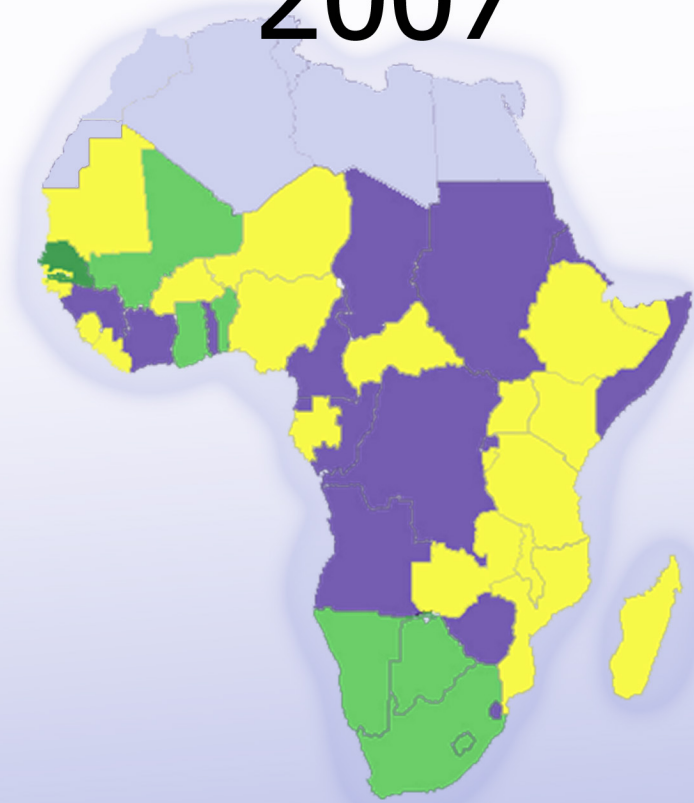


FREEDOM IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA 2007



A SURVEY OF POLITICAL RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES





A Foundation for Dialogue on Freedom in Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa in 2007 presents at the same time some of the most promising examples of new democracies in the world—places where leaders who came to power through fair elections provide real opportunities for their citizens to live in freedom—and some of the most disheartening examples of political stagnation, democratic backsliding, and state failure. Overall, however, Africa has seen notable increases in freedom over the past generation.

One of the least reported stories in recent years may well be the ongoing, if uneven, advance of freedom across the African continent. We at Freedom House would like to encourage both a greater appreciation of the strides that have been made and an informed discussion about how freedom can be further strengthened in this important region.

Since 1972, Freedom House has published an annual report on the state of global political rights and civil liberties, *Freedom in the World*. During its early years, *Freedom in the World* offered a rather grim picture. Democracy was concentrated mainly in Western Europe, North America, and the South Pacific. Throughout much of the rest of the world, strongmen, commissars, and military juntas held sway.

The condition of freedom was especially bleak in sub-Saharan Africa, where European colonies and minority-ruled states still existed, and autocracy and/or conflict afflicted most of the newly independent states. With the exception of a few bright spots, dictatorships of one political stripe or another ruled the majority of countries on the continent in the early 1970s. Coups and countercoups were commonplace, as were leaders who proclaimed themselves “president for life.” Elections, if held at all, were often used only to validate a current leader’s rule.

Much changed over the subsequent years, in the world and in Africa. From the mid-1970s to the mid-1990s, a wave of democratization transformed Southern Europe, Latin America, and the former Communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. In Africa, these changes resulted in not only the independence of Portugal’s colonies, but also a series of “national roundtables” that created new political arrangements in a number of Francophone African states. Though less far-reaching than in some other regions of the world, the gains for freedom in Africa were nevertheless significant—and they are continuing today.

Freedom in the World 2007, the most recent edition of Freedom House's annual survey, records both Africa's gains and the distance still to be traveled. Among the 48 countries of sub-Saharan Africa, 11 were rated Free for their performance in 2006, while 22 were rated Partly Free and 15 were rated Not Free.

After several years of steady and, in a few cases, impressive advances for democracy, sub-Saharan Africa suffered more setbacks than gains during 2006. One country, the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville), saw its *Freedom in the World* status decline from Partly Free to Not Free due principally to a heightened lack of transparency and openness on the part of the government. Other countries suffered declines as well, including a number that had made promising gains in the recent past, such as Burundi, Chad, Madagascar, Cote d'Ivoire, Mauritius, Somalia, South Africa, and Guinea-Bissau. More modest declines were registered in both Partly Free and Not Free countries, including Eritrea, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Kenya, Seychelles, and Zimbabwe.

There was notable progress in several countries during the year. The Democratic Republic of Congo (Kinshasa), the third-most-populous country in sub-Saharan Africa, saw its political rights rating improve because of the emerging political process surrounding largely successful presidential elections, the first in the country's history. Liberia made gains in fighting corruption and expanding government transparency, and enjoyed a much-needed stabilization during Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's first year as president. Conditions also improved in Malawi and Benin, as well as in Mauritania, which took important steps toward political pluralism and a functioning electoral framework.

The causes for sub-Saharan Africa's setbacks in 2006 varied from country to country. A regionwide analysis, however, suggests several factors that were common to the decline of freedom in many countries. One is a lack of government transparency and openness. A related issue is increased government pressure on freedom of expression and the media in countries with comparatively high levels of overall freedom, such as Ghana and Mali, as well as in countries with generally poor freedom records, including Burundi and Gabon. Another factor is regime pressure on opposition political parties

FREE, PARTLY FREE, NOT FREE

Freedom in the World provides three broad category designations for each of the countries and territories included in the index: **Free**, **Partly Free**, and **Not Free**.

A **Free** country is one where there is broad scope for open political competition, a climate of respect for civil liberties, significant independent civic life, and independent media.

A **Partly Free** country is one in which there is limited respect for political rights and civil liberties. Partly Free states frequently suffer from endemic corruption, weak rule of law, and ethnic or religious strife, and they often feature a single political party that enjoys dominance despite a façade of limited pluralism.

A **Not Free** country is one where basic political rights are absent, and basic civil liberties are widely and systematically denied.

and figures. Perhaps the most significant factor, however, is a weakness in the rule of law that is reflected in the ratings of a number of countries, including strong performers, such as South Africa, and those with less impressive records, such as Chad, Ethiopia, and Eritrea.

The following compilation of charts and tables presents both current findings and long-term trends from *Freedom in the World* and Freedom House's companion survey of media independence, *Freedom of the Press*. These figures summarize the current state of freedom in sub-Saharan Africa and show the steady, if not spectacular, expansion of African democracy over the past three decades.

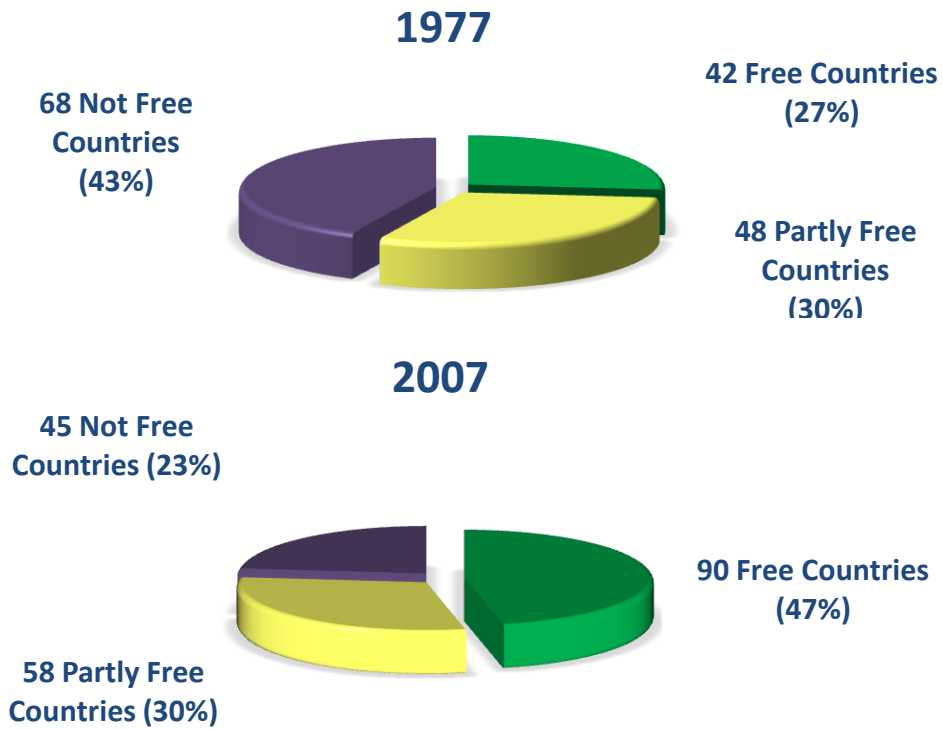
Figure 1, comparing *Freedom in the World* 1977 assessments with those made in the most recent 2007 edition, reveals a substantial increase in the proportion of Free countries (and a related decrease in Not Free societies) in the world. Figure 2 presents the same comparison for sub-Saharan Africa, showing a less dramatic but still notable increase in freedom on the continent. The findings of the *Freedom of the Press* survey, which uses a three-tiered rating system similar to that of *Freedom in the World*, are conveyed in Figures 3 and 4, comparing media assessments in 1980 and 2007. These figures show an increase in the level of global press freedom; regarding sub-Saharan Africa, they show a considerable increase, albeit from a very low starting point. The pie charts are followed by two tables listing the most recent, country-specific ratings for sub-Saharan Africa from *Freedom in the World* 2007 and *Freedom of the Press* 2007. In both tables, the countries are listed in order from most to least free.

The next set of figures depict in greater detail the trends of freedom and press freedom in sub-Saharan Africa. Figure 5 shows the substantial increase in the number of countries rated Free and Partly Free by *Freedom in the World* from 1977 to 2007, although a significant number of countries have remained in the Not Free category. Figure 6 displays the steady increase in average regional *Freedom in the World* ratings for political rights and civil liberties since 1980. The trends in political rights and civil liberties ratings for each country of sub-Saharan Africa are presented in Figures 8–55. In terms of press freedom, Figure 7 shows a striking decrease in the percentage of countries in the Not Free category from 1980 to 2007, with an accompanying increase in the percentage of countries rated Free and Partly Free. These shifts occurred primarily in the early 1990s, and ratings have improved steadily since then.

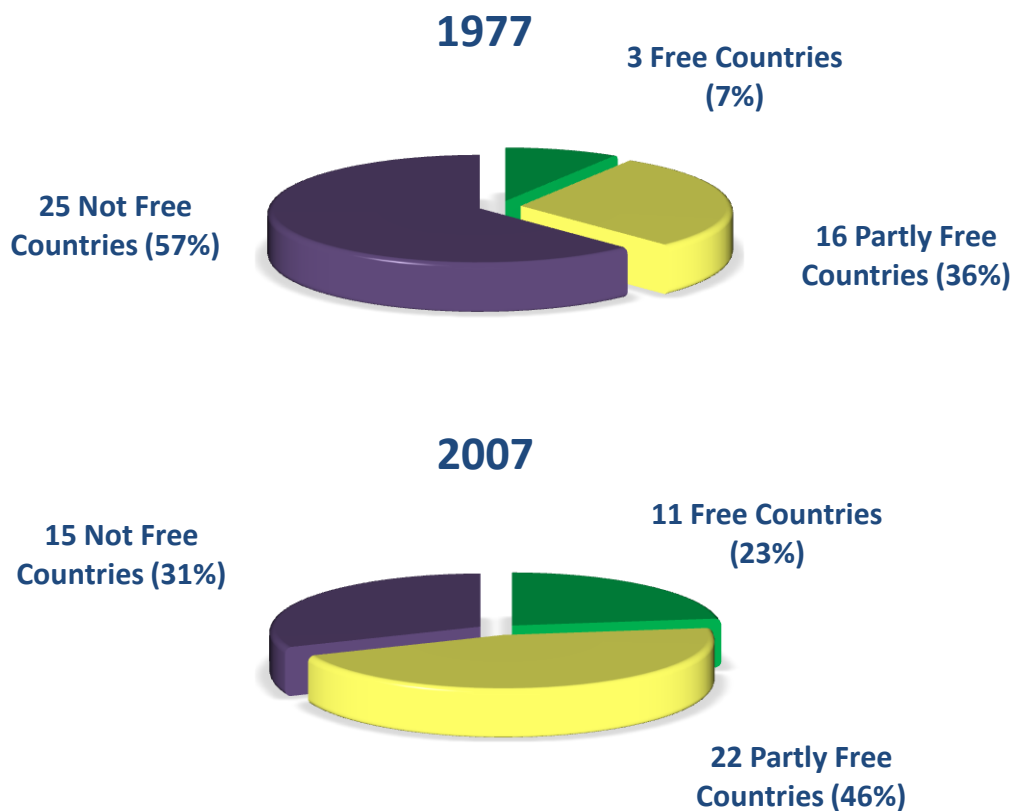
We hope these figures provide useful reference points for discussion and dialogue about freedom in sub-Saharan Africa. We welcome feedback on this graphic presentation as well as on the larger issues it illustrates.

