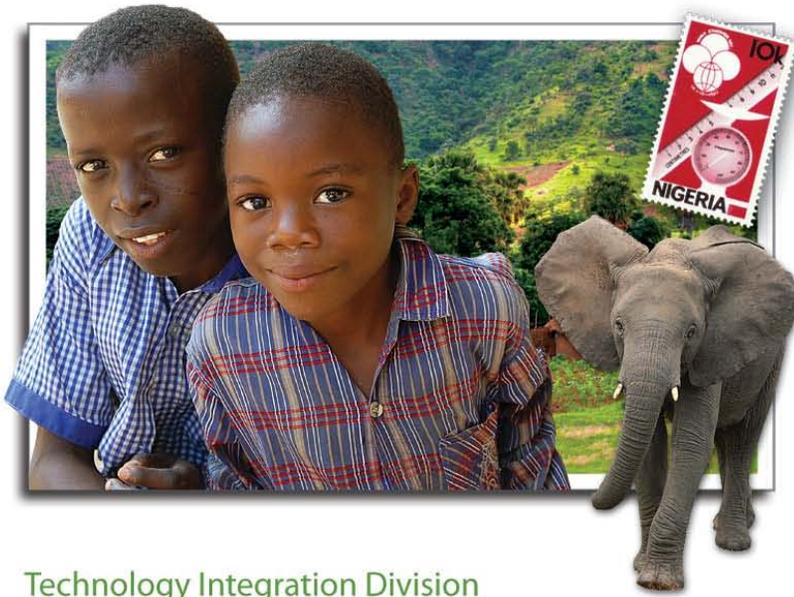


NIGERIA in Perspective

An Orientation Guide



Technology Integration Division
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DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CENTER

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Chapter 1: Geography

Introduction

Nigeria is located on the coast of West Africa, near the northeastern corner of the Gulf of Guinea. The most populated country on the African continent, it is home to over 152 million people.¹ The nation's terrain ranges from coastal swamps and lowlands to rolling plains and occasional mountain ranges. The Niger River, the third-longest river in Africa, enters the country in the northwest and ultimately flows to the southern coast, where it empties into the gulf through a vast delta region. The climate ranges from equatorial to semi-arid as one moves from the coast in the south to the plains in the north.²



DoD image
Map of Nigeria

Area

Nigeria shares land borders with four countries. Benin lies to the west, Niger to the north, Chad to the northeast, and Cameroon to the east and southeast. To the south lies the Gulf of Guinea, part of the South Atlantic Ocean. Encompassing over 923,000 sq km (356,000 sq mi) of total area, Nigeria is more than twice the size of California.³

Topography

The Nigerian landscape is dominated by plains and plateaus, with rolling hills, escarpments, and occasional granitic mountains rising from the surface. The country's highest points are found in the Jos Plateau—located in the center of the country—and the Cameroon Highlands of the southeast. Chappal Waddi, the country's highest peak, is located along the Cameroon border with an altitude of 2,419 m (7,936 ft).⁴ There is also a low range in the southwest.



© Jeff Attaway
Zuma rock, Nigeria

These highland areas are separated by the Niger and Benue river basins, which cut across the country from the northwest and northeast, respectively. The waters of these two rivers merge in south-central Nigeria and ultimately flow out to the gulf through the massive Niger River Delta, one of the largest deltas in the world. Overall, the combined paths of the Niger and the Benue form a large Y-shaped pattern. The delta region consists of swamplands intersected by numerous small channels.

Coastal plains spread out along the gulf on each side of the Niger River Delta. Plains are also prevalent in the northwest and northeast, where stretches of savannah (grassland with scattered trees)

¹ Central Intelligence Agency, "Nigeria," in *The World Factbook*, 12 January 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>

² World InfoZone, "Nigeria Information—Page 1," 1997–2009, <http://www.worldinfozone.com/country.php?country=Nigeria#population>

³ Central Intelligence Agency, "Nigeria," in *The World Factbook*, 22 January 2009, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>

⁴ Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Nigeria: Land: Relief," 2009, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

dominate. In the far northeast, an expanse of drier grassland—known as the Sahel—represents the transitional zone between the Sahara to the north and the savannah region to the south.⁵

Geographic Divisions

Nigeria can be divided into four geographic regions based on vegetation and climate: the coast, the forest belt, the savannah, and the Sahel.



© Mad African / flickr.com
Freshwater swamp

The Coast

Nigeria's southern coastline runs approximately 835 km (519 mi) alongside the Gulf of Guinea. Along the coast, a swath of low-lying mangrove forests and swamps extend inland. In most places, these areas are 15 km (9 mi) wide, but in the Niger Delta, they may stretch as far as 100 km (62 mi) from the coast. Waterways and lagoons intersect these areas, portions of which are heavily developed and populated.⁶

The Forest Belt

Inland from the coastal region is a belt of tropical and transitional forests that ultimately merges into the savannah of northern Nigeria. A portion of this region—in the southwest—is one of the most densely populated areas in Africa. Not surprisingly, human development has led to severe deforestation in many areas, leaving the region's existing forests fragmented and threatened by further activity.⁷

The Savannah

The West Sudanian Savannah covers a broad swath of northern Nigeria. Typically hot and dry, the savannah supports scattered trees—ranging from tall to stunted—and a variety of grasses.⁸ Areas of this vast plain are dotted with outcroppings of granite. Overall, the region is the site of significant agricultural activity, leaving many areas degraded.⁹

The Sahel

Covering a small portion of northeastern Nigeria, the Sahel region represents a dry transitional stage between the savannah and the Sahara to the north. The greater Sahel region stretches east to west across Africa from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea. This area sees only small amounts of rainfall—from 10 to 20 cm (4–8 in) per year—and is sparsely vegetated. Because only a few crops will grow, such as peanuts and millet, many people here earn their livelihood as nomadic herders.¹⁰

⁵ Ronald Cohen and Abe Goldman, "Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment: Physical Setting," in *Nigeria: A Country Study*, Helen Chapin Metz, ed., Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1991, .

<http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/32.htm>

⁶ International Mire Conservation Group, "Nigeria (Federal Republic of)," 31 January 2004,

<http://www.imcg.net/gbd/africa/nigeria.pdf>

⁷ World Wildlife Fund, Mark McGinley, ed., "Nigerian Lowland Forests," in *Encyclopedia of Earth*, Cutler J. Cleveland, ed. (Washington, DC: Environmental Information Coalition, National Council for Science and the Environment), 15 February 2007, http://www.eoearth.org/article/Nigerian_lowland_forests

⁸ World Wildlife Fund, Mark McGinley, ed., "West Sudanian Savanna," in *Encyclopedia of Earth*, Cutler J. Cleveland, ed. (Washington, DC: Environmental Information Coalition, National Council for Science and the Environment), 20 March 2007. http://www.eoearth.org/article/West_Sudanian_savanna

⁹ International Mire Conservation Group, "Nigeria (Federal Republic of)," 31 January 2004,

<http://www.imcg.net/gbd/africa/nigeria.pdf>

¹⁰ Christi Schmidt and Michael Smith, "Sahel and the Horn of Africa," *Cartography and Geographic Information Systems Laboratory*, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 1996–1997,

http://maps.unomaha.edu/peterson/funda/Notes/Notes_Exam4/Sahel.html

Climate

Nigeria has a tropical climate with regional variations according to latitude. In general, the country experiences increasing precipitation as one moves north to south. This pattern of rainfall—which largely defines the country’s climate—is controlled by two air masses: the dry, northeast trade winds flowing south from the continent and the humid, southwest monsoon flowing north from the Atlantic Ocean. The flow of these air masses determines the country’s dry and rainy seasons, which vary in length according to region.



© Jarjan Fisher
Dust cloud crossing road

The rainy season begins in the south around February or March and gradually moves northward, hitting the central river valleys in April or May, and then the northern areas in June or July. The rainy season peaks in the northern areas around August, while the southern regions experience decreased precipitation during this time. In the south, precipitation ranges from 1,200 to 4,000 mm (47–157 in) of rain per year, with the southeastern areas receiving substantially more rainfall than the southwestern areas. The northern areas of the savannah receive 500–750 mm (20–30 in) of rain per year. Climate conditions for the rest of the year are influenced by the *harmattan*, the northeast trade winds that bring dust from the Sahara.

Throughout Nigeria, temperatures are generally high, although during the rainy season they are moderated by the southwest monsoon. The city of Lagos, located on the southwestern coast, experiences average highs of 31°C (87.8°F) during the late dry season and average lows of 23°C (73.4°F) near the end of the rainy season. Inland areas experience greater extremes than the coast, with temperatures in the northeast rising to 44°C (111.2°F) before the rains reach the area, and falling to 6°C (42.8°F) from December to February.¹¹

Bodies of Water

Niger River

The Niger River, with a total length of about 4,200 km (2,610 mi), is the third-longest river in Africa and the longest and largest river in West Africa. Its source lies in the Fouta Djallon Mountains in Guinea to the west. Flowing eastward, the Niger passes through the countries of Mali and Niger before entering Nigeria from the northwest. From there, it flows generally southeast until it merges with the Benue River. The combined waters of the two rivers flow south and ultimately empty in the Atlantic Ocean through the fan-shaped distributaries of the Niger River Delta.¹²



© Radio Raheem
View of Niger Delta

The Niger’s original name, *egerou n-igereou*, means the “river of rivers.” For centuries, this river has provided regional inhabitants with a source of income, food, and water, even in times of drought. It is home to almost 250 species of fish, including 20 species that can only be found in the Niger. The floodplains of the river also help to sustain pastures for livestock and allow for the cultivation of rice.

¹¹ Ronald Cohen and Abe Goldman, “Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment: Physical Setting: Climate,” in *Nigeria: A Country Study*, Helen Chapin Metz, ed., Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1991, <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/33.htm>

¹² World Wildlife Fund, “Global 200 Ecoregions: Niger River Delta,” 2001, <http://www.worldwildlife.org/wildworld/profiles/g200/g155.html>

As populations along the river's drainage area have grown and desertification has increased, the river has come under intense environmental pressures.¹³

Benue River

The Benue River is the chief tributary of the Niger. Approximately 1,083 km (673 mi) in length, its initial leg of 240 km (150 mi) begins in neighboring Cameroon. After descending more than 600 m (2,000 ft) over numerous falls and rapids, the remainder of its route is largely unobstructed. Because it is navigable almost year-round, the Benue is an important trade route for cotton, peanuts, and petroleum.¹⁴

Niger Delta

The Niger Delta covers an area of approximately 70,000 sq km (27,027 sq mi), according to definitions of the region made by the Nigerian government. This area comprises 7.5% of Nigeria's land mass.¹⁵ The river's many small distributaries weave their way through the delta and provide nourishment for the soil and the large number of animals that live in and off the river.

The delta sits atop light, sweet crude oil that needs little refining. About 2 million barrels of oil are pulled from this region each day.^{16, 17} The people who live off this land subsist on fishing and farming. According to the latest estimates, 70% of the country's population lives on less than USD 1 per day.¹⁸

Major Cities

Abuja

Abuja, Nigeria's capital, is located in the central part of the country, in the administrative division known as the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). In the late 1970s, officials decided to move the nation's capital away from Lagos, where it had been for most of the 20th century. The area that is now Abuja FCT was selected for a variety of reasons, including its accessible central location and low population density.¹⁹ Abuja officially became the Nigerian capital in 1991. Efforts to create a modern urban profile have included a ban on *okada* (commercial motorcycles), the importation of London cabs, and the demolition of illegal squatter settlements in and around the city.²⁰ The city's population is approximately 1.6 million.²¹



¹³ World Wildlife Fund, "Niger: Boomerang River in Sub-Saharan Africa," n.d.,

http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/about_freshwater/rivers/niger/

¹⁴ Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Benue River," 2009,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/61238/Benue-River>

¹⁵ Niger Delta Foundation, "Niger Delta Region," 2005, <http://www.nigerdeltafoundation.org/nigerdeltaregion.html>

¹⁶ Philip M. Mobbs, "Nigeria [Advance Release]" in *2009 Minerals Yearbook*, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S.

