

Tanzania

Ethnicity in Tanzania

Group selection

Because of the contrasting ethno political dynamics in Tanzania, it is valuable to distinguish between mainland Tanzania (Tanganyika) and Zanzibar, when assessing the respective status of ethnic groups within the country.

In Tanganyika, though not completely absent, ethnicity has not played a significant role since independence. Certain ethnic groups seem to be privileged in access to the state's bureaucracy. However political discourse and contests rarely refer to ethnic identity and "appeals to tribal or ethnic values do not work in Tanzanian politics" (⁴³⁷⁴). Reasons for this are a) that there is no large or dominant group in Tanzania despite the ethnic fragmentation (about 120 groups), b) the common lingua franca Kiswahili enhanced national identity and c) the domination of one political party since independence and Nyerere's leadership generally mitigated against regional or ethnic identities. Following the line of "Mwalimu" ("teacher") Nyerere, even after the introduction of a multi-party system, ethnic, local, regional or religious parties remain forbidden.

⁴³⁷⁴ [Göran, 1999]

Mainland: Since the beginning of the democratization process in the 1990s, however, the Maasai have begun to form grassroot organisations to fight against marginalization and restrictions on their pastoralist lifestyle (⁴³⁷⁵: 370f.). Discrimination against the Maasai was and is confined to the cultural and economic realm, and is not intended to exclude them from political participation. According to their website, among the tasks of the Maasai Environmental Resource Coalition (MERC, a national network of Maasai grassroot organisations) is not only the representation of Maasai interests on the local level but also vis-à-vis national state institutions and decision makers. Thus, the Maasai are coded as powerless from 1992 on.

⁴³⁷⁵ [Neumann, 1995]

When it comes to religion, three main religious denominations may be distinguished in Tanzania, Christian, Muslim and African Traditional religions. While Muslims are overwhelmingly Sufis, Christians are further divided between Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Anglicans and Protestants churches (⁴³⁷⁶, 114, 116-7). A number of umbrella organizations for Christians denominations exist: the Tanzanian Episcopal Conference (Catholics), Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, the Anglican Church in Tanzania and the Free

⁴³⁷⁶ [Gahnstrom, 2012]

Pentecostal Churches in Tanzania. While the former three religious denominations are united in a loose organization called, the Christian Council of Tanzania, the Pentecostal Church is not part of it (4377, 116-7). The Muslims are mainly represented by the Supreme Muslim Council of Tanzania (BAKWATA), which enjoys close links with the ruling CCM party and an extensive networks of mosques (2'800) and schools (see ARC 2012). However, since the return to multiparty elections, a number of smaller religious associations have challenged BAKWATA position, generally advocating a more conservative approach to religion (4378, 117). Finally, no national level umbrella organization exists for the African Traditional Religions and these do not matter for national level politics (4379, 115).

4377 [Gahnstrom, 2012]

4378 [Gahnstrom, 2012]

4379 [Gahnstrom, 2012]

Demographically, however, the relative important of all major religious groups is difficult to ascertain, as no census on religious identities has been carried out since 1967. The last census, which gave a slight majority to Christians (32 % against 30 % for Muslims), is contested by the Muslim, who prefers to refer to the last colonial census (1957), which gives them a majority over Christians (4380, 698; 4381, 116). However, these statistics suffer from the fact that African Traditional Religions are often practiced alongside Islam, or more often, Christian religions, and not to the exclusion of these religions (see 4382, 698; 4383, 116). Recent survey estimates show that if the cross-cutting aspects of these traditional religions are taken into account, then the share of population which refer themselves as Christians (referred in the EPR dataset as Others Mainland) account for nearly 60 % of the population, while the Muslims number about 36 % (4384: 64). The statistics are broadly in lines with other surveys Afro-barometer 2008 and DHS 2004 (see 4385; 4386, 116).

