

Census Progress Watch, a first for South Africa, developed by AfriGIS, for Statistics South Africa

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AfriGIS developed the Census Progress Watch System for Statistics South Africa (StatsSA). The solution was launched on 10 October 2011 and was used for the duration of the 2011 South African Census (until 31 October 2011) to monitor the progress on a day-to-day basis.



The easy-to-use, menu-driven USSD service, incorporates Location Based Services (LBS) and Payment capabilities, runs on all mobile phones and is designed specifically for a lower income workforce with feature phones, without requiring additional capital outlay for capturing equipment.

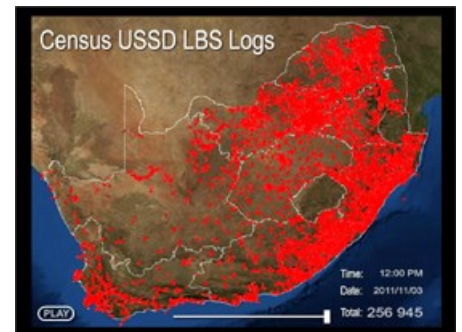
Using the USSD application, enumerators were able to report back on their daily progress. StatsSA could then easily access reports on the Census progress when information on Enumerator Area coverage and Field Worker performance was required. The geographical nature of the application enabled StatsSA to have

near real-time access to Census activity progress reports, with accurate time and location relevant information submitted by the appointed Field Workers.

The input interface is the result of years of research done by AfriGIS, into how to build a simple-to-use interface, which could be deployed and trained remotely using low level mass communication technologies like bulk SMS. The interface design was focussed around existing non-related interfaces such as routine airtime recharges or 'call back/please call me' functions performed with USSD.

The application, supported by a strong web interface provided location sensitive, real-time statistics of the census while it was taking place. StatsSA had a real-time communication and monitoring tool, along with a method to incentivise performance by loading airtime onto Field Worker's accounts.

The Census Progress Watch was a first for South Africa in terms of how Census is performed and data captured, using the mobile phone network. The billion rand exercise was tracked in real-time, and the StatsSA Head Office was kept up to date with reporting and analysis on the progress of the 2011 Census activities on a day-to-day basis. The Census Progress Watch application allowed StatsSA to monitor progress and have near real time information, which was never available during previous Census projects.



The Census Progress Watch application has been shortlisted for the AfricaCom Awards 2012 in the "Best Cost Efficiency Solution for Africa" category. Winners will be announced at a gala dinner on 14 November 2012.

View the Census Progress Watch application, including an interview with Statistician General, Mr Pali Lehohla, on YouTube: <http://youtu.be/DMkofHZ9xfA>.

Lydette Fouche
+27 87 310 6400
lydette@afrigis.co.za
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