

WorldPop

June 2026

Your update on population data and insights.



WorldPop visit the Joint Research Centre's Euro Crisis Management Lab

Making decisions count everyone, everywhere

Welcome to our May 2026 newsletter. We're very pleased to be back with an update on what's happening in our innovative, open, geospatial, demographic [research programme](#).

WorldPop produces estimates of populations with age/sex breakdowns for each 100m x 100m grid square on the planet. These are used as open access demographic datasets by international agencies and companies, such as UNHCR, ESRI and Google, to support and plan humanitarian and development interventions, and help governments fill census gaps.

In this edition we're asking for your feedback on WorldPop open data and how would you like to use it in the future. We introduce our new Advisory Board, focus on how [our open data is powering data journalism](#), our recent [co-development and capacity strengthening](#) work, and our [free online training](#), and highlight significant [academic journal articles](#) produced by our team.

Meet our new Advisory Board



We have appointed a strategic Advisory Board to further enhance the use of high-resolution spatial demographic data in supporting global health and sustainable development. The new body provides highly distinguished expert oversight to ensure the group's research continues to deliver measurable real-world impact across low- and middle-income countries.

[Read more...](#)

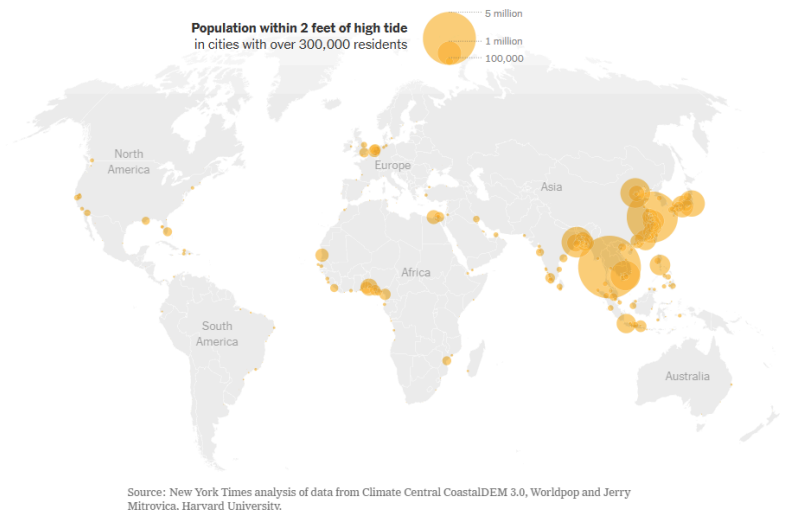
Help shape what comes next



Thanks to the hundreds of WorldPop open data users who have already completed our anonymous survey. If you haven't done so already, please share your thoughts - we're particularly interested in hearing your perspective, so tell us what questions you have for us. Your input will help shape future WorldPop open data products for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners worldwide.

[👉 Take the WorldPop survey](#)

[WorldPop open data powering data journalism](#)



Our open-access population data is increasingly enabling data-driven journalism by translating complex global challenges into human-centred stories. High-resolution datasets, such as our Global 2 population estimates, allow journalists to map where people live and quantify exposure to risks like sea-level rise. In March *The New York Times* demonstrated how combining WorldPop data with elevation models reveals millions living in vulnerable coastal areas across cities like Shanghai and Bangkok. By making granular, peer-reviewed demographic data freely available, we support more impactful reporting that helps the public and policymakers better understand and respond to global risks, particularly those linked to climate change.

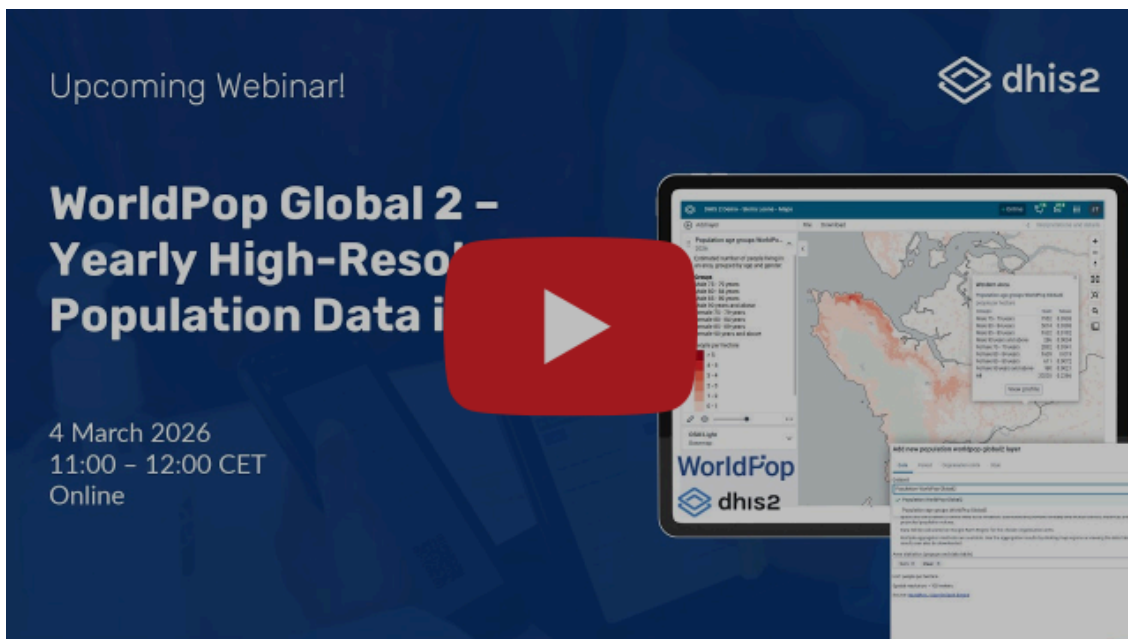
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WorldPop joins DHIS2 Technology Partner programme



