



Life expectancy

Life expectancy at birth in 2002 reached a global average of 65.2 years, compared with 46.5 years in 1950–1955. It ranged from an average of 78 years for women in developed countries to less than 46 years for men in some countries of sub-Saharan Africa. The longest life expectancy is 85 years for women in Japan and the shortest is 32 years for men in Sierra Leone.

Life expectancy in selected countries		
Country	Life expectancy at birth (years)	
	Males	Females
Australia	77.9	83.0
Brazil	65.7	72.3
China	69.6	72.7
Egypt	65.3	69.0
France	75.9	83.5
India	60.1	62.0
Nigeria	48.0	49.6
Russian Federation	58.4	72.1
United Kingdom	75.8	80.5
United States of America	74.6	79.8

Global health is a study in contrasts: an extract from WHR 2003

“While a baby girl born in Japan today can expect to live for about 85 years, a girl born at the same moment in Sierra Leone has a life expectancy of 36 years. The Japanese child will receive vaccinations, adequate nutrition and good schooling. If she becomes a mother she will benefit from high-quality maternity care. Growing older, she may eventually develop chronic diseases, but excellent treatment and rehabilitation services will be available; she can expect to receive, on average, medications worth about US\$ 550 per year and much more if needed.”

“Meanwhile, the girl in Sierra Leone has a low chance of receiving immunizations and a high probability of being underweight throughout childhood. She will probably marry in adolescence and go on to give birth to six or more children without the assistance of a trained birth attendant. One or more of her babies will die in infancy, and she herself will be at high risk of death in childbirth. If she falls ill, she can expect, on average, medicines worth about US\$ 3 per year. If she survives middle age she, too, will develop chronic diseases but, without access to adequate treatment, she will die prematurely.”

	Japan	Sierra Leone
Total Population, 2002 (000)	127 478	4764
% of population aged 60+ years, 2002	24.4	4.7
Female average life expectancy at birth, 2002 (years)	85.3	35.7
Female probability of dying under age 5 years (per 1000)	4	303

Child mortality

Approximately 10.5 million children under 5 years of age died in 2002, compared with more than 17 million in 1970. Almost all of these deaths – 98% – occur in developing countries, and 19 of the 20 worst-affected countries are in Africa.

The world's highest mortality rate for children under 5 years of age is 332 per 1000 for males and 303 per 1000 for females in Sierra Leone. The world's lowest mortality rate for children under 5 years of age is 4 per 1000 for males in Finland, Iceland, Japan and Sweden, and 3 per 1000 for females in Finland, Iceland, Monaco, San Marino, Singapore and Sweden.

Child mortality reached a global average of about 80 per 1000 live births in 2002, compared with 147 per 1000 live births in 1970. But in 9 countries (8 of which are in Africa) the current levels are higher than those seen more than 20 years ago. In developing countries, communicable diseases represent 7 out of the top 10 causes of child deaths and account for about 60% of all child deaths. The leading killers in 2002 were:

Cause	Numbers (000)
Lower respiratory infections	1856
Diarrhoeal diseases	1566
Malaria	1098
Measles	551
HIV/AIDS	370
Pertussis	301
Tetanus	185

Adult mortality

Over 60% of people in developed countries live to at least 70 years of age, compared with only about 30% in developing countries. Of the 45 million deaths among adults worldwide in 2002, 32 million, or almost three-quarters, were caused by noncommunicable diseases. HIV/AIDS has become the leading cause of mortality among adults aged 15–59 years.

Leading causes of mortality among adults, worldwide, 2002

Mortality – adults aged 15–59			Mortality – adults aged 60 and over		
Rank	Cause	Deaths (000)	Rank	Cause	Deaths (000)
1	HIV/AIDS	2279	1	Ischaemic heart disease	5825
2	Ischaemic heart disease	1332	2	Cerebrovascular disease	4689
3	Tuberculosis	1036	3	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	2399
4	Road traffic injuries	814	4	Lower respiratory infections	1396
5	Cerebrovascular disease	783	5	Trachea, bronchus, lung cancers	928
6	Self-inflicted injuries	672	6	Diabetes mellitus	754
7	Violence	473	7	Hypertensive heart disease	735
8	Cirrhosis of the liver	382	8	Stomach cancer	605
9	Lower respiratory infections	352	9	Tuberculosis	495
10	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	343	10	Colon and rectum cancers	477

Ischaemic heart disease and stroke (cerebrovascular disease) are two of the three leading causes of burden of disease in adult males globally. HIV/AIDS is the leading cause for males and the second leading cause for females, accounting for around 6% of the global burden of disease. Unipolar depressive disorders are the leading cause for females.

