THE **SLOAN CENTER** ON

aging & work

AT **BOSTON COLLEGE**

KENYA
STATISTICAL
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KENYA

Statistical Profile

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INTRODUCTION TO REPUBLIC OF KENYA

Kenya received independence from Britain in 1963. Today, the Kenyan territory covers an area of 224,961 sq. miles. The estimated population in 2009 is at 39,002,772.

The late president, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, led the country from 1963 until his death in 1978. After his death, vice president Daniel Arap Moi took power in a constitutional succession. Moi stepped down in December 2002 following peaceful and fair elections after which Mwai Kibaki — who was the candidate for of the multiethnic, united opposition group, the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) — defeated the Kenya African National Union (KANU) candidate Uhuru Kenyatta. Kibaki's NARC coalition splintered in 2005 over constitutional review process.[1]

Kibaki's controversial re-election in December 2007 plunged the country into almost two months of chaos, during which nearly 1,500 lives were lost.[1,2] After intervention by Kofi Anan, the former UN chief, an agreement was reached under which President Mwai Kibaki retained his position as president, although international observers and Kenya's own election commission declared his election deeply flawed.[1,2] Opposition leader Raila Odinga became prime minister.

With the city of Nairobi as its capital, Kenya is the regional hub of trade and finance in East Africa. The Kenyan economic growth has been hampered mainly by corruption. The Structural Adjustment Program which started in 1997 when IMF suspended its funds to Kenya due to corruption was compounded by drought in 1999 to 2000. As a result, GDP decreased by 0.2% in 2000.[1]

The AIDS pandemic has negatively affected Kenya's economy, eroding the hard-won progress in health and mortality rates. AIDS has led to the decline of the average life expectancy from 59 years in the 1980's to 53 years in 2007.[1] The pandemic is responsible for higher death rates, lower population growth rates, and unexpected changes in the population distribution by age and sex.
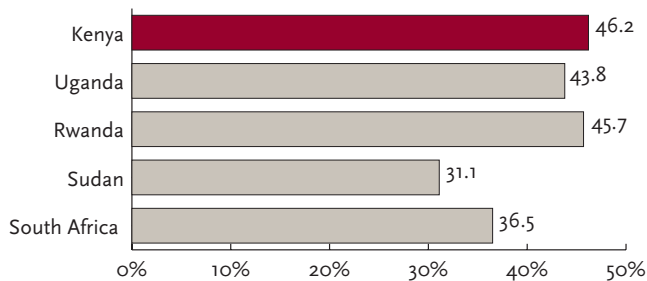
About this Statistical Profile

Organizations striving to be employers-of-choice in different countries around the world need access to current information about the economic, social, political, and demographic characteristics of the countries where their employees live and work.

The Country Profile Series focuses on statistics that can guide decision making at the workplace: workforce highlights, economic highlights, and population highlights. This Country Profile is part of a set of resources about Kenya available on the website of the Global Perspectives Institute: *www.bc.edu/agingandwork.*

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LABOR FORCE HIGHLIGHTS

- 71.8% of the total Kenyan population is in the labor force.[3]

- Total labor force includes all people, age 15 and older who supply labor for the production of goods and services in a specified time.[2] It includes both the employed and unemployed.

- The economically active population is projected to increase from 17,825 (80.9%) in 2008 to 24,821 (81%) in 2020.[4] The economically active population comprises all persons age 15 and above who supply labor for the production of goods and services during a specified time reference period.

- The unemployment rate was 40% in 2001.[5] Many others suffer under employment or poverty-level employment.[3]

- 69.8% of Kenyans who work up to 27 hours per week live in poverty. 65.6% of those who work between 28 to 39 hours live in poverty. For those who work more than 40 hours per week, the figure declines to 46.1%.[3]

- The self-employed are largely found in the agricultural sector, including 6 million Kenyans or 50% of total labor force. Although the self-employed form a significant proportion of the informal sector, they are not accounted for in official statistics as there is lack of income records.[3]

