

COUNTRY PROFILE Zambia

The landlocked country of Zambia, formerly Northern Rhodesia under colonial rule, gained independence in 1964 and initially prospered due to its wealth of copper reserves. The country was ruled for 27 years by Kenneth Kaunda as a one-party state and during this time, Zambia assisted the liberation struggles in Zimbabwe and South Africa. Although many of the population live below the poverty line, the country has made positive steps in addressing HIV/AIDS which currently affects over 15 per cent of the population.

SUMMARY FACTS (Sources: UNICEF 2006, 2008, UN 2008)

Population: 12.6 million, UK: 61.2 million	GDP per capita: US\$ 1,144 (PPP) (UN, 2008), UK: \$35,200
Capital: Lusaka	Monetary unit: 1 Kwacha = 100 ngwee
Area: 752, 614 sq km (290, 586 sq miles), UK: 243,610 sq km (94,060 sq miles)	Main exports: Copper, cobalt, cotton, tobacco, electricity, flowers
Major languages: English, Bemba, Lozi, Nyanja	CO₂ emissions share of world total: <0.1%, UK: > 2%
Major religions: Christianity, indigenous beliefs, Hinduism, Islam	Population without access to an improved water source: 42% (UN, 2006), UK: 0%
Life expectancy at birth: 45 years (UN, 2008), UK: 79 years	Population using improved sanitation: 52% (UN, 2006), UK: 100%
Under-five mortality rate: 148 per 1,000 live births (UN, 2008), UK: 6 per 1,000 live births	Government: Movement for Multi-party Democracy
HIV prevalence: 15.2% aged 15-49 (UN, 2008), UK: 0.2% aged 15-49	President: Rupiah Banda
Adult Literacy Rate: 68% ages 15 and older (UN, 2008), UK: >99%	Year Women received right to vote: 1962, UK: 1918, 1928 (equal rights)



History

The first people to live in the territory now known as Zambia were hunter-gatherers known as San, who inhabited much of southern Africa for thousands of years. Bantu-speaking people from the Congo basin, whose ancestors had originated in West Africa, began migrating into the Zambia region from the **1st century AD** and gradually displaced the native San. Migration to the region increased during the **14th to the 16th** centuries and dispersed groups gradually consolidated into powerful nations with specific territories. The most important African kingdom was located in Barotseland (now Zambia's Western Province), where the first arrival of Europeans was in the late **18th century** when Portuguese explorers entered the region.

Far to the south, **19th century** Zulu expansionism during the Mfecane ('crushing') drove many surrounding groups northwards. One such displaced group, the Kololo, led by Sebetswane, reached the Zambezi River in the **1820s**. After protracted fighting between them and the Barotse (subsequently known as the Lozi), the Kololo ascended to dominance and Sebetswane ruled both his own people and the conquered Barotse until his death in **1851**. Shortly after, the Barotse revolted and regained control of their territory under the leadership of Lewanika.

Missionary David Livingstone was the first British explorer to travel in the area and he reached a great waterfall in **1855**, known locally as Mosi-oa-Tunya ('the smoke that thunders', he named it Victoria Falls after his queen. .Soon after Livingstone came traders and prospectors in search of financial gain. Cecil Rhodes, the archetype of the financially-motivated colonial expansionist, formed the British South Africa Company in **1889**. A royal charter gave Rhodes license to expand British rule north of the Transvaal (without involving the British government in new responsibilities and expenses) and he duly obliged, sending a party to settle Harare (in present-day Zimbabwe) and prospect for gold. Rhodes himself travelled to Barotseland in **1890** and signed a treaty with Lewanika. With this achieved, Rhodes came to an agreement with the British government that his company would administer the region from the Zambezi north to Lake Tanganyika: the whole of modern-day Zambia. From **1900** the region was split into two separately administered protectorates, Northwestern and Northeastern Rhodesia, but in **1911** they were merged to become Northern Rhodesia.

