

# Chapter 4: Marital Status, Fertility, Mortality and Disability



## CHAPTER 4: MARITAL STATUS, FERTILITY AND MORTALITY

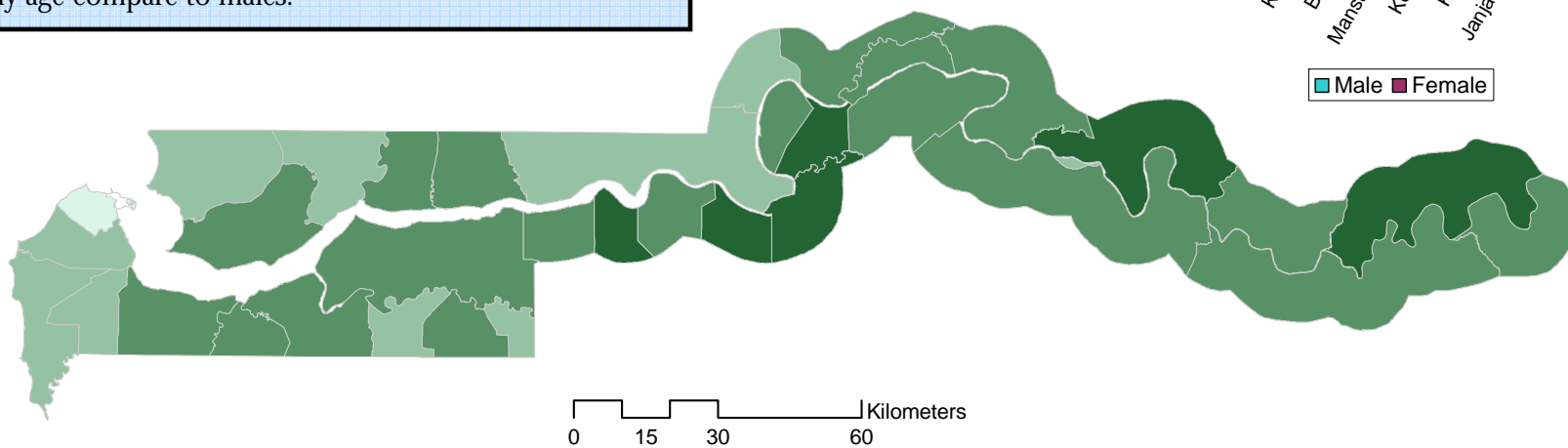
During the census all persons aged 12 years and over were asked about their marital status and type of union (monogamous or polygamous) for those ever married. In addition, all females 12 years and over were asked about the number of children ever born to them and the particulars of all births in the 12 months prior to the census. Also, all persons aged 2 years and over were asked if they have any physical, seeing, hearing, strange behaviours, learning, fits or other types of disability

This chapter summarizes information collected on marital status, fertility, mortality and disability rates. The data shows not only more females than males are in marriage, but more females than males are in polygamous marriages. Polygamy is more prevalent in rural than urban areas. Fertility and mortality rates are higher in rural than urban areas, although greater proportion of the disable population reside in urban areas.

Notes: Fertility figures are affected by a number of factors including the availability of an accurate count of children born to a woman during her lifetime. The tendency of under-reporting of number of live children born, particularly, by older females has been reported by some experts to be common. Inclusion of stillbirths and late-foetal deaths also contribute to the errors that affect the accuracy of fertility estimates. There was inadequate information to assess the extent to which some of these errors affected the final fertility and mortality estimates. Also in the absence of medical or other scientific methods of diagnosis, estimates of learning and behavioural are only based on what is reported by respondents.

**Gender difference: population 12 years and over, never married, in 2003**

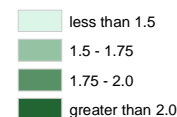
Nationwide, about 47 percent of all persons 12 years and over (59% of males and 35% of females) reported to be never married in 2003. Overall, there were about 1.6 never-married males for every never-married female. The ratio is smallest in Kanifing 1.5 and largest in Jarra East 2.2. This is due to the fact that women tend to marry at an early age compare to males.