Figure 1.   Economically Active Population as Percent of Total Population in Kenya and Comparable Countries in the Region for Year 2008.
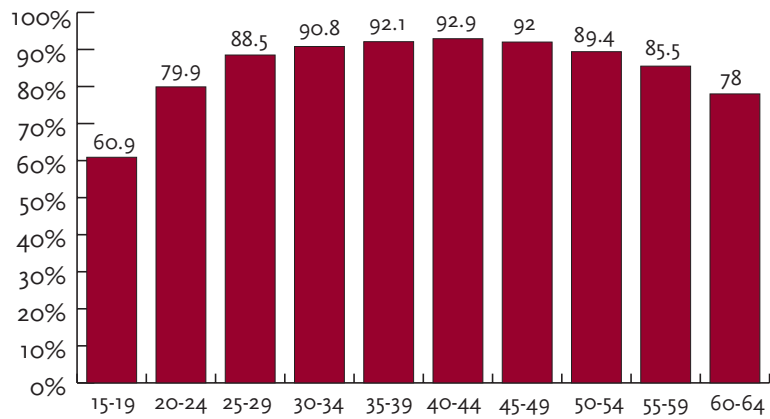

Kenya has a comparatively large economically active population (46.2%).

Source: ILO. Laborsta.[4]

There is wide variation by age group in economic activity. A high proportion of high school-age workers (ages 15-19) are economically active, indicating growing numbers of families due the effects of child-headed HIV/AIDS.[6]

Economic activity is at its highest (over 92%) between ages 35-49.
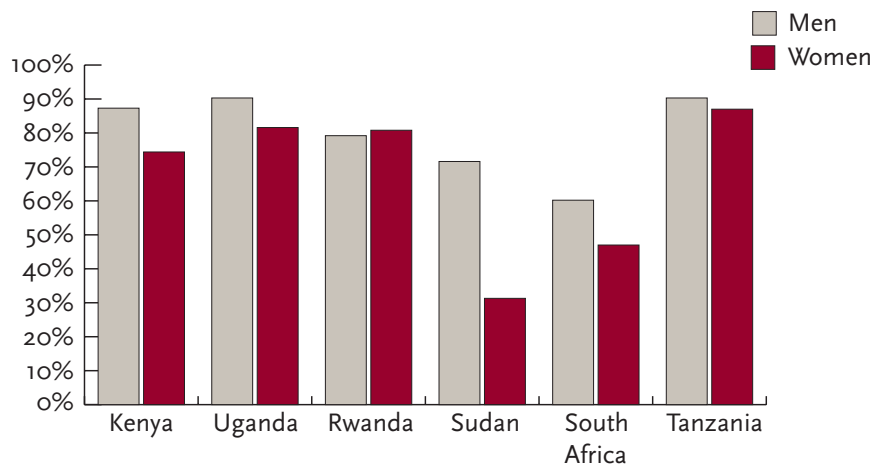
Discriminatory policies and a regulatory framework, coupled with the patriarchal orientation across African cultures, account for apparent gender disparities in the economically active population.[8]

Economically active rates in Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda compare well, as a significant fraction of the labor force is directly involved in agriculture. Although the effect of HIV/AIDs has been felt in all these, South Africa has the lowest economic activity rate by age-group.

Figure 2.   Economically Active Population by Age Groups for Kenya, 2008.
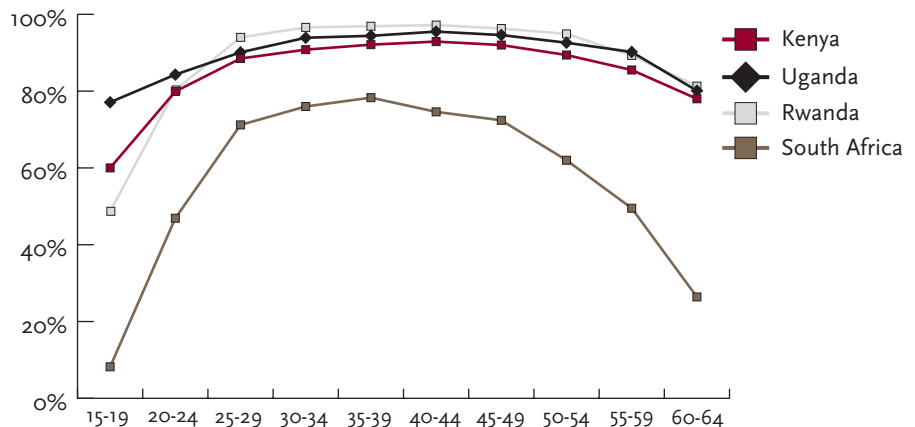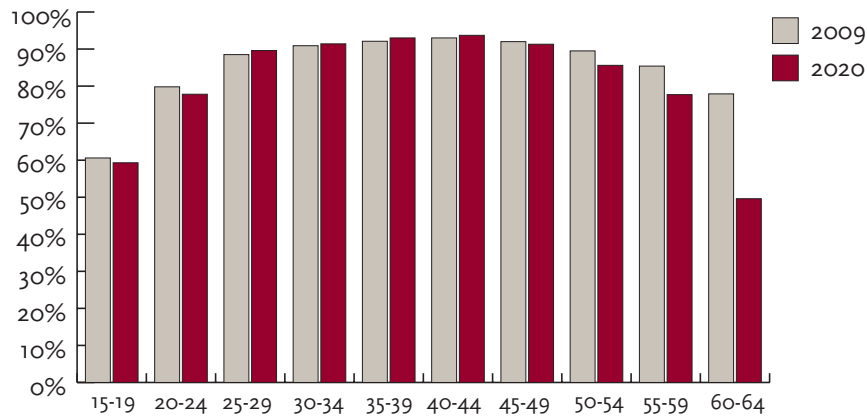

