

DID YOU KNOW... ?



AFRICA FACT SHEET

Regarding Literacy from UNESCO:

- Literacy remains a major barrier to the development of African countries. Despite the progress achieved since 1990, the absolute number of African adults who cannot read or write has increased from 131.4 million in 1990 to 136 million in 2000.
- In 2000, the average literacy rate in Sub-Saharan Africa was 52 per cent for women and 68.9 per cent for men
- Four out of ten Africans cannot read or write and there is no sign that this situation will change.
- According to UNESCO, four out of ten adults in sub-Saharan Africa cannot read or write, a total of 136 million people.
- "Illiteracy is the greatest threat to the development of Africa because it undermines our fragile democracies," says Charles Abani, Director of Action Aid Nigeria.
- An underlying setback for literacy programmes has been the unavailability of adequate reading materials. This has meant that people are not motivated to read and new literates relapse into illiteracy for want of things to read.
- **The transformation that takes place when an individual -- adult or youth -- learns to read and write is inestimable. Literacy provides a sense of pride, competence, and ability to function more effectively as a parent, a farmer or businessperson and as a leader in one's community.**
www.thp.org/africa/literacy/
- An adult literate is a person aged 15 and over who can, with understanding, both read and write a short, simple statement on their everyday life.
www.cmu.org.uk/education/08lit/lit_index.htm

General Facts:

- The average life expectancy of Africans is 46 years.
- *The cost of perpetual aid to Africa is thousands of times more expensive than solving health problems and supporting local development, thereby heading off conflicts. Not only Africans but the rest of us will be healthier and safer if Africa's nations increasingly take their places as peaceful and prospering members of the world community.* –Jared Diamond, author of Guns Germs and Steel and Collapse taken from article for National Geographic
- 50% of Africans live on less than \$1 per day.
- Fifty-three independent countries make up the African continent.
<http://www.maryknollafrica.org/Facts.htm>
- Africa is so large that a full population census has never been made. Estimates say that the continent and its nearby islands may be home to as many as 748 million people. <http://www.guilford.edu/academics>
- There are over 1,000 different languages in Africa.
<http://www.guilford.edu/academics>
- Africa is four times the size of the United States.
<http://www.guilford.edu/academics>
- Africa's population is slightly less than 14% of the total world population.
<http://www.globeafrica.com/Commons/geo.htm>