HIV/AIDS

AIDS is the leading infectious cause of adult death in the world. HIV/AIDS kills almost 5000 men and women and almost 1000 of their children every 24 hours in sub-Saharan Africa.

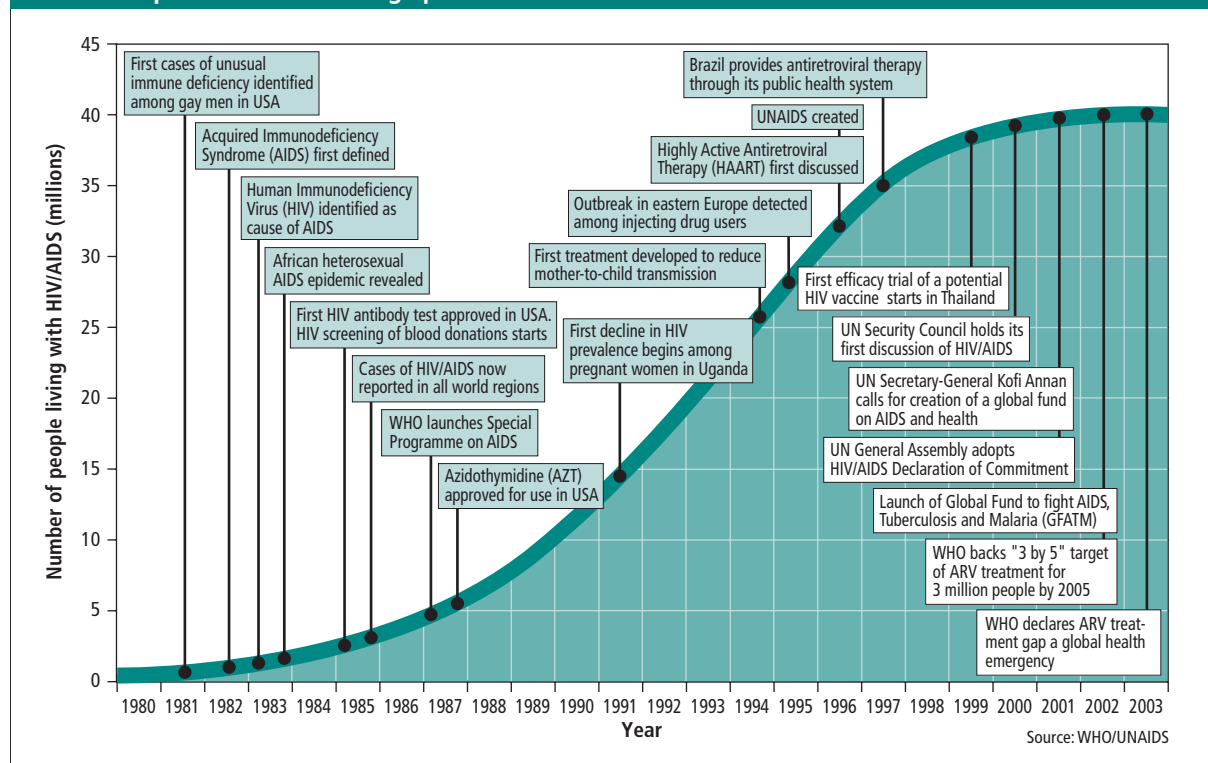
Almost 80% of the nearly 3 million global deaths from HIV/AIDS in 2002 occurred in this region. At the same time, about 5 million more people worldwide became infected with HIV.

HIV/AIDS: a strategy to achieve "3 by 5"

The "3 by 5" initiative intends to deliver antiretroviral treatment to three million people in developing countries by 2005, through:

- providing emergency response teams to high-burden countries where the treatment gap most urgently needs to be filled, on request of the government;
- establishing an AIDS drugs diagnostics facility;
- publishing uniform standards and simplified tools to enable monitoring of progress in treatment programmes;
- beginning emergency expansion of training and capacity development for health professionals;
- undertaking advocacy for funding – achieving the "3 by 5" target not only requires funding for drugs but a massive investment in training and for strengthening health services in countries.