Department of the Interior, 2009, <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country/2009/myb3-2009-ni.pdf>

¹⁷ U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Nigeria: Oil," July 2010, <http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/Nigeria/Oil.html>

¹⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, "Nigeria," in *The World Factbook*, 12 January 2011,

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>

¹⁹ Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Abuja," 2009, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/2397/Abuja/>

²⁰ Uche Nworah, "Rebranding Nigeria's Cities," *ChickenBones: A Journal*, 29 October 2006,

<http://www.nathanielturner.com/rebrandingnigeriascities.htm>

²¹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Nigeria," **1 November** 2010,

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

Lagos

Situated on the southwestern coast of Nigeria, Lagos, the former national capital, was originally settled in the 15th century by Yoruba tribes, who called it Oko.²² In recent decades, the city has experienced rapid population growth. From 300,000 in 1950,²³ the city's population has now grown to over 11.4 million,²⁴ with several million more living in the surrounding area outside the city proper. The metropolitan area, comprising an estimated 300 sq km (115.8 sq mi), is a group of islands connected by bridges. Automobile gridlock is a major problem in Lagos, where it can take hours to travel relatively short distances throughout the urban area.²⁵ Other issues, such as poor sanitation and air and water pollution, have exacerbated the problems of urbanization. Moreover, the city's population has grown faster than its network of services can provide.

Ibadan

Also located in southwestern Nigeria, Ibadan is the capital city of Oyo state; it is home to a population of about 3.3 million.²⁶ The city is an important commercial and industrial hub, as well as a major point of transport between the coast and inner Nigeria. It also retains a sizable agricultural production and processing industry, with regional products including cacao, cotton, and palm oil. Marketplaces are located throughout the city,²⁷ as are a major university and several research institutions.²⁸

Kano

Located in northern Nigeria, Kano is home to 3.3 million people.²⁹ It was once a powerful Hausa city-state but is now the core industrial city and shipping hub for the North. Its industry revolves around peanuts, cotton, leatherwork, steel, and concrete. As a historic site of Islamic learning, it was 1 of the 14 northern states to introduce strict shari'a law. This caused sectarian riots between the Muslim population and the region's religious minorities.³⁰



© Kairos / flickr.com
Port Harcourt

Port Harcourt

Port Harcourt is the capital of Rivers State in southern Nigeria and has a population of 1.2 million people.³¹ It was built along the Bonny River, an eastern offshoot of the Niger, 66 km (41 mi) upstream from the Gulf of Guinea. This deep-water port serves to export petroleum, coal, palm products, cocoa, and groundnuts.

²² Embassy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Washington, DC, "History and People," 2004, <http://www.nigeriaembassyusa.org/history.shtml>

²³ National Geographic, "Lagos, Nigeria," in *National Geographic Atlas of the World*, 8th ed., 2004, http://www3.nationalgeographic.com/places/cities/city_lagos.html

²⁴ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Nigeria," 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

²⁵ United Nations Cyber School Bus, "City Profiles: Lagos, Nigeria," n.d., <http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/habitat/profiles/lagos.asp>

²⁶ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Nigeria," 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

²⁷ Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Ibadan," 2009, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/280508/Ibadan>

²⁸ MSN Encarta, "Ibadan," 2008, http://uk.encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761555938/ibadan.html

²⁹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Nigeria," 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

³⁰ BBC News, International Version, "Kano: Nigeria's Ancient City-State," 20 May 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3708309.stm>

³¹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Nigeria," 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

Wildlife

Nigeria was once home to an abundance of savanna animals as well as marine life, but human population growth, development, pollution, and other manmade environmental pressures have threatened many species. The Niger River Delta has the world's third-largest contiguous mangrove forest, which has historically supported a diversity of plants and birds, along with crabs, lizards, and snakes.³² Pollution from the oil industry has had a devastating effect on the delta's delicate ecosystem, however.



© Danny Boy! / flickr.com
African elephant

Most large animals such as elephants (and even smaller ones such as chimpanzees) survive mostly in minimally guarded national wildlife preserves. Since Nigeria never developed a safari tourism industry, there is little economic incentive for indigent farmers to maintain regions of natural habitat. Poaching is common, and both live animals (which can be trafficked to countries where they are considered a delicacy) and bush meat from endangered species can be found in rural markets.³³

Environmental Concerns

In the Niger Delta, environmental issues tied to the extraction of oil remain a source of tension. When oil companies need to dispose of unwanted or unused gas, they burn it, which not only wastes energy but causes substantial environmental damage. These gas flares often burn at ground level, thereby spewing toxins into neighboring communities. Some flares are large enough to be visible from space. In any case, such flares emit large amounts of carbon dioxide, leading to acid rain and air pollution. As a ban on gas flaring has been continuously postponed, the Nigerian government's response has simply been to raise the amount of fines levied against oil companies who engage in the practice. However, these fines remain less than the cost that would be required to manage the fuel in an environmentally responsible manner, and thus they remain largely ineffective in halting the practice.³⁴



© Danny McL / flickr.com
Gas flaring

Deforestation is also a significant problem. According to the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization, Nigeria is among the countries with the highest deforestation rates of primary (natural, untouched) forests, leading to the loss of 55.7% of its forests between 2000 and 2005. This is due to logging, collection of firewood, and continuous expansion of subsistence farming needed to feed an ever increasing population.³⁵

³² Mangrove Action Project, "Niger Delta Visit," n.d.,

<http://www.mangroveactionproject.org/issues/petroleum/niger-delta-visit>

³³ Dale Morris, "Bush-Meat Traders Threaten Nigeria's Chimps," Straight.com, 3 November 2005,

<http://www.straight.com/article/bush-meat-traders-threaten-nigerias-chimps>

³⁴ Akanimo Sampson, "Gas Flaring: Nigerian Govt Under Pressure," Scoop.co.nz., 16 December 2008,

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/WO0812/S00359.htm>

³⁵ Rhett A. Butler, "Nigeria Has Worst Deforestation Rate, FAO Revises Figures," Mongabay.com, 17 November 2005, <http://news.mongabay.com/2005/1117-forests.html>

Nigeria experiences recurrent droughts that, along with the impact of a rapidly growing human population, have decimated what was once the sixth-largest lake in the world, Lake Chad. Formerly situated on the borders of Nigeria, Chad, and Cameroon, Lake Chad has decreased in area from 22,000 sq km (8,494 sq mi) to 300 sq km (115 sq mi) over the last four decades.³⁶ Experts predict further decline of the lake as a water resource. Today, the lake has receded from Nigeria's northeastern corner and most of the water is found in Chad.³⁷



© Robin Taylor
Dry Niger river bed

While drought leads to desertification of arable land, floods are ruining coastal farmland. In terms of the former, rainfall in northern Nigeria has been declining steadily for over 40 years. This not only leads to a loss of farmland, but also of lakes and rivers, as well as food.³⁸ For example, the Sahel Drought lasted from 1968 to 1987, with the drought of 1972–73 resulting in famine after 300,000 animals perished and farm yields declined by 60%.³⁹ Flooding causes different kinds of economic and environmental damage. Most recently, in August and September 2006, seasonal rains caused flooding across Africa's Sahel region. During this time, rainfall also ruptured a dam in northwestern Nigeria, resulting in flooding that washed away over 500 homes and left 98 people missing.⁴⁰

³⁶ United Nations Environmental Programme, "Africa: Africa's Lakes," in *Africa's Lakes: Atlas of Our Changing Environment*, 10 September 2006, <http://www.unep.org/dewa/Africa/AfricaAtlas/PDF/en/Chapter1.pdf>

³⁷ Hillary Mayell, "Shrinking African Lake Offers Lesson on Finite Resources," National Geographic News, 26 April 2001, http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2001/04/0426_lakechadshrinks.html

³⁸ Friends of the Earth International, "Climate Change in Africa," n.d., <http://www.foei.org/en/campaigns/climate/impacts/nigeria.html>

³⁹ Fidelis Chinazor Okorie, "Studies on Drought in the Sub-Saharan Region of Nigeria Using Satellite Remote Sensing and Precipitation Data," International Green Charter Movement, 2003, <http://www.mathaba.net/gci/docs/research/nigeria-drought.htm>

⁴⁰ Earth Observatory, NASA, "Floods Across Africa's Sahel," 22 September 2008, <http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/NaturalHazards/view.php?id=17217>

Chapter 1: Assessments

1. Nigeria lies on the Indian Ocean.

False

Nigeria lies north of the Gulf of Guinea, which is part of the Atlantic Ocean.

2. Nigeria has two distinct geographic regions.

False

Nigeria can be divided into four geographic regions based on vegetation and climate: the coast, the forest belt, the savannah, and the Sahel.

3. The rainy season is called the *harmattan*.

False

Harmatta are northeast trade winds that bring dust from the Sahara. These winds influence climate conditions after the rainy season has passed.

4. Nigeria's capital was moved from Lagos to Abuja.

True

In the late 1970s, Nigerian officials decided to move the nation's capital away from Lagos, where it had been for most of the 20th century, to Abuja, which is located in the central part of the country. Abuja officially became the Nigerian capital in 1991.

5. Gas flares continue to cause acid rain and air pollution.

True

When oil companies need to dispose of unwanted or unused gas, they burn it, which not only wastes energy, but causes substantial environmental damage. These gas flares often burn at ground level, thereby spewing toxins into neighboring communities. Such flares also emit large amounts of carbon dioxide, leading to acid rain and air pollution. A ban on gas flaring has been continuously postponed, and the Nigerian government's response has simply been to raise the amount of fines levied against oil companies that engage in the practice.

Chapter 2: History

Introduction

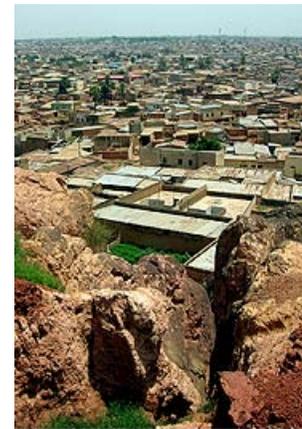
The Nigerian population is comprised of three major tribes: the Muslim Hausa-Fulani in the North, and the Igbo and Yoruba in the South. While by no means homogenous, the subgroups of each of the three major groups share a common ancestry and mother tongue. Prior to colonialism in the 19th century, the Hausa-Fulani had established the Sokoto Caliphate, which, by the standards of sub-Saharan Africa, was a highly developed political entity that exercised authority over what is now present-day northern Nigeria. It had established trade links with North Africa. In the South, governments with looser types of structure had evolved. British colonization was unevenly felt by the two regions.⁴¹ The North remained isolated and governed under Islam, while the South was integrated into the emerging global economy through the slave trade and the introduction of Western education by Christian missionaries. These disparities and their repercussions continue to impede the development of a functioning national government in Nigeria, and have remained a source of ethnic conflict and tension.



