

# IREDA

*Inventaire des  
Recensements et Enquêtes  
Démographiques en  
Afrique*

## OVERVIEW OF THE IREDA PROJECT

### Context

Nations have long felt the need to count their populations and although they have invested considerable sums of money for the purpose, they have unfortunately found it much less interesting to look after the results. Certain files or documents have become almost untraceable, even in their country of origin. Happily, the situation is now changing. Initiatives for saving and enhancing data collection operations were begun some years ago, thanks to a gradual and growing awareness of the concept of **'demographic heritage'**.

### Objectives

IREDA is part of this dynamic with the objective of a documented inventory of demographic operations (population surveys and censuses) in Africa through a synthetic description and information on existing resources, in order to promote access to these metadata by researchers and to develop their use in a comparative perspective. Such a documented inventory is of interest both to data producers (enhancing the value of their work through easier access) and to users, especially researchers (facilitating their work by providing reliable and complete information).

It is a joint project between CEPED (Joint Research Unit University Paris Descartes - IRD) and the bureau Francis Gendreau Consultant. At CEPED, it was initiated and coordinated by Françoise Gubry. It was launched in 2008 and the site went online in February 2010.

### Project structure

IREDA is a database describing operations with their associated resources and an open OAI/PMH archive.

### Temporal and geographical scopes of the IREDA inventory

This inventory starts from the end of the Second World War (since 1944, date of the first post-war census in Mauritius) and thus covers the statistical history of African countries. It ends on 31 December 2019. Operations are only included once they have been carried out in the field.

The geographical scope of the **IREDA database** is twenty-three countries, mainly French-speaking countries south of the Sahara, with **472 operations** described : Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Congo (D.R.), Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Togo (<https://ireda.ceped.org/inventaire/>).

### Selected operations

The selected operations are censuses and demographic surveys:

- For **censuses**, these are population (and possibly housing) censuses in the conventional sense. Included in the inventory are some censuses conducted in the field but subsequently 'cancelled' or discontinued, usually for political reasons. There are also some so-called 'improved administrative censuses', used in some countries before the first 'statistical census'.
- As far as **surveys** are concerned, the only ones included are household surveys providing demographic data in the traditional sense of demographic analysis (given state and/or movement data). Surveys concerning budget or household consumption, living conditions, labour, knowledge, attitudes and practises (KAP surveys) on contraception or AIDS are not



therefore included, unless such surveys also provide demographic data. 'Sample censuses' are included.

In each of these countries, only national operations have been included, that is to say those concerning the entire territory and the whole population; however, some old localised operations (from the 1950s and 1960s) have been taken into account because of their historical interest (30 in total). In certain cases, this 'national' character is obtained after grouping together several regional operations; such cases are referred to as complex operations.

## **E**xternal resources

The resources of interest for the project include all the written or digital documents available from the pre- and post-collection phases designed by the producers of the data as well as by the researchers who used the data. Each demographic operation is accompanied by numerous online resources or which are digitized as far as possible. These resources concern official reports and technical documents (questionnaires, investigator's manuals, maps, coding manuals, database documentation, etc.), as well as research publications from the work of researchers or student theses. The focus is on resources from old operations, which are less well known and less accessible. The **resources** identified for the 23 countries described are **4,812**, of which **3,341** are available in full text on the site.

## **A**ppraisal

IREDA differs from other existing inventories because it has a better **completeness**, especially for old operations and for surveys.

On the other hand, **IREDA does not manage microdata**, but indicates links to the sites providing them.

From its conception, IREDA was built as a project that should fit harmoniously among the initiatives taken in this field, and be **complementary** (insofar as it links to other sites), and not in competition with them. It uses standards (DDI for the description of operations, Dublin Core for the description of resources) making it compatible with most other projects, as well as being compatible with IHSN tools.

From its inception, IREDA has collaborated with many **partners**, including population centres in French-speaking Africa (IFORD, Yaoundé; CEFORP, Cotonou; ENSEA, Abidjan; ISSP, Ouagadougou; URD, Lomé); but also other organizations (PARIS21, INSEE, Statistical Offices, Afristat, IHSN, ODSEF, IPUMS-International, etc.). The project received **funding** from IRD, the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie and the association 'CESD-Statisticiens pour le Développement'.

## **O**pening

IREDA aims to be an **open project** since the metadata, placed under a Creative Commons license, are freely exportable and reusable in other archives using the proposed export formats (DDI or Zotero format).

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