At the turn of the **20th century** the discovery of vast mineral deposits made Northern Rhodesia an unexpectedly rich territory. In **1902** lead and zinc were found, and in **1909** copper was found on the border between Northern Rhodesia and the Belgian Congo, an area now known as the Copperbelt. The indigenous population had mined the region for centuries, but now large opencast pits were dug and the metal was extracted on an industrial scale.

In **1924** the administration of Northern Rhodesia was handed over to the British government, but the British South Africa Company retained the mineral rights in the colony.

As with most of the African colonies, discussions concerning the political future of Zambia came to the fore in the **1950s**. British proposals to unite Rhodesia and Northern Rhodesia were met with opposition from increasingly vocal African groups, and in **1953** the British government reached a compromise and created the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (Nyasaland is present-day Malawi). The Federation was to be a self-governing colony complete with a prime minister. All three of the colonies lacked significant African representation, although Northern Rhodesia's legislative council did have two seats reserved for Africans. Despite some economic benefits from the federation political unrest in Northern Rhodesia grew in intensity, particularly following the granting of independence to other British colonies beginning with Ghana in **1957**.

In **1958** Dr Kenneth Kaunda formed the Zambia African National Congress, which embarked upon a campaign of civil disobedience that resulted in the imprisonment of Kaunda. While Kaunda was in prison a new party, the United National Independence Party (UNIP), was formed and upon his release in **January 1960** he was elected as the party's president. The UNIP began to receive nationwide support and at a **1960** conference held in London on the future of Northern Rhodesia, Kaunda and the UNIP were the most prominent African delegates. At this conference, it was decided to implement a gradual process that would lead to independence.

Elections held in **October and December 1962** were inclusive of African voters and yielded an African majority in the Northern Rhodesian legislative council. The UNIP gained the most seats of any single party, but were forced into an awkward coalition with another African nationalist party, the African National Congress (not to be confused with the South African party of the same name), in order to form a majority. Resolutions were passed calling for Northern Rhodesia to secede from the Federation and be granted full self-government. Increasing pressure from all three colonies in the Federation led to its dissolution in **December 1963**, and Northern Rhodesian independence was declared on **October 24th 1964**, with the country being renamed the Republic of Zambia. Elections held earlier that year resulted in a clear majority for Kaunda's UNIP, so upon independence Kaunda became President of the new nation.

Initially Zambia's economy prospered, and the mineral rights that had been owned by the British South Africa Company now generated revenue for the state. Rising copper prices due to increased demand during the Vietnam War bolstered this early growth. However, the Unilateral Declaration of Independence by Ian Smith in neighbouring Rhodesia in **1965** caused significant damage to Zambia as it became a frontline state in the struggle against white supremacy in the region. Kaunda offered a safe haven in Zambia for guerrilla forces operating in Rhodesia, which meant retaliation by Rhodesian forces. Zambia also provided support for the South African ANC, allowing them to base their external headquarters in Lusaka, which created security problems as the South African government raided ANC targets in Zambia. Support was also given to the Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (UNITA) and the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO).

The **1968** UN trade sanctions on Rhodesia caused further damage to Zambia. Rhodesia was Zambia's main trading partner, and Zambia's copper exports travelled through its neighbour to reach a port (Zambia itself being land-locked). A new and expensive railway line to Dar es Salaam had to be built with the help of a large Chinese loan. This line reduced dependency on isolated Rhodesia, white-controlled South Africa and an increasingly troubled Angola.

These difficulties for the young nation led to Kaunda declaring a state of emergency. Kaunda became authoritarian and political opponents were increasingly harassed until laws promulgated in **1972**, and affirmed by a new constitution in **1973**, banned all political parties other than the UNIP and turned Zambia into a one-party state. As the sole presidential candidate, Kaunda was re-elected president in the **1973** elections. His mandate would be renewed in **1983** and **1988**, each time in a 'yes' or 'no' vote on his candidacy.

