

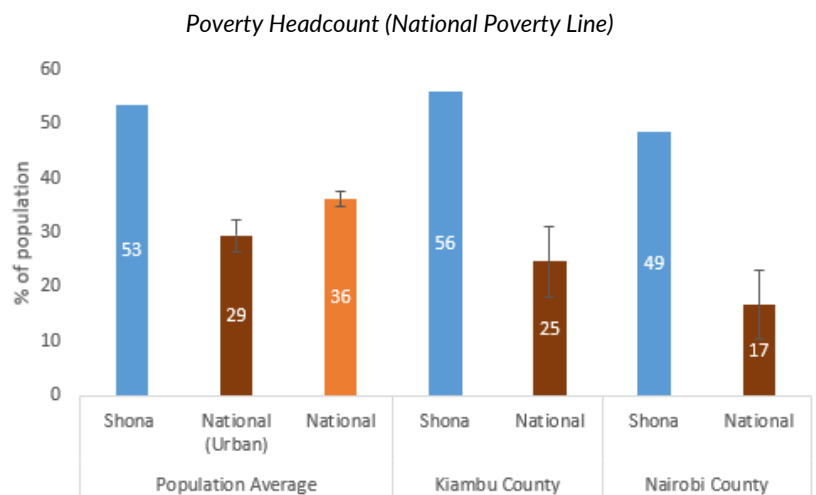
UNDERSTANDING THE SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE STATELESS SHONA COMMUNITY IN KENYA

The **2019 Shona Socioeconomic Survey** report studies data on Shona households living in and around Kenya's Nairobi and Kiambu counties. The Shona community is a stateless population with members originating from Zimbabwe and Zambia. This groundbreaking report is the first of its kind that compares stateless and non-stateless populations and is a result of continued efforts to resolve statelessness in Kenya. Produced with the support of the Government of Kenya, the report, which is based on the Shona Socioeconomic Survey and the Kenyan Integrated Household Budget Survey (KIHBS), looks at how the stateless Shona community differ from the Kenyan population in household characteristics, housing conditions, education, employment, and consumption and expenditure. The survey was conducted over May and July 2019 and the report analyses data from 328 households.

POVERTY PROFILE

53% OF SHONAS ARE POOR
17% POVERTY GAP

The Shona community has a 24 percent higher chance of being poor than the urban Kenyan population. More than half of the Shona population live below the national poverty line of US\$60 a month. This is higher than national urban average of 29 percent and the national average of 36 percent. This is also true at the county levels: in Nairobi, almost three times as many Shona individuals are poor compared to their national counterparts (49 percent compared to 17 percent), while in Kiambu, more than twice as many Shona people are poor compared to the national population (56 percent compared to 25 percent).



Source: Shona SES (2019) and KIHBS (KNBS 2015/16)

The depth of poverty is greater among the Shona population, as evident by the poverty gap which measures consumption shortfalls from the national poverty line. The Shona community face a poverty gap of 17 percent compared to 9 percent for nationals. In Kiambu, the gap is 18 percent and 7 percent, respectively, while in Nairobi the gap is 16 percent and 3 percent, respectively. Using the poverty gap as a rough estimation, eradicating poverty among the Shona population would require an annual transfer of US\$122 to each person.



A Shona family during the survey conducted in June 2019. © UNHCR Caroline Opile

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

49% WOMEN

49% YOUNGER THAN 18 YEARS OLD

2% OLDER THAN 65 YEARS OLD

The gender distribution is balanced among both the Shona and the national populations. Almost half the Shona population is below the age of 18, compared to 41 percent of Kenyans nationally. The Shona and the national Kenyan populations have the same proportion of elders above 65 years old (2 percent).

ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

28% SECONDARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Kenyans in urban areas who are of secondary-school age are twice more likely to attend secondary school than their Shona counterparts. For Shona children of secondary-school age, the net secondary school attendance rate is 28 percent, compared to 50 percent among urban Kenyans.

90% ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY GRID/GENERATOR

Most Shona households have access to the electricity grid or a generator. Among urban nationals, 60 percent have access to the electricity grid while 21 percent use a lamp, candle or torch as sources of light.

88% ACCESS TO IMPROVED DRINKING WATER

83% ACCESS TO IMPROVED SANITATION

77% USE SHARED SANITATION FACILITY

The Shona population and urban nationals have similar access to improved drinking water. In Nairobi, nationals have better access than the Shona population (98 percent compared with 85 percent), while both populations in Kiambu have similar access (more than 90 percent).

Access to improved sanitation is lower among the Shona population than urban nationals (87 percent). Further, Shona households are more likely than urban households to share these facilities with other households (77 percent compared with 66 percent).

EMPLOYMENT AND LIVELIHOODS

73% WORKING-AGE PERSONS ARE EMPLOYED WITH HIGH RATE OF SELF-EMPLOYMENT

The Shona population is more likely to be employed compared with urban nationals (69 percent). The employed Shona individuals are most likely to be self-employed or report having a non-farm business enterprise (78 percent) compared to 30 percent of urban nationals. On the other hand, urban nationals are more likely to be wage employees than Shona community members (58 percent compared to 24 percent). Lack of recognition as citizens in Kenya, coupled with lack of identity cards, prevented Shona individuals from being employed formally.

POLICY INSIGHTS

Members of the Shona community are more likely to be poor and have lower access to education (especially at the secondary school level) and formal employment.

Substantial investment is needed to build and maintain human capital by improving access to education and supporting the transition to secondary school. Removing barriers such as the requirement for birth certificates as well as enhancing access to income generating opportunities among non-school age adults will be key to supporting access to education for Shona children and youths. Policy interventions must also incorporate gender-responsive approaches that address barriers faced by women and girls, which include the disproportionate responsibility of domestic work and early marriage. These barriers limit their economic and empowerment opportunities, potentially trapping them in a cycle of poverty.

Strengthening job-related skills through programmes linked to available work opportunities can be instrumental in improving employment, especially among Shona women who have lower labour force participation rates.

Recognizing the Shona community as Kenyans can yield positive impacts for both the community and Kenyans. It will support the community's integration into the formal labour market, building human capital and contributing to the nation's socioeconomic development.

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