Jennifer Windsor
Executive Director
Freedom House
July 16, 2007

Freedom in the World (Figure 1)

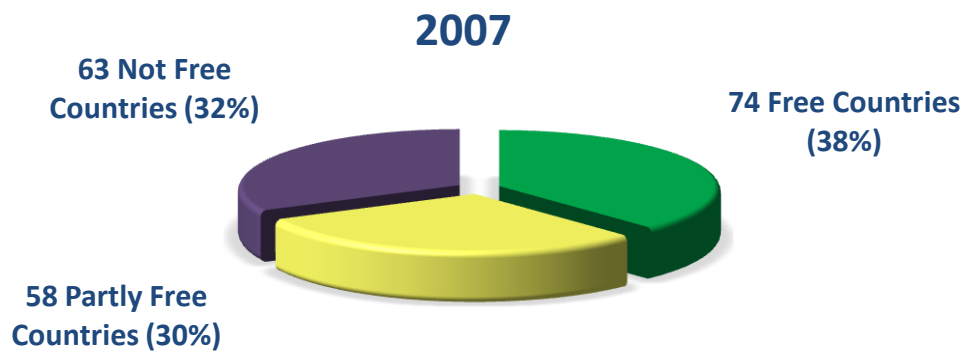
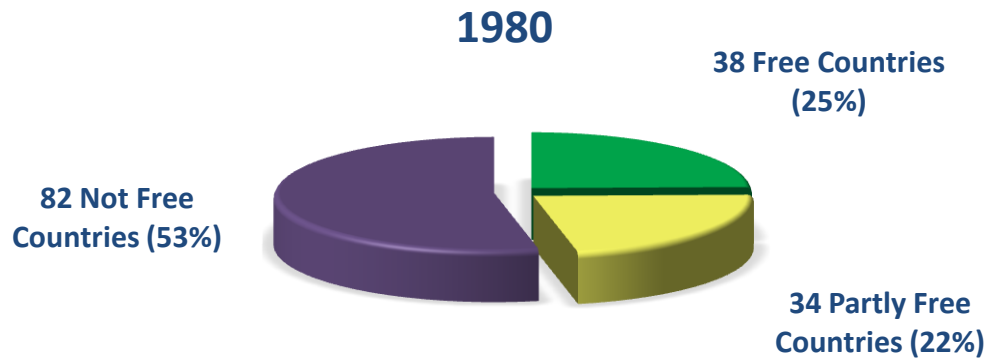


Freedom in Sub-Saharan Africa (Figure 2)

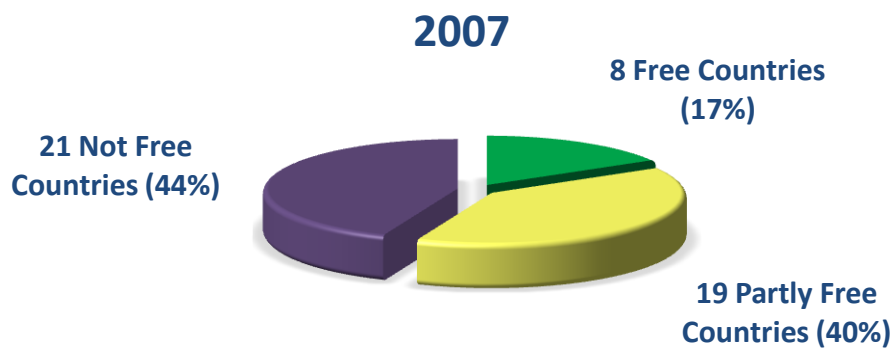
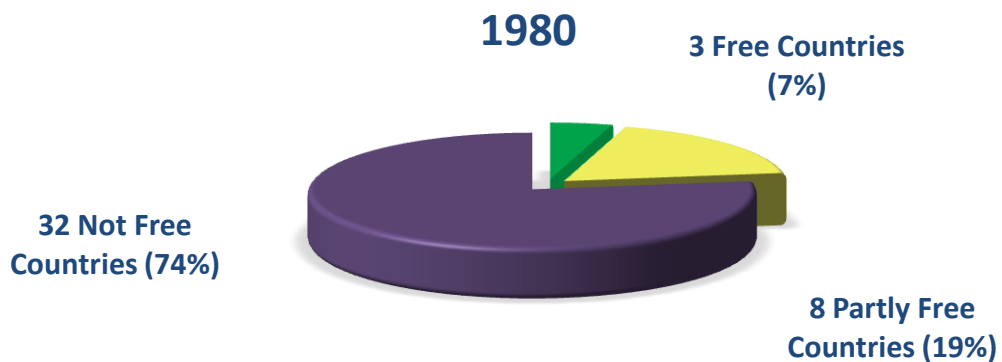


Note: All years refer to publication editions and reflect the state of freedom in the previous year

Freedom of the Press: Global (Figure 3)



Freedom of the Press: Sub-Saharan Africa (Figure 4)



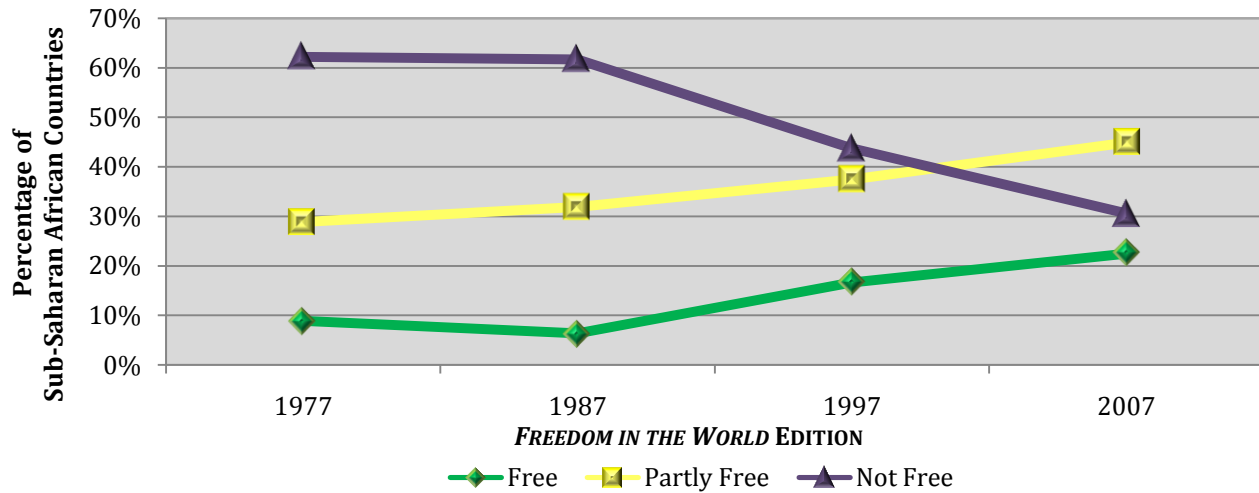
Freedom in the World 2007: Sub-Saharan Africa (Table 1)

Country	Political Rights	Civil Liberties	Status
Cape Verde	1	1	Free
Ghana	1	2	Free
Mauritius	1	2	Free
Benin	2	2	Free
Botswana	2	2	Free
Mali	2	2	Free
Namibia	2	2	Free
Sao Tome and Principe	2	2	Free
South Africa	2	2	Free
Lesotho	2	3	Free
Senegal	2	3	Free
Kenya	3	3	Partly Free
Niger	3	3	Partly Free
Seychelles	3	3	Partly Free
Comoros	3	4	Partly Free
Liberia	3	4	Partly Free
Mozambique	3	4	Partly Free
Zambia	3	4	Partly Free
Madagascar	4	3	Partly Free
Malawi	4	3	Partly Free
Sierra Leone	4	3	Partly Free
Tanzania	4	3	Partly Free
Guinea-Bissau	4	4	Partly Free
Nigeria	4	4	Partly Free
Burundi	4	5	Partly Free
Burkina Faso	5	3	Partly Free
Central African Republic	5	4	Partly Free
Gambia	5	4	Partly Free
Mauritania	5	4	Partly Free
Uganda	5	4	Partly Free
Djibouti	5	5	Partly Free
Ethiopia	5	5	Partly Free
Congo (Kinshasa)	5	6	Not Free
Gabon	6	4	Partly Free
Angola	6	5	Not Free
Congo (Brazzaville)	6	5	Not Free
Guinea	6	5	Not Free
Rwanda	6	5	Not Free
Togo	6	5	Not Free
Cameroon	6	6	Not Free
Chad	6	6	Not Free
Swaziland	7	5	Not Free
Cote d'Ivoire	7	6	Not Free
Equatorial Guinea	7	6	Not Free
Eritrea	7	6	Not Free
Zimbabwe	7	6	Not Free
Somalia	7	7	Not Free
Sudan	7	7	Not Free

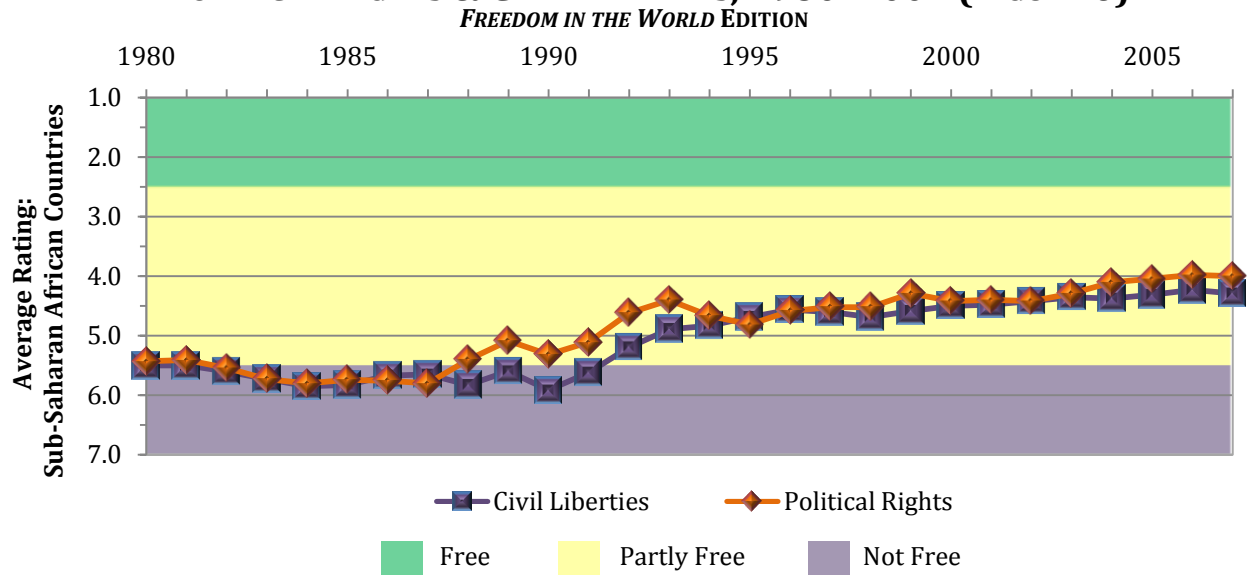
Freedom of the Press 2007: Sub-Saharan Africa (Table 2)

Country	Rating	Status
Mali	24	Free
Ghana	26	Free
Mauritius	26	Free
South Africa	28	Free
Cape Verde	29	Free
Sao Tome and Principe	29	Free
Benin	30	Free
Namibia	30	Free
Botswana	35	Partly Free
Burkina Faso	39	Partly Free
Mozambique	40	Partly Free
Lesotho	42	Partly Free
Senegal	46	Partly Free
Comoros	48	Partly Free
Guinea-Bissau	48	Partly Free
Madagascar	50	Partly Free
Congo (Brazzaville)	51	Partly Free
Tanzania	51	Partly Free
Malawi	53	Partly Free
Uganda	54	Partly Free
Mauritania	55	Partly Free
Nigeria	55	Partly Free
Sierra Leone	56	Partly Free
Central African Republic	58	Partly Free
Niger	58	Partly Free
Kenya	59	Partly Free
Seychelles	60	Partly Free
Angola	62	Not Free
Zambia	64	Not Free
Liberia	65	Not Free
Cameroon	67	Not Free
Guinea	67	Not Free
Cote d'Ivoire	68	Not Free
Djibouti	69	Not Free
Gabon	69	Not Free
Chad	74	Not Free
Togo	74	Not Free
Swaziland	76	Not Free
Burundi	77	Not Free
Ethiopia	77	Not Free
Gambia	77	Not Free
Congo (Kinshasa)	80	Not Free
Sudan	81	Not Free
Rwanda	84	Not Free
Somalia	85	Not Free
Equatorial Guinea	89	Not Free
Zimbabwe	89	Not Free
Eritrea	94	Not Free

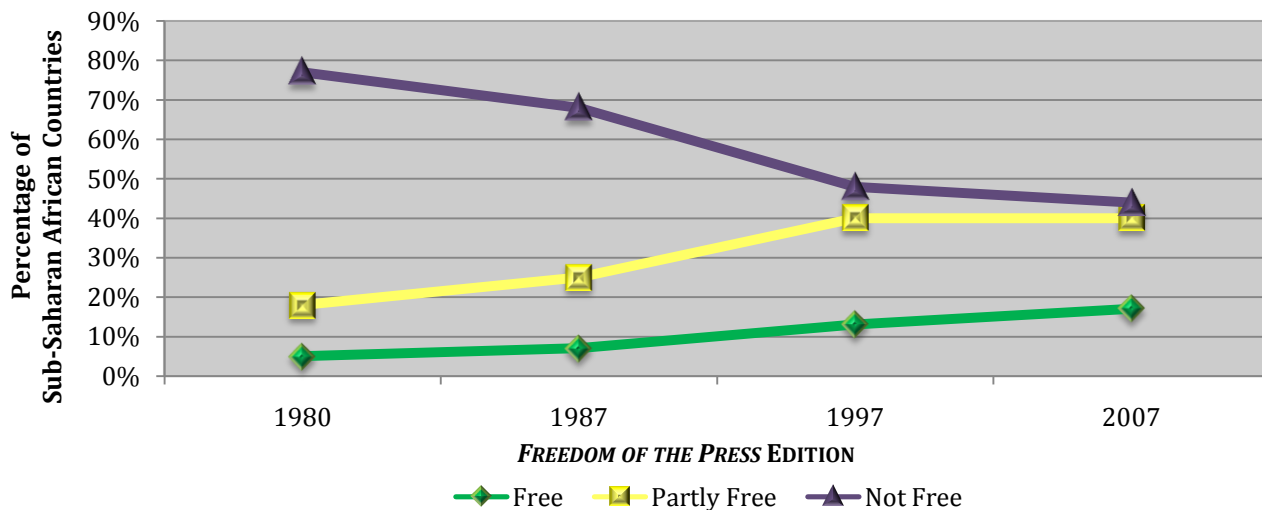
TRENDS IN FREEDOM: SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA FREEDOM STATUS, 1977-2007 (FIGURE 5)



POLITICAL RIGHTS & CIVIL LIBERTIES, 1980-2007 (FIGURE 6)

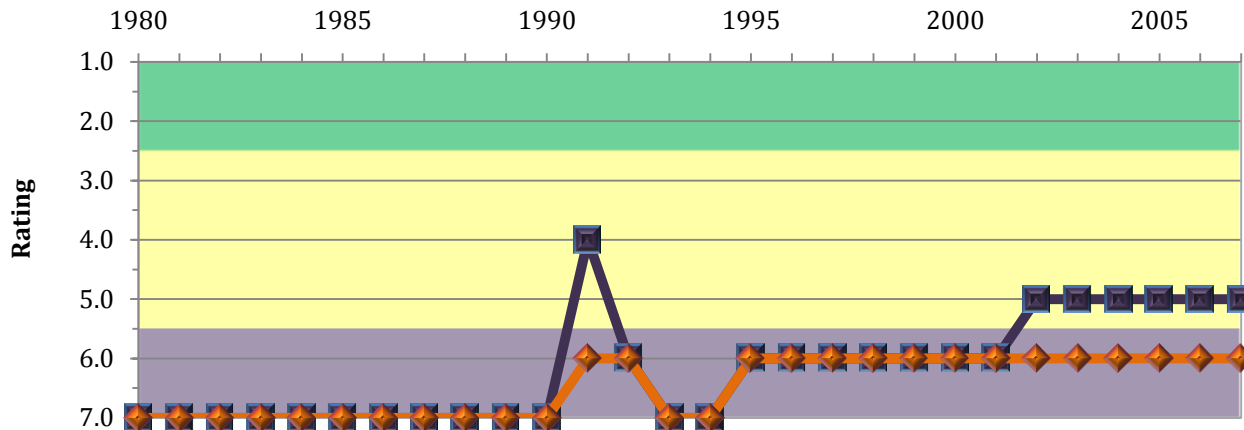


TRENDS IN PRESS FREEDOM: SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA FREEDOM STATUS, 1980-2007 (FIGURE 7)

