

Longest Uninterrupted Durations of Life Expectancy Decrease

Introduction

This page explores the query: "Which nation has undergone the lengthiest unbroken stretch of declining life expectancy?"

The data source for this analysis: [Life Expectancy](#).

Given that the available data may exhibit discontinuities in time intervals for certain countries and date ranges, the question can yield two distinct answers, contingent upon our specific definition. We approach the analysis in two distinct manners:

1. When dealing with data that furnishes an observation for each year in a continuous sequence, where each data entry corresponds to one year in succession.
2. When handling data characterized by gaps in the sequence—for example, observations made every 5 years over a historical period.

Nations with a Single Observation Per Year in Sequential Order

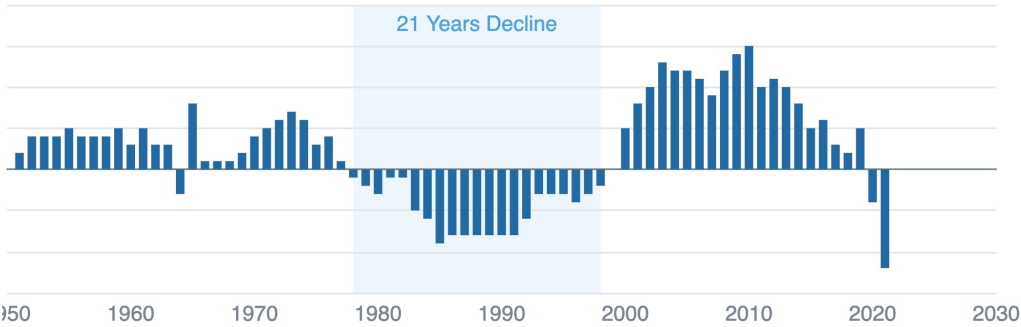
All of the ten countries facing this unfortunate trend are located in Africa, and Zambia leads the list.

Country	Start	End	Years
Zambia	1978	1998	21
Botswana	1987	2002	16
Eswatini	1991	2005	15
Kenya	1984	1998	15
Zimbabwe	1987	2001	15
Central African Republic	1987	2000	14
Cote d'Ivoire	1988	2000	13

Country	Start	End	Years
Lesotho	1995	2006	12
Namibia	1990	2001	12
South Africa	1993	2004	12

Examination of Zambia's Two-Decade Life Expectancy Decline

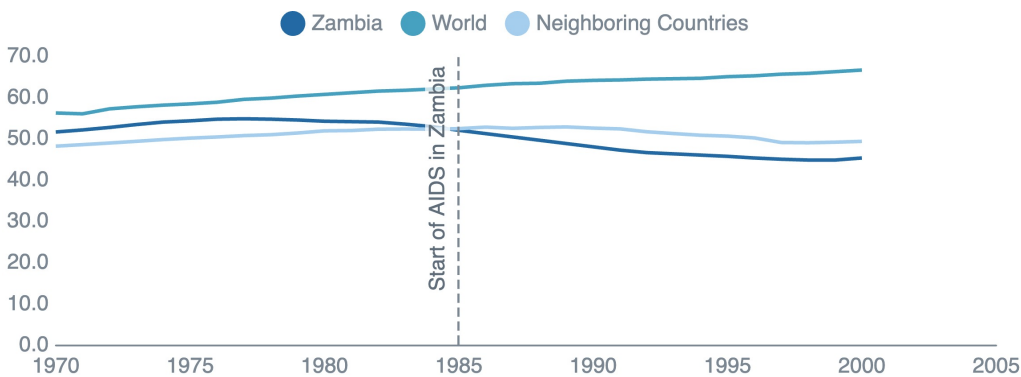
Fluctuations in Life Expectancy in Zambia from 1951 to 2020



Comparison of Life Expectancy: Zambia vs. Global Average and Neighboring Countries' Average

