

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1: Background:

Population and housing censuses have regularly been conducted in Malawi since the colonial era. However, the most comprehensive censuses have only been undertaken during the post-colonial period starting with the 1966 census and every ten years thereafter. Censuses have been conducted as part of the Integrated Household Survey programme. The four yearly Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), the five yearly Integrated Household Survey (IHS) and the annual Welfare Monitoring Survey (WMS) are part of this program.

In addition to providing benchmark data on demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the Malawi population, censuses are unique sources of information for small geographical areas and sub-national groups. Such information is vital for planning and decision-making at lower levels of the country's administrative structures.

1.2: The 2008 Population and Housing Census

1.2.1: The enumeration period and census management

The 2008 census enumeration was undertaken for a period of three weeks, from 8th to 28th June. The exercise involved the deployment of large numbers of enumerators who canvassed the entire country and administered a structured questionnaire to all persons in regular households, institutions and the homeless. In order to ensure full coverage of the population, both de facto (place where respondent slept the census night) and the de jure (usual household members) methodologies were adopted.

The Census is a major source of data for measuring progress towards the achievement of targets/goals of the major development frameworks: the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

The management, planning and implementation of the 2008 Census was undertaken by the National Statistical Office, which is mandated under the Statistics Act of 1967 to compile and disseminate all official statistics. The planning exercise started in 2003 by the demarcation of the country into small Enumeration Areas (EAs). Other critical activities in the census process included questionnaire development and data processing.

1.2.2: The census questionnaire and data capture

The development of the census questionnaire was undertaken in consultation with stakeholders and efforts were made to include adequate information that would satisfy most data needs in the country without overloading it. The Census collected data on sex, age and

place of birth and residence; disability; parental survivorship; education and literacy status; employment status and industry; marital status and children ever born, household amenities and assets; housing conditions; emigration; and, maternal and general deaths in the household. The census questionnaire is attached as annex 2.

Data capture was undertaken by scanning technology, which enabled shortening of data entry period to two months.

1.3: Quality of census data

It was recognized that data quality enhances credibility of census and ensures that decision-making process is more effective. Efforts were therefore made in ensuring that the quality of census data was not compromised at critical stages of census implementation. Specifically, it was necessary to ensure that quality was not compromised due to use of poor maps, untested methodologies/instruments, inadequate supervision, poor training, inadequate support from the general public and inadequacies in data processing.

A number of strategies were therefore put in place to address issues mentioned above. These strategies involved the demarcation of the country into small administration areas to ensure complete coverage; preparation of comprehensive supervisors' and enumerator' manuals; pretesting questionnaires and other procedures; providing adequate training to all staff involved in census activities, more especially enumerators; providing adequate publicity in order to gain public support; and undertaking key corrections and other edits immediately after scanning of the data.

1.4: Organization of the report

The report is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1: Introduction which includes background to the census. Chapter 2: Population size and composition, which includes annual population growth since 1966; inter-censal population growth rates, trends and sex ratios, population distribution; geographical/spatial distribution, urban population and population density. Chapter 3: Population characteristics covering nationality, religion, education/literacy, disability and orphan hood. Chapter 4: Household and housing characteristics covering household size, dwelling unit characteristics, household utilities that covers sources of energy for lighting, sources of energy for cooking, sources of drinking water, type of facility and household assets. Chapter 5: Population dynamics covering fertility and mortality.

2.0 POPULATION SIZE AND COMPOSITION

2.1 Population Size

Malawi conducted its Population and Housing Census in June 2008, making it the fifth during the post-independence period. Since 1966, the country has regularly participated in the recommended UN decennial census programme.