WorldPop has joined the new DHIS2 Technology Partner programme that aims to improve interoperability across digital health systems - supporting better planning, targeting, and decision-making for governments and development partners. [Read more...](#)

Webinar: Global 2 open data now on DHIS2



In collaboration with DHIS2, we recently ran a webinar showcasing the integration of the new Global 2 high-resolution population dataset into routine health information systems. The session highlights how 100-metre gridded population estimates can address longstanding gaps in traditional data by revealing precisely where people live, enabling more accurate planning for health services and emergency response. Demonstrations illustrated how users can visualise population distributions, generate refined coverage indicators, and combine demographic data with climate insights directly within DHIS2. This collaboration underscores a shared commitment to equipping decision-makers with more granular, actionable data to improve health outcomes and ensure that vulnerable and previously overlooked populations are better represented in policy and practice.

[Read more...](#)

Co-development and Capacity strengthening

Over the past 3 months our co-development and capacity strengthening work has continued to grow. In addition to online engagement we delivered in-person workshops to national statistics offices, ministries of health, and UN agencies in low- and middle-income countries.

March



WorldPop experts partnered with organisations including UNFPA and CARICOM to train national statistics offices in producing high-resolution population estimates and applying standardised urban classification methods. These tools enable

governments to better understand where populations live and how communities are changing.

[Read more...](#)

Dr Sarchil Qader led an intensive 10-day workshop in Nairobi, bringing together experts from the Somalia National Bureau of Statistics and the United Nations Population Fund. While the setting was Kenyan, the focus remained firmly on Somalia, where reliable, detailed population data has long been difficult to produce.



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April

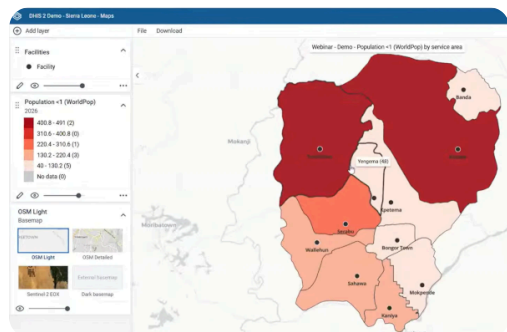


We are co-developing geospatial innovations with Nigerian partners to strengthen population data systems. In April Dr Chris Nnanatu led a visit to Abuja to align national stakeholders on integrating AI-driven modelling with census methods. The aim - to improve

accuracy, completeness, and timeliness of data to better inform policy, and planning.

[Read more...](#)

We collaborated with DHIS2, Gavi and HISP Rwanda to present a substantial webinar detailing how high-resolution WorldPop population data is now integrated into the DHIS2 platform. This is transforming how vaccines are delivered in low- and middle-income countries, including the Central African Republic, Uganda and Bangladesh.



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Conferences and meetings

March

WorldPop visited the European Commission's Joint Research Centre to advance a strategic partnership aimed at transforming global population data. By aligning methods, reducing duplication, and co-developing standards, we aim to deliver more consistent, transparent, and policy-relevant insights.



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Dr Sarchil Qader joined a panel at the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week and discussed how digital trace data - from mobile phones and online platforms - can reveal near real-time population movements in crises.

Combined with traditional sources, these data raise challenges around access,

bias, ethics, and translating insights into operational humanitarian response tools.

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April

Dr Chris Nnanatu addressed a key meeting in Abuja, highlighting how Nigeria's planned "smart census" is using geospatial and digital technologies to improve population accuracy and public planning. Through mapping, modelling and technical support, WorldPop is helping strengthen Nigeria's census and demographic data systems. [Read more...](#)



Dr Edson Utazi presented *Mapping the Risk of Guinea Worm Disease* project findings at the Carter Center 2026 Guinea Worm Eradication Program (GWEP) Research Review meeting. He and his team have developed high-resolution maps identifying Guinea worm transmission hotspots across

Sub-Saharan Africa, helping target eradication efforts and estimate at-risk populations in endemic regions.

