This guide contains information on key government documents, at both the national and international levels, relevant to the history of health and disease in sub-Saharan Africa since 1950. An effort has been made to indicate the availability of electronic versions whenever possible. It should be noted, however, that several important historical sources are still only available in their original print format.

Databases

**WHOLIS** – This database indexes WHO publications as far back as 1948. Many historical titles are available in full-text online.

*Online:*  
1948- [http://tinyurl.com/b739e8](http://tinyurl.com/b739e8)

**WHO e-library** – A collection of recent WHO publications on a variety of topics.

*Online:*  
1990s- [http://www.myilibrary.com/search/my_content.asp](http://www.myilibrary.com/search/my_content.asp) (McGill only)

**UNAIDS e-library** – A collection of recent UNAIDS publications.

*Online:*  
1990s- [http://www.myilibrary.com/search/my_content.asp](http://www.myilibrary.com/search/my_content.asp) (McGill only)

**House of Commons Parliamentary Papers** – Contains reports on British colonies.

*Online:*  

**IGO Search** – searches the websites of over 300 international organizations.

*Online:*  
Various [http://tinyurl.com/dlpgqf](http://tinyurl.com/dlpgqf)
Major Publications

WHO

The Work of WHO – A report from the Director-General outlining the WHO’s activities around the world during the previous year or two. Until 1978, this document was published as part of the Official Records of the World Health Organization.

Location:
- 1965-1978 Redpath Basement Storage (Self Service) 2274
- 1978-1991 Redpath Basement Storage (Self Service) 2812

Official Records of the World Health Organization – A collection of documents from the World Health Assembly and the Executive Board of the WHO, including budgets and resolutions.

Location:
- 1947-1964 Life Sciences Journal
- 1965-1978 Redpath Basement Storage (Self Service) 2274

Online:
- 1998- http://www.who.int/gb/


Online:

International Digest of Health Legislation – Excerpts and information on laws relating to health from around the world.

Location:
- 1963-1964 Life Sciences Storage
- 1965-1999 Life Sciences Journal
Online: 1998-  
http://www.who.int/idhl-rils/frame.cfm?language=english

UNAIDS

AIDS Epidemic Update

Online: 2001-  
http://www.unaids.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/HIVData/EpiUpdate/EpiUpdArchive/

Report on the Global AIDS epidemic

Online: 2006-  

Country Progress Reports

Online: 2006  
http://tinyurl.com/2zcp3f  
2008  
http://tinyurl.com/2fo7fc

UNICEF

The State of the World’s Children – Thematic annual publication with information and statistics on immunization and children’s health.

Location:  
1982-83, ‘85 Humanities and Social Sciences Library HQ792.2 S73  
1988 Government Information Service UN3 CEF S71  
1989-2007 Life Science Library WA 320 G762s

Online: 1997-  
http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_pubs_su.html

Prepared by Eamon Duffy, Liaison Librarian for Government Information. 10 February 2009.
Immunization Summary – Includes 20 years of immunization data by country.

_Online:_

Statistics

**WHOSIS** – A variety of international health statistics databases, including disease-specific resources. Figures are primarily recent.

_Online:_

**Weekly Epidemiological Record** – Contains information and statistics on disease outbreaks across the globe.

_Online:_
1926- [http://www.who.int/wer/en/](http://www.who.int/wer/en/)

**World health statistics annual**

_Location:_
1962-1996 Life Sciences Reference

_Online:_


_Location:_
1968-1977 Redpath Basement Storage (Self Service) 2804
Statistical Annex to the WHO’s World Health Report (see above)

_Online:_

Annexes to UNAIDS’s Report on the Global AIDS epidemic (see above)

Childinfo – Contains various statistics related to the health of children and women.

_Online:_

UNdata – Combines data from various UN bodies and specialized agencies (WHO, UNAIDS, etc.) in one interface. Some tables contain statistics back to the 1960s or earlier.

_Online:_

United Nations Demographic Yearbook – Source for historical and current data on population, births, deaths (including infant mortality rates, cause of death, death by age and sex), life expectancy, etc.

_Location:_
1948-  Government Information Service Reference HA17 D45

United Nations Statistical Yearbook – Includes data on diseases and medical personnel, among other topics.

_Location:_
1948-  Government Information Service Reference HA12.5 U63
Country Resources

Colonial Reports – These annual reports from the British Colonial Office contain chapters on health issues. There is a general report for all colonial territories, as well as reports focusing on specific ones.

Location:
1940s-1960s Government Information Service (several colony-specific reports are available, though they are not found in the catalogue. Ask at the information desk.)

Online:
1948-1962 http://parlipapers.chadwyck.com/search/initSearch.do (Search “the colonial territories” in the paper title field to find general reports.)

International Population Census – Microfilm collection containing several census publications from African countries. Contains demographic information, including health-related topics. Library holdings are indicated in the notes field of the catalogue records.

Location:
1945-1967 GDOC Micro film 423 (catalogue record)
1967- GDOC Micro film 448 (catalogue record)

Government websites – Some health ministries have significant web presences, while others maintain sites with only basic information. Any information available will only be recent, perhaps covering the past few years. A short list of sites can be found on the McGill Global Health Guide Wiki


Feel free to expand this list with helpful government sites. Simply login using your standard McGill login and password to edit the page.
Other Montreal Resources

Concordia University’s Vanier Library (located on the Loyola Campus in NDG) holds a rich collection of government documents from eastern and southern African countries. The majority of the collection covers the 1960s and 70s. Unfortunately, the documents are not in the Concordia library catalogue and no useful finding aid exists. They are simply grouped on the shelves by country. Going there and browsing the shelves is the only way to see if any relevant, health-related documents for your country are available.

For more information

Information Desk – Government Information Service, 2nd floor, Humanities and Social Sciences Library

Email: govinfo.library@mcgill.ca or Phone: 514-398-4737