size | 56 |
| 2.4.8 Educational Attainment of Household Heads..... | 57 |
| 2.4.9 Household Size and Education of Household Head..... | 58 |
| 2.4.10 Household headship and Occupation | 60 |
| 2.4.11 Employment Status of Household Heads | 62 |
| Concepts and definitions | 64 |
| Statistical tables: Absolute figures of selected tables | 69 |

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| Questionnaire..... | 85 |
|--------------------|----|

Tables and figures :..... Page no.

| | |
|--|----|
| Table 1.1b Percentage distribution of household heads by tenure of accommodation, sex and Urban-Rural areas, 1993..... | 16 |
|--|----|

| | |
|---|----|
| Table 1.1 Percentage distribution of household heads by tenure of accommodation, sex and Urban-Rural areas, 2003..... | 16 |
|---|----|

| | |
|---|----|
| Table1.2: Percentage distribution of household heads by tenure of accommodation and local government area, 2003. | 17 |
|---|----|

| | |
|--|----|
| Table1.2b: Percentage distribution of household heads by tenure of accommodation and local government area, 1993. | 18 |
|--|----|

| | |
|---|----|
| Table1.3: Percentage distribution of household heads by type of household and tenure of accommodation, 2003. | 19 |
|---|----|

| | |
|--|----|
| Table1.3b: Percentage distribution of household heads by type of household and tenure of accommodation, 1993. | 19 |
|--|----|

| | |
|---|-----|
| Table1.4b: Percentage distribution of household heads by tenure of accommodation and age, 1993..... | 21. |
|---|-----|

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table1.4: Percentage distribution of household heads by tenure of accommodation and age, 2003..... | 21. |
|--|-----|

| | |
|---|-----|
| Table1.5b: Percentage distribution of household heads by marital status, tenure of accommodation and sex, 1993..... | 22. |
|---|-----|

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table1.5: Percentage distribution of household heads by marital status, tenure of accommodation and sex, 2003..... | 23. |
|--|-----|

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table1.6b: Percentage distribution of economically active heads of households by tenure of accommodation and occupation, 1993..... | 24. |
|--|-----|

| | |
|---|-----|
| Table1.6: Percentage distribution of economically active heads of households by tenure of accommodation and occupation, 2003..... | 24. |
|---|-----|

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table 1.7b: Percentage distribution of households by main source of light and local government area, 1993..... | 25. |
|--|-----|

| | |
|---|-----|
| Table 1.7: Percentage distribution of households by main source of light and local government area, 2003..... | 26. |
|---|-----|

| | |
|--|----|
| Table 1.8b: Percentage of Households using Electricity by Country, 1993..... | 26 |
|--|----|

| | |
|---|----|
| Table 1.8: Percentage of Households using Electricity by Country, 2000..... | 27 |
|---|----|