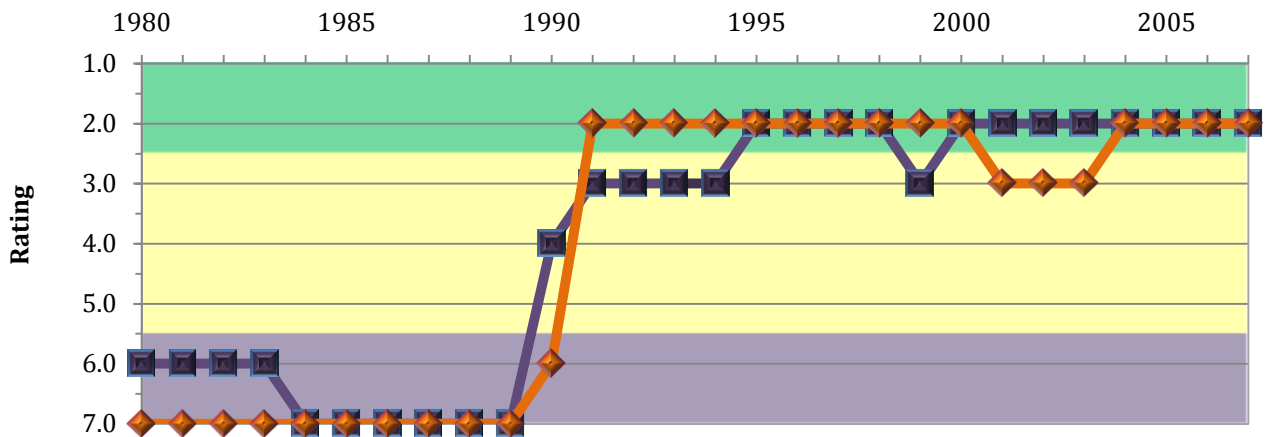


FREEDOM IN ANGOLA, 1980-2007 (FIGURE 8)

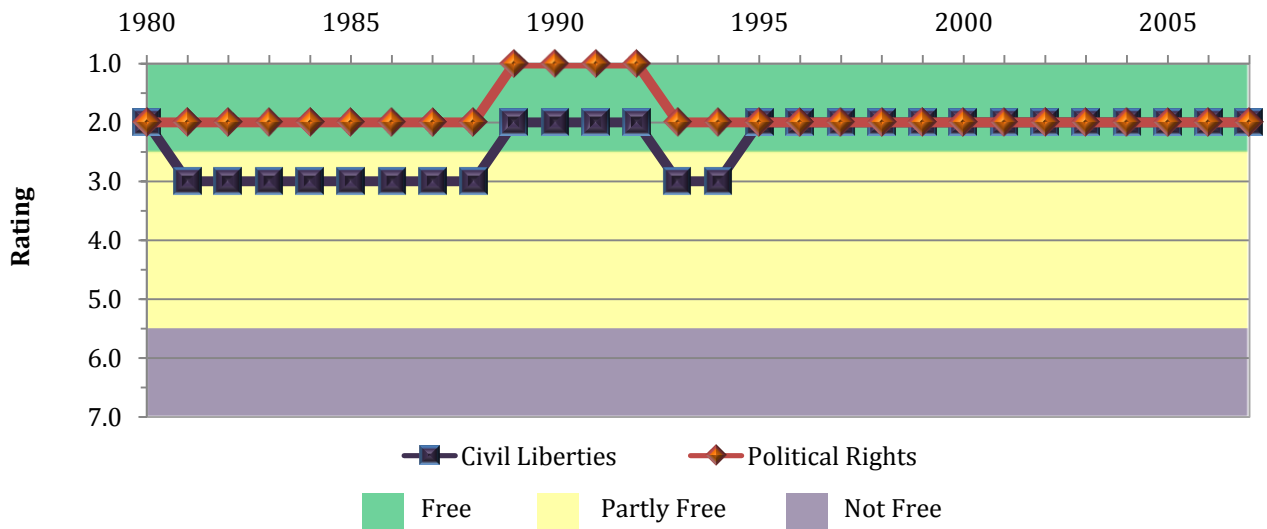
FREEDOM IN THE WORLD EDITION



FREEDOM IN BENIN, 1980-2007 (FIGURE 9)



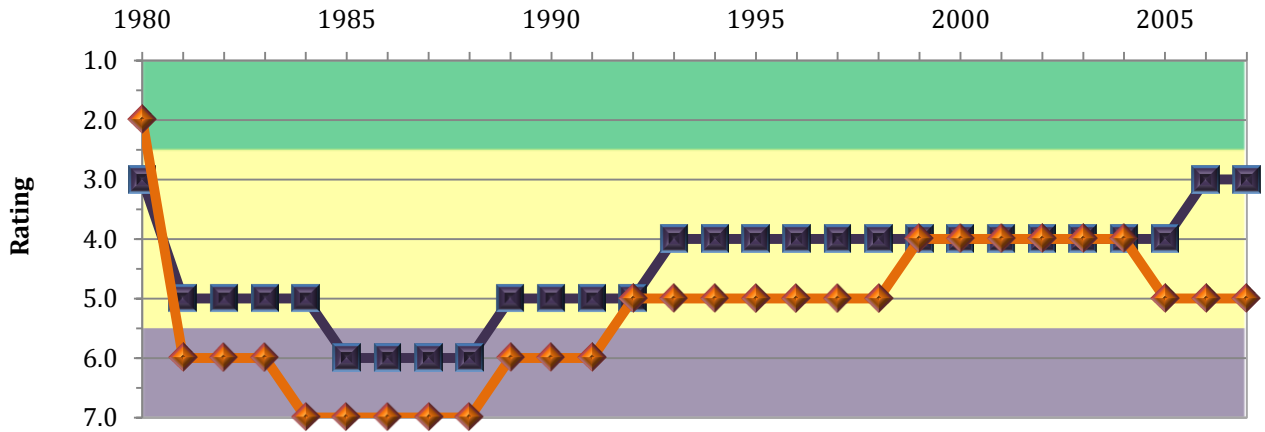
FREEDOM IN BOTSWANA, 1980-2007 (FIGURE 10)



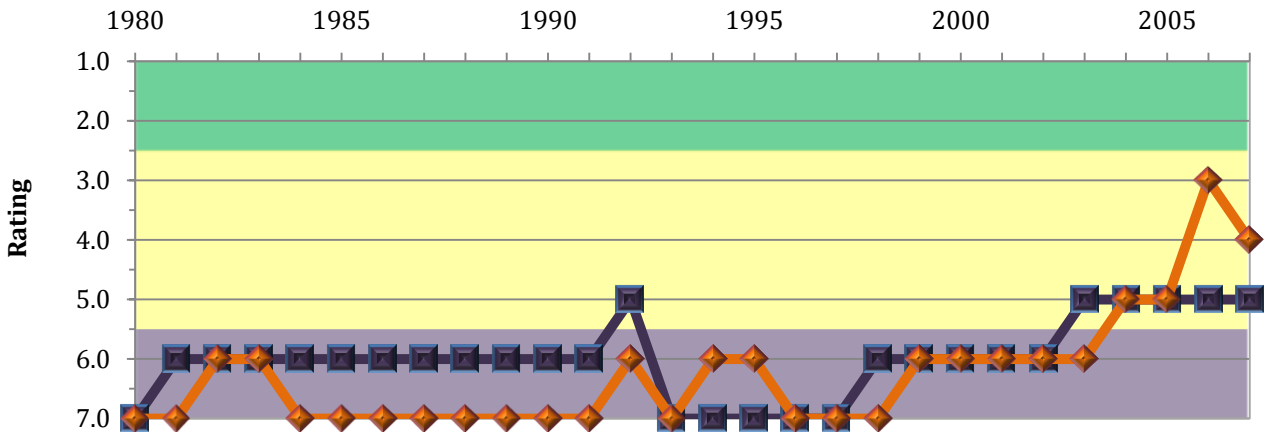
■ Civil Liberties
 ◆ Political Rights
 ■ Free
 ■ Partly Free
 ■ Not Free

FREEDOM IN BURKINA FASO, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 11)

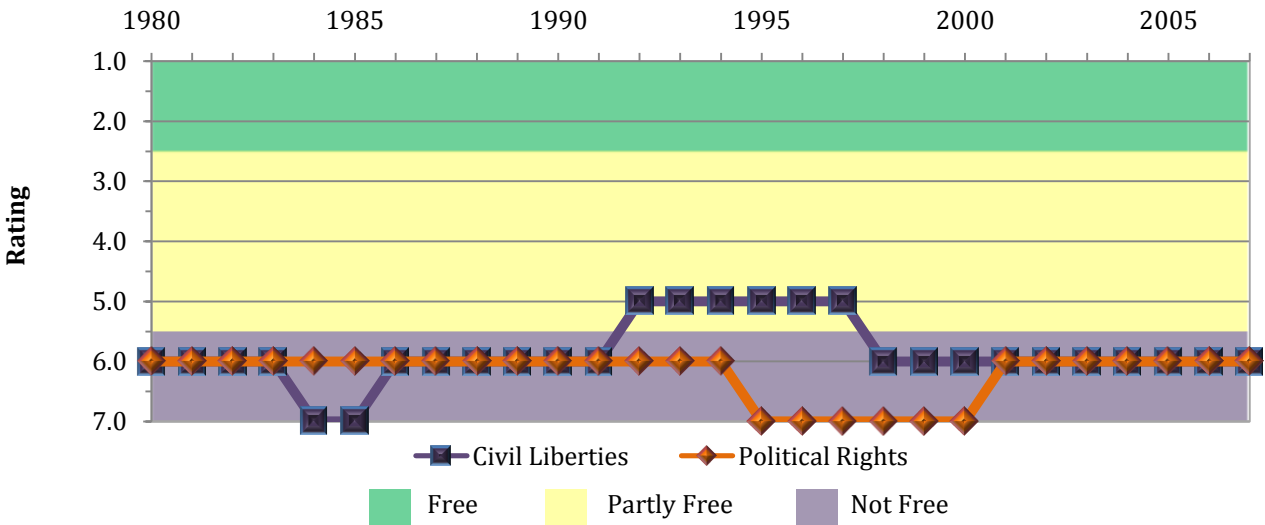
FREEDOM IN THE WORLD EDITION



FREEDOM IN BURUNDI, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 12)

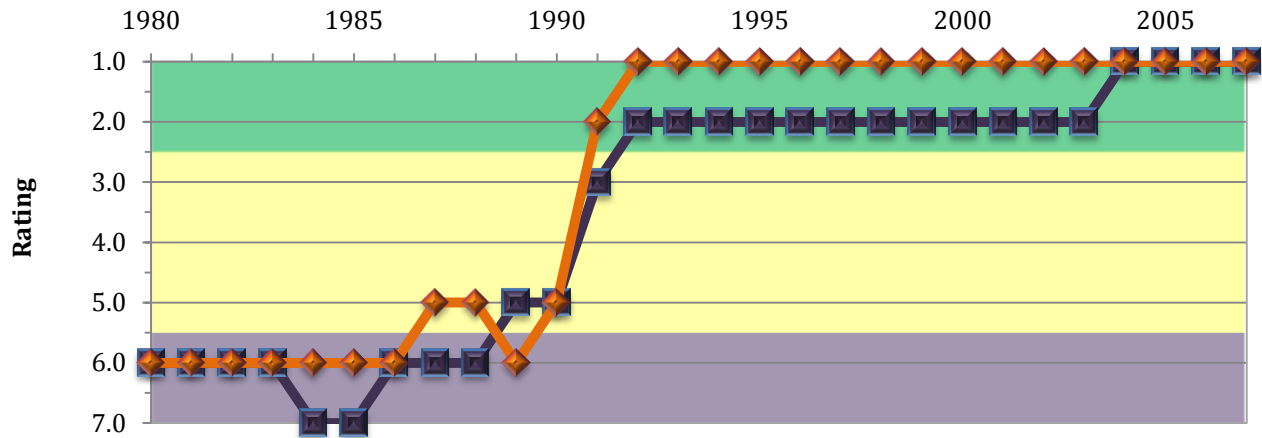


FREEDOM IN CAMEROON, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 13)

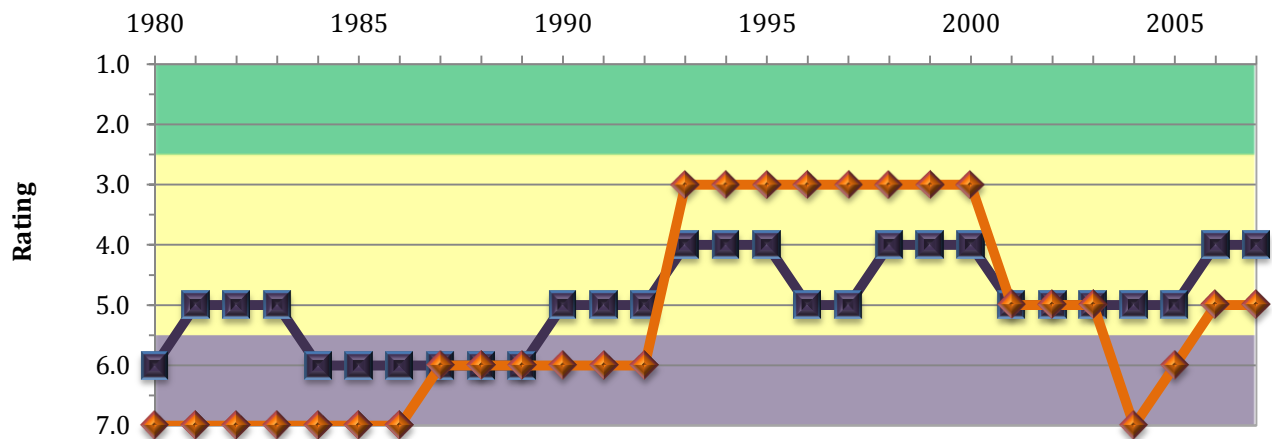


FREEDOM IN CAPE VERDE, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 14)

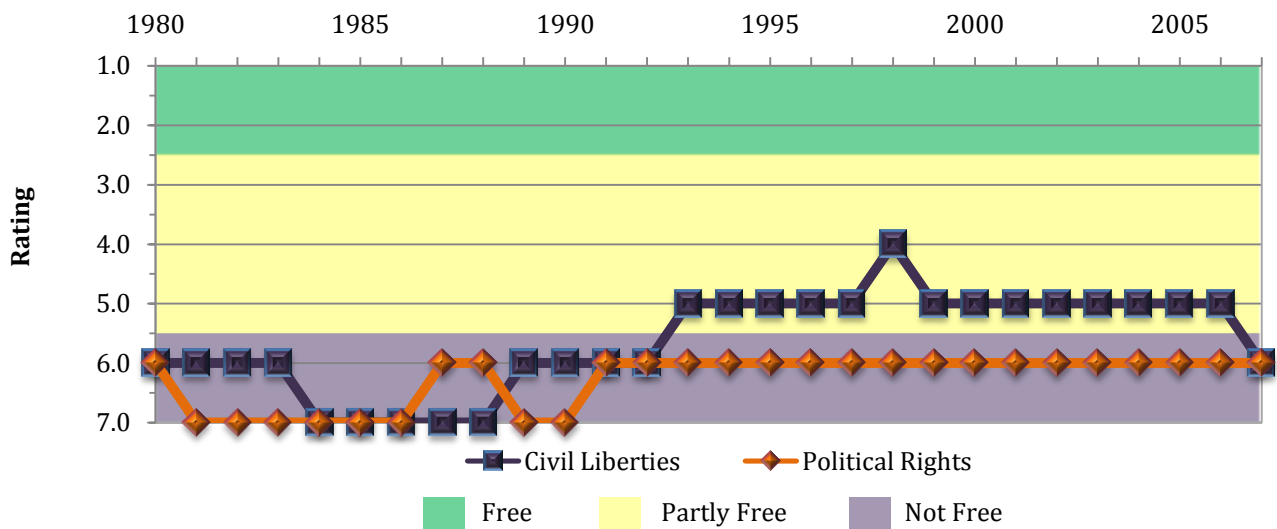
FREEDOM IN THE WORLD EDITION



FREEDOM IN CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 15)

