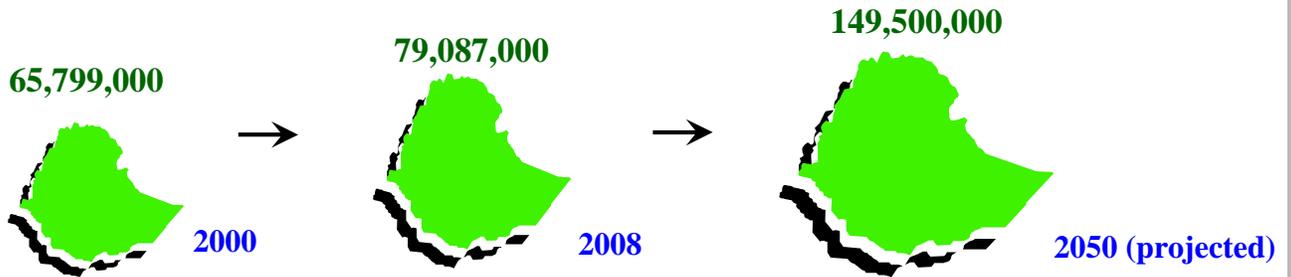




Population and Failing States

Ethiopia



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.

Ethiopia's Population Profile

- Population as of mid-2009: 82,800,000 (PRB)
- Projected Population mid-2050: 149,500,000, a projected increase of 81% from 2009 levels (PRB)
- Population growth rate: 2.7% (PRB)
- Percent of population living in urban areas: 16% (PRB)
- Population under the age of 15: 33,849,000 or 43% (PRB)
- Life expectancy at birth (both sexes): 53 years (PRB)
- Percent of the population living below the poverty line of \$1 a day: 31.3% (PRB)
- 55% of children have had their growth stunted (PRB)
- 74% of women aged 15 to 49 years of age have experienced genital mutilation (UNICEF)

Fertility in Ethiopia

- Current total fertility rate: 5.3 (PRB)
- 34% of married women have an unmet need for family planning (PRB)
- 49% of girls are married before 18 years of age. (UNICEF)
- 15% of married women ages 15-49 use contraceptives (PRB)
- 14% of married women ages 15-49 use modern contraceptives (PRB)

Maternal and Child Health Trends

- 6% of births are attended by a skilled health personnel (PRB)
- Infant mortality rate: 77 per 1,000 live births (PRB)
- Child mortality rate under age 5: 227 per 1,000 children (PRB)
- 35% of children under the age of 5 are underweight. (PRB)

Sources:

[Population Reference Bureau](#)

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

Family Planning and Reproductive Health

Fertility Trend

Ethiopia'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 6.8 in 1990 and 5.3 in 2007. The Population Reference Bureau estimates the current TFR at 5.3 (2008).

Family Planning

There is a large gap in contraceptive prevalence between urban and rural areas in Ethiopia, the urban rate is 9 times higher than the rural rate of 4%. Husbands are also a major constraint to contraceptive use, with 60% of women approving and only 34% of men (World Bank, "Ethiopia: A Country Status Report on Health and Poverty").

Women's Rights and Reproductive Health

Many Ethiopian women experience health problems and human rights violations from child marriage and female genital mutilation. Such practices can result in major health complications and other problems. In Ethiopia 49% of girls are married before the age of 18, and in the Amhara region it is 80% (IPPF, "Ending Child Marriage"). Married children are often taken out of school and lack basic reproductive health knowledge, including information on HIV/AIDS. Husbands are on average 10 years older than their 15-19 year old brides, and often dictate decisions on childbearing and contraception usage (UNFPA, "Child Marriage Fact Sheet").

Development Goals

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

Health

Only an approximate 40% of the population lives within 5 kilometers or one hour's walk of a health facility. In the three largest areas of Ethiopia, there is roughly one doctor per every 55,000 people, one of the lowest ratios of doctors to people in the world (World Bank, "Ethiopia: A Country Status Report on Health and Poverty").

Food Security

In Ethiopia; drought, low agricultural productivity, and frequent conflict, weaken local food production, creating a greater reliance on imports and foreign aid (PRB, "Population's Role in the Current Food Crisis: Focus on East Africa"). USAID estimated as of 2008, 4.6 million people in Ethiopia needed emergency food assistance (USAID, "Ethiopia: Food Security Alert"). The Global Hunger Index (GHI) ranks Ethiopia 31 on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents no hunger and above 30 is considered "extremely alarming." The GHI also classifies Ethiopia as "extremely alarming" in experiencing riots, protests, or strikes over food or agriculture related issues (GHI, "The Challenge of Hunger 2008").

Poverty

99% of urban residents in Ethiopia are slum-dwellers (UNEP, "Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment").

Education and Literacy

UNESCO reports that 69.4% (roughly 7.8 million) of primary school aged children are out of school (UNESCO, "Children out of School"), making the MDG of universal primary school education by 2015 a challenge for Ethiopia. Literacy rates are also very low, at 50.3% for men and 35.1% for women (CIA World Fact Book).

Gender Disparity

Women face many challenges to equality in Ethiopia. According to a 2008 UNIFEM report, only 21.9% of seats in the lower house of the National Parliament are filled by women and only 9.5% of Ministerial Positions (UNIFEM, "Who Answers to Women?").

Environment

Ethiopia is ranked among the worst in the world in terms of clean water and sanitation, with only 22% of the population having access to an improved water source. 85% of the land in Ethiopia is classified as moderately to very severely degraded, a result of deforestation, poor farming practices, and overgrazing (UNEP, "Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment"). Soil erosion is believed to affect 82% of the country, with only 2.4% of the country now forested, down from an initial estimate of 40% (PRB, "Integrating Population, Health, and Environment in Ethiopia").

Conflict

Ethiopia has had conflicts with neighbors Eritrea and Somalia since the 1960s, the civil war with Eritrea lasting 30 years. Relations between Eritrea and Ethiopia remain tense despite the ending of the war (Fund for Peace). Because of high conflict countries surrounding Ethiopia, there is a large number of refugees looking for a safe haven. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees states, as of January 2009, there were over 85,000 refugees and asylum seekers residing in Ethiopia, mainly from Sudan, Somalia, and Eritrea (UNHCR). Refugee children are more likely to have an inadequate education, with at least 1 in 5 children in camps not part of the formal education system. Moreover, boys outnumber girls 100 to 89 in camps where enrollment is 70% or higher (UN, "The Millennium Development Goals Report").

Special Reports

[Population, Development, and Environment in Ethiopia. Woodrow Wilson Center ECSP Report, Issue 10, 2004.](#)

Established in 1994, the Environmental Change and Security Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars publishes several annual journals, including the *Environmental Change and Security Program Report*. The following is an excerpt from a special report on Ethiopia from the 2004 report.

Educating and empowering young girls, changing traditional practices that encourage early marriage and early childbearing, and increasing access to family planning are all steps that could contribute to reducing the country's rapid population growth.

[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. The 2009 FSI, ranks Ethiopia as the 16th most unstable state. The 2009 report finds that:

Demographic pressures decreased slightly from 9.0 in 2007 to 8.9 in 2008. Ethiopia has a population growth rate of 2.2% and a large youth bulge, with 43.1% of the population under the age of fifteen. The infant mortality rate is very high at 90.24 deaths per 1000 births.