4380 [Hellman Kaiser, 2002]

4381 [Gahnstrom, 2012]

4382 [Hellman Kaiser, 2002]

4383 [Gahnstrom, 2012]

4384 [Pew Forum on Religions and Public Life, 2010]

Note: EPR statistics are computed from the 0,964 share of the population of the Mainland Africans parent groups in previous periods (data is from the 2002 census; see 4387) using the Christians/Muslims ratio, as practitioners of traditional religions perceive themselves generally as Christians or Muslims (see 4388, 698 and 4389, 116).

4387 [Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics, 2011]

4388 [Hellman Kaiser, 2002]

4389 [Gahnstrom, 2012]

Religious identities did not have particular political relevance for much of the period until the early 1990s and the return to multiparty politics. Against a background of economic and social crisis, as well as religious revivals both among Christian and Muslim communities within the broader region, religion did re-emerge as a factor influencing politics in the early 1990s (4390, 121). The re-emergence of religion was further compounded by the fact that Mainland Muslims had been under-represented in senior political and administrative position, due to the consequence of British policies during the Colonial period, which put emphasis on private and missionary education as opposed to public education (4391; 4392, 16-17; 4393, 122-3). The salience of religious identities during this period was nevertheless confined to fundamentalist groups, while the established religious institutions remained neutral, despite a number of violent incidents opposing members of Christian and Muslim communities (Ibid.). For

4390 [Gahnstrom, 2012]

4391 [Hellman Kaiser, 2002]

4392 [Wiedemann, 2010]

4393 [Gahnstrom, 2012]

instance, the major Muslim organization, the National Muslim Council of Tanzania, also known as BAKWATA, did not articulate any overtly political claims. The same also applies to established Christian organizations, such as the Tanzanian Episcopal Conference, that did not call to vote for any candidate based on religious affiliation. (⁴³⁹⁴, 137) Thus, although there is no doubt that the relevance of religious identities has been steadily rising; it is not warranted to disaggregate Mainland Africans into Christians and Muslim politically relevant groups for the period 1992-2009.

⁴³⁹⁴ [Gahnstrom, 2012]

Yet, in the run-up to the 2010 elections, religious identities have arguably become politically relevant, as previously major religious organizations, which had strived until then to remain neutral started to make overt political claims. As such, from 2010 onwards, the previously identified EPR group Mainland Africans ethnic group is divided into two subgroups: Mainland Muslims and Other Mainland (Christians and Traditional religions).

Zanzibar: The paramount issue of ethnicity in Tanzania is connected to Zanzibar. The relationship between the semi-autonomous islands Unguja and Pemba and the mainland is a constant topic of political discussion, and appeals to a historical and cultural particularism of Zanzibar are common (⁴³⁹⁵, 126, 131). This particularism is founded on claims about the Islamic tradition of the islands and on a distinct Zanzibari culture (ibid., 127). The union between the mainland and Zanzibar is a post-colonial construction established after the overthrow of the Sultan of Zanzibar in 1964. According to Crozon (⁴³⁹⁶), between 1964 and 1972, the union was merely formal, and Nyerere had no control over the authoritarian regime of Zanzibar's President Karume (who nevertheless imposed a policy of Africanization on the islands). This started to change only with the merging of the mainland Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) party with the Afro Shirazi Party (ASP) of Zanzibar resulting in the new party Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) (⁴³⁹⁷, 124, 125). But still, Zanzibar has a large political and to some extent also judicial autonomy inside the union: It has its own president and parliament and on entering Zanzibar, passports have to be shown (⁴³⁹⁸, 17). Ethnically, there are three important groups in Zanzibar:

⁴³⁹⁵ [Crozon, 1998]

⁴³⁹⁶ [Crozon, 1998]

⁴³⁹⁷ [Crozon, 1998]

⁴³⁹⁸ [Wiedemann, 2010]

1. The Arab minority. Historically the elite of the islands, they were discriminated after the revolution of 1964 and the overthrow of the Sultan, suffering massacres, deportations and expropriations (⁴³⁹⁹, 104-107). In the 1980s, a policy of reconciliation was initiated by the government: Exiled Arabs were encouraged to return. The greater role of Arabs in the economy which followed this opening provoked again anti-Arab sentiments among the African population (⁴⁴⁰⁰, 128-131). Most Arabs of Zanzibar are of mixed African descent (⁴⁴⁰¹, 64).