Source: Laborsta ILO[4]

Figure 3.   Percentage of Economically Active Population by Gender, ages 15+ for Kenya and Comparable Countries in the Region for Year 2007.

Source: Laborsta ILO[4]

Figure 4. Economically active rates for Kenya and comparable regions for the year 2008
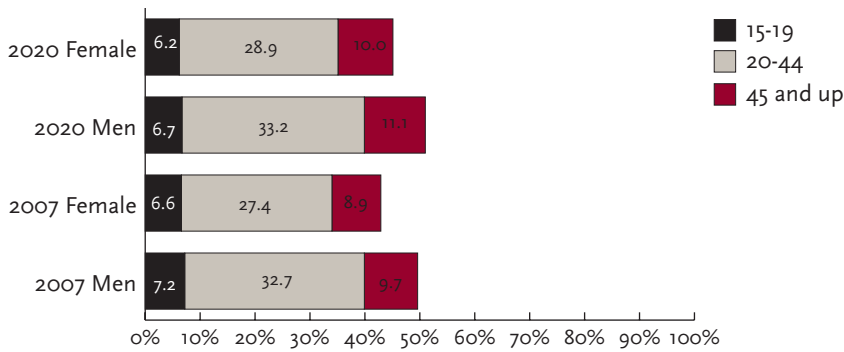

Source: Laborsta ILO[4]

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Figure 5. Current and Projected Economically Active Population Estimates for Kenya and
Comparable Regions by Age Group for the Years 2009 & 2020

Projections of the economically
active population reflect a decline in
labor force in the year 2020. Stability
shown in age group 35-49 reflects
the effect of intervention measures
currently in place.

Source: Laborsta ILO[4]

Figure 6. Current and Projected % of Total Population Economically in Kenya for years
2007 & 2020 for males and females

The economically active population
is expected to increase within
individuals in the age-group older
than 45 for both genders. The
figures reflect some gender disparity,
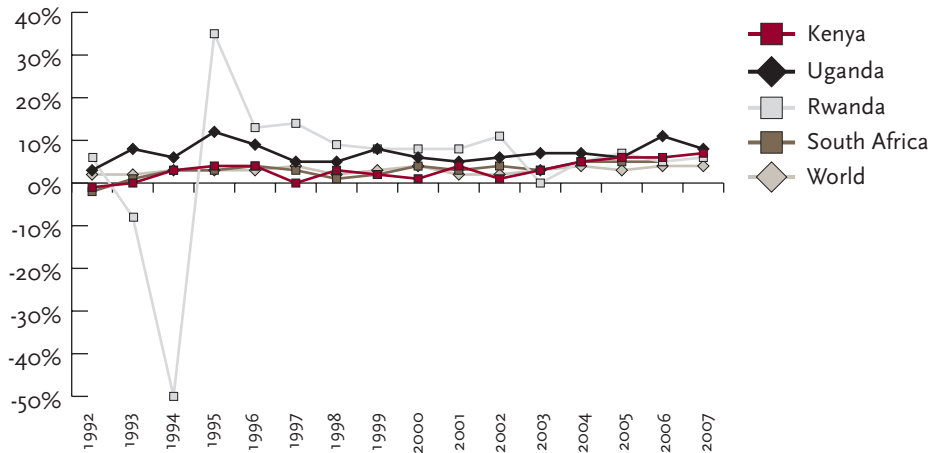with a higher rate of economic
activity among males.