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May

New climate and population datasets unveiled at EGU26 are helping researchers map human vulnerability with far greater precision. From 100m-resolution population projections to age- and sex-disaggregated climate risk analysis, our latest work aims to strengthen disaster planning, public health responses, and long-term adaptation strategies. [Read more...](#)

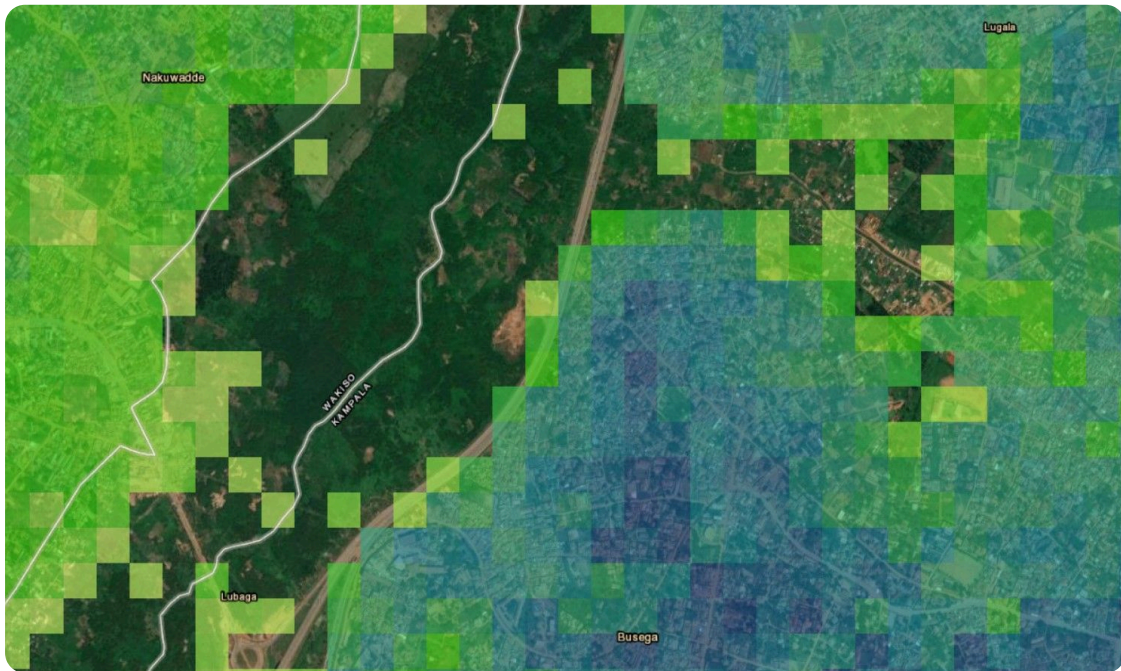


WorldPop at SOTSEF26



At the Southampton Science & Engineering Festival, we ran an interactive LEGO-based activity introducing families to population mapping and geospatial analysis. Visitors built maps and explored how data and satellite imagery inform real-world planning. The exhibit drew strong engagement, with over 100 visitors learning about WorldPop's work and its applications in infrastructure, healthcare, and resource allocation, and expanded public awareness among younger audiences.

Our latest publications



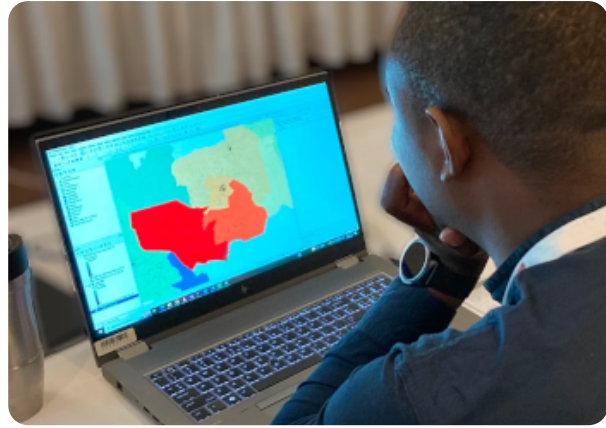
Our team have recently authored or co-authored significant papers on:

- [The influence of women's empowerment on childhood vaccination coverage in Nigeria](#)
- [Rebalancing power in infectious disease modelling: Toward inclusive and contextual approaches](#)
- [Maternal and child healthcare coverage and trends: refugee vs. non-refugee districts in Uganda](#)
- [An entropogram-based Random Field model for categorical geospatial data prediction](#)
- [Interactions of SARS-CoV-2, influenza and respiratory syncytial virus influence epidemic timing and risk](#)
- [An age-structured spatially varying coefficient model for high-resolution mapping of vaccination coverage](#)

See our [publications list](#) and search more than 300 highly cited papers published since 2004.

Online training

Build your expertise in population science with WorldPop's free, expert-designed resources. From the WorldPop Book of Methods - explaining how high-resolution population maps are created - to our Online Learning Portal with self-paced QGIS courses, certification, and community support, there's something for all levels. For practical skills, the Population Modelling Training Manual and step-by-step tutorials guide you from core concepts to real-world applications in planning, research, and decision-making worldwide.



[Read more...](#)

We hope you enjoyed our newsletter.

If you did, please share it with your friends and colleagues.

Our next edition will be published in Autumn, 2026.

Subscribe to our newsletter



The WorldPop research programme, based in the School of Geography and Environmental Science at the University of Southampton, is a multi-sectoral team of researchers, technicians and project specialists that produces data on population distributions and characteristics at high spatial resolution.



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