

Census in Zambia

The Zambia 2001 Census was a complex operation that involved capturing vital data from 13 million people and 4 million households. In earlier census projects, it had taken many years to capture the data.

Planning for the project began in 1998 when DRS participated in a trade mission to Zambia. In May 2000, a pilot project comprising of a survey of 10,000 people was then conducted using DRS technology.

After 3 years of intensive trials and demonstrations, the Zambian Government awarded the contract for the 2001 Zambian Census to DRS.

Within 3 weeks of receiving the order, DRS had designed, printed and airfreighted the first deliveries of the 17 million census forms to Zambia.

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In October 2000 the census started – more than 30,000 enumerators across Zambia began completing the 17 million double-sided A4 forms. In January 2001, DRS Optical Mark Readers commenced scanning the forms. The project was completed just 4 months later in May 2001, successfully and in record time.

The scanning was undertaken in collaboration with the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ), a long-term customer of DRS. ECZs knowledge and skills greatly assisted in the success of the project.



The DRS solution to the Zambian Census is widely held as a complete technical success and is now becoming the model for other census operations in other African countries.

In fact, DRS was awarded a special commendation for its innovative African census work from the Milton Keynes & North Bucks Chamber of Commerce.



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