Source: Laborsta ILO[4]

ECONOMIC HIGHLIGHTS

- 🌐 Gross Domestic Product per capita in Kenya (2007) was $1700, compared to $900 for Rwanda, $9800 for South Africa, $900 for Uganda.[5]

- 🌐 The Gross Domestic Product of Kenya dropped by 0.2% in 2000 due to the prevailing severe drought, which resulted in water and energy rationing, which in turn impacted agricultural output. Growth was limited to 1.2% owing to weak commodity prices, endemic corruption, and low investment in 2001. It dropped still further to 1.1% in 2002 largely owing to erratic rains, meager donor support, and political infighting prior to the elections. These elections ended Daniel Arap Moi's 24-year reign.[1,5] The new government that came to power inherited major economic problems, but after some early progress in dealing with corruption and encouraging donor support, this government was rocked by high-level graft scandals in 2005 and 2006. The GDP growth was estimated at 6% in 2007.[5]

GDP in Kenya has been consistently low comparatively, caused by climatic conditions during the time covered as well as poor governance and large-scale corruption.[2,3,8]

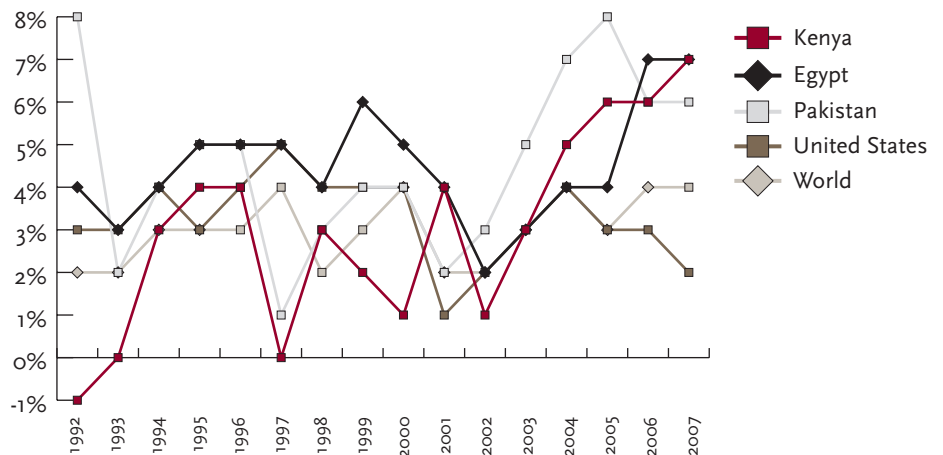Figure 7. GDP Regional Comparisons for Kenya and Comparable Countries from 1992 to 2007.

Source: World Development Indicators, World Bank Database, 2009[10]

General global slowdown impacted heavily on developing nations. These nations generally experienced lower commodity prices and reduced foreign direct investment and capital flows.[3,8]
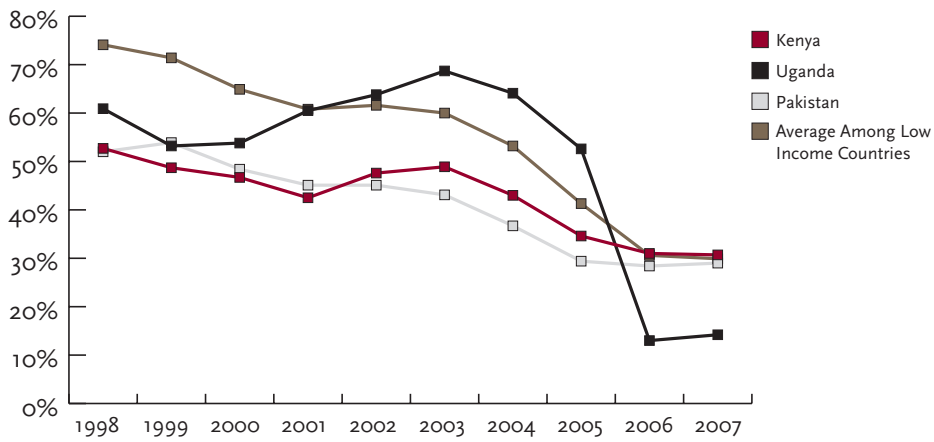
Internationally, GDP growth shows a similar trend in rising and dropping, which is the effect of globalization.

Figure 8.   International Comparison of GDP Growth for Kenya, Comparable Countries and the World.

Source: World Development Indicators, World Bank Database, 2009[10.]

