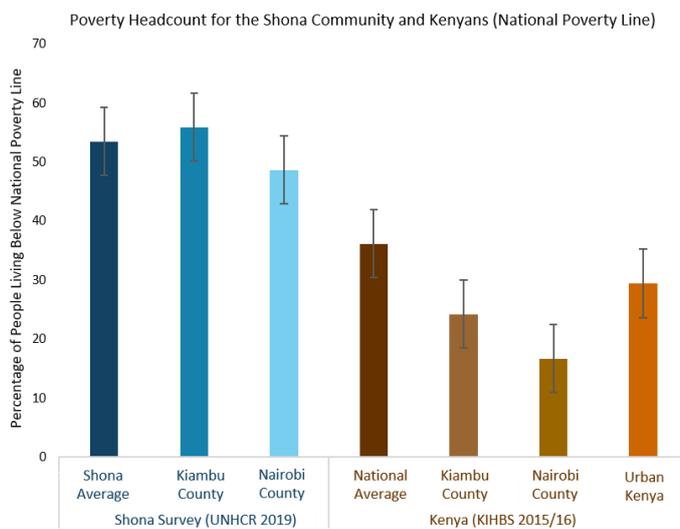


# UNDERSTANDING THE SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE SHONA COMMUNITY IN KENYA

The [2019 Shona Socio-Economic Assessment Survey](#) report studies data on Shona households living in and around Kenya's Nairobi and Kiambu counties. The Shona community is a stateless population 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. The report, which is based on the Shona Socioeconomic Assessment Survey and the Kenyan Integrated Household Budget Survey (KIHBS), looks at how the stateless Shona people 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**

**\$129 PER PERSON PER YEAR TO CLOSE THE GAP**

The incidence of poverty is higher among the Shona population. On average, more than half of the Shona population live below the national poverty line, higher than the national average of 36% and national urban average of 29%. This is also true at the county levels: in Nairobi, almost three times as many Shona people are poor compared to their national counterparts (49% compared to 17%), while in Kiambu, more than twice as many Shona people are poor compared to the national population (56% compared to 24%).

The depth of poverty is also greater among the Shona population, as evident by the poverty gap which measures consumption shortfalls from the national poverty line. The Shona people face a poverty gap of 17% compared to 10% for nationals. In Kiambu, the gap is 18% for the Shona population and 7% for nationals, while in Nairobi the gap is 16% for Shonas and 3% for nationals. Using the poverty gap as a rough estimation of the cost of household cash transfers required to eliminate poverty, eradicating poverty among Shonas would require an annual transfer of Ksh 12,949 (\$129) to each person.



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

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

**50% FEMALE**  
**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% of Kenyans nationally. The Shona and the national Kenyan populations have the same proportion of elders above 65 years old (2%).

**4.9 MEMBERS PER HOUSEHOLD**  
**20% OF HOUSEHOLDS HEADED BY FEMALES**  
**RATIO OF 1 WORKING PERSON : 1 DEPENDENT**

Shona households are on average larger than urban Kenyan households (3.3 members). In both Shona and national households, men are more likely to head the household. Just 2 in 10 Shona households are headed by females, compared with 3 in 10 in urban Kenya.

The Shona population has double the dependency ratio of urban nationals: every working-age Shona is responsible for one dependent, compared to two nationals responsible for one dependent. The same is observed in the counties.

## EMPLOYMENT AND LIVELIHOODS

**73% WORKING-AGE PERSONS ARE EMPLOYED**  
**SHONAS HAVE A MUCH HIGHER RATE OF SELF-EMPLOYMENT THAN URBAN NATIONALS**

The Shona population is more likely to be employed compared with urban nationals (69%). Among the Shona people, 73% of working-age persons are employed, 24% are inactive mainly due to schooling, and 2% are unemployed. Similar levels are observed in both Kiambu and Nairobi. Shona women are as likely as men to be working, while urban Kenyan men are more likely to be employed than their female counterparts. The employed Shona people are most likely to be self-employed (78%) while urban nationals are most likely to be wage employees (58%).

## ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

**28% SECONDARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**  
**(65% MALES VS 37% FEMALES)**

Kenyans in urban areas 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%, compared to 50% among urban Kenyans. More Shona males attend secondary school than females (65% compared with 37%).

### 3.1 PERSONS PER HABITABLE ROOM

The higher average number of members per Shona household translates into 3.1 persons per habitable room, compared with 2.1 in urban Kenya. At the county level, Shona households in both Kiambu and Nairobi are more likely to live in crowded conditions than national households.

### 90% ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY GRID

Most Shona households have access to the electricity grid. Among urban nationals, 60% have access to the electricity grid while 21% use a lamp, candle or torch as sources of light. In Nairobi, almost all Shona and national people use electrical lighting (more than 90%). In Kiambu, Shona households are better connected to the grid than nationals (92% compared with 80%).

**88% ACCESS TO IMPROVED DRINKING WATER**  
**83% ACCESS TO IMPROVED SANITATION**  
**77% USE SHARED SANITATION FACILITY**

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

Access to improved sanitation is lower among the Shona population than urban nationals (87%). Further, Shona households are more likely than urban households to share these facilities with other households (77% compared with 66%). In Kiambu, nationals have better access than the Shona community (95% compared with 74%), as do Nairobi nationals (98% compared with 93%).

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