© Peter Roan
Mask from the Igbo people

Prehistory and Early Civilizations

Archeological evidence suggests that the region comprising modern day Nigeria hosted human settlement by at least 9000 B.C.E.⁴² Evidence of societal development during these early millennia is scattered and inconclusive. The oldest developed culture for which there is substantial evidence is the Nok culture, which dates from 500 B.C.E. to 200 C.E., and takes its name from the main site of archeological discovery. Spread throughout the Jos Plateau and the Benue River Valley, the Nok civilization produced finely-crafted terracotta sculptures while working in agriculture and animal husbandry.⁴³ Evidence has been found of another early culture: inhabitants of the Igbo Ukwu in southeastern Nigeria, dating from around 800 C.E. High-quality bronzes are the primary form of evidence left by this society.⁴⁴



© Shiraz Chakera
View from Dala Hill

The Development of City-States and Kingdoms

Long home to diverse cultures, the Nigerian region saw the rise of numerous organized societies and kingdoms throughout the last millennia. Of these, the various city-states and kingdoms of the Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa-Fulani, and Benin (Edo) are the most significant in terms of size, authority, and lasting historical importance.

⁴¹ Atul Kohli, "Chapter Eight: Colonial Nigeria: Origins of a Neopatrimonial State and a Commodity-Exporting Economy" in *State-Directed Development: Political Power and Industrialization in the Global Periphery* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 313.

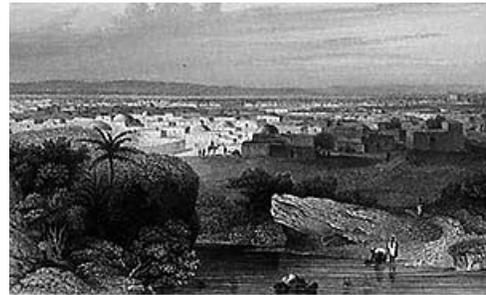
⁴² MSN Encarta, "Nigeria: History," 2008, http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761557915_9/Nigeria.html#s150

⁴³ Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Nigeria: History: Early Nigerian Cultures: Nok Culture," 2009, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

⁴⁴ Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "Nigeria: History: Early Nigerian Cultures: Igbo Ukwu," 2009, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

The Hausa-Fulani

Little has been verified about the origins of the Hausa city-state civilization of northern Nigeria. Local lore holds that Bayajidda, a native of Baghdad who had quarreled with his father, left home and ultimately traveled to the northern state of Daura, near the present-day city of Kano. There, he married the Queen of Daura and they had seven sons. Each one is believed to have founded one of the walled Hausa states: Kano, Rano, Biram, Zaria, Katsina, Daura, and Gobir—known as the seven Hausa City-States.



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Kingdom of Kano

Historically, the Hausa people migrated to the area between 500 and 700 C.E., and their city-states grew to consolidate power over the greater region by 1200.⁴⁵ As the Hausa cities developed, their local governments created a specialized division of labor that reflected the geographical strengths of their respective locations and natural resource endowments. Kano and Rano became known as the “Chiefs of Indigo.” These vast plain states harnessed the region’s prime agricultural conditions for cotton cultivation. Over time they became production centers of cloth, which was shipped out on caravans traveling to other Hausaland states and regions beyond.

The seat of the government of Hausaland was initially located in Biram. Zaria, known as the “Chief of Slaves,” provided labor. Because Katsina and Daura’s respective locations put them on the route used by caravans crossing the desert from the north, they were known as the “Chiefs of the Market.” Located in the west, Gobir was the “Chief of War,” as it had the responsibility of protecting the Hausa Empire from Ghana and Songhai, kingdoms bent on conquest.⁴⁶ In the 14th century, the practice of Islam grew increasingly prevalent in the urban centers of Hausaland,⁴⁷ after the religion had slowly been introduced to the area by travelers on the northern trade routes.

Originating in the Senegal River Valley, the Fulani people had gradually established themselves throughout Hausaland beginning in the 13th century. In 1804, a Fulani Muslim preacher, Usman dan Fodio, initiated a holy war (*jihad*) against the Hausa in order to fully establish the practice of Islam in the area. This war resulted in the occupation of the old Hausa city-states of northern Nigeria and their incorporation into the Fulani Sokoto Caliphate. Despite the fact that they were the victorious party, it was the Fulani who adopted the Hausa language, likely as a result of intermarriage with the Hausa tribes over the centuries. The Fulani’s ascendancy over the Hausa led to the widespread conversion of the northern populations to Islam.

With respect to governance, the Fulani simply assumed the high positions of authority within the Hausa system. At the top were states, known as *emirates*, ruled by an *emir*, or prince. A council of clerics, known as *mallamai*, chose the *emirs* from the ruling families.

They possessed the ultimate authority in administrative and judicial affairs of the state, but delegated the actual administrative work to subordinates.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Art and Life in Africa, School of Art and Art History, University of Iowa, “Hausa Information,” 3 November 1998, <http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/people/Hausa.html>

⁴⁶ Art and Life in Africa, School of Art and Art History, University of Iowa, “Hausa Information,” 3 November 1998, <http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/people/Hausa.html>

⁴⁷ Encyclopædia Britannica Online, “Nigeria: History: Kingdoms and Empires of Precolonial Nigeria: Hausaland,” 2009, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

⁴⁸ Jamtan Fulani, “Hausa-Fulani,” No date, <http://www.jamtan.com/jamtan/fulani.cfm?chap=4&linksPage=356>

The Yoruba and Benin

The Yoruba tribes trace their history back to the Ife and Oyo kingdoms, both based out of Western Nigeria. Dominant in the southwestern forests from the 11th to 15th centuries, the Ife kingdom established the precedents of monarchical rule and polytheistic worship that remained integral to Yoruba culture in the coming centuries. Located to the north of Ife, in the savanna west of the Niger River, the Oyo kingdom emerged in the 14th century and ultimately grew more powerful than its southern neighbor. Ife, however, remained an important religious center.



Library of Congress
Ancient Benin City

Buttressed by a strong cavalry force, the Oyo developed an expansive trade network that involved shipping goods between northern and southern entities, the latter of which included the Benin (or Edo) kingdom, based in south-central Nigeria.⁴⁹ The western territories populated by the Yoruba tribes became known as Yorubaland. Meanwhile, the Benin kingdom expanded its reach to control much of southwestern Nigeria (west of the Niger) by the 16th and 17th centuries.⁵⁰

The Igbo

While Yoruba society developed in the west, Igbo communities predominated in the east, with some of the earliest substantial evidence of Igbo society—the findings at Igbo Ukwu—dating to the eighth or ninth centuries. While evidence is limited, historians typically characterize these pre-colonial Igbo communities as “stateless,” or lacking a centralized administrative structure. Igbo society is thought to have instead consisted primarily of autonomous villages or egalitarian coalitions of regional communities. Exceptions to this pattern include the Nri kingdom, which may have developed as early as the 9th or 10th century, and some of the communities in the western Igbo region that drew influence from Benin.⁵¹



© G. T. Basden
Igbo man with facial scarifications,
known as Ichi

European Powers and the Transatlantic Slave Trade

From the outset, relations between Europe and Africa were driven by the lure of economic benefits. Motivated by a search for gold and other commodities, Portuguese merchants arrived in West Africa in the late 1400s.⁵² In addition to gold, West African merchants provided peppers, ivory, and other goods—all of which were already traded within Africa—to their European trading partners.⁵³ From the beginning, human captives were a major component of the trade relationship, and the Nigerian coast soon became an important center for the North Atlantic slave trade. Although the practice was pre-

⁴⁹ Encyclopædia Britannica Online, “Nigeria: History: Kingdoms and Empires of Precolonial Nigeria: Yorubaland and Benin,” 2009, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

⁵⁰ Paul E. Lovejoy, “Chapter 1: Historical Setting: Early History: Early States Before 1500: Yoruba Kingdoms and Benin” in *Nigeria: A Country Study*, Helen Chapin Metz, ed., Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1991, <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/5.htm>

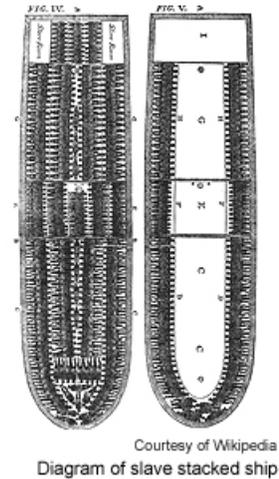
⁵¹ Paul E. Lovejoy, “Chapter 1: Historical Setting: Early History: Early States Before 1500: The Igbo: A Stateless Society?” in *Nigeria: A Country Study*, Helen Chapin Metz, ed., Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1991, <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/5.htm>

⁵² Applied History Research Group, University of Calgary, “The European Voyages of Discovery: Africa,” 1997, http://www.ucalgary.ca/applied_history/tutor/eurvoya/africa.html

⁵³ Tunde Obadina, “Slave Trade: A Root of Contemporary African Crisis,” Africa Economic Analysis, African Business Information Services, 2000, <http://www.afbis.com/analysis/slave.htm>

existing in Africa, the expansion of the slave trade to a transatlantic scale vastly increased the market and imparted a heightened level of commercialization and cruelty to the process.⁵⁴

As European slave traders established ports along the West African coast, their African trading partners expanded their slave-collecting operations in the interior. Europeans were not typically involved in the actual capturing of slaves, as such operations were conducted largely by native kingdoms and tribes (who often captured slaves in war) and indigenous slave trading networks.⁵⁵ In the Nigerian region, the Yoruba and Igbo participated in the capture and delivery of slaves to European traders, as did the Benin kingdom until the 18th century, when it largely quit the practice.⁵⁶ The demand for slaves came to dominate the economy of the southern coast in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. As a result, many parts of Africa, particularly Nigeria, were engulfed in violence.⁵⁷ Inland, it became extremely dangerous for people to venture far from home, as small or dispersed ethnic groups were often the targets of slave raids.⁵⁸



Britain, which had come to dominate the trading operations in the region, abolished its transatlantic slave trade in 1807 and subsequently imposed a naval blockade to enforce the ban. The ban was not highly effective, however, because the demand for slave labor remained strong, particularly in the New World.⁵⁹ Furthermore, because the blockade served to limit the supply to some extent, captives that were successfully smuggled to the New World increased in value.⁶⁰ Overall, during the centuries-long transatlantic slave trade, an estimated 3.5 million slaves were shipped out of Nigeria alone,⁶¹ with a minimum of 12 million exported from greater Africa to the Americas.⁶²

As the campaign to eradicate the lucrative slave trade—which included attempts to shift emphasis to other commodities, such as palm oil and timber—proved difficult,⁶³ the British increasingly

⁵⁴ Africa Action, “Nigeria’s Country Profile,” 26 April 1997, <http://www.africaaction.org/bp/nigerall.html>

⁵⁵ Tunde Obadina, “Slave Trade: A Root of Contemporary African Crisis,” Africa Economic Analysis, African Business Information Services, 2000, <http://www.afbis.com/analysis/slave.htm>

⁵⁶ Encyclopædia Britannica Online, “Nigeria: History: Kingdoms and Empires of Precolonial Nigeria: Igboland and the Delta City-States,” 2009, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

⁵⁷ Paul E. Lovejoy, “Chapter 1: Historical Setting: European Slave Trade in West Africa,” in *Nigeria: A Country Study*, Helen Chapin Metz, ed., Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1991, <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/7.htm>

