



Health and WaSH

Impact of the Demographics and Health scenario on infant mortality and life expectancy

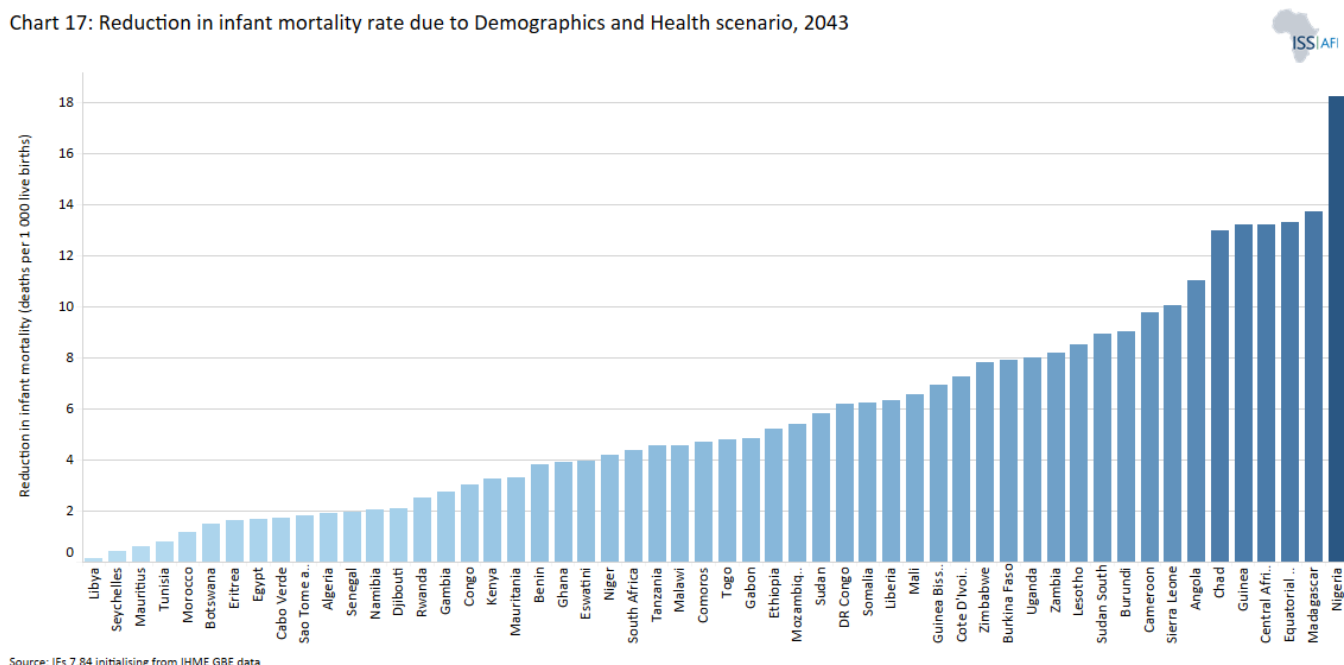
Jakkie Cilliers

Last updated 14 January 2025 using IFs 7.84

Impact of the Demographics and Health scenario on infant mortality and life expectancy

Africa is already on its way to reducing infant mortality significantly from its 2019 average: from almost 47 deaths per 1 000 live births to 36 by 2030 and to 26 by 2043. The Demographics and Health scenario reduces those rates to 28 in 2030 and to 17 in 2043. The reduction in country-level rates is presented in Chart 17. Libya gains the least by 2043 and Nigeria the most, followed by Madagascar and Guinea.