Government corruption, mismanagement and a collapse in the price of copper in the **mid-1970s** were followed by civil wars in two of Zambia's neighbours, Mozambique and Angola, and led to further decline in the economy. By the **late 1980s** the situation was so bad that riots over the lack of foodstuffs took place in several towns. Rioting and violent unrest were rapidly transformed into a general demand for multiparty democratic politics. The Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), led by trade unionist Frederick Chiluba, emerged in **1990** and gained the support of numerous important Zambians, including labour leaders and UNIP defectors. In **1991**

Kaunda finally withdrew the ban on other parties, and the first multiparty elections in 27 years were held on **31 October** that year.

Frederick Chiluba and the MMD gained a massive majority, while Kaunda and the UNIP were resoundingly rejected by the electorate and left with just one sixth of National Assembly seats. Kaunda accepted the result and bowed out, peacefully handing over power to his successor. During his first term in office, Chiluba (backed by the World Bank and IMF) followed a programme of economic liberalisation. Financial controls were liberalised, state-owned industries were privatised and deficit-reducing measures were introduced, including reform of the civil service. Such austerity measures were difficult for the average Zambian; food prices soared and the privatisation of industries led to widespread redundancy. The situation was not helped by a further drop in copper prices.

By the time of the next election in **1996**, the MMD's commitment to political reform had faded. Kenneth Kaunda had tried to make a return to politics but in **May 1996**, shortly before the elections, Chiluba pushed through a constitutional amendment requiring all candidates to have Zambian parents, which excluded Kaunda and some other opposition leaders from the contest. In November Chiluba was re-elected with an increased majority amid accusations from the UNIP and civil society of voter registration irregularities.

In the run-up to fresh elections in **December 2001** Chiluba and his supporters attempted to amend the constitution to enable him to seek a third term in office. Pressure from civil society, opposition parties and many members of his own party meant that he was unsuccessful, and Levy Mwanawasa was made leader of the MMD in time for the elections.

Mwanawasa was elected Zambia's third president with a much smaller percentage of the votes than Chiluba had claimed in **1996**. Opposition parties actually gained more seats in the National Assembly at first, although subsequent by-elections gave the MMD a majority. During his first few months in office, Mwanawasa took a strong anti-corruption stance, encouraging the Zambian Anticorruption Commission to pursue its mandate and supporting an investigation into allegations of corruption and misappropriation of funds against Chiluba. The Task Force on Corruption, established by Mwanawasa, successfully prosecuted a number of cases of high-level corruption.

Zambia had much of its US\$7billion of international debt eliminated in **2005** under the Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) scheme, but although this enabled increased spending on education and health in **2006** it did nothing to change poor terms of trade at the international level, and as a consequence Zambia had to continue borrowing to finance the budget deficit, thus undermining any positive aspects of HIPC debt cancellation.

Mwanawasa was re-elected to a second five-year term in **September 2006**, but he died less than halfway through his second term, on **19 August 2008**, following a stroke. He has been praised for his anti-corruption efforts and the economic growth in Zambia that took place during his presidency. After Mwanawasa's death, in accordance with the constitution, Vice President Rupiah Banda assumed presidential powers with a requirement that a presidential by-election election was held within 90 days. This election, held on **30 October 2008**, was won by Banda, who defeated Michael Sata of the Patriotic Front (PF) by a narrow margin. Overall, international observers were satisfied that the election was conducted adequately, despite the fact that no voters had been registered since **2005**.