⁵⁸ Geographic Alliance of Iowa, Northern Iowa University, “Nigeria Background Information: Standard 17: Historical Geography of Nigeria,” n.d., <http://www.uni.edu/gai/Nigeria/Background/Standard17.html>

⁵⁹ Cora Agatucci, “Part III: African Slave Trade & European Imperialism, AD / CE 15th—Early 19th Centuries,” Humanities Department, Central Oregon Community College, 27 December 2005, <http://web.cocc.edu/cagatucci/classes/hum211/timelines/htimeline3.htm>

⁶⁰ Tunde Obadina, “Slave Trade: A Root of Contemporary African Crisis,” Africa Economic Analysis, African Business Information Services, 2000, <http://www.afbis.com/analysis/slave.htm>

⁶¹ Paul E. Lovejoy, “Chapter 1: Historical Setting: European Slave Trade in West Africa,” in *Nigeria: A Country Study*, Helen Chapin Metz, ed., Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1991, <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/7.htm>

⁶² BBC News, “Focus on the Slave Trade,” 3 September 2001, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1523100.stm>

⁶³ Art and Life in Africa, School of Art and Art History, University of Iowa, “Nigeria Information,” 15 October 1998, <http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/countries/Nigeria.html>

intervened in the internal affairs of the Nigerian coastal region during the 19th century. Ultimately, this led to the Crown's decision to assume jurisdiction over the coastal area.⁶⁴

Colonization

Lagos, located in southwestern Nigeria, became a British colony in 1861. The settlement served as a center for the expansion of trade, missions, and political influence. Inland, Britain encouraged missionary societies to explore and trade along the Niger River. In 1886, in an effort to forestall competition from France and Germany, the British Crown granted the Royal Niger Company a charter to control commerce on the river, administer internal territories, and extract mineral wealth.⁶⁵ The protectorate was extended north in 1900.

The Yoruba tribe in the southwest had a centralized administrative hierarchy that was amenable to indirect rule. On the other hand, the Igbo in the southeast had a decentralized system. As a result, the British imposed chieftaincies, and they selected local leaders who were loyal to the Crown as chiefs. Numerous smaller ethnic groups were also subjugated in this way.⁶⁶ In sum, power was exercised through a form of indirect rule that left actual governance to indigenous authorities.⁶⁷



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Stamp from Southern Nigeria, 1901

After British involvement, the selection of an *emir* in Hausaland had to be approved by the colonial government. Ultimately, however, this served to reinforce the position of the ruling Muslim elite, as they remained in control of an established system of taxation and administration from which the British were able to draw benefits.⁶⁸ Their jurisdiction of authority was also extended; the British put the northern minorities under the control of the Sokoto Caliphate for reasons of administrative efficiency.

One of the major British concessions was to officially discourage Christian missionary activity in Muslim northern Nigeria. This coincided with the interests of northern elites, who did not want European missionaries proselytizing since it could undermine the theocratic authority of the ruling Muslim class. The institution of separate governments in the North and the South was intended to

⁶⁴ Paul E. Lovejoy, "Chapter 1: Historical Setting: The 19th Century: Revolution and Radical Adjustment: Abolition of the Slave Trade." in *Nigeria: A Country Study*, Helen Chapin Metz, ed., Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1991, <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/11.htm>

⁶⁵ Private companies were part of the European colonization program for Africa. They were formed by businessmen interested in exploiting the natural resources. But they were also responsible for the administrative expenses that created an incentive to maximize revenues through such policies as forced labor.—African Studies Center, Michigan State University, "Exploring Africa: Unit Two: Studying Africa through the Social Studies," <http://exploringafrica.matrix.msu.edu/students/curriculum/m7b/activity2.php>

⁶⁶ IRIN News, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Nigeria: A History of Conflicts," 1 April 2003, <http://www.irinnews.org/InDepthMain.aspx?InDepthId=30&ReportId=70458>

⁶⁷ Michael Chege, review of *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, by Mahmood Mamdani, *African Studies Quarterly* vol. 1, no. 1 (1997), <http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v1/1/4.htm>

⁶⁸ Dan Issacs, "Islam in Nigeria: Simmering Tensions," BBC News, International Version, 24 September 2003, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3155279.stm>

strengthen British colonial control by preempting any coalition of resistance.⁶⁹ However, it had the unintended consequence of propelling the two regions in greatly different developmental directions.⁷⁰

Unification

In 1914, the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria and the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria were merged into one colony by Sir Frederick Lugard, the first Governor General. This move once again weakened any possibility of unified resistance. Ethnic groups were isolated from one another through the creation of multiple administrative units. Frequent administrative reclassifications marked the 60 years of British colonial rule. The example of Nigeria illustrates the difficulties colonial powers had in uniting a tribal territory into a single yet compliant entity.⁷¹

Direct political exchange between the North and the South did not take place until 1946, when the British introduced a constitution that divided Nigeria into three regions: the North, the West, and the East.⁷² Southern Nigerians, who had embraced the educational opportunities offered by Christian missionaries, were beginning to clamor for independence. Accordingly, the British split the South into two regions, leaving the North intact as a single region. In effect, this move established the conditions for northern dominance in the political system.⁷³ It also set a precedent in which the administrative structure and hierarchy of the government was continually remade in an effort to create a peaceful polity.

The Ibadan General Constitutional Conference of 1950 marked the beginning of a collaborative effort between the educated political class and the British to create the outlines of a constitution for an independent, self-governing state. During the conference, northern delegates lobbied for seats in a proposed legislature to be allocated according to population, which would have accorded them 50%. Southerners, by contrast, called for regional representation. Moreover, northerners favored allocation of resources on a per capita basis, which was more favorable to them, while southerners, playing to their advantages, argued that volume of trade or need should be the determining factors.⁷⁴



© amberdrop / flickr.com
Tribute to first Nigerian engineer

⁶⁹ Emmy Godwin Irobi, "Ethnic Conflict Management in Africa: A Comparative Case Study of Nigeria and South Africa" Beyond Intractability, May 2005, http://www.beyondintractability.org/case_studies/nigeria_south-africa.jsp?nid=6720

⁷⁰ Geographic Alliance of Iowa, University of Northern Iowa, "Nigeria Background Information: Standard 17: Historical Geography of Nigeria," No date, <http://www.uni.edu/gai/Nigeria/Background/Standard17.html>

⁷¹ History World, "History of Nigeria," n.d., <http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ad41>

⁷² Niels Kastfelt, "The Politics of History in Northern Nigeria," African Studies Centre, Leiden, 27 April 2006, <http://www.ascleiden.nl/Pdf/paper-NielsKastfelt.pdf>

⁷³ IRIN News, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Nigeria: A History of Conflicts," 1 April 2003, <http://www.irinnews.org/InDepthMain.aspx?InDepthId=30&ReportId=70458>

⁷⁴ Richard L. Sklar, "Chapter Three: Regionalism and the Emergence of a Three Party System," in *Nigerian Political Parties: Power in an Emergent African Nation* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2004), 88.

Independence

When it gained independence on 1 October 1960, the new nation of Nigeria possessed all the makings of a democratic government. Its federal constitution provided a large measure of autonomy for three (later four) regions. A parliamentary system modeled along British lines emphasized majority rule, and a functioning (although regionally based) multi-party system stood in marked contrast to neighboring African states that adopted single-party systems.⁷⁵



© Mad African / flickr.com
Independence Day celebration

Yet this was not enough to guarantee the survival of the republic, owing to specific structural weaknesses. Gaps in economic development and educational opportunities between the regions quickly amplified their longstanding ethnic and religious tensions.⁷⁶ The South was ahead in nearly every quantifiable measure of modernization, including education, per capita income, off-farm employment, and industrialization.

In 1951, for example, there was only one university graduate among the northerners. There were, however, hundreds of Yorubas, Igbos, and other southerners who had earned graduate and even postgraduate degrees during that same year.⁷⁷ Education had enabled them to get administrative jobs under the British. The northerners feared the southerners' continued overrepresentation in the government, while southerners feared that the northern Muslims could marshal a numerical majority and rule the country.⁷⁸

Nigeria's three regional states were outwardly united as a federation, but each state was controlled by a single, dominant, ethnic-based political party. This alignment produced destructively centrifugal tendencies. Each party utilized all of the resources at the regional level to enable its group to monopolize political power. The Nigerian government was thus inherently subject to internal competition and strife between parties.⁷⁹ On the sidelines were the 200-plus minority tribes, who were relegated to mere spectator status as the three major groups divided up the nation's spoils.

Civil War

On 15 January 1966, a small group of army officers—mostly Igbos from the southeast—and their leader, General Aguiyi-Ironsi, staged a coup. Under their leadership, the Nigerian administrative structure was reshuffled into a national military government that consolidated regional and federal public services. The new arrangement placed northerners at a disadvantage since they could not compete against the better-educated southerners for positions in a



DoD image
Nigerian soldier making a radio call

⁷⁵ Eghosa Osaghae, "Chapter 4: Government and Politics: The First Republic," in *Nigeria: A Country Study*, Helen Chapin Metz, ed., Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1991, <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/68.htm>

⁷⁶ Art and Life in Africa, School of Art and Art History, University of Iowa, "Nigeria Information," 15 October 1998, <http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/countries/Nigeria>

⁷⁷ Rotini Suberu, "Chapter Two: The Evolution of the Nigerian Federation," in *Federalism and Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria* (Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 2001), 22.

⁷⁸ David Laitin, "Chapter One: The Two Faces of Culture," in *Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change among the Yoruba* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 6.

⁷⁹ John Ghazvinian, "Chapter One: The Onshore Effect," in *Untapped: The Scramble for Africa's Oil* (New York: Harcourt, 2007), 22.

unified civil service.

Rising tensions led to a counter coup 6 months later in which Aguiyi-Ironsi was killed.⁸⁰ After thousands of Igbo in the Muslim north were killed in a massacre stemming from the counter coup, hundreds of thousands of them migrated to the Christian southeast.⁸¹ In January 1967, this oil-rich area declared its independence as the Republic of Biafra.⁸²

The Federation would allow Biafra to claim revenues from the oil, which was located within its declared borders. The government, however, launched a counter attack against the secessionists only after the Shell oil company, which was extracting oil in the contested region, agreed to pay royalties to Biafra, not Nigeria.⁸³ The military government drafted the Petroleum Act of 1969, which vested the Nigerian federal government with ownership of all oil and gas within the country's borders, including its territorial waters and continental shelf.⁸⁴

Before the surrender of the short-lived independent Biafran government in January 1970, a naval, land, and air blockade of the Igbo homeland resulted in mass starvation and, ultimately, charges of genocide.⁸⁵ Between 500,000 and 2 million Biafran civilians died from starvation during the 3-year civil conflict.⁸⁶

Late 20th Century

Following the civil war, the government turned to the task of economic development. Foreign exchange earnings and government revenues increased dramatically with the rising oil prices of 1973–74. A bloodless coup brought General Murtala Muhammed to power in 1975. He announced a timetable for the resumption of civilian rule by 1 October 1979.

Under the 1979 constitution promulgated by the military leadership, the first elections were held on schedule in July and August 1979. Power was handed over to a new civilian government headed by President Shehu Shagari on 1 October 1979.

