

Forecasts of disease burden through 2050

Highlights

Our forecasts reveal that life expectancy will continue to climb globally, increasing by 4.6 years from 2022 to 2050, even after factoring in rising temperatures, indicating a very different future than many experts have predicted.

Causes contributing to improvements in life expectancy include declining deaths from cardiovascular diseases, respiratory infections and tuberculosis,* and maternal and neonatal deaths.

Our findings indicate that increases in life expectancy will be largest in countries where it is currently lower, and inequalities between countries will shrink.

There is an opportunity to speed up progress by addressing behavioral and metabolic risks, which include high blood sugar, high body mass index, high blood pressure, and smoking.

What's new in this study?

Marks the first time that GBD Collaborators have produced forecasts for all the study's key metrics.

Provides a picture of disease burden for the first four years of the COVID-19 pandemic.

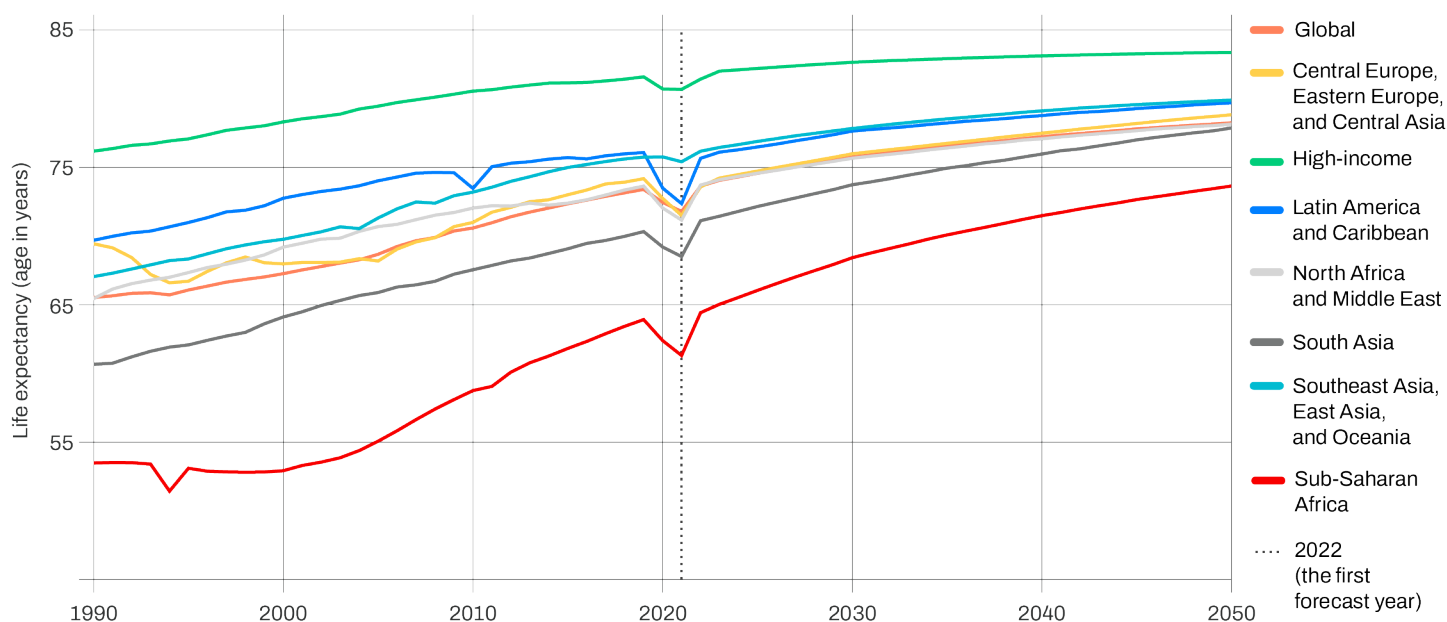
Includes forecasts for 359 diseases and injuries.

Utilizes improved methods.

*Declining deaths from "respiratory infections and tuberculosis" were largely due to reductions in deaths from COVID-19, a disease that is included in this category.

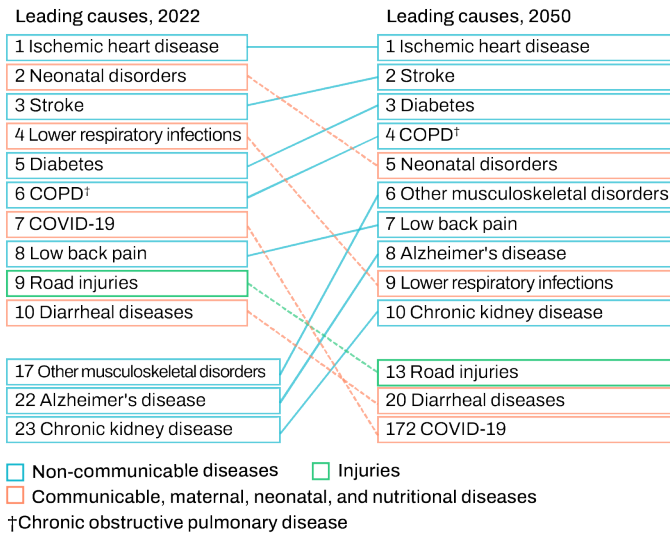
We forecast that life expectancy improvements will be larger in sub-Saharan Africa than in any other super-region between 2022 and 2050.

Global and super-regional life expectancy, 1990–2050



Between 2022 and 2050, we forecast that poor health and early death from communicable, maternal, nutritional, and neonatal diseases will decline, and the burden of non-communicable diseases will rise.

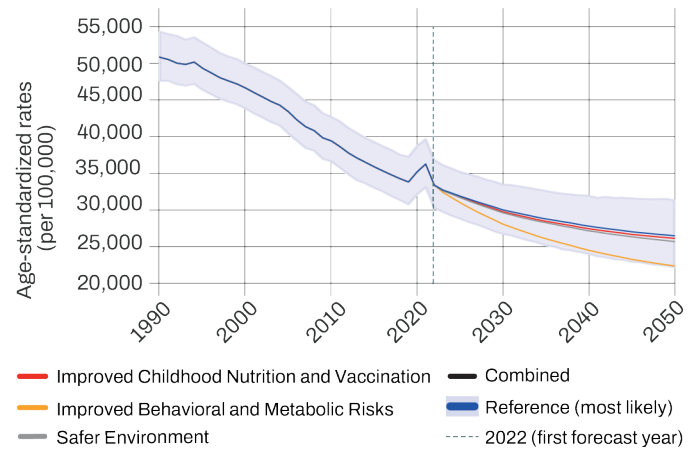
Leading causes of disease burden* worldwide in 2022 versus 2050



*Measured in number of disability-adjusted life years (DALYs)

The researchers devised different intervention scenarios in which key risk factors are eliminated – “Safer Environment,” “Improved Behavioral and Metabolic Risks,” and “Improved Childhood Nutrition and Vaccination.” The “Improved Behavioral and Metabolic Risks” scenario leads to the largest reduction in global disease burden (13% fewer DALYs in 2050 than the most likely [Reference] scenario).

Forecasted global disease burden by scenario through 2050**



**Measured in disability-adjusted life years (DALYs)

In 2050, we forecast that the impacts of the “Improved Behavioral and Metabolic Risks” scenario will be greatest among countries in North Africa and the Middle East.

Percentage decrease in disease burden in 2050 for the “Improved Behavioral and Metabolic Risks” scenario compared to the most likely (Reference) scenario

