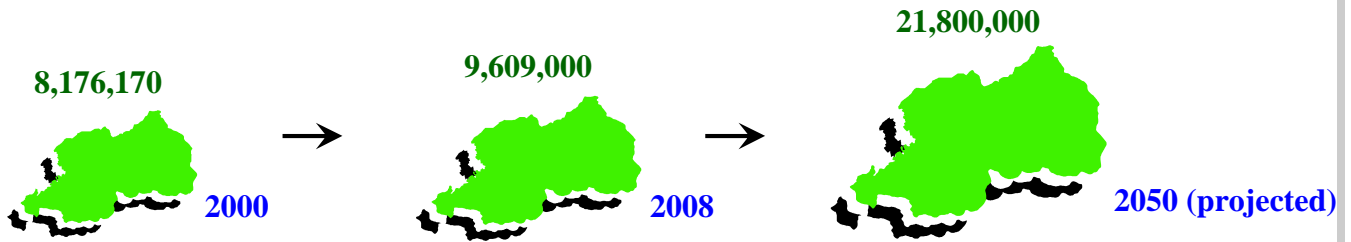




Population and Failing States

Rwanda



Population and Failing States

Failing nations, almost without exception, have high population growth rates. *Foreign Policy* and the Fund for Peace publish an annual ranking of failed states. All of the top ten countries in the 2009 Failed States Index have total fertility rates (the average number of children born by a woman over her lifetime) substantially higher than the global average (2.6). Six of them had TFRs of 5.0 or higher. High fertility rates are often associated with high maternal and infant mortality rates. Early teenage pregnancy and unhealthy birth spacing, in particular, are associated with poor health outcomes for mothers and infants. High population growth rates may make it more difficult for failing states to provide adequate schooling, nutrition, immunization, and other essential services. Population pressures can also lead to environmental degradation, food insecurity, and even conflict.

Rwanda's Population Profile

- Population as of mid-2009: 9,900,000 (PRB)
- Projected Population mid-2050: 21,800,000, a projected increase of 121% from 2009 levels (PRB)
- Population growth rate: 2.5% (PRB)
- Percent of population living in urban areas: 18% (PRB)
- Population under the age of 15: 4,180,000 or 44% (PRB)
- Life expectancy at birth (both sexes): 48 years (PRB)
- Percent of the Rwandan population living below the poverty line of \$1 a day : N/A

Maternal and Child Health Trends

- A Rwandan women's lifetime risk of dying from maternal causes is 1 in 16 (PRB)
- 31% of births are attended by a skilled health personnel (PRB)
- Infant mortality rate: 62 per 1,000 live births (PRB)

- Child mortality rate under age 5: 179 per 1,000 children (PRB)
- 23% of children under the age of 5 are underweight. (PRB)
- 45% of children have had their growth stunted (UNICEF)

Fertility in Rwanda

- Current total fertility rate: 5.5 (PRB)
- 36% of married women ages 15-49 use contraceptives (PRB)
- 27% of married women ages 15-49 use modern contraceptives (PRB)

Sources:

[Population Reference Bureau](#)

[UNICEF, Info By Country: Rwanda Statistics](#)

Family Planning and Reproductive Health

Fertility Trend

Rwanda's total fertility rate (average number of children born by a woman in her lifetime) has declined only slightly in the past few decades. UNICEF estimated the total fertility rate at 7.6 in 1990 and 5.9 in 2007. The Population Reference Bureau estimates the current TFR at 5.5 (2009).

Family Planning

In a Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) conducted in 1992, 13% of married women were using modern contraceptive methods. This figure plummeted to 4% by 2000, mostly due to the 1994 genocide, but rebounded to 10% by 2005. Preliminary results from a 2008 DHS indicate an increase to 27% partly attributable to the government's dedication to family planning. The Rwandan minister of health stated, "Family planning is priority number one—not just talking

about it, but implementing it" (IntraHealth International, "Family Planning in Rwanda").

