

Country Profile: Zambia

Almost two-thirds of the population in Zambia live on less than \$1 a day.

HISTORY

Zambia has moved from being a major copper producer and potentially one of the continent's richest countries at independence in 1964 to one of the world's poorest. A colonial legacy, mismanagement, debt and disease are said to have contributed to the country's tribulations. Politically, it switched from colonial government into an era of one-party rule lasting 27 years. A multi-party system emerged in the early 1990s. In the late 1960s it was the third largest copper miner, after the US and the Soviet Union. World copper prices collapsed in 1975 with devastating effects on the economy.

RECENT SITUATION

Zambia is landlocked and sparsely populated by more than 70 ethnic groups, many of them Bantu-speaking. It has some spectacular scenery, including the Victoria Falls along the Zambezi River, the Bangweulu Swamps and the Luangwa river valley. The World Bank has urged Zambia to develop other sources of revenue - including tourism and agriculture. Even so, copper accounts for most of Zambia's foreign earnings and there is optimism about the future of the industry, which was privatised in the 1990s. Electronics manufacturers have fuelled demand and investment in mines has grown. Aids and malaria have been blamed for lowering the number of Zambian professionals - including engineers and politicians. Zambia hosts tens of thousands of refugees who have fled fighting in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Thousands of refugees from the Angolan civil war have yet to return home.

FACTS

- **Full name:** Republic of Zambia
- **Population:** 11.9 million (UN 2007)
- **Capital:** Lusaka
- **Area:** 752,614 sq km (290,586 sq miles)
- **Internet domain:** .zm
- **International dialling code:** +260
- **Major religion:** Christianity, indigenous beliefs, Hinduism, Islam
- **Major languages:** English (official), Bemba, Lozi, Nyanja, Tonga

- **HDI value*¹:** 165. Zambia (0.434) [1. Iceland (0.968)] (2005)
- **Human Poverty Index (HPI-1)*²:** 13. Zambia (41.8) [1. Chad (56.9)] (2005)

- **Life expectancy at birth (years) :** 40.5
- **Probability of not surviving past 40 (%):** 53.9 (second highest in the world)
- **Under-five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births):** 182 (2005)
- **HIV prevalence (% aged 15-49):** 15.2 (2007)



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Education

- **Combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio (%):**
 - **130. Zambia (60.5)** [1. Australia (113.0)] (2005)
- **Adult Literacy Rate: (% ages 15 and older):**
 - **107. Zambia (68.0)** [1. Georgia (100.0)] (2005)

Economy and Trade

- **GDP per capita:** No. of people lived below the national poverty line. (PPP US\$):
 - **165. Zambia (1,023)** [1. Luxembourg (60,228)] (2005)
- **GNI Per Capita:** **US \$490** (World Bank, 2005)
- **Gini Coefficient *³:** **22. Zambia (50.8)** [126. Denmark (24.7)] (2007)
- **Monetary unit:** 1 Kwacha = 100 ngwee
- **Main exports:** Copper, minerals, tobacco
- **CO₂ emissions share of world total (%):** **0.0 (2004)** [0.0 (1990)]

Water, sanitation and nutritional status

- **Population without access to an improved water source (%):** **42**
- **Population using improved sanitation (%):** **55 (2004)** [44 (1990)]
- **Population Undernourished (% of total population):** **46 (2002-2004)** 48 [(1990-1992)]

Politics

- **Government:** Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD)
- **President:** Byelection October 2008
- **Year Women received right to vote:** **1962**
- **Internally displaced people (thousands, 2006):** **n/a**



*¹ The HDI provides a composite measure of three dimensions of human development: living a long and healthy life (measured by life expectancy), being educated (measured by adult literacy and enrolment at the primary, secondary and tertiary level) and having a decent standard of living (measured by purchasing power parity, PPP, income).

*² The Human Poverty Index for developing countries (HPI-1), focuses on the proportion of people below a threshold level in the same dimensions of human development as the HDI.

*³ The **Gini coefficient** is most prominently used as a measure of inequality of wealth distribution. A value of 0 represents absolute equality, and a value of 100 absolute inequality.

*⁴ Rankings are out of a total of 177.