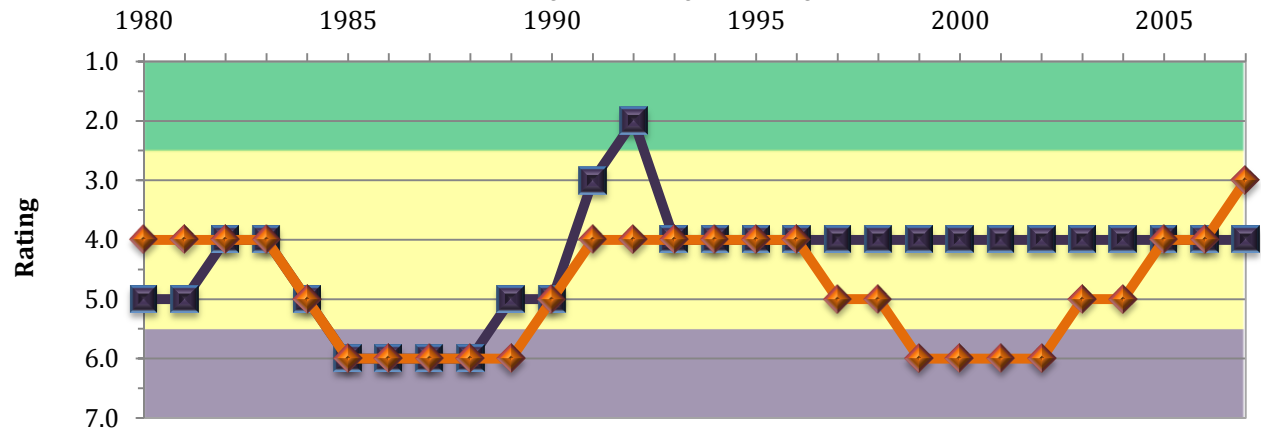


FREEDOM IN CHAD, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 16)

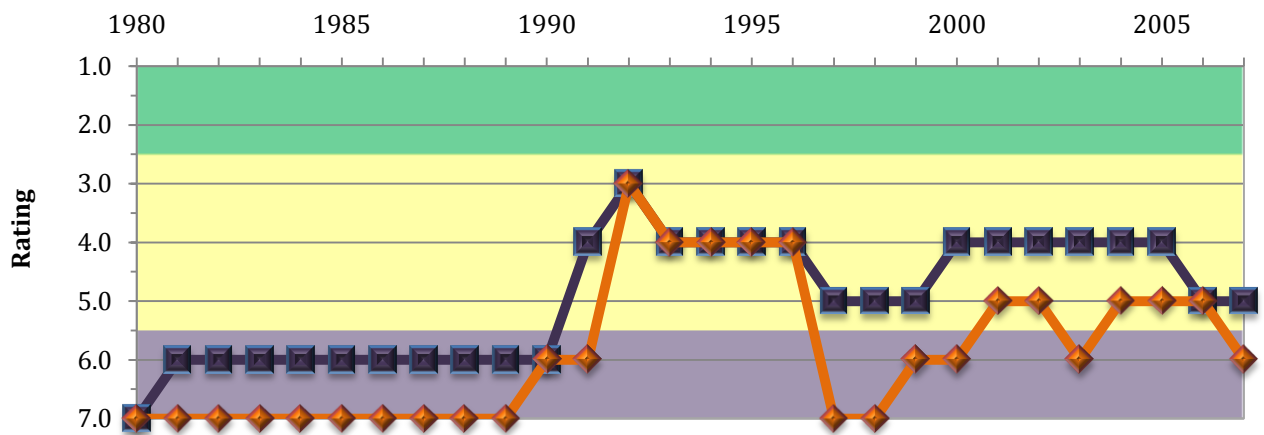


FREEDOM IN COMOROS, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 17)

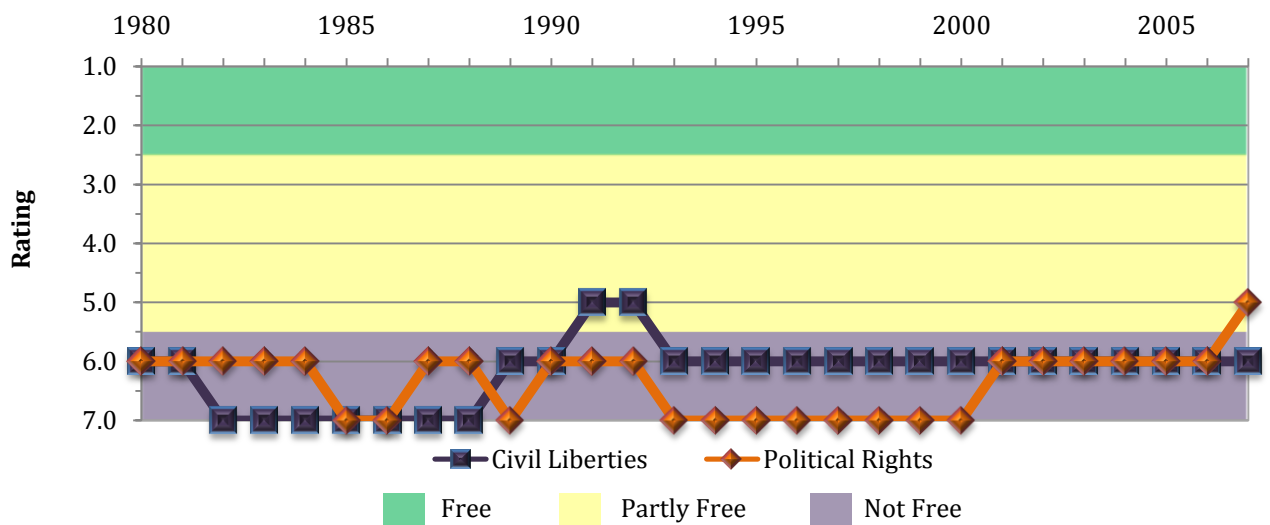
FREEDOM IN THE WORLD EDITION



FREEDOM IN CONGO (BRAZZAVILLE), 1980–2007 (FIGURE 18)

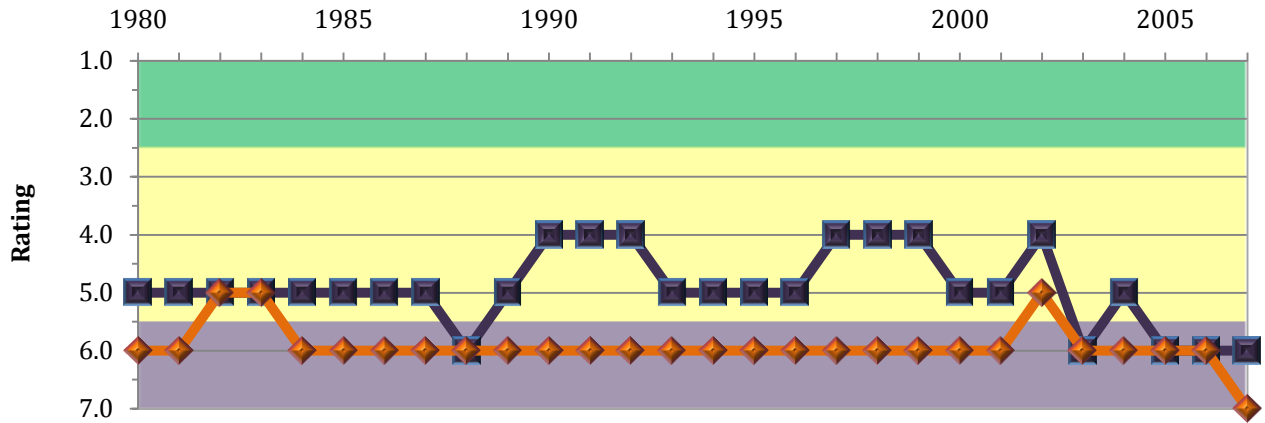


FREEDOM IN CONGO (KINSHASA), 1980–2007 (FIGURE 19)

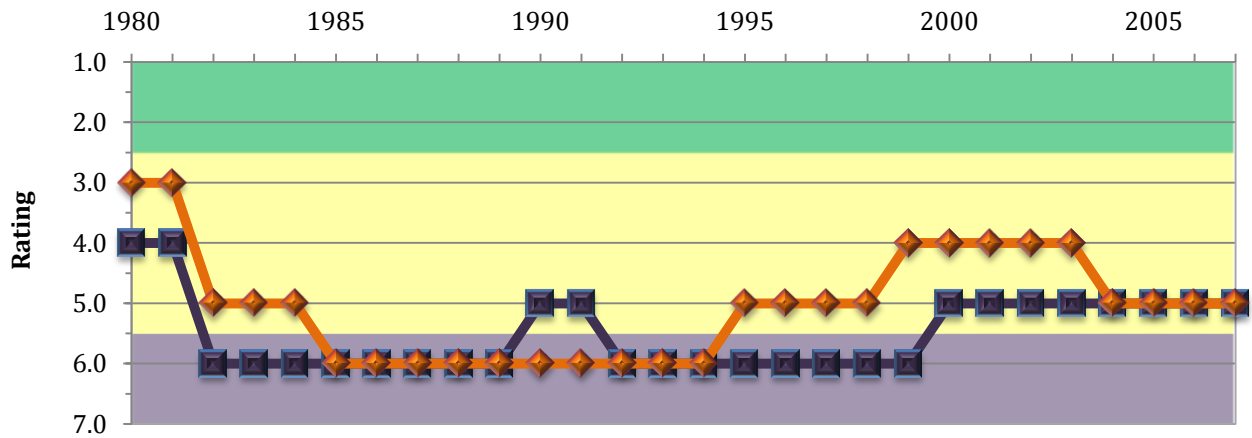


FREEDOM IN COTE D'IVOIRE, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 20)

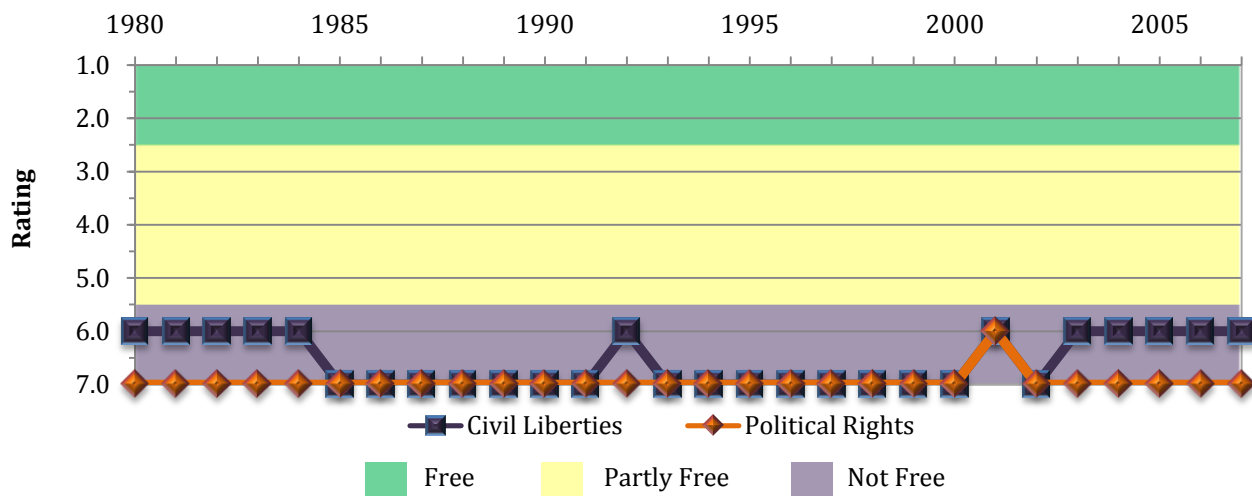
FREEDOM IN THE WORLD EDITION



FREEDOM IN DJIBOUTI, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 21)

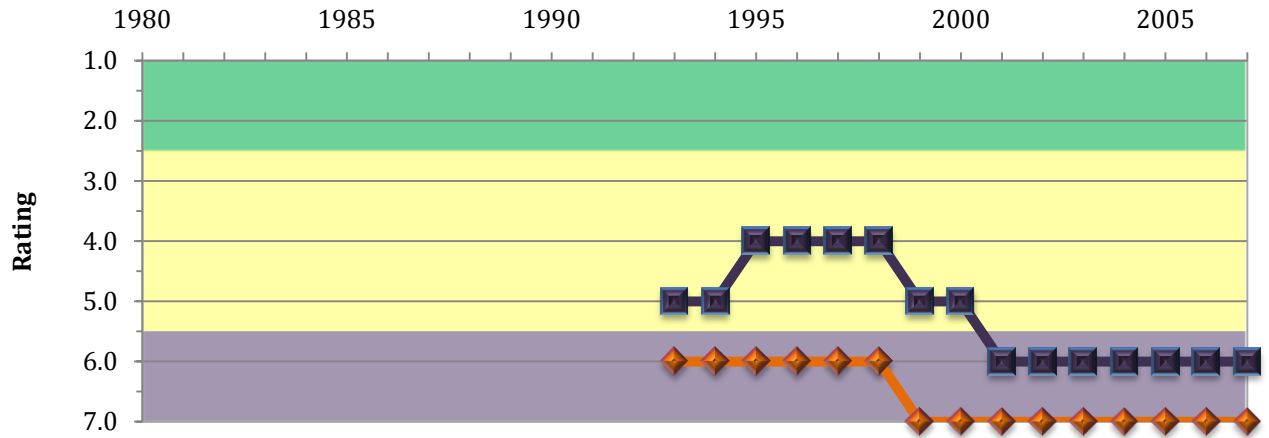


FREEDOM IN EQUATORIAL GUINEA, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 22)