Nigeria's Second Republic came into existence in the midst of great expectations. Oil prices were high and thus government revenues were on the rise. The promise of prosperity, however, proved short-lived amid the



Courtesy of Wikipedia
General Murtala Ramat Mohammed

⁸⁰ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Nigeria," December 2008, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

⁸¹ Chatham House, "Fostering Unity in a Fragmented Nation: The Role of Religion in Nigeria," 19 March 2007, http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/9132_190307nigeria.pdf

⁸² BBC News, "Nigeria: A History of Coups," 15 February 1999, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/83449.stm>

⁸³ James Fairhead, "Chapter Nine: International Dimensions of Conflict over Natural and Environmental Resources," in *Violent Environments*, Nancy Lee Peluso and Michael Watts, eds. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 223.

⁸⁴ Under the 1960 and 1963 Constitutions, most natural resources, including mines, minerals, oil fields, and petroleum surveys, were under federal government authority. But there was a generous revenue-sharing formula that returned 50% of tax proceeds from the extracted resources to the home region.

⁸⁵ While famine and battle raged, the Biafran government hired a PR firm to make their case internationally and counter the campaign of the firms hired by the Nigerian government.—Bob Clifford, "Chapter Two: Power, Exchange, and Marketing," in *The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 25.

⁸⁶ American University, Inventory of Conflict & Environment Case Studies, "ICE Case Studies: The Biafran War," November 1997, <http://www.american.edu/TED/ice/biafra.htm>

recession of the early 1980s; plunging oil prices precipitated an economic decline. Widespread corruption also undermined public confidence in the Shagari government. The Second Republic did not survive its infancy.

After the military overthrew the Second Republic at the end of 1983, Nigeria was governed by a succession of military leaders for the next 16 years.⁸⁷ Under military rule, Muslim northerners who held dominant positions in the armed forces were given federal post appointments on the basis of patronage rather than merit.

General Muhammadu Buhari surfaced as the leader of Nigeria's new ruling body, the Supreme Military Council (SMC). His government was, in turn, overthrown in a bloodless coup by the SMC's third-ranking member, Army Chief of Staff General Ibrahim Babangida, in August 1985.

President Babangida pledged to restore civilian rule by 1990. This date was subsequently postponed until January 1993. On 12 June 1993, elections were held, with many independent observers judging them as the fairest in Nigeria's short history as a nation. Early returns predicted that M.K.O. Abiola, a wealthy Yoruba businessman, would win.⁸⁸ However, later in the month, Babangida annulled the election results, citing several pending lawsuits as a pretext. This caused widespread social unrest as Nigerians confronted the possibility that any election could be annulled.⁸⁹ Riots ensued, leading to the deaths of more than 100 people. On 27 August, Babangida agreed to hand over power to an "interim government" headed by Ernest Shonekan.⁹⁰



DoD image
Ken Saro-Wiwa

In November, Defense Minister Sani Abacha stepped in to assume power amid the chaos. Although he promised to return the country to civilian rule, he first disbanded all democratic political institutions, and he placed military officers in government positions previously held by elected officials. His harsh rule, which included the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, an environmental and Ogoni tribal rights activist whom many viewed as a victim of trumped-up charges, led most Western aid donors including the Peace Corps to withdraw from Nigeria. Abacha did not provide a timetable for a return to civilian governance until his 1 October 1995 Independence Day address, when he announced plans for a 3-year transition from military to civilian rule.

In preparation for the 1998 elections, Abacha approved only five political parties. Each of these parties nominated him as their presidential candidate. Declarations of "No Abacha, No Nigeria" and "General Abacha is the best thing that ever happened to this country" were made by leading

⁸⁷ One scholar has explained the culture of violence that permeates contemporary Nigeria as the result of years of military dictatorship. Specifically, Hassan Kukah argues in *Religion, Politics and Power in Northern Nigeria* (1994) that military rule shut off access to other channels of organized opposition and imposed severe limitations on the ability of disaffected groups to negotiate with the state. In effect, violence was the only means of gaining the attention of military regimes. Cited by Ogbu Kalu, "Who is Marginalizing Nigerian Muslims," USA/Africa Dialogue Series, n.d., <http://www.utexas.edu/conferences/africa/ads/694.html>

⁸⁸ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Testimony: George Moose on Nigeria," U.S. Department of State Geographic Bureaus, Electronic Research Collection, University of Illinois at Chicago, 20 July 1995, <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/bureaus/afr/950720Nigeria.html>

⁸⁹ Sanya Osha, "Nigeria's Democracy Project: Lessons from the Abacha Regime," *Holler Africa*, 2005, <http://www.hollerafrica.com/showArticle.php?artId=161&catId=1>

⁹⁰ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Nigeria," December 2008, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

politicians. Even television sets with Abacha's picture embossed on them appeared in March 1998.⁹¹ He was expected to succeed himself as a civilian president on 1 October 1998, but he died on 8 June of that year.

A Democratic Nigeria

A new democratic era began when Olusegun Obasanjo assumed office in May 1999. Obasanjo, a former general, had garnered public respect for his stand against the Abacha regime and its legendary human rights abuses. He also received acclaim for his 1979 attempt to restore civilian rule and his promise to look past religious differences in order to represent all Nigerians.



The elected president immediately confronted many problems, including economic stagnation, a bureaucracy staffed by patronage appointments, and decrepit infrastructure. In responding to these challenges, Obasanjo divested the civilian government of hundreds of military officers, created a panel to investigate the Abacha regime's human rights abuses, released people who had been detained without reason, withdrew questionable contracts allocated by previous governments, and attempted to recover millions of dollars in public funds.⁹²

Before Obasanjo took office in 1999, there was talk of alternating the presidency between the Christian South and the Muslim North. The 8 years of Obasanjo's two-term presidency symbolized Christian control. For the 2007 elections, all of the country's major political parties chose Muslim candidates.⁹³

However, most of the political parties have been described as "relatively weak," with few distinguishing factors among them. Their appeal depends upon the personalities that lead them.⁹⁴ Furthermore, in late 2006, 33 of Nigeria's 36 state governors were under investigation for corruption, money laundering, or other financial crimes.⁹⁵



© Agência Brasil
President Umaru Yar'Adua

Recent Events

The Nigerian constitution imposes a two-term limit on the president and state governors. After winning a second term, President Obasanjo tried to change the constitution so he could run for a third term. However, he was thwarted by the Nigerian Senate.

The consensus of outside observers is that the April 2007 election did not meet international standards for fairness and transparency.⁹⁶ On

⁹¹ Chippla's Weblog, "Nigerian Presidential Election 2007: Abacha's Ghost," 27 December 2005, <http://chippla.blogspot.com/2005/12/nigerian-presidential-election-2007.html>

⁹² Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Nigeria," December 2008, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#history>

⁹³ Robert Ruby and Timothy Samuel Shah, "Nigeria's Presidential Election: The Christian-Muslim Divide," The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 21 March 2007, <http://pewforum.org/docs/?DocID=182>

⁹⁴ International Republican Institute, "2007 Nigeria National Elections: Pre-Election Assessment Final Report," 1 February 2007, <http://www.iri.org/africa/nigeria/pdfs/2007-02-01-Pre-electionAssessment.pdf>

⁹⁵ This in turn has become a rallying cry to consolidate the country into 6 administrative regions in order to reduce the number of officials, which now includes not only the 36 governors but 36 deputy governors, an unknown number of permanent secretaries, political advisors, etc. All live in the capital of Abuja at public expense.—Karl Maier, "Epilogue," in *The House Has Fallen: Nigeria in Crisis* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003), 300.

⁹⁶ BBC News, "What Nigerian Election Observers Say," 23 April 2007, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6582979.stm>

Election Day, some polling places did not open on time, if at all, or they ran out of ballots. The pre-election environment was marred by attempts to selectively disqualify candidates based on the preferences of those already in power.⁹⁷ Voter registration used untested, direct-capture technology, which neither voters nor government officials understood well.⁹⁸ Finally, there was evidence of systematic collusion between the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP), the Independent National Election Commission (INEC), and local law enforcement agencies to intimidate voters and influence the election.⁹⁹

The new president, Umaru Yar'Adua, a Hausa Muslim from the north and member of the PDP, was Obasanjo's preferred successor. Yar'Adua faced significant challenges in governance, particularly since the election was not considered free and fair. He immediately promised electoral reforms to prevent recurrence of the problems that characterized the election of 2007.¹⁰⁰

After he assumed office, Yar'Adua moved slowly, to the disappointment of many.¹⁰¹ Some observers claimed that northerners in the government were more concerned with holding onto power than resolving issues that hobbled Nigeria's economic growth.¹⁰² However, in August 2009 the government granted amnesty to the main militant group, Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, so the country was relatively peaceful for at least 6 months.¹⁰³ Nevertheless, Yar'Adua's time in power was plagued by health problems, resulting in power struggles behind the scenes.

Finally, in November 2009, President Yar'Adua was flown to Saudi Arabia for emergency medical care for heart and kidney problems.¹⁰⁴ Yar'Adua's prolonged absence from office led the National Assembly to appoint Vice President Goodluck Jonathan as acting president in February 2010. As acting president, Jonathan dissolved the cabinet and nominated his own cabinet ministers. He named corruption, the Niger Delta peace process, energy, and electoral



© The Ford Foundation
President Goodluck Jonathan

⁹⁷ International Republican Institute, "Nigeria's Elections Below Acceptable Standards: Preliminary Findings of IRI's International Election Observation Mission," 22 April 2007, <http://www.iri.org/africa/nigeria/2007-04-22-nigeria.asp>

⁹⁸ Nathan Van Dusen, "From the Field: Nigerian Elections: What Went Wrong?" International Foundation for Electoral Systems, 2 May 2007, [http://www.ifes.org/features.html?title=From the Field %25 Nigerian Elections %25 What Went Wrong%25](http://www.ifes.org/features.html?title=From%20the%20Field%20Nigerian%20Elections%20What%20Went%20Wrong%25)

⁹⁹ Richard Joseph, et al., "Joint Statement on Nigeria's Recent Elections," African Policy Forum, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 17 May 2007, <http://forums.csis.org/africa/?p=36>

¹⁰⁰ Gilbert Da Costa, "Nigeria Begins Election Reform Process," Voice of America News, 12 May 2008, <http://www.voanews.com/english/archive/2008-05/2008-05-12-voa34.cfm?CFID=88927537&CFTOKEN=12983692>

¹⁰¹ Randy Fabi and Felix Onuah, "New Nigerian Leader Pledges Electoral Reform," Reuters, 6 May 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/05/06/us-nigeria-president-idUSTRE64468820100506?pageNumber=2>

¹⁰² The Economist, "Nigeria's President: Please Hurry Up," 23 October 2008, http://www.economist.com/world/mideast-africa/displaystory.cfm?story_id=12480913

¹⁰³ Randy Fabi and Felix Onuah, "New Nigerian Leader Pledges Electoral Reform," Reuters, 6 May 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/05/06/us-nigeria-president-idUSTRE64468820100506?pageNumber=2>

¹⁰⁴ Randy Fabi and Felix Onuah, "New Nigerian Leader Pledges Electoral Reform," Reuters, 6 May 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/05/06/us-nigeria-president-idUSTRE64468820100506>

reforms as his top priorities.¹⁰⁵ Upon Yar'Adua's death on 6 May, Jonathan was sworn in as president.

