Country: Nigeria
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Location and Population

- Nigeria is located in western Africa on the Gulf of Guinea and shares borders with Niger, Benin, Chad, and Cameroon.

- Its total area is 924k square kilometers.
  - Approximately twice the size of California.

- Nigeria is divided into 36 states with each state electing its own Governor.

- Since 1991, Nigeria’s capital city has been Abuja, replacing Lagos (still Nigeria’s largest city).

- The country’s total population is over 170 million people
  - The most populous country in Africa, and 7th most populous in the world.
People, Languages, and Religion

- Nigeria’s total population is over 170 million people.

- There are over 250 ethnic groups and a multitude of languages spoken.

- Nigeria’s Constitution guarantees religious freedom. The country’s religious beliefs include Muslim, Christian, and indigenous beliefs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>% of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hausa and Fulan</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoruba</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Igbo (Ibo)</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ijaw</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanuri</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibibio</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiv</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Spoken</th>
<th>% of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English (official)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hausa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoruba</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Igbo (Ibo)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulani</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Indigenous Languages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religions</th>
<th>% of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>48.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Beliefs</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Abuja National Mosque, Abuja, Nigeria
History and Government

- Nigeria’s history dates back to the 5th Century BC with the Nok people.
- Other kingdoms include the Hausa, Yoruba, Ife, Oyo, Benin, and Fulani.
- From 1901, until gaining independence on October 1, 1960, Nigeria was a British colony.
- From 1960 until 1999, Nigeria was ruled under a Military Government.
- Nigeria’s Constitution was adopted in May 1999 and is now governed as Federal Republic (modeled after the US system).
- Currently led by President Goodluck Jonathan, a member of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) who was elected on May 5, 2010.
- The seats in the House of Representatives and the Senate are overwhelmingly held by PDP party affiliates.
Culture, Customs, and Etiquette

- Nigeria is considered a super-power on the African continent and thus Nigerians are generally proud of their country.
- Nigeria also has vast natural resources.
  - 6th largest oil producing country
  - Well educated (61.3% of the population is literate)
- Family relationships are integral to the social system.
  - Guided by hierarchy and seniority
  - Social standing determined by family connections
  - Family honor is important
  - Family is expected to provide for all members (financial and other supports)
  - Polygamy is legal and practiced, but is decreasing
- In general, age and position earn respect.
  - Oldest person is greeted and served first in social situations
The Christian Missionaries introduced **western style education** to Nigeria in the mid-1800’s.

It was not until the 1940’s that the education system developed into a **3-tiered system** of Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary levels.

**Primary education** (age 6-12) has been **compulsory** since 1999 and is free to all students.

A large portion of Muslim children in the northern part of the country, almajirai’s, **do not attend the government run schools**, but instead receive an Islamic education.
Today’s Education System

- Today’s Education System is comprised of:
  - **Basic Education** (Compulsory / Free)
    - Primary School
      - 6 years in length
      - Generally begin when 6, graduate when 12
  - **Secondary Education** (Not Compulsory / Tuition Based)
    - Less than 1/3 of students **continue** on to Secondary Education
      - Top 3 reasons cited are:
        - 32% - Monitory Cost
        - 26% - Insufficient Interest
        - 16% - Labor Needed
  - **Junior Secondary School** (JSS)
    - 3 years in length
    - Generally start when 12, graduate when 15
Today’s Education System, cont.

• Secondary Education, cont.
  • Senior Secondary School (SSS)
    • 3 years in length
    • Required Exam – Senior School Leaving Certificate (SSCE)

• Tertiary Education
  • 36 Federal Universities, 37 State Universities, and 45 Private Universities
  • In 2010, approximately 550,000 students were enrolled in Universities

• English Literacy
  • English is the official language in Nigeria though is generally not Nigerian’s first language.
  • English is taught to all students in Primary and Secondary schools.
  • However, only 50% of students pass the English portion of their SSCE.
Today’s Education System, cont.

• The overall literacy rate in Nigeria is 61.3%
  • Significant differences between men and women, especially at the tertiary level.
• Some reasons include:
  • Early marriage and perceived notion of age of marriage
    • Women are expected to marry young. Fear becoming an “old layer” (very old single woman)
  • Religious and cultural beliefs and practices
    • Women are expected to obey men. If too educated, there is fear that the woman will not obey
  • Birth order and socio-economic status
    • If there are limited funds, priority is given to males. If all females in the family, priority given to oldest.
There are many challenges facing the education system in Nigeria:

- **Staff shortages** in all areas
  - Class size expected to be 30 students, sometimes up to 90+ students in the classroom
  - **High** rate of teacher **absenteeism**

- **Poor teacher training** and development
  - Low proficiency in their own language
  - No system on on-going professional development for teachers

- Significant “**brain-drain**” at the University Professor level

- Approximately **1/3 of the children that should be enrolled in Primary school are not** (the almajirai)
  - Those attending school have **high absenteeism** rates

- **Underfunding** / insufficient investment
  - School **facilities are deteriorating**
  - **Inadequate supply of books** and other resources

- However, education has recently been **identified as a government priority**
  - **Achieving Universal Basic Education by 2015** is one of Nigeria’s Millennium Development Goals.
Nigerians in the US

• In 2009, approximately 210,000 Nigerian’s immigrated to the United States.

• One third of all Nigerian born US residents live in New York, California, Texas, or Maryland.

• 60% of Nigerian immigrants reported having earned a bachelors degree or higher

• 87% self-reported as English Proficient
  • Speak English only
  • Speak English “very well”
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**Images**

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http://www.sonunth-usa.org/index.html
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