

The Two West Africas: The Two Historical Phases of the West African Brain Drain

by

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Abstract

This paper argues that West Africa as a region is not only among the most underdeveloped or least developed in Africa, but also in the world. Part of the reason for the underdevelopment of West Africa is that it has experienced two historical phases of the brain drain (slavery and post World War II skilled exodus). As a result, the paper claims that among the most influential individuals in the world such as scientists of all kinds, professional entertainers, athletes, politicians, businessmen and women, etc. are people of West African descent who are not in West Africa.

Introduction

As an entity, the 16 nations that comprise the geographic region of West Africa is among one of the poorest regions in the world in the 21st century, even though the region is among the richest in the world in its stock of natural resources and raw and underdeveloped human talent. The natural resources of Nigeria for example, include: natural gas, petroleum, tin, iron ore, coal, limestone, niobium, lead, zinc and arable land; in Liberia: iron ore, timber, diamonds, gold and hydropower; in Sierra Leone: diamonds, titanium ore, bauxite, iron ore, gold, chromite; in Cote d'Ivoire: petroleum, natural gas, diamonds, manganese, iron ore, cobalt, bauxite, copper, gold, nickel, tantalum, silica sand, clay, cocoa beans, coffee, palm oil, hydropower; and in Niger: uranium, coal, iron ore, tin, phosphates, gold, molybdenum, gypsum, salt, petroleum (Compiled from the 2005 CIA World Factbook). Liberia also has one of the largest rubber plantations in the world.

Among the five geographic regions of Africa (Eastern, Northern, Middle, Southern and Western Africa), West Africa has the lowest average per capita Gross Domestic Products, and the second highest average infant mortality rate after Middle Africa. The region also has low rates of individuals who can read and write, a high proportion of unpaved roads and a weak economy.

Moreover, since the 1990s, the region experienced civil conflicts or wars in a number of countries, including Liberia and Sierra Leone, costing hundreds of thousands of lives and the destruction of billions of dollars in infrastructure, such as schools, hospitals and businesses.

The interesting irony about West Africa's underdevelopment is that, although the people in that region are among the poorest people in the world, individuals of West African descent outside of the region and the continent tend to be in significant to substantial numbers among some of the most influential and highly-respected scientists of all sorts, world-class entertainers, professional athletes, politicians, business men and women, etc., especially concentrated in North America and the rest of the Western Hemisphere, and other parts of the world. The question then is: Why is West Africa, a region of 261 million people as of July 2006, one of the poorest and least developed regions of the world?

The answer to that question is that West Africa in the past 500 years has experienced two major historical phases of the "Brain Drain": (1) the Transatlantic or European slave trade and (2) the post World War II exodus of skilled West Africans, who left the region to seek better professional and economic opportunities in rich or developed countries across the world.

This essay examines the implications of these two historical phases of the West African "Brain Drain". The essay provides the estimates of Africans who were taken out of the continent (especially West Africa) and brought to the New World. The essay also examines the skilled exodus of West Africans to rich countries, especially North America, in the post World War II era. It provides estimates of educated West Africans residing in developed countries. The paper attempts to present an understanding of how a region that has provided the world with a significant number of the most gifted individuals still remains one of the poorest areas on earth. Let us begin by first examining the demographic, economic and social conditions of West Africa compared with the other four regions of Africa, and other developing regions of the world.

Demographic and Economic Inter-regional Comparisons of Africa

Africa's total population is growing faster than many other continents or regions in the world. In recent years, the continent's total population has been growing by 15 million to 18 million people, out of the total estimated 80 million people that are added to the world population annually. For example, Africa's total population increased by an estimated 87.34 million from 823.5 million in July 2001 to 910.84 million in July 2006. West Africa and North Africa are two regions that are contributing substantially to Africa's annual population increase.

Utilizing the United Nations Statistics Division's classifications of the five regions of Africa (Eastern, Middle, Northern, Southern and Western Africa, see Appendix), out of the 910.84 million people in Africa in July 2006, Eastern Africa had the highest proportion, with 284 million (31.2%), followed by Western Africa with 260.9 million (28.6%), Northern Africa 202.6 million (22.2%), Middle Africa, 112.2 million (12.3%), and Southern Africa, 51 million (5.6%). Only one of the ten most populous nations in Africa is in West Africa, and that is the most populous nation on the continent: Nigeria. The 10 most populous countries in Africa as of July 2006, were Nigeria, with 131.9 million (14.5% of total), followed by Egypt, 78.9 million (8.7%), Ethiopia, 74.8 million (8.2%), the Democratic Republic of Congo, 62.7 million (6.9%),¹ South Africa, 44.2 million (4.9%), Sudan, 41.2 million (4.5%), Tanzania, 37.4 million (4.1%), Kenya, 34.7 million (3.8%), Morocco, 33.2 million (3.6%), and Algeria, 32.9 million (3.6%) (Compiled and computed based data in the 2006 CIA World Factbook).

