



With population characteristics and processes both the drivers and results of social and economic development processes and outcomes, it is imperative that a good understanding of a country's population dynamics provide the basis for informed decision-making, policy development and planning.

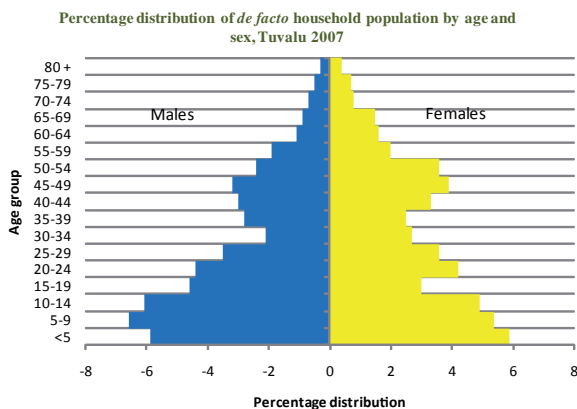
While population and housing censuses provide the backbone of this information in most countries, the provision of a snapshot, and often only every 10 years, is clearly insufficient to inform policy and allow a regular monitoring of development progress.

Regular household surveys, such as the 2007 Tuvalu DHS, address this data and information gap by providing high quality and up-to-date statistics and information in their own right, as well as providing the basis for the calculation of important development indicators. This survey provided more than a hundred such indicators, covering many development features of relevance to both national and international development agencies and conventions such as Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), to name but a few that are included in this development snapshot.

The population of Tuvalu

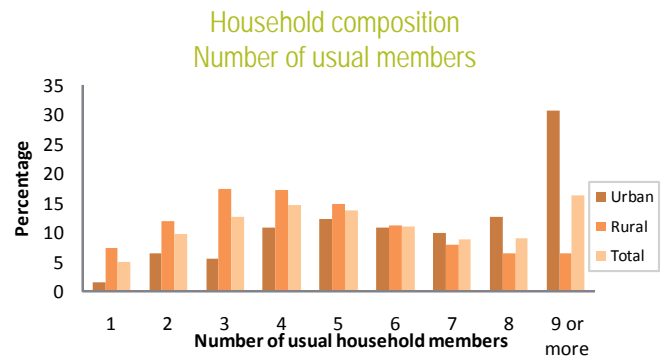
A census is held in Tuvalu every ten years and the most recent Census was in 2002. The 2007 Tuvalu DHS, provides a rich up-to-date account of how the country is progressing in key areas of social and human development.

The population of Tuvalu is young, with 42% younger than twenty years of age. The older age groups are very small in comparison, as can be seen in the population pyramid. This type of age structure has a built in momentum for the growth of the country's population. The population pyramid also illustrates a rapid decrease in the middle aged population because people are leaving Tuvalu in search of employment.

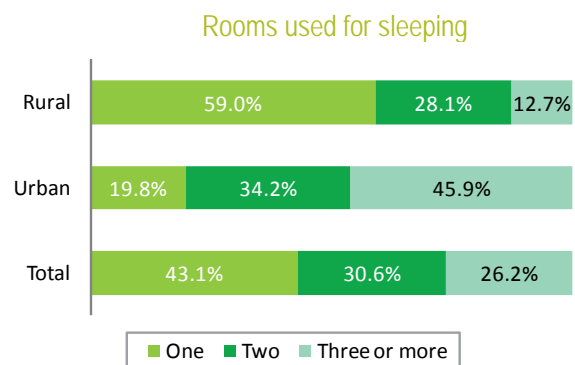


Household composition

The average household size in Tuvalu stands at 5.6 members, showing some very distinct urban-rural differentials. Urban households feature a high degree of over-crowding, with 31% of households on Funafuti comprising 9 members or more, compared to just 6% in the outer islands. This is indicative of continued mobility from the outer islands to Funafuti, and of emigration, with the very young or old left in the care of other family members. It also points to some housing shortages on Funafuti.



Overall, almost half of all households (43%) use only one room for sleeping, with far more households in rural areas (59%) using one room for sleeping than those in urban areas (20%).



Large household sizes, particularly in Funafuti, reflect not only the growing population in Tuvalu and inter-island migration, but also the large number of children cared for by people other than their parents. Almost 40% of households include an orphan or a foster child and there is no significant variation between urban and rural areas. Survey results showed that one quarter of Tuvaluan children under age 18 were not living with either parent.

Apart from basic population information, the Tuvalu DHS 2007 also yields some key socio-economic background characteristics, which may explain key demographic and health outcomes. These include education (through attainment levels), economic well-being (illustrated through wealth quintiles), and basic household amenities such as access to





safe water, sanitation and household characteristics. All of these factors are of critical importance, especially to the wellbeing of infants and young children.