Banda, sworn in on **2 November 2008**, vowed to continue the corruption-fighting policies of Mwanawasa. Subsequent governmental corruption scandals have called

this promise to promote fiscal transparency into question, and in **2009** Dutch and Swedish governments suspended their funding of the healthcare sector after it came to light that millions of dollars had been siphoned off from the health ministry. A further question mark over Banda's corruption fighting credentials also came in **2009** when Chiluba was acquitted of corruption charges. The acquittal was itself controversial, but Banda dismissed the chairman of the Task Force on Corruption, Maxwell Nkole, after Nkole had called for an appeal against the acquittal. Banda's presidency has been characterised by conflicts with members of the MMD who have challenged his leadership, especially his presumed candidacy for the next general election, which is scheduled for **2011**. Also, aggressive actions have been taken against those members of the political opposition and civil society who are thought to be against President Banda.

In March **2009** the PF joined hands with the other main opposition party, the United Party for National Development (UPND), in anticipation of challenging the MMD at the **2011** elections.

Population

Zambia's population consists of more than 70 ethnic groups, largely Bantu-speaking peoples. Most of the ethnic groups are small and only two, the Bemba and Tonga, constitute more than 10 per cent of the population. Although a substantial amount of rural-to-urban migration has occurred in Zambia, with many people relocating to the Copperbelt to find employment in the mines, 60 to 65 per cent of Zambians still live in rural areas, and most of these are subsistence farmers. Zambia is one of the more sparsely populated countries in southern Africa, with only Angola, Namibia and Botswana having a lower ratio of people per square km. Lusaka and the Copperbelt have the highest population density, while many rural areas have emptied of their populations. The predominant religion is Christianity, in many cases blended with some elements of traditional beliefs. A significant minority are also adherents to Islam and Hinduism. Zambia hosts many thousands of refugees who have fled the fighting in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo.

Politics

Zambia's present constitution was instituted when multiparty democracy was restored in 1991. A unicameral National Assembly of 150 directly elected (and eight appointed) members acts as the legislature, the president and his appointed cabinet form the executive and the Supreme Court is the highest court in the judicial system. The MMD won the 1991 elections and retained power through subsequent parliamentary elections in 1996, 2001, 2006 and a presidential election in 2008. Although the MMD has retained power for almost 20 years the elections have been considered largely free and fair, and the MMD's majority in the National Assembly has been substantially reduced since 1991.

In anticipation of the 2011 presidential and parliamentary elections the two main opposition parties, the Patriotic Front (PF) and United Party for National Development (UPND), formed the fragile PF-UPND pact in order to attempt to gain a majority and oust the MMD from government. There are tensions between Michael Sata, the leader of the larger PF, and the UPND leader Hakainde Hichilemam, with the latter accusing the PF of disrespecting him and his party.

Despite periods of undemocratic government pre-1991 Zambia has maintained strong levels of stability since independence, with few of the violent tensions that have blighted so many of Zambia's neighbours. Considering that four of these neighbours – Angola, Mozambique, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zimbabwe – have undergone civil wars, it is worth noting that Zambia has not been seriously affected by armed struggle. This stability perhaps helps to explain Zambia's consistent contribution to the resolution of conflicts elsewhere in the region. President Chiluba's government sponsored Angolan peace talks that led to the 1994 Lusaka

Protocols. His administration also saw Zambia take the lead in efforts to establish a cease-fire in the Democratic Republic of Congo. President Mwanawasa, while chair of SADC, brought the issue of Zimbabwe to the fore and pressured Robert Mugabe to enact reforms. Zambia also provided troops for UN peacekeeping missions in Mozambique, Rwanda, Angola, and Sierra Leone and Sudan.

Economy

Despite the global economic crisis, which did affect the country, Zambia experienced positive economic growth for the eleventh consecutive year in 2009, with a real growth rate of 4.3 per cent. However these impressive statistics mask the fact that Zambia remains one of the poorest nations in the world, with unemployment and low worker productivity (due to HIV/AIDS prevalence) both serious issues. Approximately two-thirds of Zambians live in poverty and per capita annual incomes are estimated to be well below their levels at independence. Furthermore, long-term projections suggest that Zambia's current rate of growth will be unable to support rapid population increases. Debt cancellation under the HIPC initiative has eased the burden of debt repayments, although unfair trade agreements have resulted in the need for further borrowing, making the debt cancellation measures unsustainable in the long-run.