⁴³⁹⁹ [Prunier, 1998]

⁴⁴⁰⁰ [Crozon, 1998]

⁴⁴⁰¹ [Ali Bakari, 2001]

2. The Shirazi are the indigenous African inhabitants of the islands. They are the majority population and "although primarily black, draw a distinction between themselves and 'Africans' who are

more recent immigrants from the mainland” (f.e. ⁴⁴⁰², 252). Since after the revolution “Africanness” meant implicitly first-class citizenship, it was beneficial to people who before labeled themselves as “Shirazi” to switch to an “African” self-description. Consequently, the number of Shirazi diminished drastically in surveys on ethnic identity (⁴⁴⁰³, 71, 72).

3. The continental Africans are ethnically heterogeneous. Their common economic status at the poor end of Zanzibari society fostered historically their self-perception as a homogenous block (⁴⁴⁰⁴, 98).

Unlike the mainland, Zanzibar is overwhelmingly Muslim (99%) (⁴⁴⁰⁵, 3).

Still today, politics in Zanzibar exhibit a distinct pattern. In contrast to the mainland, for example, a strong opposition force to the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) party has emerged since the introduction of the multiparty system in the 1990’s: the Civic United Front (CUF), a principally nationwide party which however only plays a significant role in Zanzibar. In three highly contested and violent elections (1995, 2000, 2005) the CCM candidate won by a small margin. Following a power sharing agreement between the CCM and the CUF in 2009 and approved in a referendum before the election, the CUF was included in the government as a junior partner. As a consequence, the 2010 elections were generally peaceful and ended once again with a narrow victory of the CCM over the CUF (⁴⁴⁰⁶, 2011).

There seems now to exist a tendency that both parties fight together for more political and economic independence from the mainland (⁴⁴⁰⁷). Although CUF is in favor of a stronger Islamic influence and for more autonomy, both CCM and CUF appeal to the Muslim voters. According to the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, CCM-Zanzibar is not the extended arm of mainland-CCM but can instead be considered as the follow-up to the Afro Shirazi Party (ASP). Neither is it considered more liberal or western than the CUF (⁴⁴⁰⁸: 3). In 1993, the CCM-government of Zanzibar decided to join the Organization of Islamic Conference, a decision which later had to be revoked because of its anticonstitutionality (⁴⁴⁰⁹, 135; ⁴⁴¹⁰). According to Ali Bakari (⁴⁴¹¹, 171), in 2001 the leadership of CCM-Zanzibar consisted mainly of “black Africans”.

The CUF generally has stronger support in areas with high Arab population. CUF leaders have close ties to emigrated Arab Zanzibaris on the Arabic peninsula (⁴⁴¹², 46). Nevertheless, and as stated above, the CUF cannot be said to represent Arab or Pemba nationalism in opposition to an “African” CCM (⁴⁴¹³, 188). Its chairman and since 2010 vice-president of Zanzibar, Seif Shariff Hamad is a Shirazi, and within the party’s leadership in 2001, there was no representative of the Arab minority (⁴⁴¹⁴, 175).