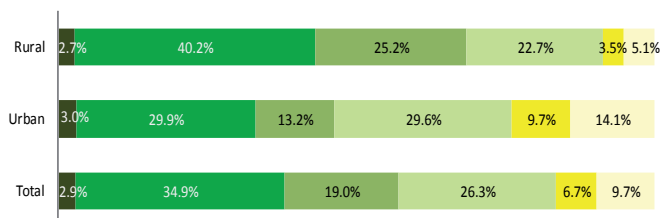
Educational level

Education is free and compulsory up to and including primary level in Tuvalu. The vast majority of the Tuvaluan population attended school, however 35% of men and 39% of women did not complete primary school and very few people completed secondary and higher education.

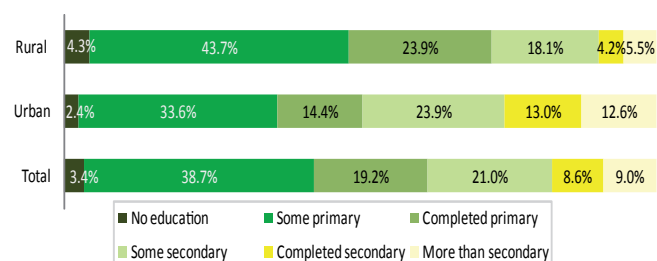
Primary school attendance is almost universal, as shown by a primary level Net Attendance Ratio (NAR) of 98%. The secondary level NAR shows a distinct decline at only 35% for males and 47% for females. This difference may well be a reflection of the fact that school fees must be paid by those attending secondary schools in Tuvalu.

Further evidence of a strong association between education and socio-economic status emerges in the levels of educational attainment: 26% of Tuvalu men from the wealthiest households have more than secondary education, compared to just 6% of men from the two lowest wealth quintiles combined. A similar pattern is observed for women, with 22% of females from the wealthiest households and 6% from the two lowest wealth quintiles combined having attained more than secondary education.

Highest male educational attainment



Highest female educational attainment



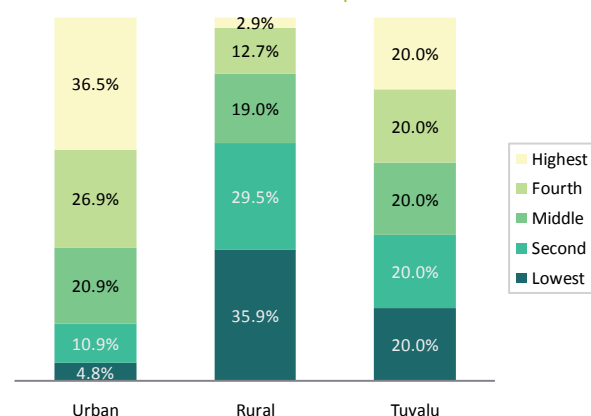
Economic well-being

Household information on assets allows the calculation of a wealth index, which provides a useful proxy measure describing the long-term standard of living of a household. It is not an absolute measure that can tell us if a household suffers hardships or lives in poverty. What it can tell us, however, is that a person living in a household in the highest wealth quintile has a better socio-economic status than someone in the lowest

quintile and a worse socio-economic status than someone in the middle wealth quintile.

Distributing the population across five equally sized wealth quintiles shows an uneven distribution of wealth. Nearly 37% of the population of Funafuti is in the highest wealth quintile, compared with 3% of the population in the Outer Islands. Correspondingly, only 5% of the Funafuti population is in the lowest wealth quintile, compared to 36% of the population on the outer islands.

Wealth quintiles



Access to safe water and sanitation

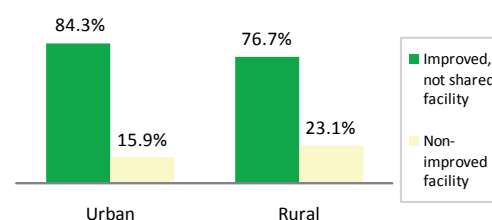
Poor sanitation coupled with unsafe water sources can increase the risk of waterborne diseases and illnesses due to poor hygiene. Households without proper toilet facilities are more exposed to the risk of diseases like dysentery, diarrhoea, and typhoid fever than those with improved sanitation facilities.

Access to safe drinking water

Most Tuvaluan households (98%) have access to an improved water source, with piped water into the dwelling by far the most common source of household water. Almost all households use an appropriate method to treat their drinking water.

Household sanitation facilities

5.1% of households in Tuvalu have no toilet facilities of any kind. The 2007 Tuvalu DHS shows a significant decrease from the 2002 Tuvalu Census which indicated that 13% of households did not have toilet facilities.



Almost all households in Tuvalu (97%) have access to electricity. This figure is slightly higher than what was found in the 2002 Tuvalu Census. There is very little difference between Funafuti and the outer islands; 99% of households in Funafuti have electricity compared with 95% of households on the outer islands.