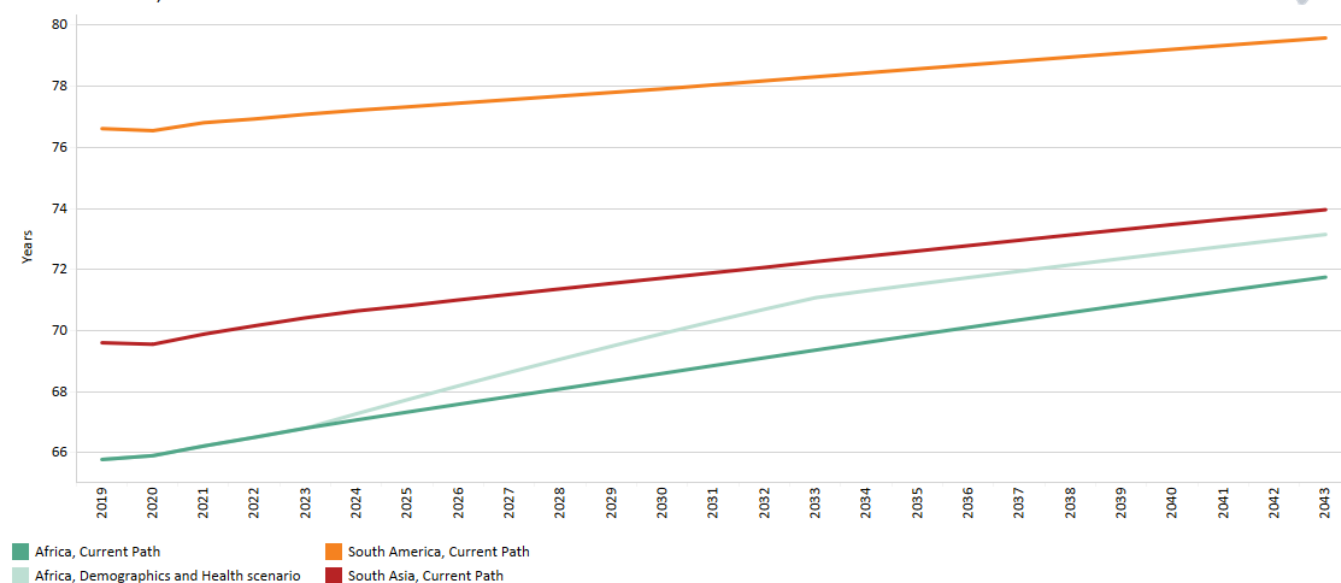
Chart 17: Reduction in infant mortality rate due to Demographics and Health scenario, 2043



By 2043, almost 11 million fewer Africans will be born in the Demographics and Health scenario compared to the Current Path forecast for that year. In fact, the scenario would cumulatively see 131 million fewer births over the forecast horizon.

Chart 18 shows the expected life expectancy in Africa, with trends for South Asia and South America added for comparison. In the Current Path forecast, life expectancy in Africa is projected to improve from 65.8 years in 2019 to 71.8 years in 2043. In the Demographics and Health scenario, life expectancy increases to 73.3 years. Lesotho gains the most (an increase of more than 2.2 years), followed by South Africa, Nigeria, South Sudan and Chad. The countries that gain the least are Comoros, Djibouti and The Gambia, the last of which gains only 6 months.

Chart 18: Life expectancy in Africa, South America and South Asia according to the Current Path forecast and Demographics and Health scenario, 2019–2043



Source: IFS 7.84 initialising from IHME GBE data

Donors and sponsors



Reuse our work

- All visualizations, data, and text produced by African Futures are completely open access under the [Creative Commons BY license](#). You have the permission to use, distribute, and reproduce these in any medium, provided the source and authors are credited.
- The data produced by third parties and made available by African Futures is subject to the license terms from the original third-party authors. We will always indicate the original source of the data in our documentation, so you should always check the license of any such third-party data before use and redistribution.
- All of our charts [can be embedded](#) in any site.

Cite this research

Jakkie Cilliers (2025) Health and WaSH. Published online at futures.issafrica.org. Retrieved from <https://futures.issafrica.org/thematic/05-health-and-wash/> [Online Resource] Updated 14 January 2025.

About the authors

Dr Jakkie Cilliers is the ISS's founder and former executive director. He currently serves as chair of the ISS Board of Trustees, head of the African Futures and Innovation (AFI) programme at the Pretoria office of the Institute, and is an extraordinary professor at the University of Pretoria. His 2017 best-seller *Fate of the Nation* addresses South Africa's futures from political, economic and social perspectives. His three most recent books, *Africa First! Igniting a Growth Revolution* (March 2020), *The Future of Africa: Challenges and Opportunities* (April 2021), and *Africa Tomorrow: Pathways to Prosperity* (June 2022) take a rigorous look at the continent as a whole.

About African Futures & Innovation

Scenarios and forecasting can help Africa identify and respond to opportunities and threats. The work of the African Futures & Innovation (AFI) program at the Institute for Security Studies aims to understand and address a widening gap between indices of wellbeing in Africa and elsewhere in the world. The AFI helps stakeholders understand likely future developments. Research findings and their policy implications are widely disseminated, often in collaboration with in-country partners. Forecasting tools inspire debate and provide insights into possible trajectories that inform planning, prioritisation and effective resource allocation. Africa's future depends on today's choices and actions by governments and their non-governmental and international partners. The AFI provides empirical data that informs short- and medium-term decisions with long-term implications. The AFI enhances Africa's capacity to prepare for and respond to future challenges. The program is headed by Dr Jakkie Cilliers.