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Figure 9. Total External Debt as % of GNI

Kenya is not included in the debt-relief initiatives of the Highly Indebted Countries. Kenya's external debt is considered to be sustainable given the country's export performance.[3]
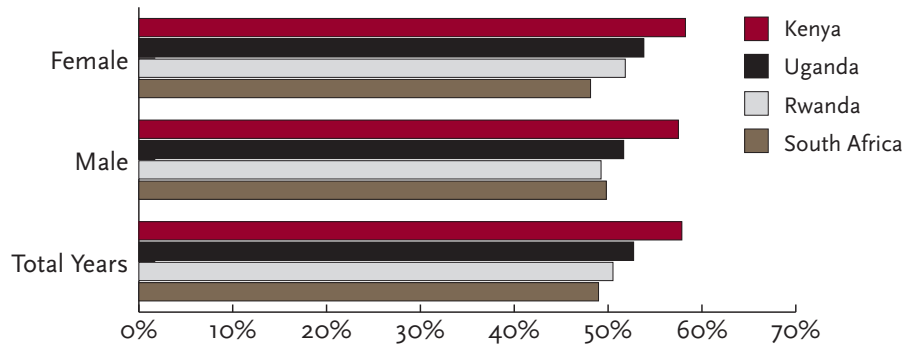
Source: World Development Indicators, World Bank Database, 2009[10].

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DEMOGRAPHIC HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2008, the population of Kenya was 37,953,838 compared to Uganda's 31,367,972 and Rwanda's 10,186,063 for the same period.[5] These estimates have taken into account the effect of excess mortality due to HIV/AIDS. The population in Kenya is higher than that of Uganda and Rwanda, both of which have experienced political crisis that resulted in the loss of several thousands of lives.[5]

- Total fertility rate, which is the number of children to be born to a woman during her reproductive span of her life in Kenya was estimated at 4.7, Uganda had 6.8 and Rwanda had 5.3 for the same period of time.[1]

- Kenya has several ethnic groups or tribes: Kikuyu 22%, Luhya 14%, Luo 13%, Kalenjin 12%, Kamba 11%, Kisii 6%, Meru 6%, other African 15%, and non-African (Asian, European, Arab) 1%.[1]

- The median age for Kenya is 18.6 male and 18.8 female. This is slightly higher than that of Uganda, at 14.9 male and 15.1 female.[1]
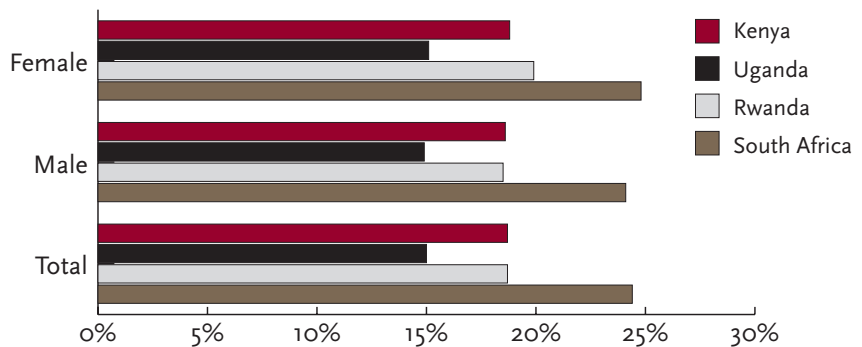
Life expectancy is a reflection of health.[3] The effect of the HIV/AIDs pandemic has affected demographic trends in comparable regions; though Kenya has the highest life expectancy (57.86) compared to the African regions represented. It is lowest in South Africa (48.98).

Figure 10. Life Expectancy for Kenya and Comparable Regions

Source: CIA World Factbook, 2008[1]

This is the age that divides the population into two parts of equal size such that there are as many persons with ages above the median as there are with ages below the median. South Africa has the highest median age.
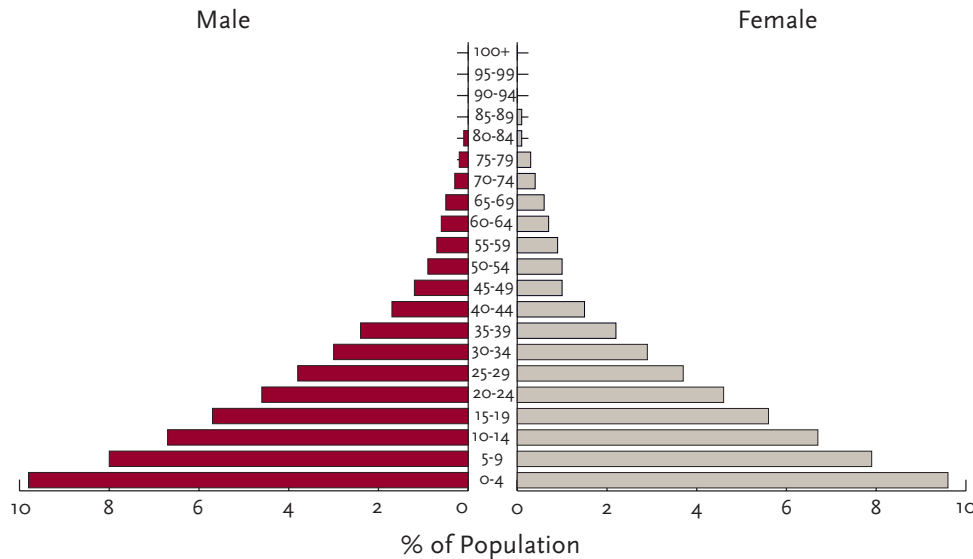
Figure 11. Median Age for Kenya and Comparable Regions