The difficulty in coding the Zanzibar situation consists in the question to which ethnic group the obvious Zanzibari particularism has to be attributed. Based on the foregoing explications, it seems

⁴⁴⁰² [Notholt, 2008]

⁴⁴⁰³ [Ali Bakari, 2001]

⁴⁴⁰⁴ [Prunier, 1998]

⁴⁴⁰⁵ [Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Tansania, 2005]

⁴⁴⁰⁶ [U.S. State Department, 2011]

⁴⁴⁰⁷ [The Citizen, 2009]

⁴⁴⁰⁸ [Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Tansania, 2005]

⁴⁴⁰⁹ [Crozon, 1998]

⁴⁴¹⁰ [Wikipedia, 2014]

⁴⁴¹¹ [Ali Bakari, 2001]

⁴⁴¹² [Mukangara, 2000]

⁴⁴¹³ [Ali Bakari, 2001]

⁴⁴¹⁴ [Ali Bakari, 2001]

reasonable to locate it within the Shirazi and Arab groups. The latter were discriminated until the mid 1980s, and still excluded of executive positions at both regional and national levels today (“powerless”). The Shirazi can be seen as having regional autonomy. Population figures for the Zanzibar Arabs and the Maasai are based on absolute numbers provided by the Ethnologue, divided by the official country population based on the 2002 census (⁴⁴¹⁵). The Shirazi figure was calculated with Notholt’s (⁴⁴¹⁶) relative figure for Zanzibar and the 2002 population data.

⁴⁴¹⁵ [Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics, 2011]

⁴⁴¹⁶ [Notholt, 2008]

2009-2013 (update): In the run-up to the 2010 elections, religious identities arguably became politically relevant, as previously major religious organizations, which had strived until then to remain neutral started to make overt political claims. As such, from 2010 onwards, the previously identified EPR group Mainland Africans ethnic group is divided into two subgroups: Mainland Muslims and Other Mainland (Christians and Traditional religions).

Indeed, these elections arguably represent a watershed, as established religious associations for the first did articulate religious claims. Indeed, in pastoral letter, the Roman Catholic Church called electors to vote in favor of candidates rejecting corruption (⁴⁴¹⁷, 137; ⁴⁴¹⁸). As during the last legislative period, the governing Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) party led by President Jakaya Kikwete, a Muslim, had been embroiled in scandals, the statement by the Catholic Church was widely perceived by Muslims as in support of the Opposition Chadema party, led by a Christian and former priest, Dr. Slaa. In reaction, a Muslim organization, Baraza Kuu, the nationwide Political Committee of the Council of Muslim Clerics launched a guideline, urging to vote for good representatives who fight to free Muslims from oppression (⁴⁴¹⁹, ⁴⁴²⁰, 137-8). In addition, during the election campaign both Baraza Kuu, and the larger and more traditional Muslim organization, BAKWATA, called for the re-establishment of Islamic Kadhi Courts, that had been abolished at the independence, and openly threatened to withdraw their political support to CCM-led government (⁴⁴²¹, 137; ⁴⁴²²). In light of these religious-based claims by major religious organization, the Muslim and Other mainland (Christians and African traditional religions) are coded as politically relevant from 2010 onwards.

⁴⁴¹⁷ [Gahnstrom, 2012]

⁴⁴¹⁸ [Tanzanian Affairs, 2009]

⁴⁴¹⁹ [Tanzania Information, 2009]

⁴⁴²⁰ [Gahnstrom, 2012]

⁴⁴²¹ [Gahnstrom, 2012]

For the period 2010-2013, the Muslims are coded as junior partner and the Christians and followers of traditional religions as senior partner, in spite of the fact that the Tanzanian president, Jakaya Kikwete, is Muslim and that the Muslim representation in higher political offices has improved under his presidency (⁴⁴²³, 155). The reason is that, although other coding might be possible, it may not be ruled out that the previous over-representation of Christian due to educational advantage still persist, including when it comes to representation in the national executive. This is however a conservative coding.

⁴⁴²³ [Gahnstrom, 2012]

It remains that religious identities, though important in politics,

are clearly not the dominant fault lines in politics and the extent to which, they do matters for political behavior is probably still low in Tanzania (⁴⁴²⁴, 157). However, albeit infrequent, it should be remarked that violence opposing both religious communities has been on the rise since 2010 (see ⁴⁴²⁵).