Unlike Yar'Adua, Jonathan is a Christian from the south, and the first president from the Niger Delta region.¹⁰⁶ Based on an unwritten agreement, the presidency is to rotate between the north and south^{107, 108} Thus, the presidential election, scheduled for 9 April 2011, was expected to go to the Muslim north.¹⁰⁹ But Jonathan defied tradition and is running for office. He gained legitimacy when he won the primaries against his main rival Atiku Abubakar, the Muslim former vice president.¹¹⁰ To appease the Muslim north, Jonathan has promised to not to seek another term if he wins the election. As of this writing, Jonathan seems to be the front-runner in the presidential race.^{111, 112} The opposition parties could not agree on a candidate to run against him, thus reducing their chances of winning.¹¹³ His main rivals are General Muhammadu Buhari, of the Congress for Progressive Change party, and former anti-corruption campaigner Nuhu Ribadu.¹¹⁴ Corruption, unemployment, and lack of electricity are among the voter's main concerns. As the polls draw near, civil unrest has become another concern for voters.^{115, 116}

¹⁰⁵ BBC News, "Nigeria Country Profile," 30 November 2010,

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/1064557.stm#leaders

¹⁰⁶ BBC News, "Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan to Seek One Term," 1 February 2011,

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12339017>

¹⁰⁷ Randy Fabi and Felix Onuah, "New Nigerian Leader Pledges Electoral Reform," Reuters, 6 May 2011,

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/05/06/us-nigeria-president-idUSTRE64468820100506>

¹⁰⁸ Voice of America, "Jonathan Sworn in as New Nigerian President," 6 May 2010,

<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/Jonathan-Sworn-in-as-New-Nigerian-President--92947464.html>

¹⁰⁹ BBC News, "Nigeria's Goodluck Jonathan Sworn in as President," 6 May 2010,

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8664150.stm>

¹¹⁰ Nick Tattersall, "Factbox—Key Political Risks to Watch in Nigeria," Reuters, 1 February 2011,

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/02/01/nigeria-risks-idUSRISKNG20110201?pageNumber=1>

¹¹¹ Reuters Africa, "Update 1—Nigeria President Says He's Seeking Only Single Term," 1 February 2011,

<http://af.reuters.com/article/nigeriaNews/idAFLDE7101TW20110201?sp=true>

¹¹² BBC News, "Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan to Seek One Term," 1 February 2011,

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12339017>

¹¹³ Paul Okolo, "Nigeria's Opposition Fail to Agree on Joint Candidate for April Election," Bloomberg, 31 January 2011, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-01-31/nigeria-s-opposition-fail-to-agree-on-joint-candidate-for-april-election.html>

¹¹⁴ Nick Tattersall, "Factbox—Key Political Risks to Watch in Nigeria," Reuters, 1 February 2011,

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/02/01/nigeria-risks-idUSRISKNG20110201?pageNumber=1>

¹¹⁵ Ibrahim Mshelizza, "Nigerian Electoral Candidate Shot in Northeast City," Reuters, 29 January 2011,

<http://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFTRE70R54Y20110129?sp=true>

¹¹⁶ Nick Tattersall, "Factbox—Key Political Risks to Watch in Nigeria," Reuters, 1 February 2011,

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/02/01/nigeria-risks-idUSRISKNG20110201?pageNumber=2>

Chapter 2: Assessments

1. The Hausa city-state civilization was victorious over the Sokoto Caliphate.

False

In 1804, a Fulani Muslim preacher, Usman dan Fodio, initiated a holy war (jihad) against the Hausa in order to fully establish the practice of Islam in the area. This war resulted in the occupation of the old Hausa city-states of northern Nigeria and their incorporation into the Fulani Sokoto Caliphate.

2. Lagos became a British colony in the early 18th century.

False

Lagos became a British colony in 1861. The settlement served as a center for the expansion of trade, missions, and political influence. Inland, Britain encouraged missionary societies to explore and trade along the Niger River. In 1886, the British Crown granted the Royal Niger Company a charter to administer internal territories; this protectorate was extended north in 1900.

3. During the 19th century, Britain imposed a naval blockade off the coast of Nigeria in an effort to eradicate the transatlantic slave trade.

True

Britain abolished its transatlantic slave trade in 1807 and imposed a naval blockade off the coast of Nigeria to enforce the ban.

4. In 1993, Defense Minister Sani Abacha assumed control of the government.

True

In November 1993, Defense Minister Sani Abacha stepped in to assume power. Although he promised to return the country to civilian rule, he first disbanded all democratic political institutions, and he placed military officers in government positions previously held by elected officials.

5. Abacha was the presidential candidate for all official political parties in the 1998 elections.

True

In preparation for the 1998 elections, Abacha approved only five political parties. Each of these parties nominated him as their presidential candidate. Declarations of “No Abacha, No Nigeria” and “General Abacha is the best thing that ever happened to this country” were made by leading politicians.

Chapter 3: Economy

Introduction

Nigeria has long been involved in the global economy. In the past, the transatlantic slave trade saw 3.5 million people taken from present-day Nigeria to the New World before the practice was abolished.¹¹⁷ After the discovery of oil, petroleum extraction became the mainstay of the economy. A manufacturing base was not developed under British colonial rule, and since the nation's independence in 1960, little industrial development has occurred.^{118, 119, 120} This lack of diversity renders the Nigerian economy vulnerable to price swings in the international oil market. It has also resulted in a low rate of off-farm job creation, thereby spawning a large informal economy as a source of both goods and employment opportunities.¹²¹ Untaxed, unregulated, and, in some cases, illicit enterprises provide most urban Nigerians, particularly in Lagos, with the means to eke out a living.



© Yosef Hadar / World Bank
Farmer tilling fields

Resources

Nigeria has significant renewable and non-renewable resources, some of which have not been fully exploited. Its most profitable minerals include crude petroleum, natural gas, and coal.¹²² Nigeria's oil reserves now comprise 80% of federal government revenue and 90% of exports.^{123, 124} Most oil reserves are in onshore fields in the Niger Delta and Kaduna.^{125, 126} The Niger Delta also contains most of the country's natural gas reserves (the eighth-largest in the world), which are also impacted by the area's security issues.¹²⁷

¹¹⁷ Paul E. Lovejoy, "Chapter 1: Historical Setting: European Slave Trade in West Africa," in *Nigeria: A Country Study*, Helen Chapin Metz, ed., Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1991, <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/5.htm>

¹¹⁸ Bisi Ojedirin, "Nigeria: Is Manufacturing Dying?" All Africa, 10 March 2009, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200903100124.html>

¹¹⁹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Notes: Nigeria," 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

¹²⁰ Mike Jide, "The Structure of the Nigerian Manufacturing Industry," UN Economic Commission for Africa, July 2010, http://www.uneca.org/istd/documents/NigerianManufacturingSector_20_21_July_2010/Paper 2 - Structure of Nigeria Manufacturing%20Industries.pdf

¹²¹ BBC News, "Nigeria 'Fuelled' by Black Economy," 3 December 2001, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/1689165.stm>

¹²² Encyclopædia Britannica, "Nigeria: Economy," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

¹²³ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Notes: Nigeria," 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

¹²⁴ U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Nigeria Energy Profile," 14 July 2010, http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/country/country_energy_data.cfm?fips=NI

¹²⁵ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Notes: Nigeria," 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

¹²⁶ U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Nigeria: Background," 14 July 2010, <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/Nigeria/Background.html>

¹²⁷ U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Nigeria: Natural Gas," July 2010, <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/Nigeria/NaturalGas.html>

Nigeria has significant but untapped reserves of coal. Most of the coal is used by power plants, the railroad, and the metal industries. High transportation costs and low productivity hinder the mining industry.¹²⁸

Oil and Economic Integration

The revenues generated from the oil industry have given rise to what is known as “Dutch Disease.” That is, those who have access to hard currency buy imported goods, which are perceived (usually accurately) to be of better quality than domestic counterparts. As a result, domestic manufacturing and even agriculture decline in competitiveness.

Such a calculation reflects the preeminence of a rentier class, or people who live off income from property or securities. In effect, a select few citizens become landlords. In Nigeria their livelihood is secured through payments from foreign oil companies, which exploit land that has since ceased to support farmers, laborers, skilled artisans, or entrepreneurs.¹²⁹



© Danny McL / flickr.com
Port Harcourt, Oil Support Vessel

Sectors

Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing

Agriculture accounts for 30% of Nigeria’s gross domestic product (GDP) and 10% of non-oil growth.¹³⁰

Agriculture also employs about two-thirds of the labor force.¹³¹ Most agriculturalists are small-scale farmers just beyond subsistence, who dominate both staple food and industrial crop production.¹³² Major agricultural products in Nigeria include: cocoa, cotton, corn, peanuts, palm oil, millet, sorghum, rice, cassava (tapioca) yams, and rubber. Livestock and other products in Nigeria include: sheep, goats, cattle, pigs, fish, and timber.¹³³



© Munir Squires
Shea plants

Agriculture, particularly poultry and cocoa production, has not kept up with the nation’s rapid population growth.¹³⁴ The agricultural sector has suffered from mismanagement, poor policies, a poor transport system, and a lack of basic infrastructure for many years. During the 1970s and early 1980s, Nigeria’s high export earnings from oil sales and an overvalued currency allowed it

¹²⁸ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, “Country Profile: Nigeria: Economy,” July 2008, 12, <http://memory.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Nigeria.pdf>

¹²⁹ George Packer, “The Megacity: Decoding the Chaos of Lagos,” *New Yorker*, 13 November 2006, http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2006/11/13/061113fa_fact_packer

¹³⁰ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Background Notes: Nigeria,” 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

¹³¹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Background Note: Nigeria,” 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

¹³² Encyclopædia Britannica, “Nigeria: Economy,” 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

¹³³ Central Intelligence Agency, “Nigeria: Economy,” in *The World Factbook*, 24 January 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>

¹³⁴ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, “Country Profile: Nigeria: Economy,” July 2008, 12, <http://memory.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Nigeria.pdf>

to finance large-scale food imports.¹³⁵ However, the worldwide recession in the 1980s caused the Nigerian economy to collapse, leaving the government heavily in debt for food purchases it had made on credit.^{136, 137} Besides these obstacles, farmers must cope with land degradation due to desertification and drought in the North and heavy rain, flooding, and oil pollution in the South.¹³⁸

Industry

Industry, dominated by the oil and natural gas energy sector, accounts for 32% of the GDP and employs about 10% of the population.¹³⁹ Within this sector, manufacturing production was high during the 1970s but declined after the oil boom.¹⁴⁰ The overall industrial production growth rate for 2010 was estimated at 4%.¹⁴¹ Major industries include: crude oil, coal, tin, columbite, rubber products, wood, hides, textiles, cement, other construction materials, food products, footwear, chemicals, fertilizer, printing, ceramics, and steel.¹⁴²



© Travelling Steve / flickr.com
Shell Oil construction site

Most factories are in the Greater Lagos area while a few industries, such as steel and paper mills, are in remote areas.¹⁴³ Traditional products and industries, such as hoes and hatchets, soap- and saltmaking, and pottery and woodcarving, are local.¹⁴⁴ Emerging industries include telecommunications and the non-oil mining sectors, such as coal, iron, uranium, and gold.¹⁴⁵ Challenges to the sector are cheaper imported products, high domestic production costs, and insufficient electricity and fuel supply.¹⁴⁶

¹³⁵ ‘Tunji Akande, “An Overview of the Nigerian Rice Economy,” Economics and Trade Branch, United Nations Environment Programme, n.d., <http://www.unep.ch/etu/etp/events/Agriculture/nigeria.pdf>

¹³⁶ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, “Low-Income Food-Deficit Countries (LIFDC)—List for 2010,” <http://www.fao.org/countryprofiles/lifdc.asp>

¹³⁷ Encyclopædia Britannica, “Nigeria: Economy,” 2011,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