Source: CIA[1]

Figure 12a. : Population Pyramid for Kenya 2010

Male

Female

% of Population

The pyramid for Kenya has a broad base indicating a high proportion of children. The proportion of older people (60+) is 4.1%. Median age is 18.4.

Figure 12b. Population Structure for Uganda 2010

Male

Female

% of Population
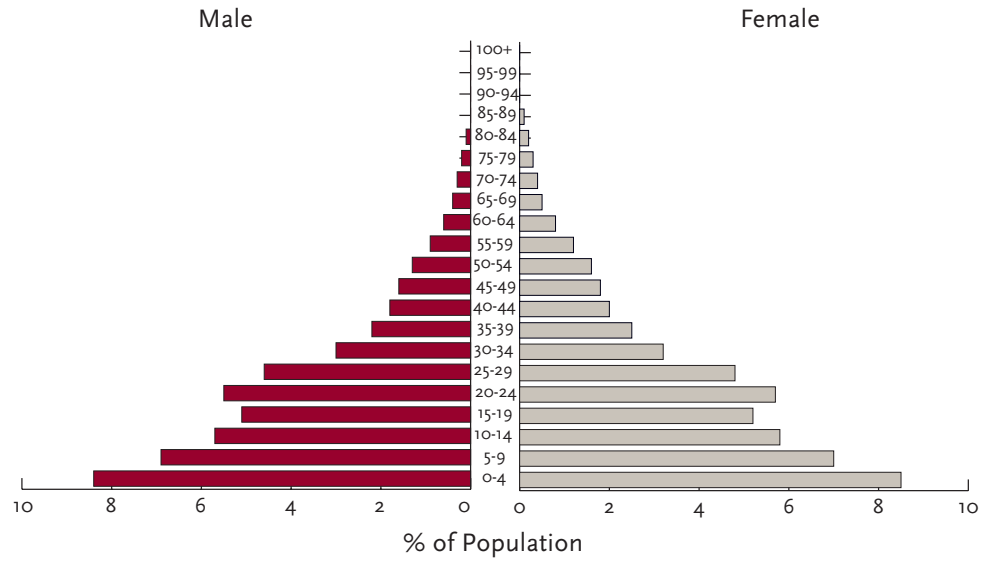
Uganda shows the same type of broad-based structure, with a high proportion of children, implying a high dependency ratio.

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The structure for Rwanda shows the same broad-based structure, with a significantly high proportion of children.

Figure 12c. Population Structure for Rwanda, 2010

Male   Female

% of Population

Source: United Nations Population Division. (2008) [9]

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ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

Established in 2007 by the Sloan Center on Aging & Work, the Global Perspectives Institute is an international collaboration of scholars and employers committed to the expansion of the quality of employment available to the 21st-century multi-generational workforce in countries around the world.

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- 🌐 innovative thinking about private-public partnerships that promote sustainable, high-quality employment.

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The Sloan Center on Aging & Work at Boston College promotes quality of employment as an imperative for the 21st century multi-generational workforce. We integrate evidence from research with insights from workplace experiences to inform innovative organizational decision making. Collaborating with business leaders and scholars in a multi-disciplinary dialogue, the Center develops the next generation of knowledge and talent management.

Elizabeth Okongo is currently in her final year of Study for a Masters Degree in Education, Special Education, with specialization in severe disabilities, deaf/blind. Her thesis focuses mainly on communication ability for the deaf/blind, which calls for specialization in sign language for the deaf as well as Braille literacy for the blind. She has a great interest in research methodology.

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