Table 2.1 shows that the population has grown from 4,039,583 in 1966 to 13,077,160 in 2008 an increase of 9 million. The table also shows annual population growth rates since 1966, as depicted in Figure 1

Table 2.1: Total population 1966-2008

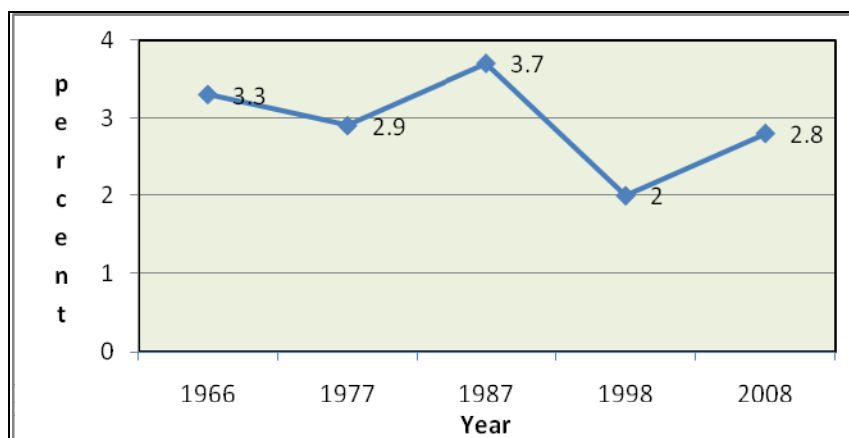
Year of Census	Total Population	Average Annual/Intercensal Growth rate
1966	4,039,583	3.3
1977	5,547,460	2.9
1987	7,988,507	3.7
1998	9,933,868	2.0
2008	13,077,160	2.8

De-facto population;

2.2 Population Growth

Table 2.2 shows inter-censal annual growth rates and inter-censal population increase for the period, 1998 – 2008, at national, regional and district level. The annual growth rate in the Northern Region was 3.3 percent, Central Region 3.1 percent and Southern Region 2.4 percent.

Figure 1: Annual inter-censal growth rates 1966-2008



The annual growth rate for Lilongwe and Mzuzu cities is 4.4 percent, Zomba city (3.0 percent) and Blantyre city (2.8 percent). The table also show that at district level, Mwanza

had the highest growth rate of 4.1 percent; Chitipa and Mchinji 3.5 percent and Karonga 3.4 percent. The lowest annual population growth is observed for Zomba rural at 0.6 percent.

Across the regions, the table shows a 39 percent inter-censal growth in Northern Region, 36 percent in the Central Region and 26 percent in the Southern Region. Mzuzu City has the highest inter-censal growth rate of 54 percent and the lowest is Zomba rural with 6 percent.

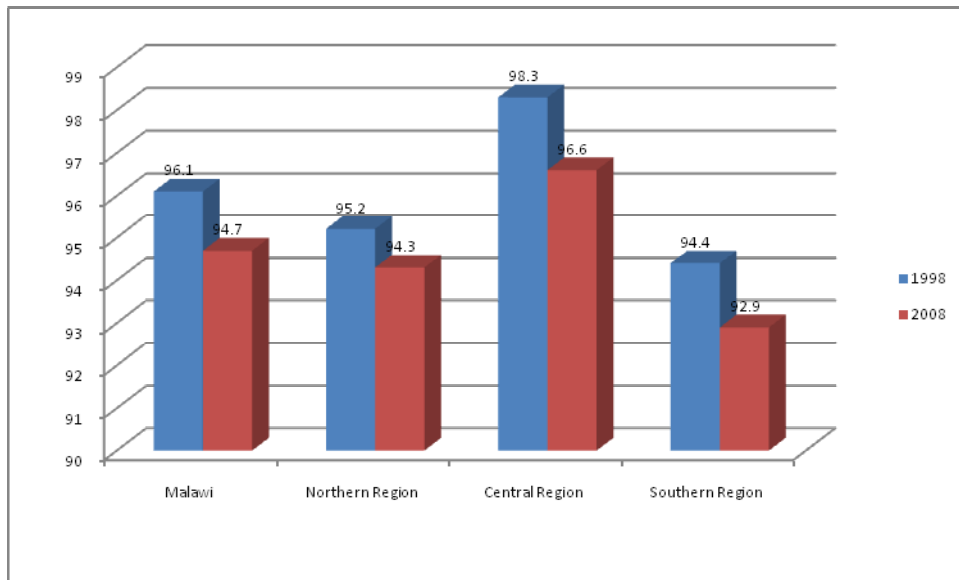
Table 2.2: Annual population inter-censal growth rates and increase 1998-2008, by sex, region and district