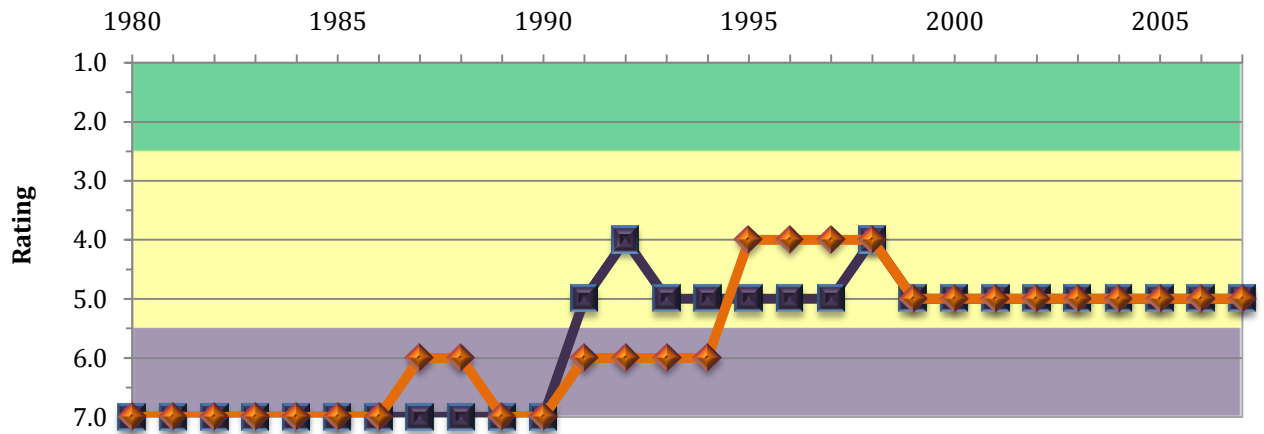


FREEDOM IN ERITREA, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 23)

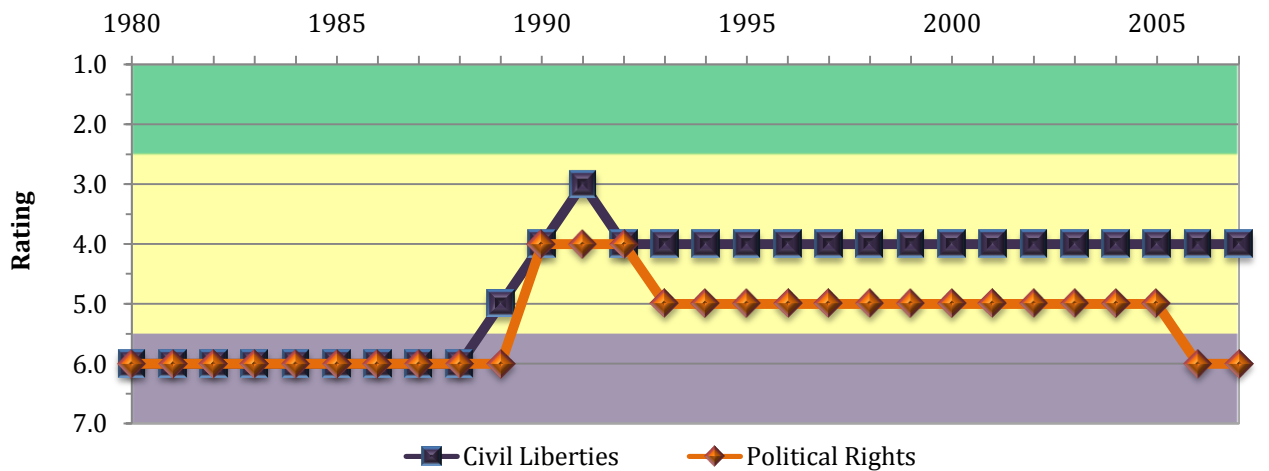
FREEDOM IN THE WORLD EDITION



FREEDOM IN ETHIOPIA, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 24)



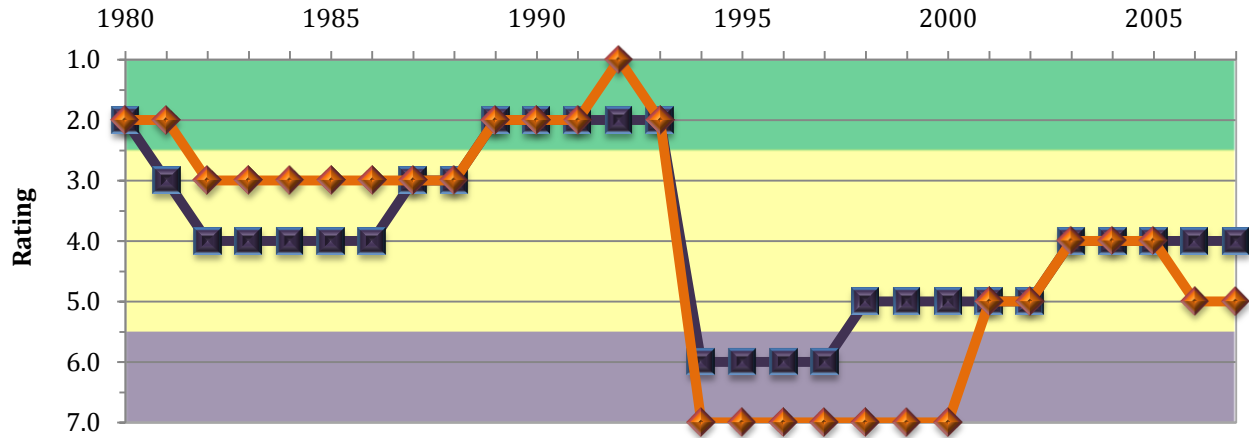
FREEDOM IN GABON, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 25)



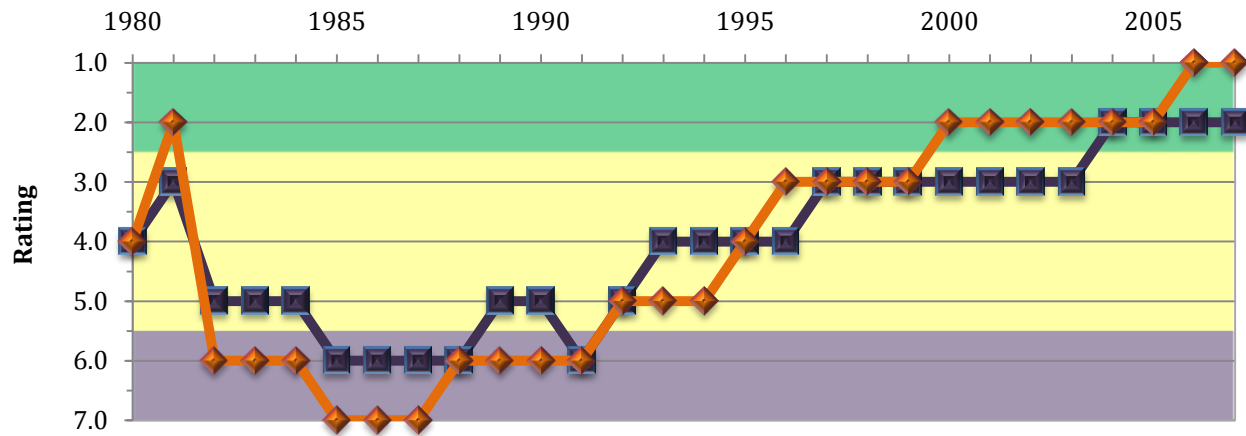
■ Civil Liberties ◆ Political Rights
■ Free ■ Partly Free ■ Not Free

FREEDOM IN THE GAMBIA, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 26)

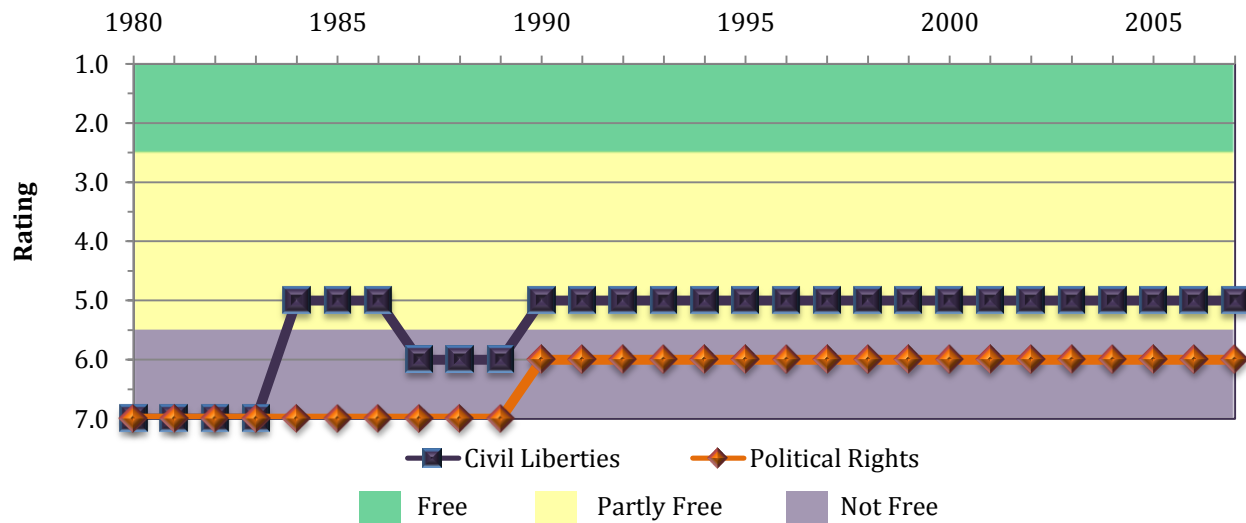
FREEDOM IN THE WORLD EDITION



FREEDOM IN GHANA, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 27)

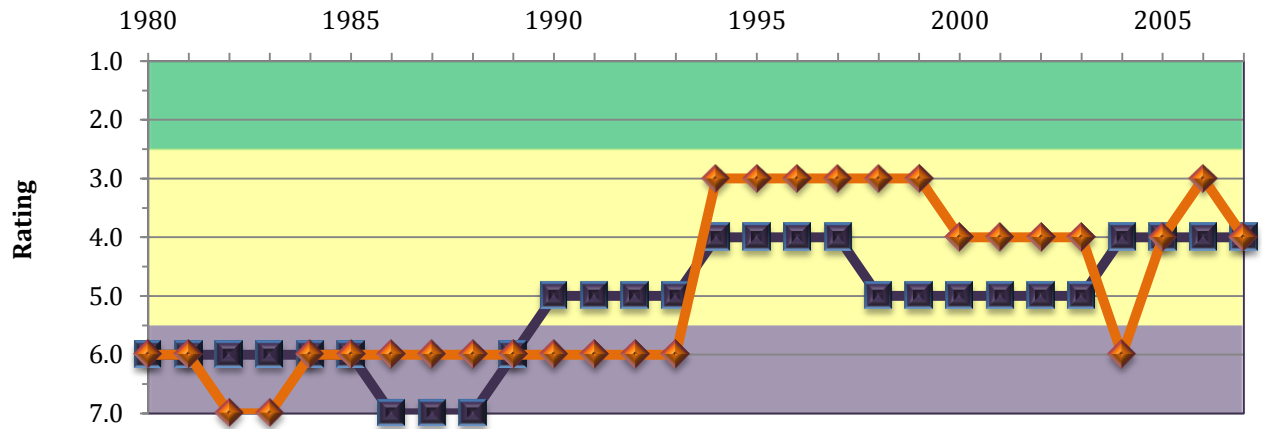


FREEDOM IN GUINEA, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 28)

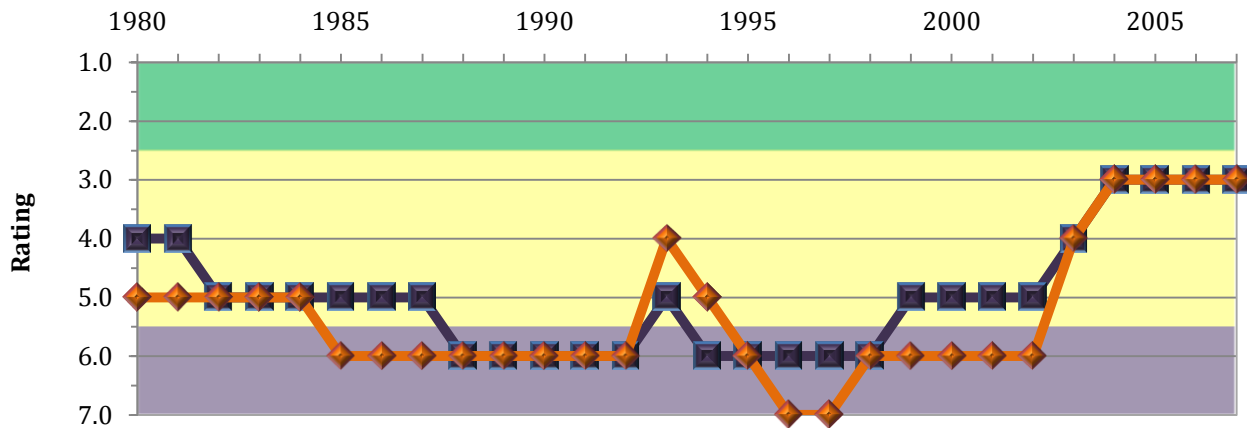


FREEDOM IN GUINEA-BISSAU, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 29)

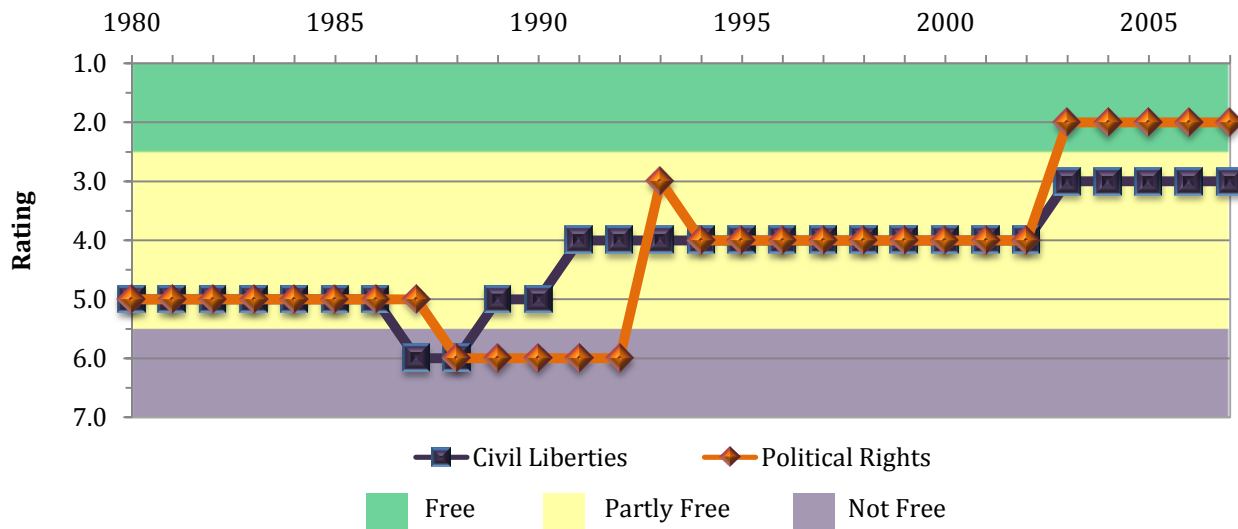
FREEDOM IN THE WORLD EDITION



FREEDOM IN KENYA, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 30)