Copper is by far Zambia's most important export and Zambia is one of the world's biggest producers of the metal. However, reliance on this one product has always made the Zambian economy vulnerable to global price fluctuations, which occurred most notably in the mid 1970s and again in late 2008. Despite these fluctuations, prospects for the copper industry currently look good: electronics manufacturers are increasing the demand for copper, which is used to make wires. However, in order to bring greater stability to the Zambian economy, as well as increase the growth rate, the World Bank has recommended to the Zambian government that they pursue a diversification programme to reduce dependence on the copper industry. Zambia's rich resource base can potentially be exploited through tourism, agriculture and hydroelectric power.

Civil society and Trade Unions

Civil society involvement in Zambian society is substantial, and there are a variety of different civil society organisations working in the country, on vastly differing projects. Women have historically suffered severe discrimination in Zambia, and so consequently gender-focused NGOs are a significant strand of Zambian civil society. The biggest of these is an umbrella organisation, the Non Governmental Organisations Coordinating Council (NGOCC), which has a membership of 52 NGOs and 56 Community Based Organisations (CBOs). The NGOCC was established in 1985 to facilitate networking between NGOs in order to empower women. It is a well respected organisation, and international donors often consult it before approving applications for funding.

Women for Change (WfC) is another gender-focused NGO. WfC works specifically with rural women, and attempts to promote sustainable economic and human development systems that respond to the needs of rural communities.

Faith-based organisations also form an influential part of Zambian Civil Society. The Zambia branch of Caritas Internationalis, a Catholic global network seeking to combat poverty and injustice, focuses on promoting sustainable agricultural development in rural areas. The organisation has provided Zambians with seeds for drought-resistant food crops as part of an agricultural diversification programme that has contributed to greater levels of food security in Zambia. Caritas Zambia also campaigns for human rights and monitors government expenditure. The Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) has a more academic approach to civil society action, and engages in research on key social issues such as the cost of living, the social implications of debt servicing and the accessibility of healthcare and

education. Findings are generally disseminated through conferences and media publications.

Other notable civil society organisations include the Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR), who promote civic engagement in pro-poor development and poverty eradication plans, and Alliance Zambia, a country branch of the International HIV/AIDS Alliance (IHAA) who support community action to provide access to antiretrovirals and combat stigmatisation and discrimination.

Over the last quarter of a century, membership of trade unions in Zambia has declined both in terms of actual numbers and as a percentage of the workforce. In the 1980's union membership peaked at between 70 and 80 per cent of workers, but this has fallen to 50 per cent since the turn of the millennium. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, structural adjustment policies implemented by the government, which included the privatisation of state-owned companies, have meant significant retrenchment of workers. Unemployment has risen and consequently the number of people involved in unions has fallen. Secondly, private companies are often aggressively anti-union in Zambia. Multinationals in particular will often ask potential new employees to sign a statement choosing a job over a union, and those who are not prepared to give up their right to unionise are not hired.

Although legislation theoretically gives workers the right to unionise, anti-union discrimination is prevalent in both the private and the public sector. Threats of violence against trade unionists are a frequent problem; one high profile instance of this occurred in 2002, when striking journalists were forced back to work at gunpoint. Many officials in workers' unions have been dismissed from their jobs for their union activities. It is also theoretically legal to strike, but in reality so many procedural requirements have to be met that between 1994 and 2002 not a single legal strike could take place.

The Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) is the largest labour federation in Zambia, and represents around 30 affiliated trade unions, the biggest of which are the Civil Servants Union of Zambia (CSUZ), Zambia National Union of Teachers (ZNUT) and Mineworkers Union of Zambia (MUZ). The ZCTU seeks to create a strong, unified labour movement that can be used as a springboard for achieving pro-poor, sustainable socio-economic development. Despite the growth in the number of informal sector workers, there has as yet been little progress in unionising this particularly marginalised sector of society.