Average Total Fertility Rates (Children Born per Woman)

West Africa's total population is rising at a relatively high rate because of the region's high fertility rate. The fertility rate in West and Middle Africa are significantly higher than those in the other three regions. For example, as of 2006, Middle Africa and Western Africa had the two highest average total fertility rates, 5.43 and 5.22 children born per woman respectively; 4.87 children born per woman in Eastern Africa; 2.97 children born per woman in Southern Africa; and 2.86 children born per woman in Northern Africa. The average for all of Africa in 2006 was 4.68 children born per woman.

Average Infant Mortality Rates (Deaths per 1,000 Live Births)

Infant mortality rates are significantly higher in West and Middle Africa than the other three regions. For example, as of 2006, Northern Africa and Southern Africa had the lowest infant mortality rates, 35.01 deaths per 1,000 live births (37.37 for boys and 32.52 for girls) and 64.31 (67.70 for boys and 60.81 for girls) deaths per 1,000 live births respectively; 70.54 (76.30 for boys and 64.61 for girls) deaths for Eastern Africa; 86.40 (94.18 for boys and 78.39 for girls) deaths for Western Africa; and 87.27 (94.22 for boys and 80.07 for girls) deaths per 1,000 live births for Middle Africa. The average for all of Africa in 2006 was 73.68 deaths per 1,000 live births (79.67 for boys and 67.50 for girls) (Compiled and computed based data in the 2006 CIA World Factbook).

Illiteracy Rates (People Aged 15 or Over Can Read and Write)

Although Africa still lags behind other continents or regions in terms of the proportion of people aged 15 or over who can read and write, the continent has made substantial progress from 1970, but West Africa has the lowest rate when compared with the other four regions of the continent. According to 2002 UNESCO statistics, in 1970, 72.4% of people in Africa aged 15 or over could not read and write, compared with 36.6% for the world average. In 2000, the proportion of people on the continent who could not read and write declined to 40.2%, compared with 20.3% for the world average. When one compares West Africa and the other four regions of the continent, however, the region still lags behind. For example, as of 1995, 60.48% of people aged 15 or over in Africa could read and write; 76.1% in Southern Africa; 66.5% in Middle Africa; 61.5% in East Africa; 57.6% in North Africa; and 40.7% in Western Africa (Compiled and computed based on data in the 2001 CIA World Factbook).

Gross Domestic Products (GDP)/Per Capita GDP

West Africa also has the lowest per capita GDP among the five regions of Africa.

In 2005, Africa's combined total GDP was estimated at 2.366 trillion, (3.9%) of the Gross World Products (GWP) of \$60.71 trillion. For comparative purposes, the GDP in 2005 for the U.S. (with 298.4 million people as of July 2006) was 12.36 trillion (20.4% of the world) and 12.18 trillion (20.1% of the world) for the European Union (with 457 million people as of July 2006). In 2005, Northern Africa's GDP was \$909.9 billion (38.5% of total); \$575.45 billion (24.33%) for Southern Africa; \$377.84 billion (16%) for Western Africa; \$315.32 billion (13.33%) for Eastern Africa; and \$151.66 billion (6.41%) for Middle Africa. In 2005, due largely to Equatorial Guinea's extremely high per capita GDP (\$50,200, second in the world only to Luxembourg, \$55,600, among independent countries),² Middle Africa had the highest average per capita GDP (\$7,600); followed by Southern Africa (\$7,400); Northern Africa (\$6,183); Eastern Africa (\$2,421); and Western Africa (\$1,818) (Compiled and computed based data in the 2006 CIA World Factbook).

Least Developed Nations: 2004

In addition, of the 49 nations classified by the UN Population Division as least developed nations as of 2004, African nations comprised 34 (69%). Of the 34 African nations, on that list, West African nations comprised 12 (35%). This means that 12 (75%) out of the 16 nations of West Africa are classified as least developed nations ("Least Developed Countries," 2004).