¹³⁸ Rural Poverty Portal, International Fund for Agricultural Development, “Rural Poverty in Nigeria,” n.d.,

<http://operations.ifad.org/web/guest/country/home/tags/nigeria>

¹³⁹ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, “Country Profile: Nigeria: Economy,” July 2008, 12,

<http://memory.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Nigeria.pdf>

¹⁴⁰ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., “Manufacturing,” in *Nigeria: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1991. <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/63.htm>

¹⁴¹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Background Notes: Nigeria,” 1 November 2010,

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

¹⁴² Central Intelligence Agency, “Nigeria: Economy,” in *The World Factbook*, 24 January 2011,

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>

¹⁴³ Encyclopædia Britannica, “Nigeria: Economy,” 2011,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

¹⁴⁴ Encyclopædia Britannica, “Nigeria: Economy,” 2011,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

¹⁴⁵ Economy Watch, “Nigeria Industry Sectors,” n.d.,

http://www.economywatch.com/world_economy/nigeria/industry-sector-industries.html

¹⁴⁶ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Background Notes: Nigeria,” 1 November 2010,

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

Services

Services account for 35% of GDP, employing 20% of the labor force.¹⁴⁷ Banking and finance are the largest service sectors.¹⁴⁸

Banking

Nigeria's banking sector remains weak and inefficient, hampered by a cash-based economy and bureaucracy, despite the government's significant steps to strengthen it.¹⁴⁹ In 2009, a debt crisis led to the financial audit of all 24 national banks, 10 of which were found to be undercapitalized and lacking in liquidity.^{150, 151} In a pattern similar to the global recession at that time—the bailout, credit crunch, and stimulus—Nigeria's Central Bank injected approximately USD 6 billion into the sector while replacing the banks' management teams.^{152,}

¹⁵³ These reforms were in addition to the 2006 consolidation program that reduced the number of banks from 89 to 24.¹⁵⁴



© Chippla Vandu
Nigerian Central Bank HQ in Abuja

Although the aim of the recent reforms was to increase lending to farmers and small manufacturers, the banking crisis and subsequent suspension of lending led to less available credit for individuals and small businesses.^{155, 156} For access to cash, about 65% of the population uses the informal sector, which includes private money lenders, friends, and credit unions; this has resulted in a largely cash-based economy.^{157, 158} Individuals (particularly women) who lack collateral yet have a business plan are enabled by microcredit to acquire the capital to actualize their proposal.¹⁵⁹ Rural communities still have little access to credit, however,

¹⁴⁷ 1999 estimate—Central Intelligence Agency, “Nigeria: Economy,” in *The World Factbook*, 24 January 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>

¹⁴⁸ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, “Country Profile: Nigeria: Economy,” July 2008, 13, <http://memory.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Nigeria.pdf>

¹⁴⁹ The Heritage Foundation, “2011 Index of Economic Freedom: Nigeria,” 2011, <http://www.heritage.org/index/Country/Nigeria>

¹⁵⁰ Voice of America, “Nigeria Bank Crisis Prompts Reforms,” 29 August 2009, <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/a-13-2009-08-29-voa33-68658757.html>

¹⁵¹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Background Notes: Nigeria,” 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

¹⁵² Drew Hinshaw, “Nigeria’s Banking Crisis,” *Global Post*, 15 October 2009, <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/nigeria/091013/nigerias-banking-crisis>

¹⁵³ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Background Notes: Nigeria,” 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

¹⁵⁴ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Background Notes: Nigeria,” 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

¹⁵⁵ Louise Greenwood, “Nigeria’s New Credit Crunch,” *BBC News*, 29 September 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/8271450.stm>

¹⁵⁶ *The Economist*, “Nigeria’s Banking Clean-Up: Invasive Surgery,” 22 October 2009, <http://www.economist.com/node/14710784>

¹⁵⁷ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Background Notes: Nigeria,” 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

¹⁵⁸ The Heritage Foundation, “2011 Index of Economic Freedom: Nigeria,” 2011, <http://www.heritage.org/index/Country/Nigeria>

¹⁵⁹ This situation was addressed by Herman de Soto in *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else* (New York: Basic Books, 2000). He argues that a haphazard regulatory

and small businesses and the real-estate sector continue to receive lesser loans. The internet banking, retail corporate, and home loan markets are among the most competitive sectors.¹⁶⁰

Tourism

For visitors, Nigeria has numerous attractions such as wildlife reserves, coastal beaches, diverse cultural groups, and museums. Although tourist attractions are well maintained by African standards, the Nigerian government has not promoted the nation as a place to visit. Military rule has not been conducive to tourism and ethnic violence is still discouraging to tourists.¹⁶¹

Therefore, tourist revenues are not a major contributor to the economy.¹⁶²



© Jeff Attaway
Hotel in Abuja

Trade

Nigeria trades mostly with the United States, Asia, and Europe. The United States is Nigeria's leading export partner because of Nigerian petroleum. As the fifth-largest oil exporter to the United States, Nigeria sends nearly half its daily oil production there.¹⁶³ Two other main Nigerian exports are cocoa and rubber. In terms of Nigeria's imports, China leads at 15% for machinery, transport equipment, chemicals, manufactured goods, and foodstuffs. Domestic trade moves between the north and the south as well as between larger cities.¹⁶⁴

Standard of Living

Wealth garnered from oil extraction has not filtered down to the majority of Nigeria's increasing population. Instead, it has been squandered on lavish consumption or lost to corruption. Poverty has steadily increased, with approximately 70% of the population below the poverty line in 2007.^{165, 166} Nigeria is now trying to leverage its wealth against poor social indicators, particularly in rural areas.

About one-half the Nigerian population lives in rural areas where agriculture is both a source of food and income.¹⁶⁷ But with the marginalization of agriculture, crop farmers and cattle herders find fewer customers because wealthier consumers often prefer high-quality imported fare. This

environment forces the poor into the underground economy, which does not allow them to count their assets, such as housing, as capital.

¹⁶⁰ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Notes: Nigeria," 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

¹⁶¹ Encyclopædia Britannica, "Nigeria: Economy," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

¹⁶² AllAfrica, "Nigeria: 'Tourism Contributes Little to Our Economy,' Adeola," 8 October 2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201010210164.html>

¹⁶³ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Notes: Nigeria," 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

¹⁶⁴ Encyclopædia Britannica, "Nigeria: Economy," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

¹⁶⁵ Briony Hale, "Nigeria's Economy Dominated by Oil," BBC News, 16 January 2002, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/1763464.stm>

¹⁶⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, "Nigeria: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 24 January 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>

¹⁶⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, "Nigeria: People," in *The World Factbook*, 24 January 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>

prompts many farmers to abandon failing agricultural livelihoods and move to the cities.^{168, 169} There they confront a far different reality in which financial security is difficult to attain.¹⁷⁰

Aside from underemployment and poverty, other conditions affecting the standard of living include high numbers of people living with HIV (in 2009, the world's second-highest rate after South Africa), malnourishment, and high infant and maternal mortality rates.^{171, 172, 173, 174} Nigeria is committed to meeting the U.N.-sponsored Millennium Development Goals between 2000 and 2015, involving education, poverty reduction, health, gender equality, the environment, and global development cooperation.¹⁷⁵ Toward this end, Nigeria has increased per capita spending to an estimated USD 2,400, after a low of USD 300 in 1998.^{176, 177} Poverty and violence in Nigeria are connected because groups fight for land and resources; the conflicts lead to increased poverty and malnourishment.¹⁷⁸

Foreign Investment

Foreign investment in Nigeria comprised 37.6% of GDP in 2009.¹⁷⁹ Although the amount of investment had quadrupled from 1995 to 2009, its percentage of GDP had decreased by 20%.¹⁸⁰ The United States has been Nigeria's largest foreign investor, with USD 339 million



© Salamsm / wikipedia.com
Lagos, and the largest financial center of Nigeria

¹⁶⁸ Sonnie Ekwowusi, "Population Not Cause of Our Problem," Black Herbals, 25 September 2002, http://www.blackherbals.com/overpopulation_is_not_the_problem.htm

¹⁶⁹ Economy Watch, "Nigeria Industry Sectors," n.d., http://www.economywatch.com/world_economy/nigeria/industry-sector-industries.html

¹⁷⁰ For example, Benin City is home to 1 million people, 90% of whom are unemployed. In the past, the city was the site of significant commercial activity, with major products including wood, rubber, manufactured furniture, and bronze figures. But in recent years Benin City has become known as a source of trafficked humans, most notably young girls from impoverished families who venture abroad as indentured servants in the sex trade.—Klaus Brinkbäumer, "An African Odyssey Part III: Surviving the Sahara on the Way to Europe," Spiegel Online International, 29 January 2007, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/spiegel/0,1518,462089,00.html>

¹⁷¹ "United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) Country Progress Report: Nigeria," UNAIDS, March 2010, 24, 37, http://www.unaids.org/en/dataanalysis/monitoringcountryprogress/2010progressreportsubmittedbycountries/nigeria_2010_country_progress_report_en.pdf

¹⁷² All Africa, "Nigeria: Nation and Millennium Development Goals," 5 October 2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201010050212.html>

¹⁷³ The World Bank, "Nigeria: Country Brief," September 2010, <http://go.worldbank.org/FIIOT240K0>

¹⁷⁴ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "Nigeria," 24 January 2011, <http://www.fao.org/countries/55528/en/nga/>

¹⁷⁵ UN Development Programme, "UNDP's Support to the Achievement of the MDG's in Nigeria," 2007, <http://web.ng.undp.org/nigeriamdgs.shtml>

¹⁷⁶ Roger Blench, "Nigeria: Maximising Pro-Poor Growth: Regenerating the Socio-Economic Database," Overseas Development Institute, 16–17 June 2004, http://www.odi.org.uk/speeches/nigeria_2004/Blench%20Nigeria%20%20paper%20web.pdf

¹⁷⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, "Nigeria: People," in *The World Factbook*, 24 January 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>

¹⁷⁸ Federal Ministry of Health, "Statement on Nigeria and the Millennium Development Goals," 7 October 2010, <http://www.fmh.gov.ng/index.php/resources/speeches-delivered/767-statement-on-nigeria-and-the-millennium-development-goals>

¹⁷⁹ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations World Investment Report of 2010, "Country Fact Sheets: Nigeria," 2010, <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Page.asp?intItemID=2441&lang=1>

¹⁸⁰ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations World Investment Report of 2010, "Country Fact Sheets: Nigeria," 2010, <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Page.asp?intItemID=2441&lang=1>

in 2006.¹⁸¹ Most of 2010's total estimated USD 67 billion in foreign investment went to the oil industry, with some going into telecommunication and manufacturing.¹⁸² Nigeria offers investors significant incentives, such as abundant natural resources and cheap labor.^{183, 184} Nevertheless, Nigeria has a number of impediments to investment: corruption, inadequate infrastructure, a poor regulatory environment, restrictive trade policies, inadequate dispute resolution mechanisms, an ineffective court system, and crime and security concerns.^{185, 186}

Business Culture

While outsiders see corruption as pervasive, Nigerians themselves view it as taking two different forms.¹⁸⁷ One involves public officials who solicit bribes that go directly into their own pockets.¹⁸⁸ The other is the deeply embedded culture of patronage that operates down to the village level.¹⁸⁹