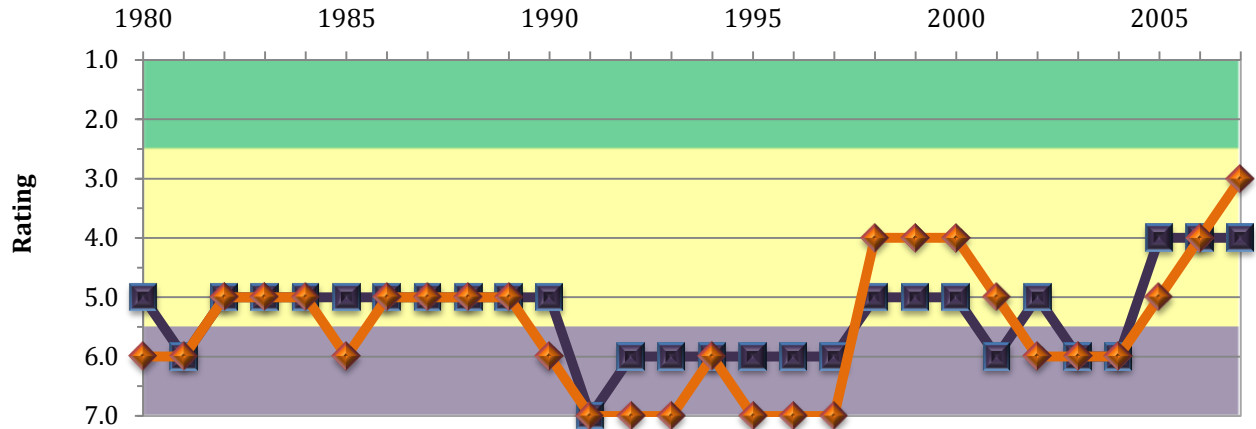


FREEDOM IN LESOTHO, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 31)

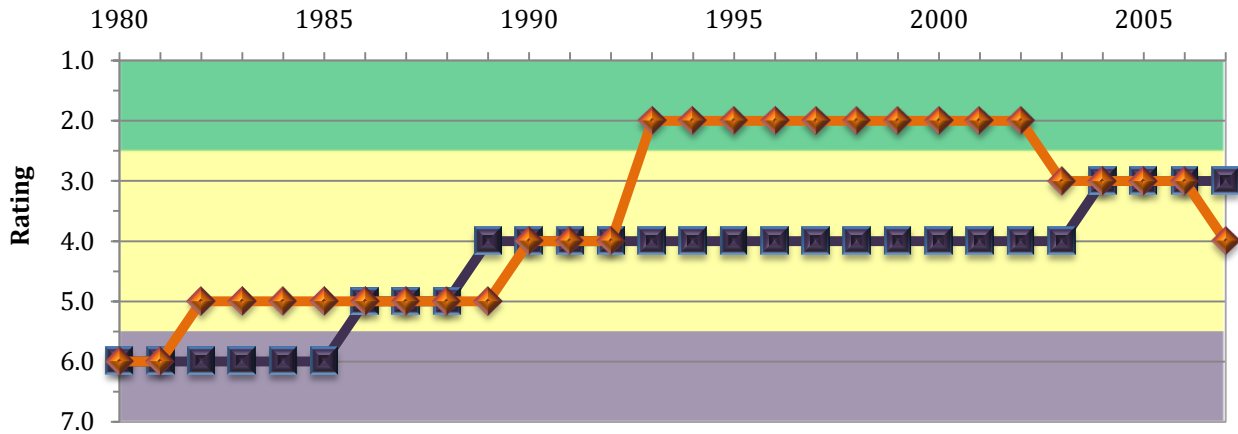


FREEDOM IN LIBERIA, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 32)

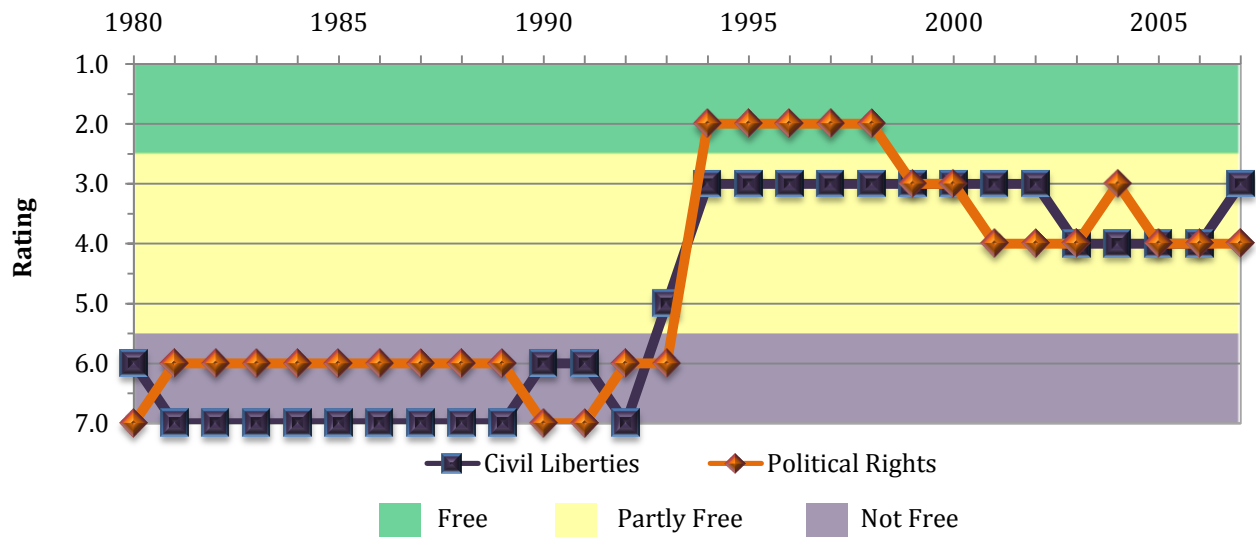
FREEDOM IN THE WORLD EDITION



FREEDOM IN MADAGASCAR, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 33)

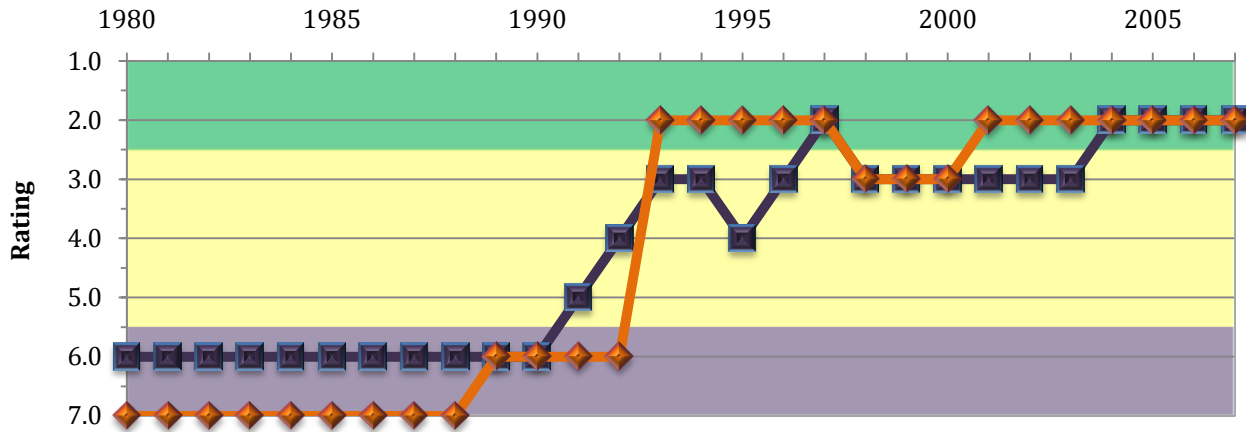


FREEDOM IN MALAWI, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 34)

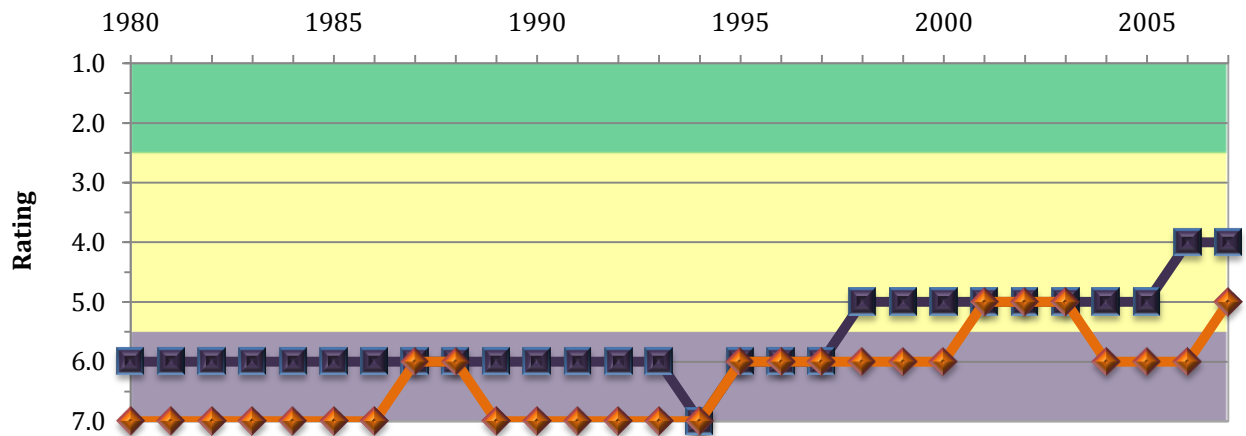


FREEDOM IN MALI, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 35)

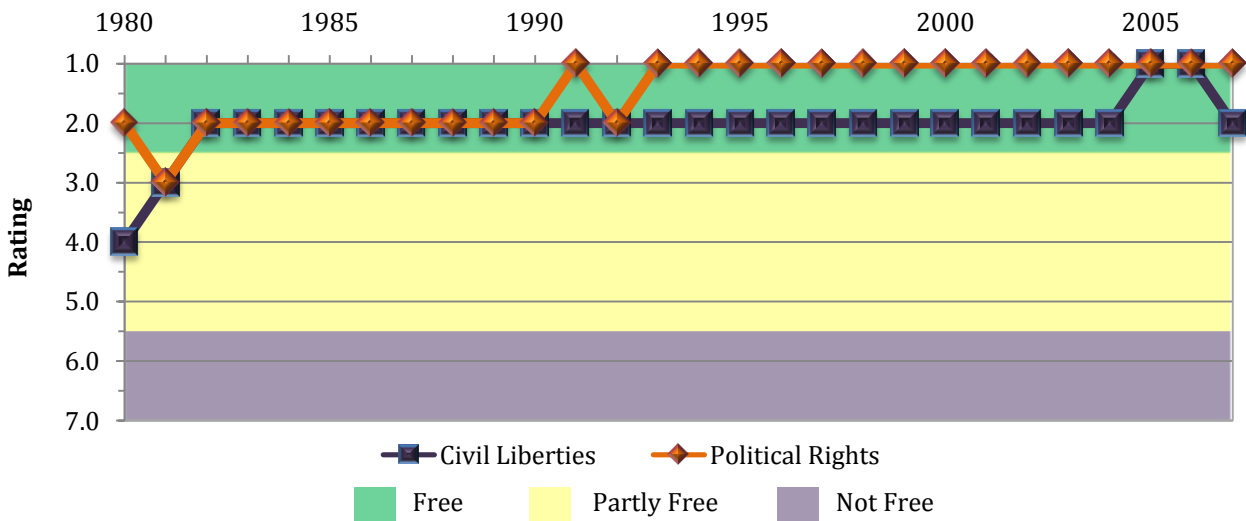
FREEDOM IN THE WORLD EDITION



FREEDOM IN MAURITANIA, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 36)



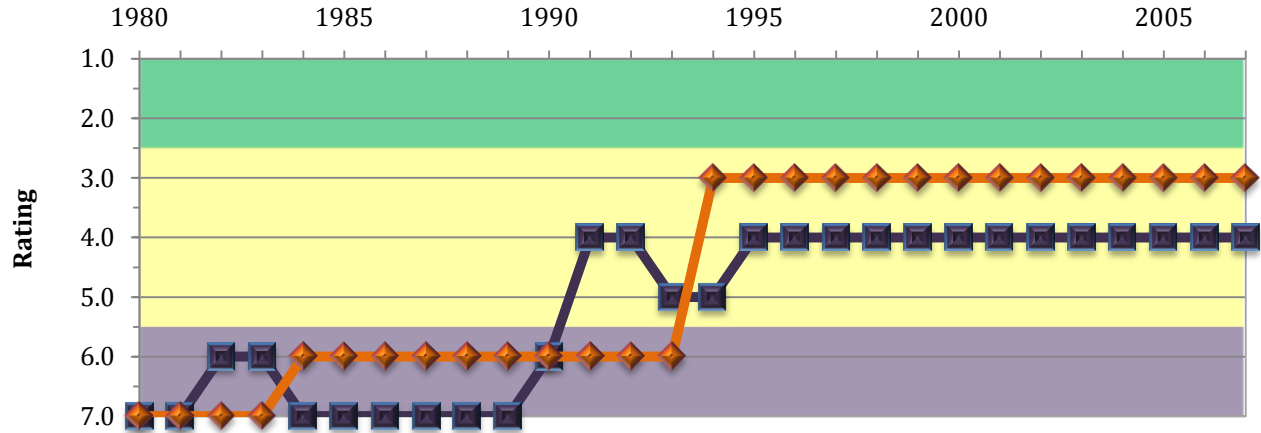
FREEDOM IN MAURITIUS, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 37)



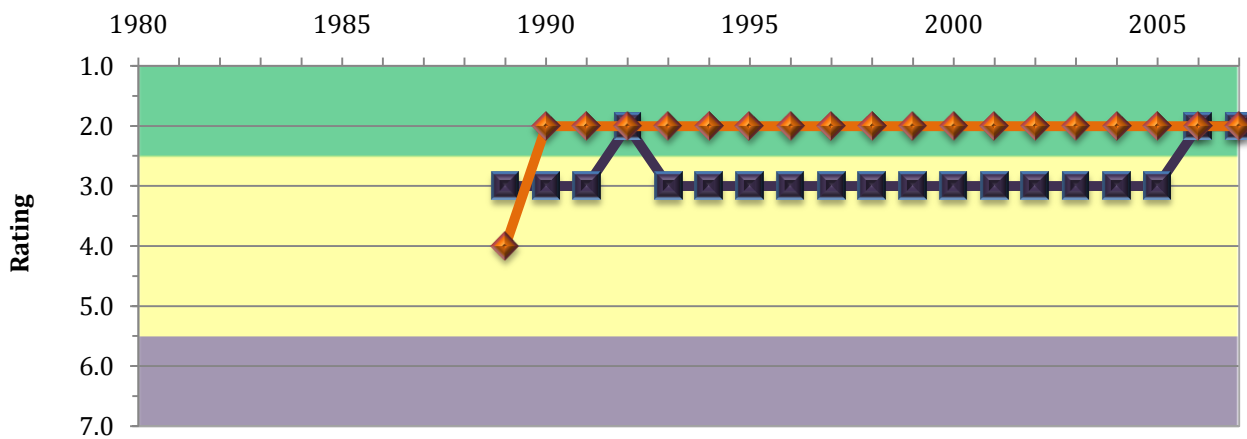
■ Civil Liberties
 ◆ Political Rights
 ■ Free
 ■ Partly Free
 ■ Not Free

