# sease in Kenya

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**Abstract:**

In Kenya and most of Eastern Africa, sickle haemoglobin (HbS) is the pre-dominant beta-globin chain abnormality; homozygous sickle cell disease, (SCA), is the predominant form of sickle cell disease. Although the prevalence of sickle cell trait (SCT) in Kenya was known, the magnitude of SCA was yet to be established. We performed a national survey in all hospitals from November 1987 to May 1990 and found 3605 cases with SCA. Age was recorded for 2821 patients. Seventy-seven per cent of these patients were below the age of fifteen. The oldest patient was a 50-year-old female. The paediatric to adult ratio was 3:1. More than 80% of the patients were of Luo or Luhya ethnic origin (Luo 58.4%, Luhya 23.9%). There was a discrepancy between SCT rate (SCTr) and the percentage distribution of SCA patients per province. The Kambes of the Mijikenda group in the Coast Province with the highest SCTr (35%) constituted only 8.5%, but the Luos with a SCTr of 28%, 58% of the total SCA patient population in Kenya. We found reports of SCA in the Somali and Turkana, in whom no SCT had been found previously.