Districts with largest and smallest ratio of male:female never married population in 2003

District	male:female never-married	District	male:female never married
Banjul North	1.3	Niamina West	2.1
Banjul South	1.4	Wuli	2.1
Kanifing	1.4	Sami	2.1
Banjul Central	1.5	Jarra Central	2.2
Janjanbureh	1.5	Jarra East	2.3

**Gender difference: Population never married in 2003. Percentage of males divided by percentage of females**

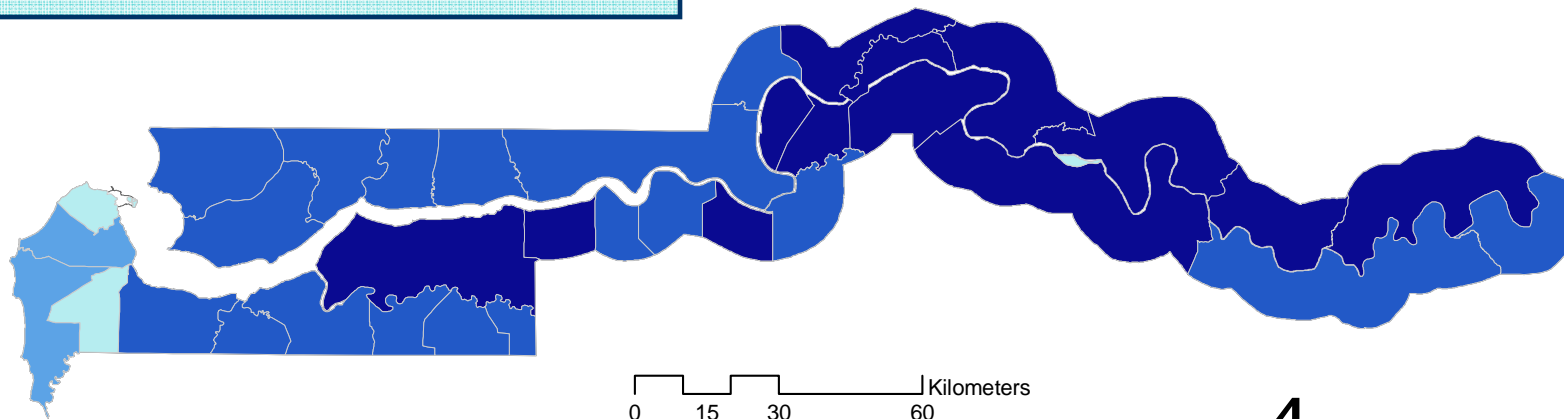
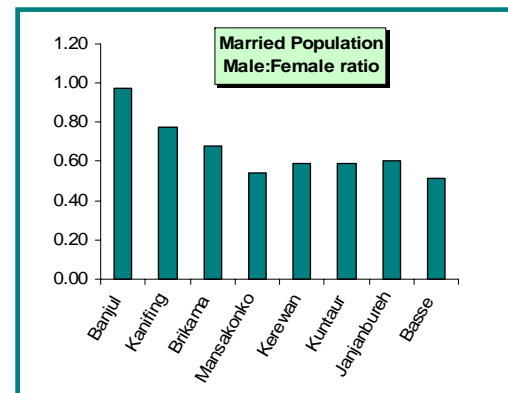


Population data: The Gambia Population and Housing Census 2003  
 District boundary data: The Gambia 50000 dataset. Department of State for Local Government and Lands, 2001.

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## Population 12 years and over in marriage in 2003

About one in two persons aged 12 years and over were in marriage in 2003. This proportion is lowest in Banjul (41%) and highest in Kuntaur (57%). In general, districts in Central River and northern Upper River Division have higher proportion of their marriage-age population in marriage. Nationwide, there are 35% fewer males in marriage than females. The gender difference varies from 3% in Banjul to 48% in Basse.