Number of Caloric Intake

West Africans also have lesser caloric intake than most regions of the world. Part of the reason is that there are substantially fewer agricultural machines to produce food in a region with very fertile and lush landscape. For example, according to the 2000/2001 World Bank World Development Report, the average number of agricultural machinery (tractors) per 1,000 agricultural workers from 1995 to 1997 for 17 Latin American nations (only available data) was 38.58 tractors. The average for 11 (only data available) Western African countries was 0.4 agricultural machinery (tractors) per every 1,000 agricultural workers during that same period. It is therefore no surprise that in 1997, the average daily per capita intake of calories in Latin America was 2,604. Of 14 West African countries (excluding Liberia and Mauritania), the average daily per capita supply of calories in 1997, was only 2,403 (Compiled and computed based on data in the 2000 UNDP World Development Report). Kingsley Osadolor reported on April 24, 2002, that in 2001, Nigeria spent \$877.3 million on food imports.

Regional Trade and Electricity Production

In 2004, Africa's total merchandise trade was \$232 billion, with \$99 billion of that total trade conducted with all of Europe. During that same year, Africa's merchandise trade with North America was \$43 billion (18.5%); Asia, \$39 billion (16.8%); South and Central America, \$7 billion (3%); Middle East, \$3 billion (1.3%); and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), \$1 billion (0.4%). Intra-Africa merchandise trade in 2004, however, was \$23 billion (9.9%) (World Trade Organization, 2005).

Trade among West African nations, however, is weak. For example, according to Amoako (2000), trade among members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was 6% of total trade. Part of the reason is that the region lacks electricity, which is essential to the massive production of goods and services. For example, for comparative purposes, in 1999, the total electricity consumption for 15 West African nations (excluding Mauritania) was 31 billion kwh. For the Southeast Asian nation of Malaysia (with 24 million people as of July 2005), electricity consumption in 1999 was 54.87 billion kwh (Compiled and Computed based on Data in the 2001 CIA World Factbook). In Nigeria, for example, a nation with 36 billion barrels of proved crude oil reserves as of 2005, electricity is available to only 3 out of every 10 homes (Jimba, 1998: 64).

Transportation and Development: Percent of Paved Roads, 1996 to 1997

Furthermore, from 1996 to 1997 for those same 15 West African nations, of a total of 411,392 km of highways, only 98,101 (24%) were paved (30% of roads were paved on average for Africa during that same period). For Malaysia, out of a total 64,672 kilometers of highways in 1999, 48,707 (75%) were paved (Compiled and Computed based on Data in the 2001 CIA World Factbook). Let us now briefly examine the two factors that have contributed to West Africa's underdevelopment.

The Transatlantic or European Slave Trade Brain Drain

Although it is difficult to point out the actual proportion or total number of slaves brought to the New World from West Africa during the European slave trade, there is a consensus that most or the majority of slaves came from that region. For example, Clark (2005) points out that African slaves brought to the Western Hemisphere were "...mostly from coastal West and Central Africa..." (p.273). Edwards (2005) reports of the story of a 10-year-old West African girl named Priscilla, who was bought as a slave in Sierra Leone in 1756 and brought to South Carolina. As a result of good record keeping, Priscilla's great-great-great-great-great-granddaughter, Thomalind Martin Polite of South Carolina, was able to trace her ancestry to her. Thomalind then traveled to Sierra Leone for a homecoming visit. Edwards quoted Joseph Opala, curator of the exhibit, *Finding Priscilla's Children* at the New York Historical Society, as saying that: "It is a unique case that brings together records showing the location she was taken, slave ship records, and plantation records.... This has never been done before and is nothing short of being an accident of historical documentation" (p.A-11).

As for the actual estimates of slaves transported to the New World, there are various figures cited. During this period (1600s) up until the end of the 19th century, estimates of fewer than 10 million to almost 100 million Black Africans were brought to the Western Hemisphere as slaves and a small number arrived as indentured servants. According to Wright, the total number of African slaves transported to the Western Hemisphere from the 1600s to the 1800s was estimated at almost one hundred million (Wright, 2003). Franklin and Moss (1994) point to two figures cited, with the first being 14.65 million, while the other figure is said to be 9.57 million (p.41). Another account put the figure at over 12 million (Clark, 2005).

By the beginning of the 21st century, people of West African descent (and Africa as a whole) are scattered all across the Western Hemisphere and the world. Research by this author shows that of the estimated 518 million people in Latin America as of July 2005, people of African descent comprised at least 20 percent. People of Black African descent (mostly West Africans) constitute the majority of the 24 countries/territories that make up the Caribbean.