⁴⁴²⁴ [Gahnstrom, 2012]

⁴⁴²⁵ [BBC Monitoring, 2013]

In Zanzibar, the extension of the coding to 2013 as before is informed by the lack of access to executive power. For the regional autonomy variable, decision to code Shirazi as benefiting from regional autonomy in Zanzibar has been extended to 2013, while the Arab population is still coded as not benefiting from regional autonomy. Nevertheless, it should be mentioned here, that information on ethnic backgrounds of members of the Zanzibar Cabinet and the Civic United Front is particularly limited.

2014-2017 (update): Political grievances in mainland Tanzania in the years in this period appear to be caused by the dominance of the leading CCM party (⁴⁴²⁶). As previously noted, ethnicity does not play a salient role in defining the political party system. In 2015 the election of John Magufuli, a Christian CCM politician, supports the continuation of the senior partner status for the mainland Christians. Before his election, religious tensions were heightened by a proposed referendum which sought to change the constitution through creating a series of “Kadhi Courts” to adjudicate on Muslim issues (⁴⁴²⁷). This referendum was considered an offering to the marginalised Muslim communities who feel excluded from the secularist government, but was “postponed” due to voter registration difficulties (Voa 2015). Overall, Wikipedia and Lexis-Nexis searches show that the proportion of mainland Muslim to Christian members of the cabinet is roughly the same (out of 18, 4) as the previous cabinet, which suggests that the junior partner status of mainland Muslims remains as they are represented at similar levels to the previous period in the executive.

⁴⁴²⁶ [Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2016]

⁴⁴²⁷ [Reuters, 2015]

Regarding Zanzibari ethnic relations, before discussing internal Zanzibari politics, it is prudent to consider the position of Zanzibari ethnic groups in the greater power relations of Tanzania as a whole. According to Wikipedia and Lexis-Nexis searches, the Vice-President herself, and Vice Presidents since 1995 have been of Zanzibari origin, and such a position would normally justify a junior partner status. However, whereas the Shirazi group are deemed to dominate internal Zanzibar politics (as explained in previous notes), thus supporting their regional autonomy coding, the Zanzibari politicians that have taken the Vice-President position have been from the ruling CCM party. They do not claim to represent Shirazi interests and instead have been construed as a party supporting African Nationalism, and the continued union of the two parts of Tanzania (⁴⁴²⁸, 71). It seems that the current and previous Vice-Presidents from Zanzibar cannot be considered representatives of Zanzibari ethnic group interests, but rather, the “Black African” identity that the CCM party represent (⁴⁴²⁹). Therefore, the Zanzibari ethnic groups (Shirazi and Zanzibari

⁴⁴²⁸ [Ali Bakari, 2001]

⁴⁴²⁹ [Carter, 1977]

arabs) remain powerless.

As regards internal Zanzibari politics, including the regional parliament and executive, an assessment of the cabinet does not give any evidence of inclusion of the Arab minority on Zanzibar. Three of the minority party (ie, not CCM) were included in the cabinet (⁴⁴³⁰). This low representation level explains the continued “powerless” status for the Arab minority in Zanzibar. In recent years, ethnic divides on Zanzibar have been overshadowed by cross-party calls for more autonomy from the mainland, which demonstrates that diversity may not necessarily lead to ethnic political cleavages (⁴⁴³¹).