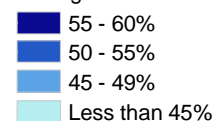
0 15 30 60 Kilometers

4

Districts with smallest and highest ratio of female:male married population in 2003

District	Ratio Female:male	District	Ratio Female:male
Banjul North	1.1	Niamina East	1.6
Banjul South	1.3	Jarra Central	1.6
Kanifing	1.3	Wuli	1.6
Banjul Central	1.4	Sami	1.7
Foni Brefet	1.4	Niani	1.7

Percentage of population 12 years and over in marriage. \* National total = 48.7%

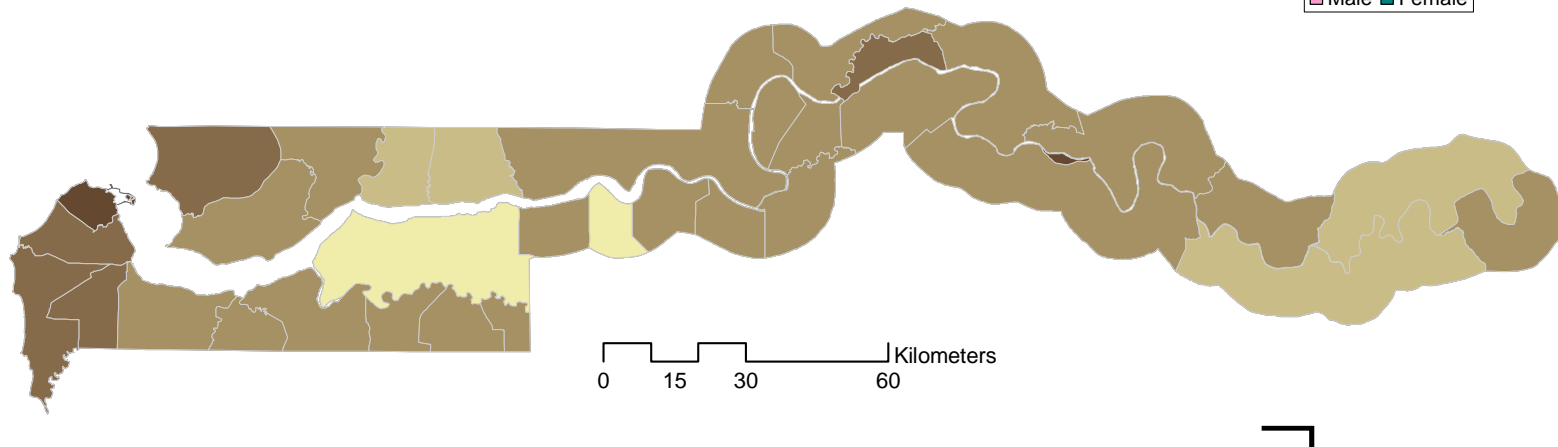
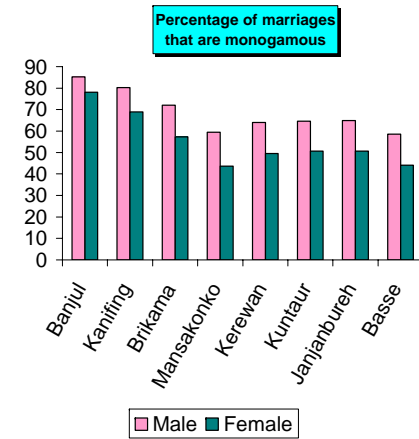


Population data: The Gambia Population and Housing Census 2003  
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## Monogamous marriages in 2003

Sixty-one percent of the married population is in a monogamous (one man to one wife) relationship. Monogamy is most prevalent in urban areas with more than 70% of all marriages. Areas with the lowest percentage of monogamous marriages include Mansakonko, Kerewan and Basse LGA.

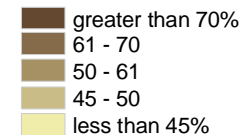


Districts with highest and lowest percentage of married women in monogamous relationship

District	%	District	%
Banjul South	81	Kiang West	35
Banjul Central	78	Kiang East	37
Banjul North	77	Wuli	41
Janjanbureh	71	Lower Baddibu	42
Kanifing	69	Fuladu East	43