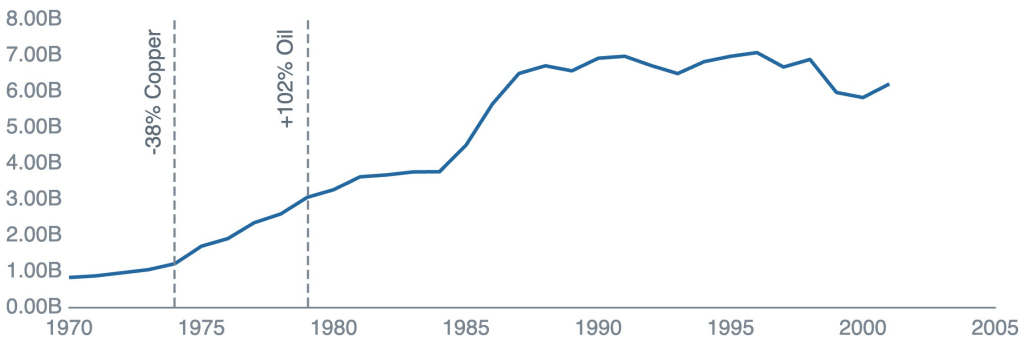
Zambia's life expectancy consistently outpaced that of its neighboring countries until the onset of a sustained decline in 1978.

[Washington Post, 1985 - Zambia Trapped in Poverty's Vise](#)



Zambia's National External Debt

Copper stands as Zambia's primary export commodity. Following the conclusion of the Vietnam War, the global copper market experienced a significant downturn. Shortly thereafter, energy prices embarked on a notable upward trajectory. Zambia, being a landlocked nation without direct railway access to seaports, relies heavily on the transportation of copper exports via trucks, which, in turn, depend significantly on petroleum.



Nations with Discontinuous Yearly Data

The top ten countries exhibiting data gaps tend to be situated in more developed regions, and these data discontinuities typically occur in earlier historical periods. Bangladesh leads the list.

As there are gaps in the yearly observations in the data, this table displays the final recorded observation year preceding the initial occurrence in the sequence of declines.

Country	Year Preceding	Last Year in Sequence	Years
Bangladesh	1876	1906	30
Russia	1896	1920	24
Finland	1845	1865	20
India	1881	1901	20

Country	Year Preceding	Last Year in Sequence	Years
United Kingdom	1708	1728	20
Germany	1935	1946	11
Argentina	1875	1885	10
Japan	1935	1945	10
Sri Lanka	1901	1911	10
Uruguay	1920	1930	10

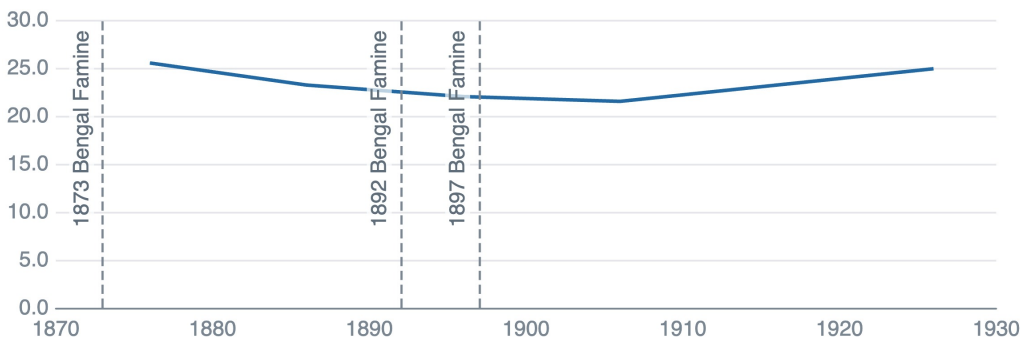
Analysis of Bangladesh's Estimated 30 years of Life Expectancy Reduction

Life expectancy in Bangladesh experienced a distressingly low period during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This challenging situation was exacerbated by the impact of British Raj rule, particularly affecting the region then known as Bengal.

[The Bengal Famine](#)

Year	Life Expectancy
1876	25.5
1886	23.2
1896	22.0
1906	21.5
1926	24.9

Changes in lifespan in Bangladesh, 1876 - 1950



Thankfully, Bangladesh's life expectancy ascended to align with global averages during the latter half of the 20th century.