Region /District	Intercensal Annual Growth Rate (%), 1998-2008			Intercensal Population Increase 1998-2008	
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Number	Percent
Malawi	2.8	2.7	2.9	3,143,292	31.6
Northern Region	3.3	3.3	3.4	475,370	38.5
Chitipa	3.5	3.6	3.5	52,105	41.1
Karonga	3.4	3.4	3.3	75,318	38.7
Nkhatabay	2.8	2.8	2.8	51,028	31.0
Rumphhi	3.0	3.0	3.0	43,674	34.0
Mzimba	3.4	3.3	3.5	203,917	38.9
Mzuzu City	4.4	4.1	4.7	46,988	54.0
Likoma	2.6	2.8	2.4	2,340	29.0
Central Region	3.1	3.0	3.2	1,443,855	35.5
Kasungu	2.7	2.4	3.1	146,808	30.5
Nkhota kota	2.9	2.8	3.0	74,199	32.3
Ntchisi	3.0	2.8	3.2	56,992	33.9
Dowa	3.1	3.0	3.2	147,083	35.8
Salima	3.2	3.1	3.2	89,681	36.1
Lilongwe Rural	3.1	3.1	3.2	324,945	35.9
Lilongwe City	4.4	4.1	4.7	233,977	53.1
Mchinji	3.5	3.3	3.6	131,575	40.5
Dedza	2.6	2.6	2.5	137,763	28.3
Ntcheu	2.5	2.5	2.4	100,832	27.2
Southern Region	2.4	2.3	2.5	1,224,067	26.4
Mangochi	2.7	2.7	2.8	186,822	30.6
Machinga	2.9	2.8	3.0	120,965	32.7
Zomba Rural	0.6	0.4	0.8	32,978	6.0
Zomba City	3.0	2.8	3.2	22,399	34.0
Chiradzulu	2.1	2.0	2.1	52,496	22.2
Blantyre Rural	1.1	0.9	1.2	33,384	10.9
Blantyre City	2.8	2.5	3.1	159,203	31.7
Mwanza	4.1	4.0	4.1	30,570	49.0
Thyolo	2.5	2.5	2.6	128,077	27.9
Mulanje	2.0	2.0	2.0	93,069	21.7
Phalombe	3.1	3.1	3.0	81,139	35.0
Chikwawa	2.0	2.0	2.1	77,966	21.9
Nsanje	2.1	2.0	2.1	43,179	22.2
Balaka	2.3	2.4	2.3	64,226	25.4
Neno	2.7	2.6	2.8	24,666	29.8

2.3 Sex Ratio

Sex ratio is defined as the number of males per 100 females. Figure 2 shows the sex ratio for 1998 and 2008 at national and regional levels. At national level in 2008, the sex ratio is 94.7, meaning there were more females than males.

Figure 2: Sex ratios by region, 1998 and 2008



The sex ratios at regional level were 94.3 for the Northern Region, 96.6 Central Region and 92.9 for Southern Region.

Table 2.3 shows that in the four cities of Lilongwe, Blantyre, Mzuzu and Zomba there are more males than females. The table also shows that there are more females in the rural areas of the country. Almost similar patterns are observed in the 1998 census.