FREEDOM IN MOZAMBIQUE, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 38)

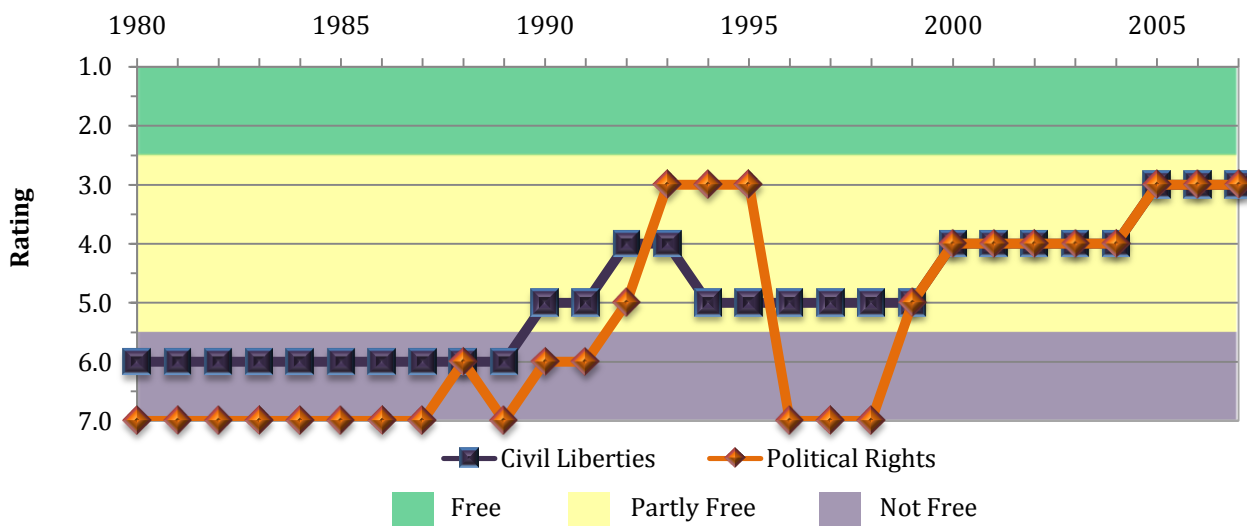
FREEDOM IN THE WORLD EDITION



FREEDOM IN NAMIBIA, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 39)

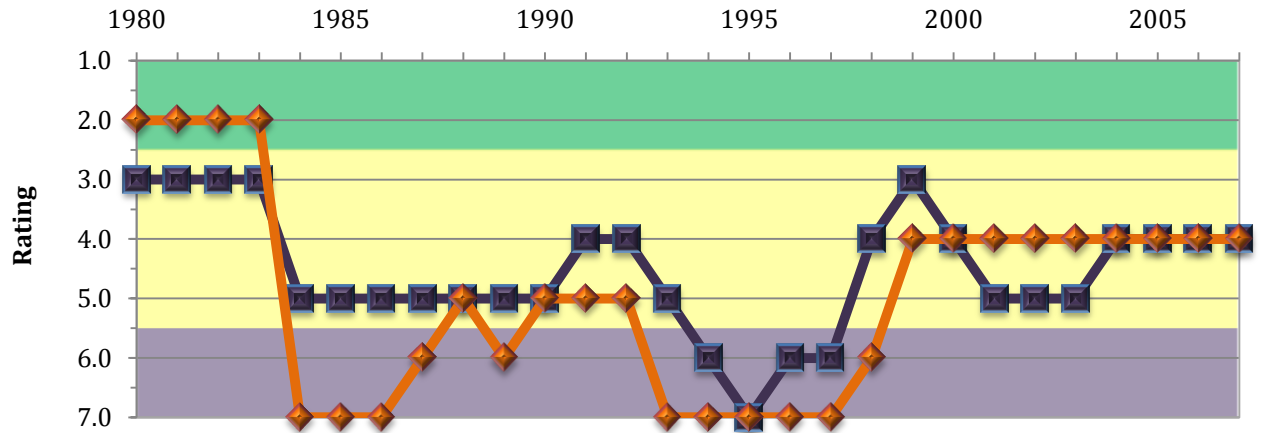


FREEDOM IN NIGER, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 40)

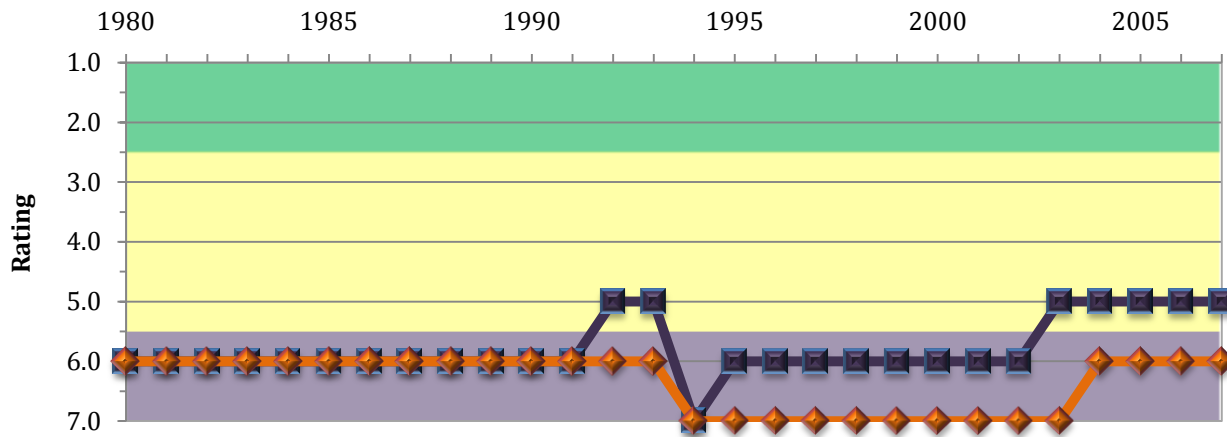


FREEDOM IN NIGERIA, 1980-2007 (FIGURE 41)

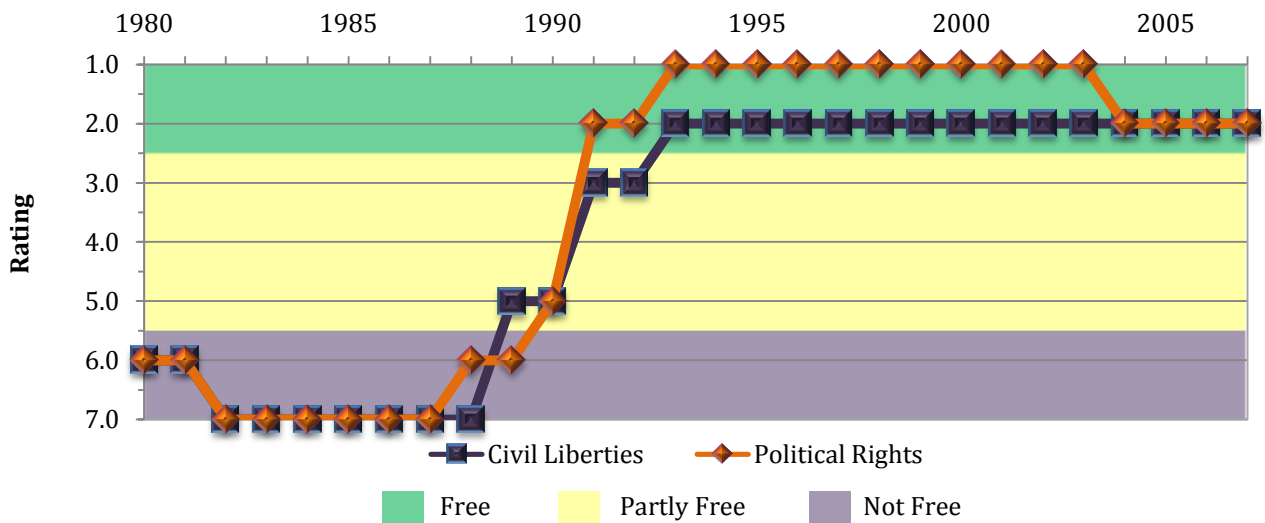
FREEDOM IN THE WORLD EDITION



FREEDOM IN RWANDA, 1980-2007 (FIGURE 42)

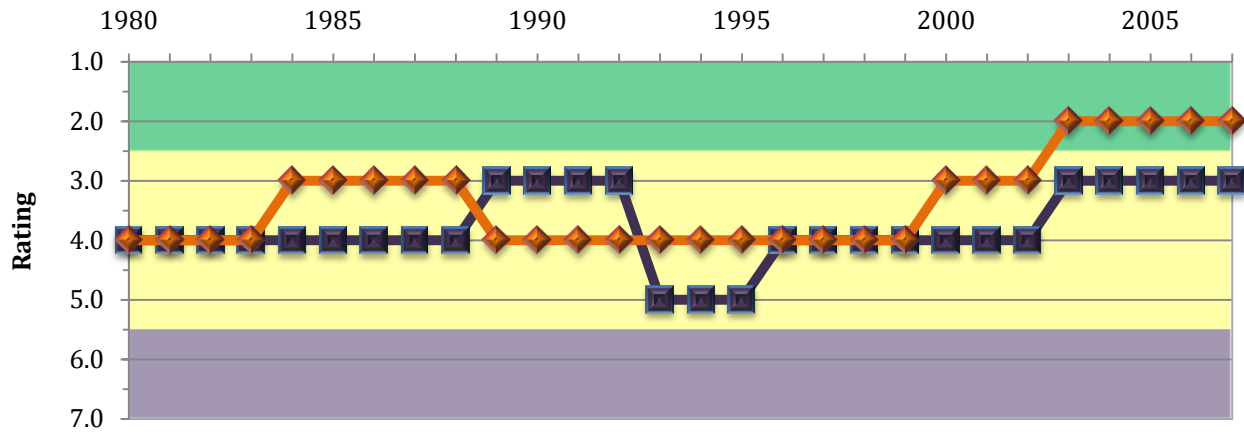


FREEDOM IN SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, 1980-2007 (FIGURE 43)

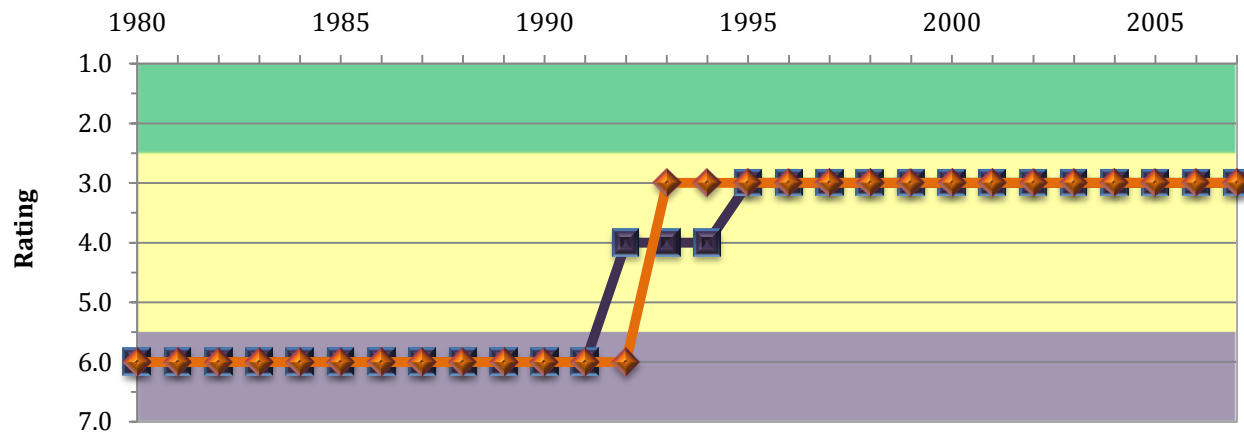


FREEDOM IN SENEGAL, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 44)

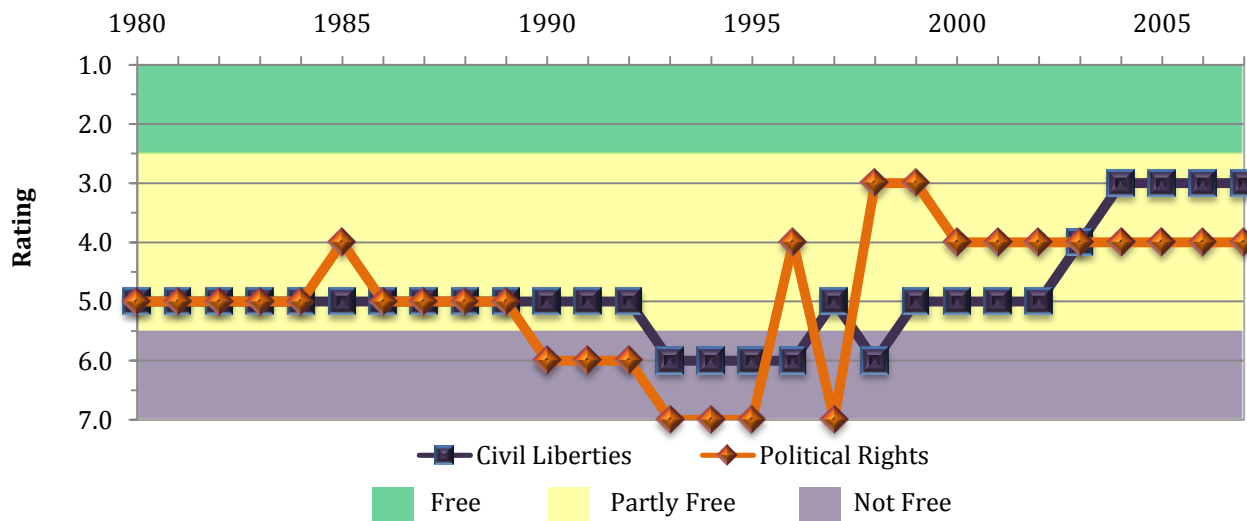
FREEDOM IN THE WORLD EDITION



FREEDOM IN SEYCHELLES, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 45)