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table 1.9b: Percentage distribution of household heads by tenure of accommodation and main source of light, 1993..... | 27 |
| Table 1.9: Percentage distribution of household heads by tenure of accommodation and main source of light, 2003..... | 28. |
| 1.10b: Percentage distribution of households by type of cooking fuel and local government area, 1983 & 1993..... | 29 |
| 1.10: Percentage distribution of households by type of cooking fuel and local government area, 1983, 1993 & 2003. | 29 |
| Table 1.11b: Inter-Censal Change in the Percentage Distribution of Households by Cooking Place, 1983, 1993..... | 31 |
| Table 1.11: Inter-Censal Change in the Percentage Distribution of Households by Cooking Place, 1983, 1993, 2003 | 31 |
| 1.12b: Percentage distribution of households by type of toilet facility and local government area, 1993 | 33. |
| 1.12: Percentage distribution of households by type of toilet facility and local government area, 2003 | 33. |
| Table 1.13b: Percentage of households using Water Closet (WC) by country and residence 1993..... | 34 |
| Table 1.13: Percentage of households using Water Closet (WC) by country and residence 2003..... | 35 |
| Table 1.14: Inter-Censal Change in the Percentage Distribution of Households by Bathing Facility, 1983-2003 | 36 |
| Table 1.14b: Per cent distribution of households by tenure of accommodation and bathing facilities, 2003..... | 36 |
| Table 1.14c: Inter-Censal Change in the Percentage Distribution of Households by Bathing Facility, 1983-1993 | 36 |
| Table 1.15c: Percentage distribution of households by main source of water and local government area, 2003 | 37. |
| Table 1.15: Percentage distribution of households by main source of water and local government area, 2003. | 38 |
| Table 1.15b: Distribution of households by source of water and tenure of accommodation, 2003..... | 38 |
| Table 1.16b: Inter-Censal Change in the Percentage Distribution of Households by Main Source of Water, 1983-1993..... | 39. |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table 1.16: Inter-Censal Change in the Percentage Distribution of Households by Main Source of Water, 1983-2003..... | 39. |
| Table 2.1: Distribution of households by LGA, 1983-2003..... | 41 |
| Table 2.1b: Distribution of households by LGA, 1973- 1993..... | 41 |
| Table 2.2a: Average Household Size by Residence 1983-2003..... | 42 |
| Table 2.2b: Average Household Size by Residence, 2003..... | 42 |
| Table 2.3: Average Household Size by Country and Residence, 2003 | 43 |
| Table 2.3b: Average Household Size by Country and Residence, 1993 | 44 |
| Table 2.4a: Percentage distribution of household heads by size and residence, 2003..... | 44 |
| Table 2.4b: Frequencies of household size, 2003..... | 45 |
| Table 2.5: Percentage of Single Person Households by residence, 1993 and 2003..... | 45 |
| Table 2.6a: Percentage of single person households by country, 1993 | 46. |
| Table 2.6: Percentage of single person households by country, 2000 | 46. |
| Table 2.7b: Percentage Distribution of households by type of household, local government area and residence, 1983 and 1993 | 47 |
| Table 2.7: Percentage Distribution of households by type of household, local government area and residence, 1993 and 2003 | 47 |
| Table 2.8: Percentage distribution of household heads by sex, local government area and residence. 1993, 2003..... | 48 |
| Table 2.8b: Percentage distribution of household heads by sex, local government area and residence. 1983-2003 | 49 |
| Table 2.9b: Percentage distribution of household heads by sex, country and urban-rural areas 1993..... | 50 |
| Table 2.9: Percentage distribution of household heads by sex, country and urban-rural areas 2003..... | 50 |
| Table 2.10b: Mean Age of Household Head by Sex, Local Government Area and residence, 2003..... | 51 |
| Table 2.10: Mean Age of Household Head by Sex, Local Government Area and residence, 2003..... | 51 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table 2.11: Mean Age of Household Head by Sex, Size of Households and Residence, 2003 | 52 |
| Table 2.11b: Mean Age of Household Head by Sex, Size of Households and Residence, 1993 | 53 |
| Table 2.12b: Percentage Distribution of Household Heads by Marital Status, Sex and Local Government Area 1993 | 53. |
| Table 2.12: Percentage Distribution of Household Heads by Marital Status, Sex and Local Government Area 2003 | 54. |
| Table 2.13b: Percentage Distribution of Ever Married Household Heads by Marital Status, Type of Union and Sex, 1993 | 55 |
| Table 2.13: Percentage Distribution of Ever Married Household Heads by Marital Status, Type of Union and Sex, 2003 | 56 |
| Table 2.14b: Percentage Distribution of Household Heads by Household Size, Marital Status and Sex, 1993..... | 56 |
| Table 2.14: Percentage Distribution of Household Heads by Household Size, Marital Status and Sex, 2003..... | 57 |
| Table 2.15b: Percentage Distribution of Household Heads by Sex..... | 57 |
| Table 2.15: Percentage Distribution of Household Heads by Sex..... | 58 |
| Table 2.16: Percentage Distribution of Household Heads by Educational Attainment, Size of Household and Sex, 2003..... | 59 |
| Table 2.16b: Percentage Distribution of Household Heads by Educational Attainment, Size of Household and Sex, 1993..... | 59 |
| Table 2.17: Percentage Distribution of economically active household heads by Occupation, Residence and Sex, 2003..... | 60. |
| Table 2.17b: Percentage Distribution of economically active household heads by Occupation, Residence and Sex, 1993..... | 62 |
| Table 2.18b: Percentage Distribution of Employed Household Heads by Employment Status, Sex and Urban-Rural Residence, 1993 | 62. |
| Table 2.18: Percentage Distribution of Employed Household Heads by Employment Status, Sex and Urban-Rural Residence, 2003 | 63. |
| Figure 1: Per cent of household by tenure type, 2003. | 15 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Figure 2: Percentage of households renting their Accommodation by Local Government Area | 18 |
| Figure 3: Per cent of household heads that owned accommodation by type of household, 2003..... | 20 |
| Figure 3.4b: Per cent of household heads who own accommodation by age group, 2003. | 22 |
| Figure 4: Per cent of married male heads by tenure type, 2003 | 23 |
| Figure 5: Per cent of households in LGAs using WC toilet facilities, 2003 | 32. |
| Figure 6: Per cent of households by bathing facilities, 2003, 2003..... | 35. |
| Figure 7: Average number of persons in households by urban and rural areas, 2003 | 43. |
| Figure 8: Per cent of single-person households by urban and rural areas, 2003. | 46 |
| Figure 9: Per cent of heads by sex 1993 and 2003 | 49. |
| Figure 10: Mean age in years of heads by sex and residence, 2003 | 52. |
| Figure 11: Per cent of heads by formal education, 2003..... | 58. |
| Figure 12: Per cent of heads by occupation, 2003 | 61. |
| References | 87. |