Percentage of married population in monogamous relationship

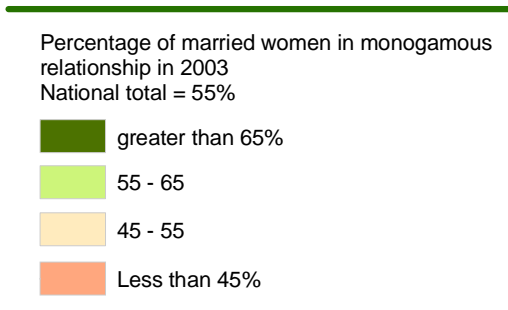
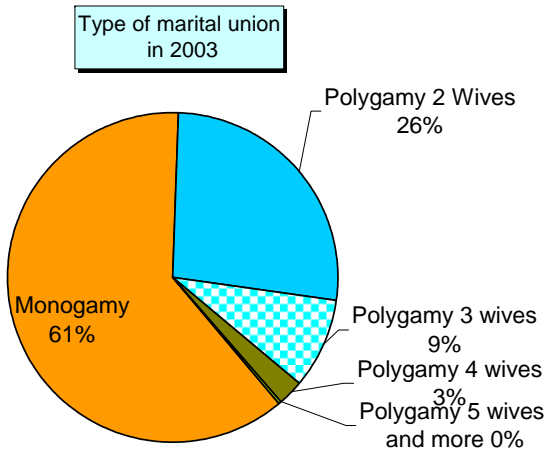
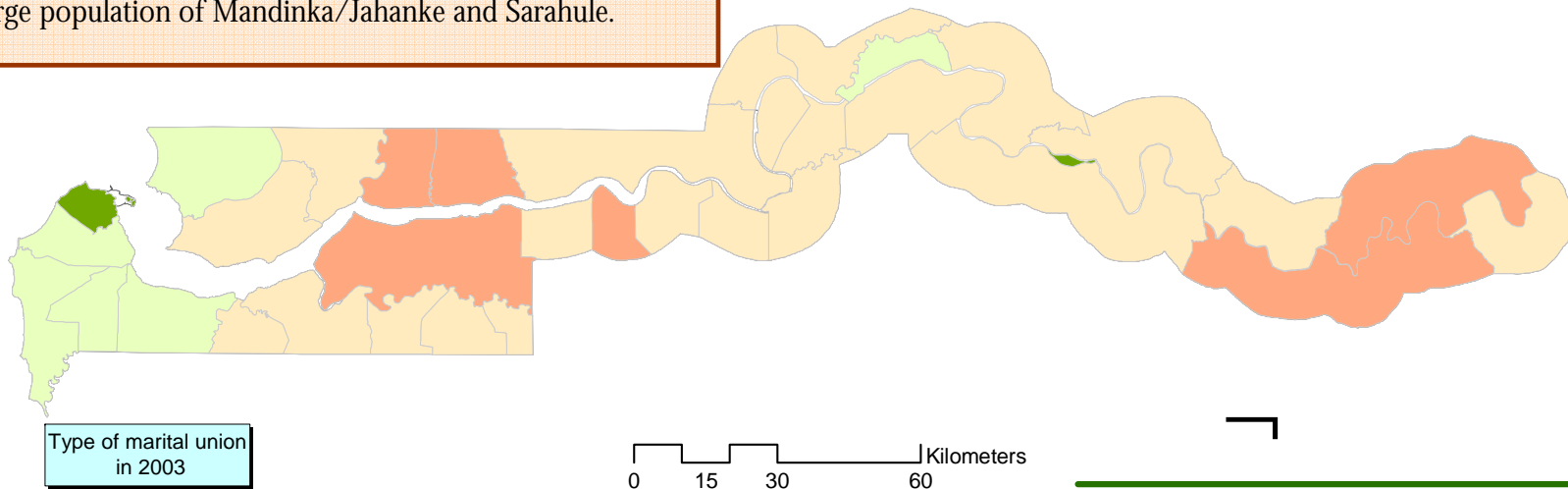
\*National total = 61%



Population data: The Gambia Population and Housing Census 2003  
 District boundary data: The Gambia 50000 dataset. Department of State for Local Government and Lands, 2001.

**Women and types of marriages in 2003**

In 2003, fifty-five percent of married women are in monogamous relationships with the remaining 45% in polygamous relationships. Of those in polygamous marriages, 65% are in polygamy with two wives, 24% in polygamy with 3 wives with remaining 11% in polygamy with 4 or more wives. Districts with high percentage of polygamous marriages include Lower and Central Baddibu, Kiang East and West, Fula East and Wuli — districts with large population of Mandinka/Jahanke and Sarahule.



Population data: The Gambia Population and Housing Census 2003  
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