Table 2.3: Sex ratio at regional and district levels, 1998 and 2008

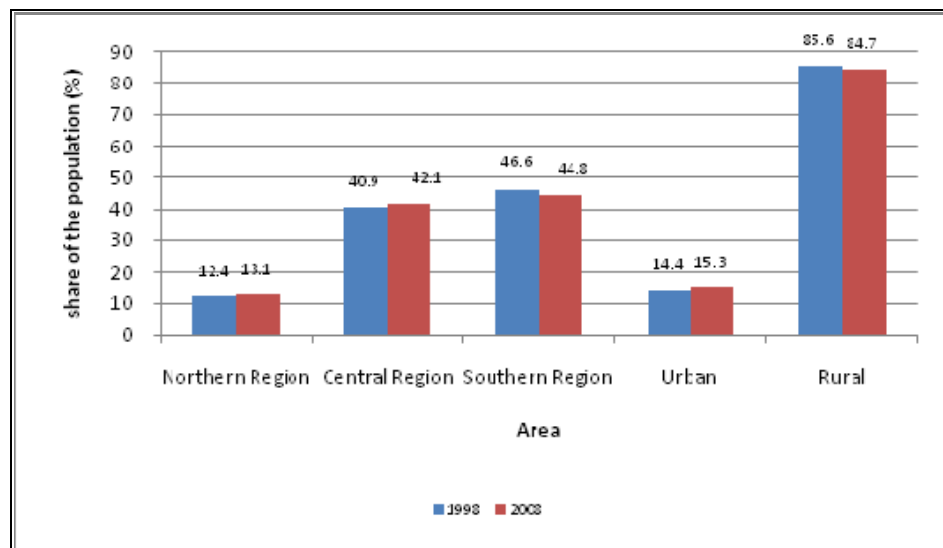
Region /District	Sex Ratio	
	1998	2008
Malawi	96.1	94.7
Northern Region	95.2	94.3
Chitipa	91.8	93.1
Karonga	92.8	93.7
Nkhatabay	94.6	94.8
Rumphi	97.2	97.0
Mzimba	95.1	93.1
Mzuzu City	106.4	100.6
Likoma	85.9	89.4
Central Region	98.3	96.6
Kasungu	106.5	99.6
Nkhota kota	100.2	98.7
Ntchisi	99.2	95.7
Dowa	98.2	96.5
Salima	96.7	95.5
Lilongwe Rural	95.4	95.2
Lilongwe City	110.8	104.7
Mchinji	102.0	99.2
Dedza	89.8	91.0
Ntcheu	90.2	91.1
Southern Region	94.4	92.9
Mangochi	92.5	91.2
Machinga	91.7	90.7
Zomba Rural	94.7	91.3
Zomba City	106.9	102.7
Chiradzulu	89.3	88.3
Blantyre Rural	96.1	93.6
Blantyre City	109.9	103.4
Mwanza	93.4	92.6
Thyolo	90.8	90.0
Mulanje	88.3	87.9
Phalombe	89.0	90.1
Chikwawa	99.9	98.4
Nsanje	94.0	93.8
Balaka	91.2	92.0
Neno	95.6	93.9

2.4 Population Distribution

2.4.1 Spatial distribution

Figure 3 shows the percentage distribution of the population among regions. The population is unevenly distributed among the regions of the country. In 2008 about 45 percent of the total population was enumerated in the Southern Region. The corresponding figures for the Central and the Northern Regions were 42 percent and 13 percent, respectively (see figure 3). The regional distribution pattern shows some changes in the population distribution since 1998. There is a reduction in the population residing in the Southern Region from 47 percent in 1998 to 45 percent in 2008. However there have been corresponding increases in the population shares residing in the Central Region from 41 to 42 percent and for the Northern Region from 12 to 13 percent. (Annex 1)

Figure 3: Percentage distribution of population by region, urban and rural, 1998 – 2008



At district level, the largest population was enumerated in Lilongwe rural (9.4 percent), Mangochi (6.1 percent), Mzimba (5.6 percent). The least populated districts were Likoma

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