Preface

Volume six of the 2003 Population and Housing Census is the second edition of the series on housing and household characteristics. The report has two main chapters: chapter 1 – focuses on housing characteristics and chapter 2 on household characteristics.

In addition to the two chapters the report presents simplified and succinct summary of key findings that enable users to have a clear picture of the evolution of the housing and household characteristics of The Gambia during at least the past two decades.

I am greatly indebted to Mr. Edrissa Ceesay, senior statistician, at The Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBoS), for generating the 2003 tables, which he used in preparing this report. Mrs. Lolley Kah Jallow is also remembered here for the tables she generated for this publication. My gratitude also goes to Mr. Alieu Saho, a staff of GBOS, for assisting in editing this report.

I wish to recall the relentless efforts of Mrs. Sainabou Mbenga Njie, a staff of GBoS who typed the 1993 data presented in this report. This data was taken from the publication entitled: POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS 1993 - HOUSING AND HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS, VOLUME 6.

Finally, I also wish to thank the UNFPA, and the World Bank for supporting The Gambia Government in conducting the 2003 Population and Housing Census.

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SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Housing Characteristics

- Ownership of accommodation has improved slightly over the inter-censal period 1993-2003. It has improved in urban and rural areas as well as among male household heads.
- In The Gambia three in every ten households rent the accommodation in which they stay. Six in every ten households own the accommodation in which they stay. The proportions by type of tenure vary narrowly across local government areas (LGAs).
- Half of extended households own accommodation, two-thirds of composite households rent and one-half of nucleus households rent.
- The distribution of households by tenure and age of household heads shows that the proportion of household heads that rent declines with increases in the age of the household heads. On the contrary, the proportion that own accommodation increases with the age of the household heads.
- Just over a quarter of married household heads rent accommodation.
- In 2003, the occupation that engages service and market sales workers has the highest proportion of household heads (45 per cent) that have rental tenure status. Agriculture has the highest proportion of workers (88.7 per cent) that have ownership tenure of accommodation.
- The main source of light in The Gambia is candle. This is true for all tenure types. The inter-censal differential (1993-2003) is insignificant. About one in every two households uses candle as main source of light in The Gambia.
- In 2003, one in four households uses electricity as main source of light. In 1993, it was one in every five households.
- About half of those who rent use electricity and, about a fifth of those who own accommodation use electricity as main source of light.
- From 1993 to 2003 the proportion of households using electricity whilst in rental tenure increased by 4 per cent. The proportion of households using candles and kerosene lamps decreased by 5 per cent.
- About 90 per cent of households use firewood as main fuel for cooking. The inter-censal change was almost zero per cent.
- More than three quarters of Gambian households cook in rooms or kitchens. About 15 per cent more households use rooms in 2003 compared to 1993.

- Private pit is the most common toilet facility used in The Gambia. More than one-half of the households in The Gambia use this facility. The urban-rural differentials in the use of toilet facilities are significant with Water Closet being more common in urban areas especially in Banjul.
- The proportion of households using Water Closet in 2003 is higher than the proportion in 1993 by about 9 per cent.
- About 45 per cent of households use separate room for single household use as bathing place, whereas, about 40 per cent use enclosure without roof. During the inter-censal periods 1983 to 2003, the proportion of households using separate room for the use of one household, has been on a progressive rise, whereas, the proportion using enclosure without roof has been on a regressive decline.
- Just over 70 per cent of households use safe drinking water sources.
- The most commonly used source of water is public standpipe. About 2 in every 3 households use public standpipe.
- The proportion of households using safe sources of water has remarkably increased over the past three decennial censuses 1983-2003. More than 50 per cent increase.