⁴⁴³⁰ [All Africa, 2016]

⁴⁴³¹ [Bjerk, 2015]

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Political status of ethnic groups in Tanzania

From 1961 until 1964

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Mainland Africans	0.964	IRRELEVANT
Maasai	0.013	IRRELEVANT

From 1965 until 1984

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Mainland Africans	0.964	DOMINANT
Shirazi (Zanzibar Africans)	0.018	POWERLESS
Maasai	0.013	IRRELEVANT
Zanzibar Arabs	0.005	DISCRIMINATED

From 1985 until 1991

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Mainland Africans	0.964	DOMINANT
Shirazi (Zanzibar Africans)	0.018	POWERLESS
Maasai	0.013	IRRELEVANT
Zanzibar Arabs	0.005	POWERLESS

From 1992 until 2009

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Mainland Africans	0.964	DOMINANT
Shirazi (Zanzibar Africans)	0.018	POWERLESS
Maasai	0.013	POWERLESS
Zanzibar Arabs	0.005	POWERLESS

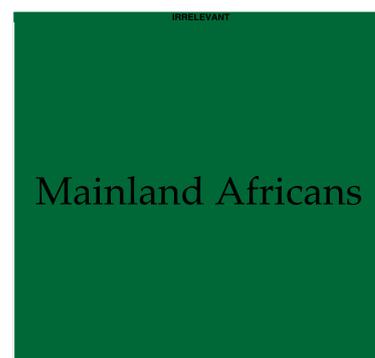


Figure 898: Political status of ethnic groups in Tanzania during 1961-1964.

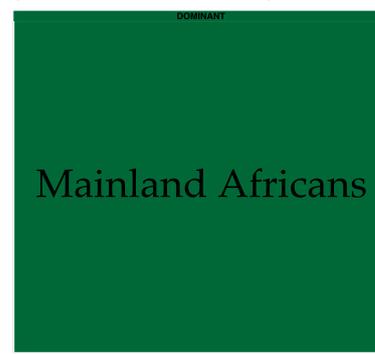


Figure 899: Political status of ethnic groups in Tanzania during 1965-1984.

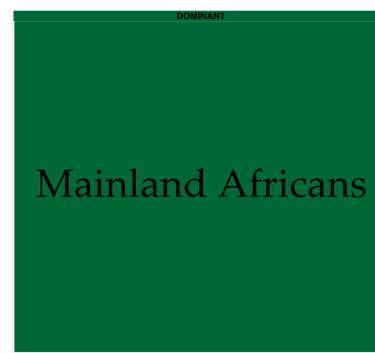
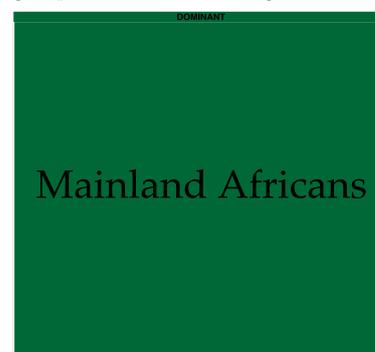


Figure 900: Political status of ethnic groups in Tanzania during 1985-1991.



From 2010 until 2017

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Others Mainland (Christians and traditional religions)	0.603	SENIOR PARTNER
Mainland Muslims	0.361	JUNIOR PARTNER
Shirazi (Zanzibar Africans)	0.018	POWERLESS
Maasai	0.013	POWERLESS
Zanzibar Arabs	0.005	POWERLESS

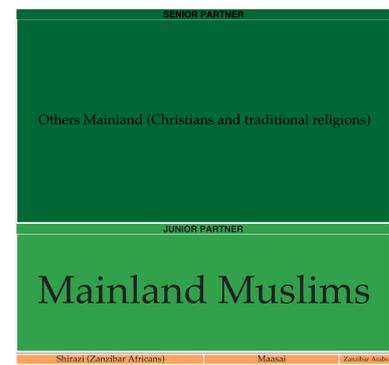


Figure 902: Political status of ethnic groups in Tanzania during 2010-2017.

Geographical coverage of ethnic groups in Tanzania

From 1964 until 1964



Figure 903: Map of ethnic groups in Tanzania during 1964-1964.

Group name	Area in km ²	Type
■ Mainland Africans	877 320	Regionally based

Table 303: List of ethnic groups in Tanzania during 1964-1964.