HIV/AIDS: episodes in an evolving epidemic

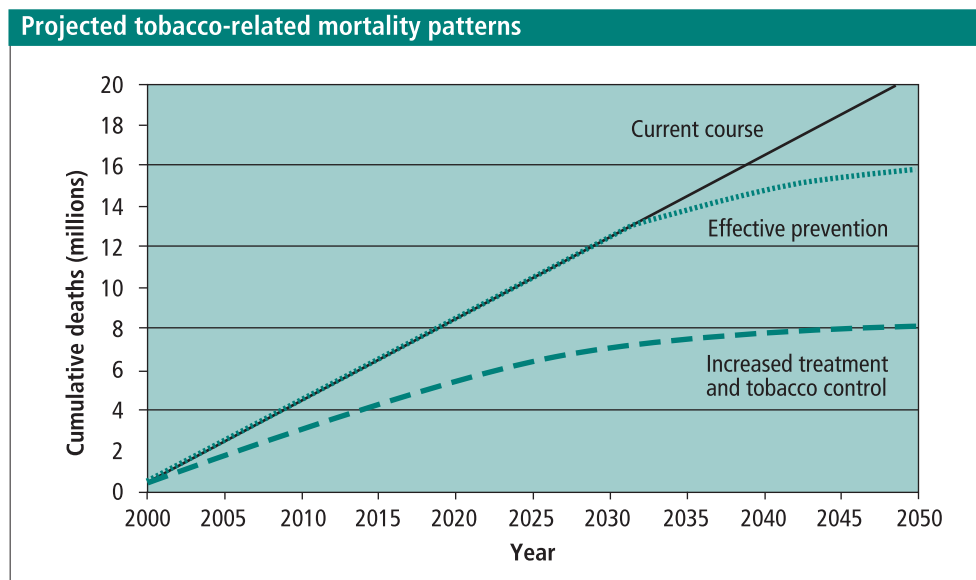


Heart disease and stroke

In 2002, just over half (16.7 million) of all deaths attributable to noncommunicable diseases were the result of cardiovascular diseases (heart disease and stroke). Of this total, almost 5.5 million deaths were caused by stroke. Worldwide, heart disease and stroke are the leading causes of death for adults over 60 years of age. In developed countries, heart disease and stroke are the leading causes of death for adult men and women. However, in some developing countries they have also become the leading causes of death and were responsible for over 10 million deaths in 2001.

Tobacco-related diseases

Tobacco-related diseases are the world's leading preventable cause of death, responsible for about 5 million deaths a year. Total tobacco consumption is on the rise. The number of smokers, estimated at 1.3 billion today, is expected on current trends to rise to 1.7 billion by 2025 and every second smoker will die of a tobacco-caused disease.



Cancer

Over 1.2 million people died of lung cancer in 2002, an increase of nearly 30% since 1990, with 3 out of 4 deaths occurring among men. Breast cancer kills almost half a million women a year.

Deaths resulting from the dominant types of cancer, 2002			
Male cancers	Deaths (000)	Female cancers	Deaths (000)
Trachea/bronchus/lung	886	Breast	474
Stomach	523	Trachea/bronchus/lung	353
Liver	428	Stomach	326
Colon/rectum	321	Colon/rectum	299
Oesophagus	284	Cervix Uteri	239
Prostate	268	Liver	191

Double burden

In all WHO regions except Africa, deaths from noncommunicable diseases outnumber those from communicable conditions.

Deaths by cause (000)		
	Communicable diseases*	Noncommunicable conditions
Africa	7779	2252
The Americas	875	4543
Eastern Mediterranean	1746	2030
Europe	567	8112
South-East Asia	5730	7423
Western Pacific	1701	9000

* Includes maternal and perinatal conditions and nutritional deficiencies.

Road traffic hazards

There are more than 20 million casualties on the world's roads each year. In 2002, there were almost 1.2 million deaths from road traffic injuries, of which over 70% were male.

Fatality rates are rapidly accelerating in the developing world, especially in Asia. By 2020, road traffic deaths are expected to increase by 92% in China and 147% in India, with an increase of approximately 80% in many developing countries.

SARS

The outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) which spread to 30 countries in 2003 produced a total of 8422 probable cases and 916 deaths by early August. Of the probable cases, 5327 (63%) were in China, 1755 (21%) in China, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and 665 (8%) in Taiwan, China.

Polio eradication

Indigenous polioviruses have now been eliminated from all but 7 countries, down from over 125 since 1998. The 7 countries are Afghanistan, Egypt, India, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan and Somalia.

As a result of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, the number of children paralysed by polio has fallen from 350 000 in 1998 to as few as 1918 in 2002.

The World Health Report 2003 – Shaping the Future.

Published December 2003 in English, French and Spanish.

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The World Health Report 2003 full press kit can be obtained on the WHO Internet home page
<http://www.who.int/>.

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