Household Characteristics

- The number of households has been increasing almost proportionately with increases in the population of The Gambia over the past three decennial censuses.
- The average household size in The Gambia is about 8 persons. This average size has never changed by even 1 person the past 20 years.
- In The Gambia about one in every three households has more than 9 persons in the household. In other words, one in every three has household size that is more than the national average household size of 8.3 persons.
- About one in every ten households is a single person household.
- About half of households in The Gambia are extended households.
- Over two-thirds of household heads are male. However, during the past three decades the proportion of female heads has been on the rise.
- The average age of household heads has increased to 46 years in 2003. In 1993 it was 44 years.
- There is a low positive linear relationship between household size and age of household heads as shown by a correlation coefficient of 0.3.

The average household size is 8.3 persons with a standard deviation of 7.4 persons. The average age of household heads is 46 years with a standard deviation of 15.5 years.

- In 2003, about 88 per cent of male household heads are married and almost 68 per cent of female household heads are also married.
- About 6 per cent of female heads of households are divorcees. This percentage was almost constant between 1993 and 2003. About two-thirds of the female household heads that are divorcees are in monogamous marital union.
- Three out of every 50 female heads of households are divorcees. This ratio was almost constant between 1993 and 2003. Over two-thirds of the female household heads that were divorcees were in monogamous marital union.
- The proportion of female heads of households widowed has increased from around 15 per cent in 1993 to 17.7 per cent in 2003.
- There is a strong negative correlation of $-.72$ between household size and the number of never married household heads.
- There is a fairly strong positive correlation of $.59$ between household size and the number of married household heads.
- The number of household heads with formal education increased approximately by 11 per cent between 1993 and 2003 to reach almost 31 per cent.
- In 1993, about 71.4 per cent of household heads had no formal education and only about 19 per cent had formal education.
- In 2003, about 67 per cent of household heads are without formal education and only about 31 per cent of heads have formal education.
- Most household heads are crop producers and skilled agricultural workers (about 32 per cent of household heads). This represents a decline of 6 per cent between 1993 and 2003 resulting from the increasing prominence of other occupations in the service sector.
- The proportion of household heads that are employees or self-employed remained almost constant between 1993 and 2003. About 60 per cent are self-employed and 31 per cent employed.

Background of Housing Censuses

The 2003 Population and Housing Census is the fourth decennial census conducted in The Gambia in which housing questions have been included. A census on housing was first conducted in 1973. During the 1983 and 1993 censuses, housing characteristics were also included with modest modifications and improvements from one census to the next in terms of content and coverage.

The 1973 Housing Census made a count of compounds, and buildings/structures and also looked at the use to which such buildings are put. Information collected on construction material of walls and roofs during this census was used to classify buildings into broad permanency category.

In the 1983 Housing Census, the 1973 Housing Census questionnaire was improved with the inclusion of questions on the socio-economic characteristics of household heads, toilet, bath facilities and main source of light and cooking fuel. Except for minor additions to the 2003 census instrument, the 1983 and 1993 Housing Census questionnaires and questions on housing and household characteristics are largely the same in content as that of the 2003.

Scope and Limitation of Data

Scope

The 2003 Housing Census was conducted in April 2003 a week before the Population Census. The housing and household questions were directed to household heads or their representatives each of whom was required to give information about the household and housing unit under his or her care.

The Housing Census collected information on the housing conditions of households both in respect of tenure, source of water and light, cooking fuel and toilet facilities.

National and administrative level time series data, covering the period 1983-2003, for various household and housing characteristics are presented in the report. The lower level disaggregates correspond to urban and rural residence and, local government areas. The housing information presented in this report, it is hoped, will provide vivid indicators on trends in housing and household welfare in general.

Attempts have been made to incorporate few critical statistics on housing conditions as required by Habitat II World Conference, which focuses on housing and household conditions within the context of developmental issues such as poverty, social exclusions, policies and programs on housing. In this light, the preparation of this report will serve a useful purpose for assessing the country's housing conditions vis-à-vis international standards or levels.

Data Limitations

In the course of administering the housing census questionnaire there have been very few instances when the head of household was absent. Since the census was to be conducted within a specified time, interviews were conducted with representatives of the heads of

households. The representatives are very often related to the household heads. Some of these representatives may not have a complete knowledge about the household as do the head.