Achievements:

1. Democratic elections: since the successful multiparty, democratic elections in 1991 Zambia has had three further democratic general elections and a presidential election. Despite occasional voter registration anomalies these elections have been viewed as largely free and fair. Considering the country spent 27 years, under Kaunda, without elections, it is a positive achievement that democracy appears to have become entrenched. Although the 2011 general elections could be a real test of the MMD's commitment to the electoral process given the strong challenge to MMD rule that the PF-UPND pact could potentially make to if it holds together.

2. HIV/AIDS rates: between 1990 and 1995 HIV infection rates nearly doubled, from 8.9 per cent to 16.3 per cent. A concerted effort from the government, international community and civil society to combat the rise in the disease has been successful. Infection rates stabilised at just over 15 per cent from 2000, and in 2009 there was a slight drop in the percentage of the population affected. Better preventative education and increased condom use are cited as the key reasons for this stabilisation. There is much work to do, and HIV/AIDS still has a damaging affect on Zambia's professional classes, but progress has certainly been made in the last decade.

3. Religious freedom: freedom of religious belief is formally guaranteed by the constitution, and has been respected in reality.
4. Peace building: Zambia's contribution to both peacemaking and peacekeeping across southern Africa has benefited a number of its neighbours. Zambia has been a stabilising influence in the region, and its facilitation of peace talks between warring entities in Angola and the DRC has advanced the prospects of long-term peace in both countries considerably.

Development Challenges:

1. Freedom of the press: the government controls two of the most widely circulated newspapers, the *Zambian Daily Mail and Times of Zambia*, and pre-publication review results in journalists practising self-censorship. Journalists in the independent media face harassment from the state and have frequently been detained or arrested. Conditions for the independent press and media deteriorated further in 2009. The government and ruling party aggressively harassed and interfered with independent newspapers deemed opponents of the administration, in particular the most popular independent paper, the *Post*. On 4 June 2010 the editor and owner of the *Post*, Fred M'membe, was sentenced to four months in prison with hard labour, after having been found guilty of contempt of court after the *Post* published an article calling an obscenity case against a *Post* writer "a comedy of errors". The state-owned Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) dominates the broadcast media, and the government maintains further control through appointing the members of the 'Independent' Broadcasting Authority, which has the power to grant or refuse licenses to prospective broadcasters.
2. NGOs: Although NGOs have operated freely in the past, the government passed legislation in 2009 placing new constraints on their activities. The law requires the registration of NGOs and re-registration every five years and establishes a board to provide guidelines and regulate NGO activity in the country. Furthermore, while the law does not require permits for demonstrations, the police have frequently broken up protests because the organisers did not have a permit.
3. Women's rights: Societal discrimination remains a serious obstacle to women's rights in Zambia. Domestic violence and rape are major problems, and women are denied full economic participation and usually require male consent to obtain credit. Discrimination against women is especially prevalent in customary courts, where they are considered subordinate with respect to property, inheritance, and marriage. Although numerous civil society groups focus on the issue of women's rights, the state must show a greater willingness to enforce equality legislation.
4. Female education: In 1990 the youth literacy rate (literacy rate of those aged 15-24) among boys and girls was almost equal, at 67 and 66 per cent respectively. However, by 2009 male youth literacy rates had improved to 82 per cent, while female youth literacy rates had almost stagnated, rising just two per cent in 20 years. 16 per cent more boys attend secondary school than girls.

For more information on Zambia, visit the following websites

- Official website of the office of the President <http://www.statehouse.gov.zm/>
- Non Governmental Organisations' Coordinating Council website: <http://www.ngocc.org.zm/>
- The *Post* online, website for popular independent newspaper: <http://www.postzambia.com/post-index.php?page=home>