From 1965 until 1991

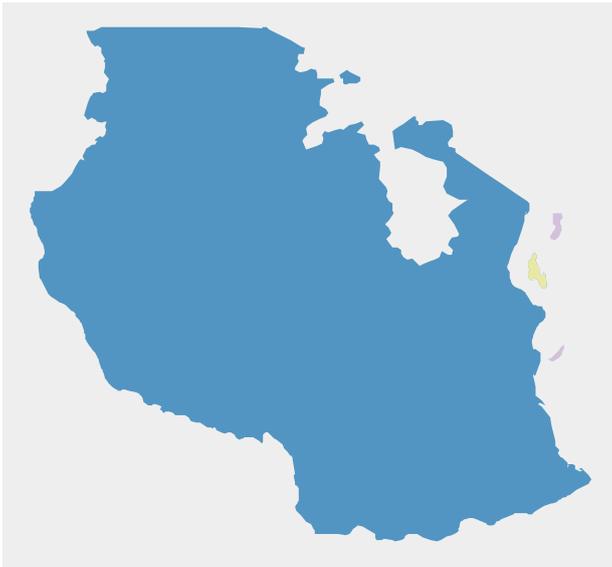


Figure 904: Map of ethnic groups in Tanzania during 1965-1991.

Group name	Area in km ²	Type
■ Mainland Africans	877 320	Regionally based
■ Shirazi (Zanzibar Africans)	3007	Regionally based
■ Zanzibar Arabs	1582	Regionally based

Table 304: List of ethnic groups in Tanzania during 1965-1991.

From 1992 until 2009

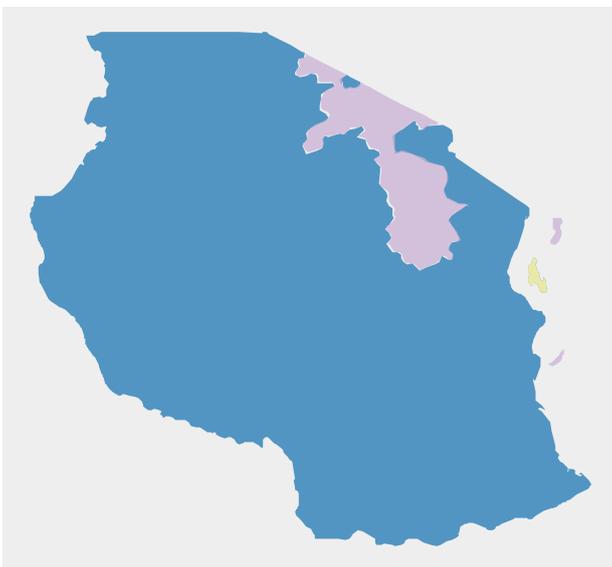


Figure 905: Map of ethnic groups in Tanzania during 1992-2009.

Group name	Area in km ²	Type
■ Mainland Africans	877 320	Regionally based
■ Maasai	61 928	Regionally based
■ Shirazi (Zanzibar Africans)	3007	Regionally based
■ Zanzibar Arabs	1582	Regionally based

Table 305: List of ethnic groups in Tanzania during 1992-2009.

From 2010 until 2017



Figure 906: Map of ethnic groups in Tanzania during 2010-2017.

Group name	Area in km ²	Type
■ Others Mainland (Christians and traditional religions)	877 320	Regionally based
■ Mainland Muslims	875 738	Regionally based
■ Maasai	61 928	Regionally based
■ Shirazi (Zanzibar Africans)	3007	Regionally based
■ Zanzibar Arabs	1582	Regionally based

Table 306: List of ethnic groups in Tanzania during 2010-2017.

Conflicts in Tanzania

Starting on 1978-11-10

Side A	Side B	Group name	Start	Claim	Recruitment	Support
Government of Tanzania	Government of Uganda		1978-11-10			