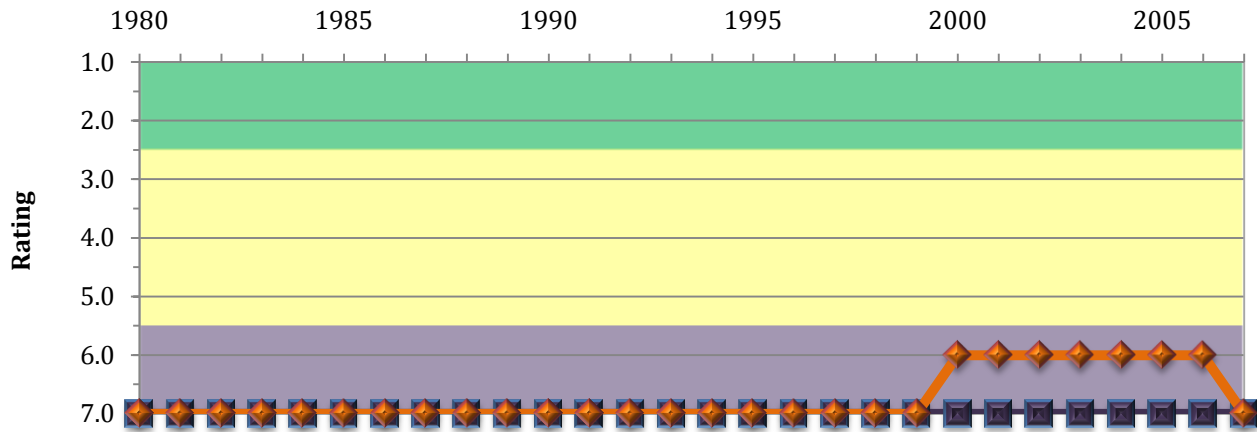


FREEDOM IN SIERRA LEONE, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 46)

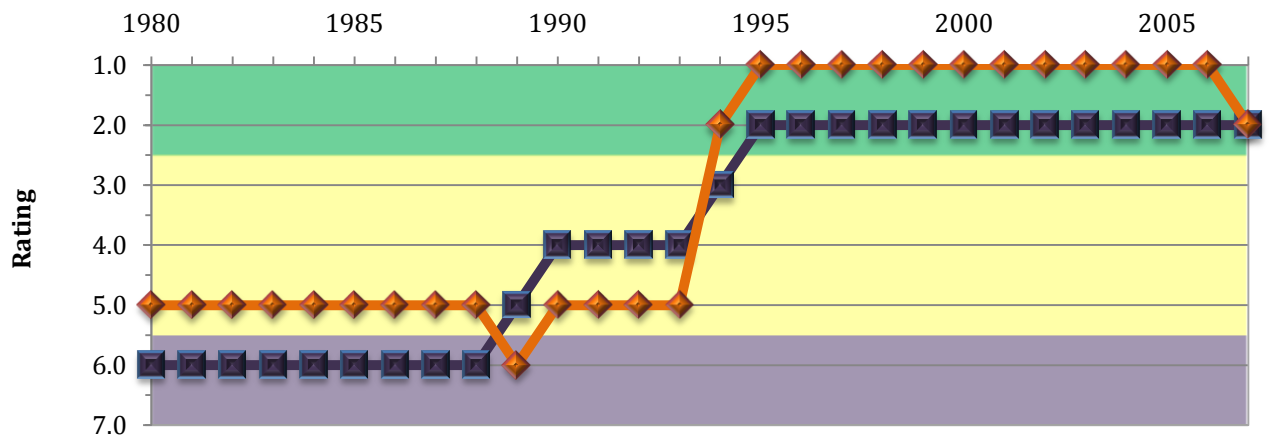


FREEDOM IN SOMALIA, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 47)

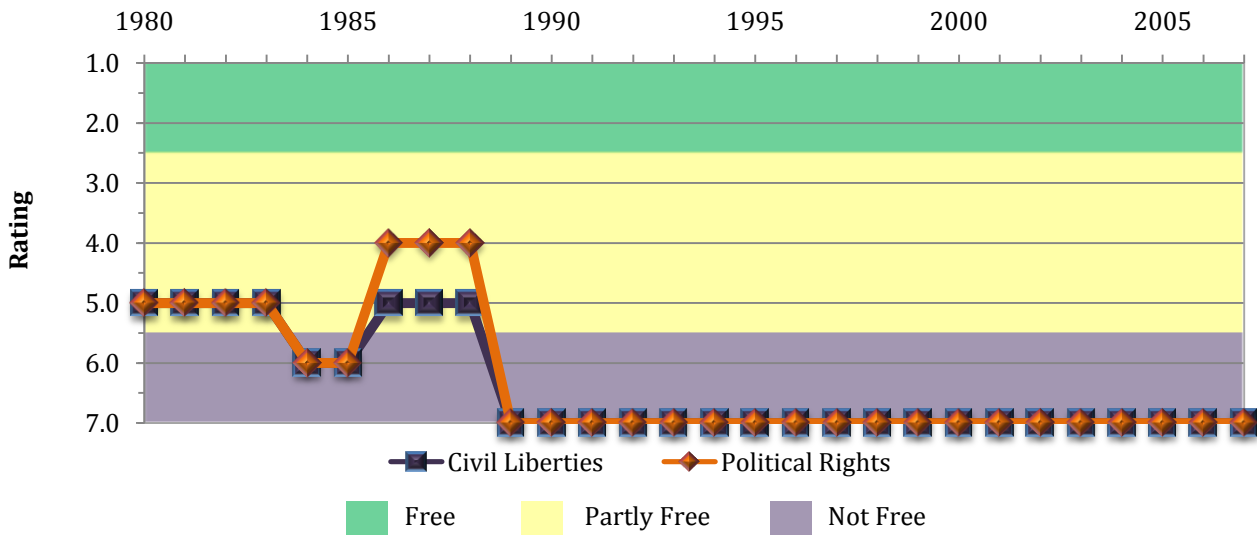
FREEDOM IN THE WORLD EDITION



FREEDOM IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 48)

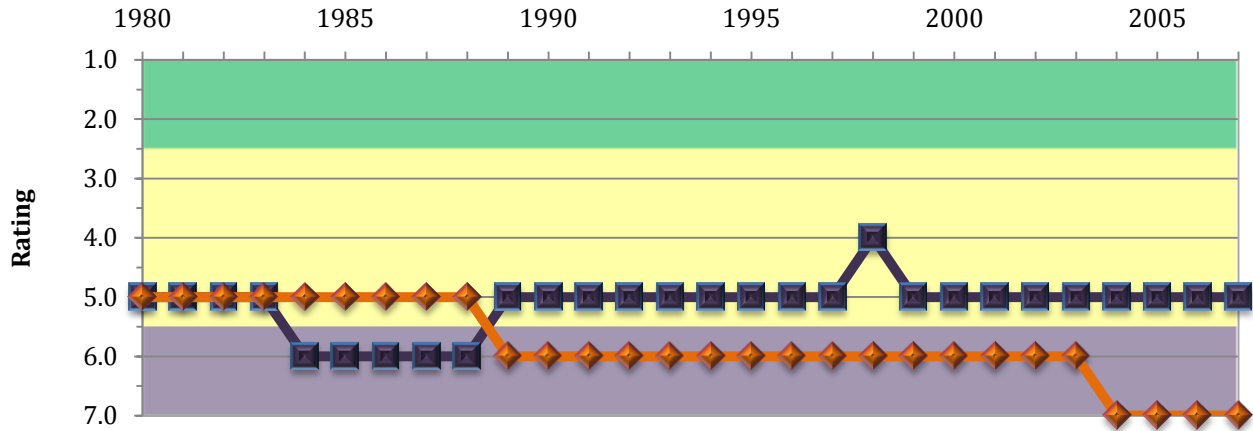


FREEDOM IN SUDAN, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 49)

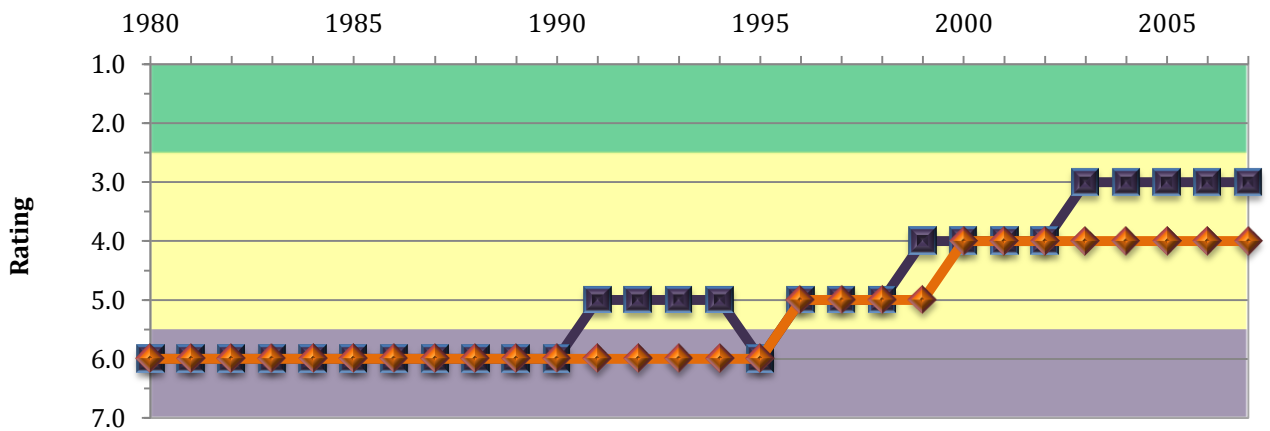


FREEDOM IN SWAZILAND, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 50)

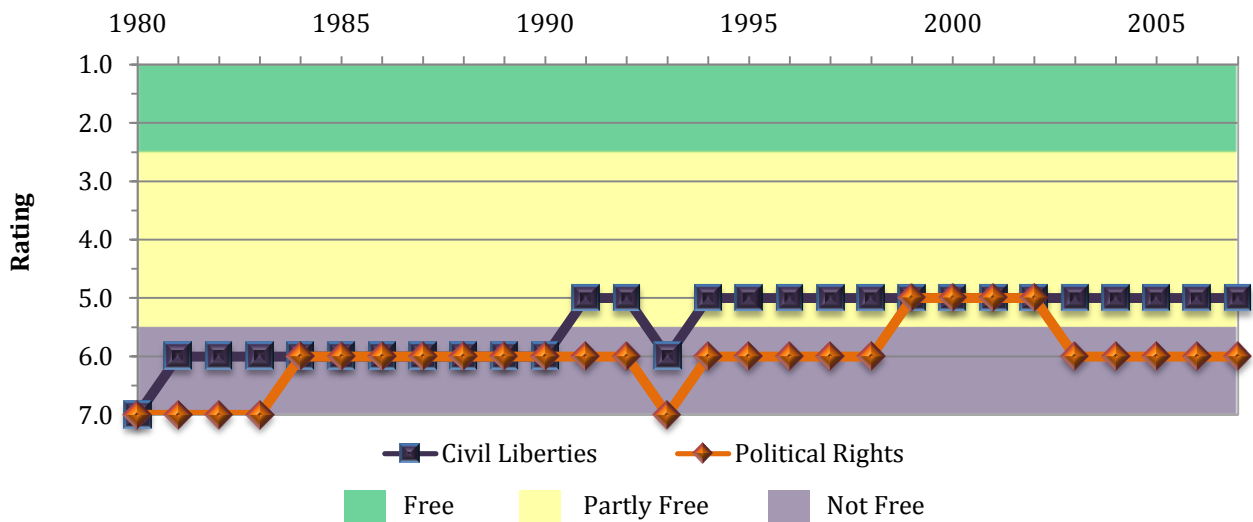
FREEDOM IN THE WORLD EDITION



FREEDOM IN TANZANIA, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 51)

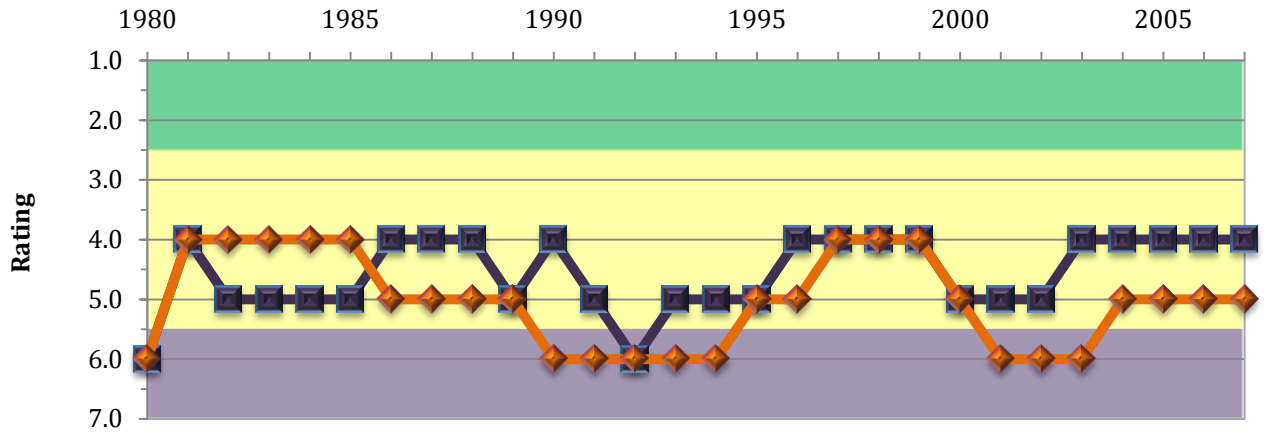


FREEDOM IN TOGO, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 52)

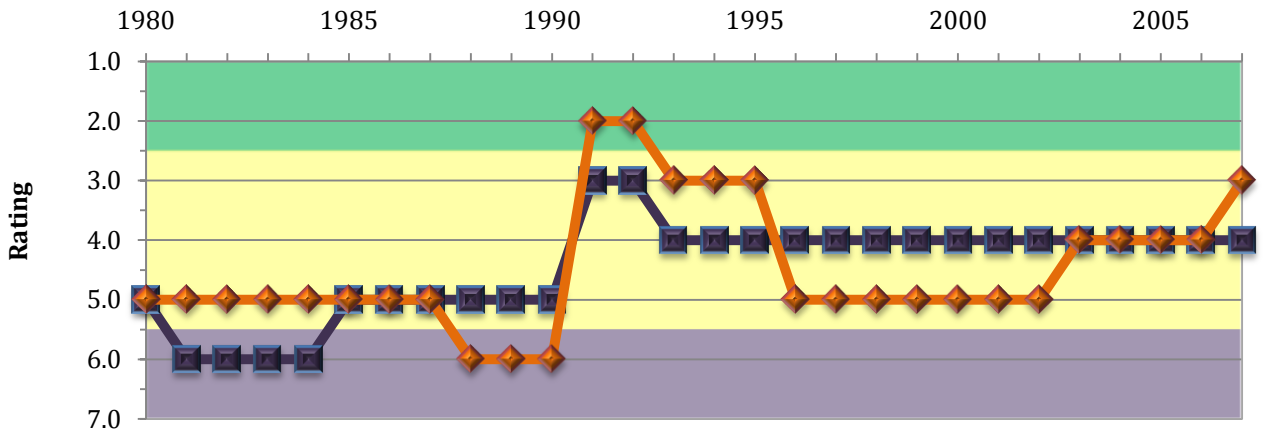


FREEDOM IN UGANDA, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 53)

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FREEDOM IN ZAMBIA, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 54)



FREEDOM IN ZIMBABWE, 1980–2007 (FIGURE 55)