As of July 2005, the total population of the Caribbean was estimated at 38.7 million, with an estimated 65% of this total population being Black or people of Black African descent (Compiled and computed based on data in the 2005 CIA World Factbook). As of July 1, 2004, there were 39.2 million blacks or African Americans in the United States (Bernstein, 2005). It is noted that at least 50 million people of African descent reside in the United States (Akukwe and Jammeh, 2004). In Canada, according to the 2001 Canadian census, of the 29,639,030 people in that country, Blacks comprised 662,215 (2.2%) (Canada Statistics, 2001). Let us now examine the second phase of the West African Brain Drain.

Post World War II Skill Exodus Brain Drain

The United States has the largest number of educated West African immigrants who live and work in Western nations. Almost all of the African immigrants who have emigrated to the U.S. did so in the post World War II era. In 1960, for example, there were 35,000 African immigrants in the United States (“Profile of the Foreign Born Population,” 2001: 10). By the year 2002 that figure had increased to just over one million (“American Community Survey Profile 2002,” 2003). Just as most African slaves were brought to the United States from West Africa, so also are West Africans the highest proportion of all African immigrants emigrating to the United States in the post World War II Era. This fact is contributing to why West Africa is still underdeveloped, because for hundreds of years, that region has been losing its talented people to Western nations and other parts of the world.

According to the United States Census Bureau, as of the year 2000, there were an estimated 881,300 African immigrants in the United States. During that year, West African immigrants comprised 326,507 (37% of the total African immigrants), with Nigerians comprising 134,940 (41.3%), Ghana 65,572 (20.1%), and Sierra Leone 20,831 (6.4%) of the West African total. East African immigrants in 2000, comprised 213,299 (24.2% of the total African immigrants), with Ethiopians comprising 69,531 (32.6%) of the East African total. North African immigrants in 2000 comprised 190,491 (21.6% of the total African immigrants), with Egyptians comprising 113,396 (59.5%) of the North African total. Middle African immigrants in 2000 in the United States comprised 26,900 (3% of all African immigrants in the United States). Southern African immigrants in the United States in 2000 comprised 66,496 (7.5% of all African immigrants in the United States), with South African immigrants comprising 63,558 (95.6%) of the Southern Africa total. There were 57,607 (6.5% of all African immigrants) African immigrants in the United States in 2000 whose origin was not classified. The 134,940 Nigerian immigrants in the United States in 2000 comprised 15.3% of all African immigrants in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

West African immigrants in the U.S. like their other African counter-parts, are among the most highly educated group in the country. The 700,000 African immigrants in the United States as of March 2000, were not only more highly educated than their compatriots in Africa, but they also have become one of the most highly educated groups within the entire United States, at a time when the people of Africa are at the bottom of the literacy ladder of the world. According to a 2001 U.S. Census Bureau report, 94.9% of these African immigrants aged 25 and over have at least a high school diploma, compared with 87% of the American population. The proportion of the 700,000 Africans in the United States (as of March 2000) aged 25 and over with at least a bachelor's degree was 49.3%, substantially higher than the average for the general population of 25.6%, and other foreign born populations in the country such as Asians (44.9%) ("Profile of the Foreign-Born Population in the United States: 2000," 2001: 37).

Moreover, Nigerian immigrants in the United States are among the most highly educated groups. For example, according to a 1998 U.S. Census Bureau publication, of a list of over 65 ancestry groups listed, in 1990, 52.9% of people of Nigerian descent aged 25 and over, had at least a bachelor's degree. Apart from Egyptian immigrants (60.4%), no other single group (English, German, Irish, Italian, Scottish, Dutch, etc.) had 50% bachelor's degree attainment rate. For master's degrees, 26.3% of Nigerians and 25.6% of Egyptians aged 25 and over held such degrees in 1990, with Egyptians third only behind Nigerians and Iranians (26%) ("Educational Attainment for Selected Ancestry Group, 1990" 1998). In a World Bank policy research paper (2003), Richard H. Adams, Jr. points out that in 2000, there were 90,620 Nigerian immigrants who had attained tertiary education in the United States (p.26).

According to Leiman (2004) "...hardly any educated people are left in Sierra Leone to help a country with a literacy rate of only 15%" (p.675), with a high proportion of them in the United States. Faye (2002) notes that in the West African nation of Senegal, over 105 lecturers and researchers have emigrated primarily to American and French universities in recent years (p.1).

