

Data Analysis: Trend in life expectancy at birth in Sub-Saharan Africa since 1960

Baguinebie Bazongo

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Summary of main findings

Life expectancy at birth is recorded for 264 countries over the period 1960-2017. Cambodia and Rwanda experienced the lowest life expectancy in 1997 and 1993 respectively (18.9 vs. 26.2), while Hong Kong SAR, China and Japan experienced the highest life expectancy in 2017 (84.7 vs. 84.1).

When we examine Sub-Saharan Africa trend, figure 1 below shows overall increase in life expectancy at birth over 1960-2017. However, Rwanda experienced suddenly decreased in life expectancy since 1987 to reach its lowest level in 1993, a year of civil war. Although this decrease, Rwanda experienced a rapid increase in life expectancy since 1994, and this exceeded that of Sub-Saharan Africa since 2002. To conclude, life expectancy in Sub-Saharan Africa has significantly increased since 1997, but Rwanda had a higher progress in life expectancy compared to overall countries of the region.

Figure 1. Life expectancy at birth in Sub Saharan Africa since 1960