Women's Rights and Reproductive Health

Rwandan women are victims of discrimination and violence. A 2005 assessment of women's rights in Rwanda highlighted "critical barriers to the empowerment of women in Rwanda, including customary practice that denies women and girls basic human rights and defines women by their relationships to and with men...Practices such as violence by the community and by male partners against women and sexual harassment of women with impunity, as well as a lack of rights to control assets or inherit land, deny women's humanity, increase women's poverty, and hurt the economic and political development of the entire country" (USAID, "Rwanda Assessment and Analysis Report").

Development Goals

High fertility rates pose a significant challenge to economic advancement and the attainment of the U.N. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Rwanda.

Health

Rwandan women face a 1 in 16 lifetime risk of death from maternal causes, and the infant mortality rate is 62 deaths per 1,000 live births (PRB). AIDS and malaria have been devastating, currently the two leading causes of death with both being the highest funded health programs in the country (PRB, "Integrating Population, Health, and Environment"). It is clear that family planning and reproductive health need better integration with HIV/AIDS programs.

Food Security

Food insecurity is a major concern in Rwanda. The World Food Programme remarks that, "High population density and growth have led to deforestation, soil erosion and decreased agricultural productivity. At least 28 percent of households (2.1 million people) are food-insecure, and another 24 percent are highly vulnerable to food insecurity."

Poverty

Rwanda has seen robust GDP growth in recent years, however, "Population growth has contributed to a rise in the absolute number of Rwandans living in poverty by more than half a million since 2001. The bulk of the population lives in rural areas (90% in 2005), while current economic growth has come almost exclusively from the manufacturing and service sectors, thus further concentrating wealth

at the top of the income ladder" (UNDP, "Country Programme Document for Rwanda").

Education and Literacy

Despite implementing free primary education nationwide in 2003, Rwanda is struggling to improve the education system. "The great expansion effort done in the past ten years in relation to primary education, needs to be complemented with a quality effort and with special efforts in the field of non-formal education, especially literacy and basic education for youth and adults" (UNESCO, "Functional Literacy for Youth and Adults in Rwanda").

Gender Disparity

Rwandan women are victims of gender based violence, subject to high dropout rates from primary school, and are economically constrained. "Gender based violence is a culture-linked serious issue facing women and men in Rwanda." Economically, "unequal access to credit, education and training tend to limit women's involvement in trade." In education, "girls lag behind boys in terms of completion rates and final examination scores" (EAC, "Gender and Community Development Analysis in Rwanda").

Environment

"...Rwanda's mountainous topography and growing human population have resulted in increasingly severe environmental degradation: soil erosion from cultivation of steep slopes; pollution and sedimentation of water sources; and loss of forests, protected areas, and biodiversity to new human settlements" (PRB, "Integrating Population, Health, and Environment in Rwanda").

Special Reports

[Integrating Population, Health and Environment in Rwanda, Population Reference Bureau \(Feb 2009\)](#)

This PRB policy brief looks at efforts to address population and environment problems in Rwanda.

Rapid population growth and the resultant dwindling landholdings...have pushed more people onto landscapes poorly suited for agriculture, grazing, and settlement, such as steep hillsides and urban watersheds. As a result, an increasing number of households are vulnerable to food shortages and water scarcity and are more susceptible to disease and poor health. Thus, continued improvement in the quality of life of Rwanda's citizens depends in large part on finding innovative and integrated solutions to complex population, health, and environment problems.

[Failed States Index 2009, Fund for Peace, \(June 2009\)](#)

In partnership with *Foreign Policy*, the Fund for Peace produces an annual ranking of failed and failing states. Using a scale of 1-10, the study looks at 12 indicators of instability, including demographic pressures. The 2009 FSI, ranks Rwanda as the 45th most unstable state. The 2009 report finds that:

The demographic pressures indicator remained high at 9.1 for the FSI 2008. Rwanda has a high population growth rate of 2.78% and a large youth bulge, with 41.9% of the population under the age of 15. The life expectancy is only 50 years, and the infant mortality rate is high at 83.42 deaths per 1,000 live births.