Schiff and Ozden (2005) present a table in their World Bank study on the brain drain from poor developing nations, showing developing countries whose skilled or educated citizens were residing outside of their countries, as of the year 2000. Of the 30 nations listed, 23 (77%) are either Black African nations or countries in the Western Hemisphere with majority Black population or significant to substantial Black populations. Of those 23 nations, 9 (39%) are in Africa. This now brings us to West Africa. Of the 9 African nations on the list, 5 (55.5%) are West African nations. According to the table, as of 2000, 67.5% of the educated or skill-citizens of Cape Verde are outside of Cape Verde; 63.3% of Gambians; 52.5% of Sierra Leoneans; 46.9% of Ghanaians; and 45% of Liberians (pp. 173-178).

The Nobel Prize winning human right organization “Physicians for Human Rights” released a report in July 2004, in which it urged developed countries to reimburse African countries for the loss of their health professionals who leave the continent for their countries, after being trained by African universities at the expense of the people of the continent. The 129-page report entitled “An Action Plan to Prevent Brain Drain: Building Equitable Health Systems in Africa” notes that 1,200 Ghanaian physicians are in the United States (p.2).

One of the most important emerging benefits of the post World War II brain drain from West Africa, Africa and developing countries as a whole, is the increasing amount of money that immigrants in developed nations are now sending back to their home countries. Remittances to the developing world are now reported to be more than foreign aid. In 2003, worldwide remittances to developing countries surpassed \$100 billion (Wucker, 2004: 37). In 1995 remittances to the developing world was estimated at \$70 billion (Guarnizo, 2003:672). According to Adams Jr., in 1999 remittances from Nigerians abroad to Nigeria was estimated at \$1.198 billion (2003: 23). According to Khan (2003): “In Mali, payments from migrants account for a staggering 20 percent of gross national product” (p.1).

Among the substantial number of influential or famous West Africans who now reside outside West Africa are: Kofi Annan, a Ghanaian, and the Secretary General of the United Nations as of November 2006; the renown Nigerian-born American computer scientist, Philip Emeagwali; the great Nigerian writers and professors in the United States, Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka (a Nobel Laureates in Literature); Distinguished Binghamton University (State University of New York) Nigerian-born professor, Isidore Okpewho; renowned Princeton University professor Kwame Appiah, a Ghanaian; and as of 1998, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) scientist, Cheick Diarra, from Mali. There are many more such prominent West Africans in the Western Hemisphere, Europe and parts of the develop world.

International Influence of People of West African Descent

A significant number of people of West African descent, who are descendants of the European slave trade, are influential in many important ways. They are prominent or world class scholars and scientists of all sorts, politicians, professional athletes and entertainers, writers and poets, business men and women, etc. In the United States, for example, the first George W. Bush administration had three Blacks in top government positions: Colin Powell, Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, National Security Adviser (now U.S. Secretary of State), and Rod Paige, Secretary of Education. Also, the 108th Congress of the United States, which took office in late January 2003, had 39 Black members (9%) of the 435 total members in the Hose of Representatives (108th Congress: A Profile,” 2003).

On November 7, 2006 voters in the state of Massachusetts (USA) elected a Black American, Deval L. Patrick, as their Governor.

In addition, there is a Black man, Clarence Thomas, among the nine members of the U.S. Supreme Court. In Brazil, Raymond Colitt reported in the *Financial Times* in May 2003 that, for the first time a Black man, Barbosa Gomes, was appointed to the Brazilian Supreme Court. Among other prominent people of African descent in the Western Hemisphere are: Michael Jordan, Muhammad Ali, James Earl Jones, Sidney Poitier, Professor Molefi Asente, Bill Cosby, Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton, Bishop T.D. Jakes, businessman Russell Simmons, Oprah Winfrey, Denzel Washington, Morgan Freeman, Dr. Dorothy Height, Tina Turner, Aretha Franklin, Michael Jackson, Professor Henry Louis Gates, Professors Michael Eric Dyson and Tukufu Zuberi of the University of Pennsylvania, astrophysicist Neil Tyson, Professor William Julius Wilson, Professor Molefi Kete Asante, Dr. Benjamin Carson, Director of the Division of Pediatric Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins University, Bruce S. Gordon, President & CEO, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Statesman Harry Belafonte, Economist Dr. Thomas Sowell, Corporate lawyer Vernon Jordan, Professor Cornell West, etcetera. There is a high probability that most of these individuals cited above are of West African descent.

For example, in a documentary aired on Public Television in the U.S. in February 2006, a scientific test revealed that: Oprah Winfrey's DNA links her or she is descended from the Kpelle ethnic group or 'tribe' from Liberia; Bishop T.D. Jakes is traced to the Igbo ethnic group in Nigeria; Actress Whoopi Goldberg's DNA is traced to the Papel and Bayote 'tribes' currently in Guinea-Bissau; Dr. Sara Lawrence Lightfoot's (Harvard University Professor) DNA is traced to the Mandingo ethnic group of Guinea Bissau; Actor Chris Tucker's DNA is traced to the Mbundu 'tribe' of modern-day central Angola; Musician Quincy Jones' DNA is not only traced to the Tikar 'tribe' of Cameroon, but it is noted that the people of that particular region are widely known for their music talent; Dr. Ben Carson's (Johns Hopkins University Neurosurgeon) DNA is traced to the Lunda people of Congo/Angola; and Dr. Henry Louis Gates' (Harvard University Professor) DNA is traced to the Mende ethnic group of Sierra Leone (Kaba 2006: 107-109). These influential African Americans listed are not only making private investments in helping to develop the continent of Africa, but they are also using their growing influence to seek favorable relations between Africa and the government and people of the United States (Kaba, 2004).

In the United Kingdom, it is also possible that many of the successful Black people there are of West African descent, because Black people from the Caribbean Islands comprise a substantial proportion of the Black population in that country, in addition to other Blacks directly from Africa, including a substantial number of West Africans, such as Nigerians, Ghanaians and Sierra Leoneans. As of June 12, 2003, there were two Black cabinet ministers in Prime Minister Tony Blair's government. They were Baroness Amos, the first Black woman cabinet minister, who was appointed as International Development Secretary in May 2003, and Paul Boateng, Treasury Minister, who became the first Black minister in the United Kingdom's history in 2002.

Conclusion

This paper has presented examples showing that West Africa is one of the least developed regions of Africa and the world. The paper argues that part of the reasons for the underdevelopment of West Africa is that the region in the past 500 years has experienced two historical phases of the brain drain. The paper then presents examples that show that among the most influential individuals in the world are West Africans who are not in West Africa. As of 2003, there were more than 250,000 scientists and physicians of African descent in the United States alone (Kaba, 2004: 24).

One highly important example of how influential people of West African descent are outside of West Africa is that of the late civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In the United States, Dr. King and Jesus Christ are the only individuals whose birthday is a national or Federal holiday. No other individual currently has such an honor.³

These prominent individuals of West African descent residing outside of their ancestral region must form an ambitious plan to help that region reduce its extreme poverty and compete in the international arena, just as prominent individuals of European, Jewish and Chinese descent in North America and the Western Hemisphere, have all implemented well-established economic plans to help their compatriots in their ancestral lands in the post World War II era.

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Appendix

Classifications of Regions of Africa

(N=57)

Eastern Africa (n=19)

Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Reunion, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mayotte.

Middle Africa (n=9)

Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Sao Tome & Principe

Northern Africa (n=7)

Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia and Western Sahara

Southern Africa (n=5)

Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland

Western Africa (n=17)

Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo and Saint Helena (note: Saint Helena (7,460 people as of July 2005) is made up of islands in the South Atlantic Ocean, about midway between South America and Africa).

Source: Country/regional classifications by the United Nations Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Retrieved on July 12, 2004, from <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm>.

Notes

¹ It is useful to note that by July 2006, the Democratic Republic of Congo became the country in the world with the largest total population where French is an official language, just as India is the largest country (just over 1 billion people) in the world where English is an official language. The total population of France as of July 2006 was 60.9 million.

² According to the 2007 CIA World Factbook, the nation of Bermuda is located in North America and it is still a colony of the United Kingdom. The majority of Bermuda's population is Black. As of 2000, 54.8% of Bermuda's total population was Black; Whites comprised 34.1%, mixed 6.4%, other races 4.3% and those grouped as unspecified 0.4%. In July 2006, Bermuda's total population was 65,773. As of 2004, Bermuda's estimated per capita GDP was \$69,900, the highest in the world. This means that of the nations with the top three per capita GDP in the world, two are Black majority nations (Bermuda and Equatorial Guinea).

³ There is a Federal holiday in the U.S. called Presidents' Day, but it is for past, present and future presidents of the country, not one individual.