The latter form is seen as legitimate, whereas the former often fuels social discontent. Pulling strings to help a relative or friend get a job is seen as fulfilling one's obligation as a relation of that person. In addition to kin, this practice extends to those who share the same community of origin or who maintain other ties across the social hierarchy. This patron-client system has long functioned as a substitute for civil service hiring and the transparent distribution of public goods. In effect, it offers the group informal access to resources.¹⁹⁰



© Jeff Attaway
Market in Abuja

By contrast, the solicitation of bribes by officials, be it from passing motorists or a foreign investor looking to land a lucrative contract, is not viewed as a legitimate practice. Thus, when Nigerians complain about corruption, they are really speaking of the self enrichment form and how this has

¹⁸¹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Nigeria," 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

¹⁸² Bureau of Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "2010 Investment Climate Statement: Nigeria," March 2010, <http://www.state.gov/e/eeb/rls/othr/ics/2010/138123.htm>

¹⁸³ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Nigeria," 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

¹⁸⁴ Bureau of Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "2010 Investment Climate Statement: Nigeria," March 2010, <http://www.state.gov/e/eeb/rls/othr/ics/2010/138123.htm>

¹⁸⁵ Bureau of Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "2010 Investment Climate Statement: Nigeria," March 2010, <http://www.state.gov/e/eeb/rls/othr/ics/2010/138123.htm>

¹⁸⁶ The Heritage Foundation, "2011 Index of Economic Freedom: Nigeria," 2011, <http://www.heritage.org/index/Country/Nigeria>

¹⁸⁷ Mashood Erubami and Ian R. Young "Nigeria's Corruption and Related Economic Behavior in Their Global Context," CHRRD Research Review, no. 1, Center for Human Rights Research and Development, September 2003, <http://www.chrrd.kabissa.org/nigeria-corruption-review.htm>

¹⁸⁸ Sue Hawley, "Exporting Corruption: Privatisation, Multinationals and Bribery," The Corner House, June 2000, <http://www.thecornerhouse.org.uk/pdf/briefing/19bribe.pdf>

¹⁸⁹ David Strain, review of *A Culture of Corruption: Everyday Deception and Popular Discontent in Nigeria*, by Daniel Jordan Smith, Peace Corps Writers, 2007, <http://peacecorpswriters.org/pages/2007/0701/701rv-culture.html>

¹⁹⁰ Daniel Jordan Smith, "Introduction," in *A Culture of Corruption: Everyday Deception and Popular Discontent in Nigeria* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 18–19.

displaced the tradition of helping others when one is in a position to do so. In their eyes, this trend has contributed to a decline in morality.¹⁹¹

¹⁹¹ This is the argument of James Scott in *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976). Scott has observed that farmers place subsistence considerations above all else. Out of this come the norms of reciprocity that enable the group to survive.

Chapter 3: Assessment

1. Since Nigeria's independence in 1960, little industrial development has occurred.

True

Since Nigeria gained independence in 1960, little industrial development has occurred. This creates a lack of diversity that renders the Nigerian economy vulnerable to price swings in the international oil market.

2. In 2007, poverty levels steadily decreased in Nigeria.

False

Poverty has steadily increased, with approximately 70% of the population below the poverty line in 2007.

3. Agriculture became a major export sector after the oil boom because of the vast amounts of arable land.

False

Agriculture in Nigeria has not kept up with the nation's rapid population growth. Nigeria continues to face low productivity levels and a food deficit despite the availability of arable farm land.

4. Roughly 65% of Nigerians prefer to utilize the informal financial sector instead of dealing with banks.

True

Nigerian banks prefer to extend loans to businesses with assets rather than to enter the riskier market of consumer lending. As a result, roughly 65% of the population access cash through the informal sector, which includes private money lenders, friends, and credit unions.

5. Revenues from tourism contribute significantly to the Nigerian economy.

False

While the country's tourist attractions, such as its nature reserves and museums, are well maintained by African standards, the Nigerian government has put little investment into promoting the nation as a place to visit. As a result, tourist revenues are not a major contributor to the economy.

Chapter 4: Society

Introduction

Nigerian culture is noteworthy for its diversity, since the country is home to over 250 ethnic groups.¹⁹² The vast differences between these groups are expressed in this quotation: “The Niger Delta man, the Omani man, the Ijaw man, is as far from the Yoruba man or the Hausa man culturally, linguistically, and even physically, as Spain is from Norway, or as Portugal is from England.”¹⁹³ Yet the cultures frequently blend when different groups live in proximity, and the boundaries between them often prove quite fluid. All groups share a commitment to preserving traditional cultural rituals. Indigenous festivals, music, storytelling, and dance performances remain popular, particularly in rural areas.

Ethnic Groups

Ethnic population figures for Nigeria are unreliable and contentious due to measurement problems and political manipulation. According to some estimates, the Hausa-Fulani in the North represent 29% of the population, the Yoruba in the southwest constitute 21%, and the Igbo in the southeast comprise 19%.¹⁹⁴

Yoruba

The encompassing designation “Yoruba” does not refer to a cohesive ethnic group, but smaller communities that are loosely linked by geography, language, history, and religion.¹⁹⁵ As a whole, the Yoruba people have long been urban dwellers, establishing numerous centralized kingdoms over the centuries. Traditionally, the king (*oba*) presiding over each kingdom lived in a centrally located palace in the capital city, which was typically large and densely populated.¹⁹⁶ The Yoruba people remain one of Nigeria’s most urban groups, as evidenced in Lagos, where they make up the majority of the population.¹⁹⁷ As residents of urban environments, they often specialize in skilled trades or provide services for others. However, many will also migrate to rural areas to engage in agricultural activities for portions of the year.

The Yoruba have embraced both Christianity and Islam, but they have also maintained many of their beliefs in Yoruban deities, known as *Orisha*.



© pjtter 05 / flickr.com
Nenwe family



© pjtter05 / flickr.com
Typical colored dress

¹⁹² Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Background Notes: Nigeria,” December 2008, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

¹⁹³ John Ghazvinian, “Chapter One: The Onshore Effect,” in *Untapped: The Scramble for Africa’s Oil* (New York: Harcourt, 2007), 69.

¹⁹⁴ National Geographic, “Nigeria: Nigeria Information and History,” in *National Geographic’s Atlas of the World*, 8th ed., 2004, http://www3.nationalgeographic.com/places/countries/country_nigeria.html

¹⁹⁵ School of Fine Arts, Indiana University, “Cutting to the Essence: History,” 29 March 1995, <http://www.fa.indiana.edu/~conner/yoruba/cut.html>

¹⁹⁶ World Museum Liverpool, “Yoruba, Nigeria,” n.d., <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/wml/humanworld/worldcultures/africa/nigeriayoruba/>

¹⁹⁷ The Online NewsHour, PBS, “Oil and Politics in Nigeria: Background Report: Ethnicity in Nigeria,” 5 April 2007, http://www.pbs.org/newshour/indepth_coverage/africa/nigeria/ethnic.html

Yoruban culture can also be seen in the Caribbean and other areas of the world, because many Yoruba were taken in the trans-Atlantic slave trade.¹⁹⁸

Hausa

The name Hausa refers to people who may come from different cultural origins but who share the Hausa language and, for the most part, the Islamic faith. In northern Nigeria, Hausa is the native language of the majority of the population and the regional tongue regardless of a resident's first language.¹⁹⁹ The Hausa have long been based out of southern Niger and northern Nigeria, but they have also established communities in such countries as Ghana and Sudan.²⁰⁰ They are the largest ethnic group in West Africa.

Igbo

The Igbo have traditionally prized individual enterprise, a trait that has sometimes been used as an explanation for their prosperity and social mobility. During the socialization process, they are encouraged to succeed in an environment in which open competition is acceptable and those with skills are rewarded with higher status.²⁰¹



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Nigerian Christian students

In contrast to the Hausa and Yoruba administrative hierarchy, Igbo society was traditionally egalitarian and decentralized. Observers have noted that this social structure made it easier for European missionaries to convert the Igbo people to Christianity, which remains the dominant faith among the Igbo today. Broadly, Igbo people played a large part in Nigerian politics during the British colonial era and the establishment of Nigerian independence. However, their presence in politics has declined in recent decades.²⁰²

Ijaw

The Ijaw are the fourth-largest ethnic group in Nigeria, comprising approximately 10% of the population.²⁰³ They are divided into numerous subgroups who speak mutually unintelligible dialects of the Ijaw language. This is because the Niger Delta historically made travel among its disparate regions difficult, thereby ensuring that local communities were largely self-contained. The Ijaw homeland comprises much of the territory where Nigerian sweet crude oil is located.²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁸ World Museum Liverpool, "Yoruba, Nigeria," n.d., <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/wml/humanworld/worldcultures/africa/nigeria/yoruba/>

¹⁹⁹ University of California, Los Angeles, "Who are the Hausas? The Range of Hausas," 20 August 2008, <http://www.humnet.ucla.edu/humnet/aflang/Hausa/Language/bg.html>

²⁰⁰ Susan O'Brien, "Pilgrimage, Power, and Identity: The Role of the *Hajj* in the Lives of Nigerian Hausa *Bori* Adepts," *Africa Today* 46, no. 3/4 (1999), Indiana University Press, <http://www.jstor.org/pss/4187283>

²⁰¹ Ronald Cohen and Abe Goldman, "Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment: Ethnicity: Regional Groupings: The Southern Area," in *Nigeria: A Country Study*, Helen Chapin Metz, ed., Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, June 1991, <http://www.country-data.com/cgi-bin/query/r9377.html>

²⁰² The Online NewsHour, PBS, "Oil and Politics in Nigeria: Background Report: Ethnicity in Nigeria," 5 April 2007, http://www.pbs.org/newshour/indepth_coverage/africa/nigeria/ethnic.html

²⁰³ Central Intelligence Agency, "Nigeria," in *The World Factbook*, 22 January 2009, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>

²⁰⁴ Bronwen Manby, "Oil Companies and the Oil Producing Communities," in *The Price of Oil: Corporate Responsibility and Human Rights Violations in Nigeria's Oil Producing Communities* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999), <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/nigeria/Nigew991-06.htm>

Languages

British colonial rule introduced English as the medium of exchange for official business. The subsequent adoption of English as the official language of independent Nigeria precluded the need to select one tribal dialect among the many spoken in the country. The language selected would have likely been the mother tongue of whichever ethnic group had the most power at the time. Such a selection would have elevated that language's status above the others and likely added to ethnic unrest.²⁰⁵ Nigerians from different linguistic groups typically communicate in English, although proficiency in two or more native languages is common.²⁰⁶ Hausa is spoken as a *koine*, or common language, in the North.²⁰⁷ Igbo is the primary language in the southeast while Yoruba is the most prevalent language in the southwest.²⁰⁸



© Mike Blyth
School girls

Religion

The respective sizes of Nigeria's substantial Muslim and Christian populations have been a sensitive subject of consideration. The government chose not to place a question about religious affiliation in the national census of 2006, the first to be held since 1991.²⁰⁹ Christians and Muslims are generally considered to claim an approximately equal number of adherents in Nigeria.



© Kipp Jones
Mosque in Abuja

The east-west middle belt is the transition zone between the Christian-dominated South and the Muslim North. This region is inhabited by dozens of small, minority ethnic groups. This makes it the focus of intense competition between Muslim and Christian organizations seeking converts. Although the term missionary is often associated with white foreign nationals, the majority of missionaries, either Christian or Muslim, are African.²¹⁰

The return to civilian rule in 1999 resulted in a new constitution that recognized collective religious rights and granted a greater degree of self-rule for each region. Several Muslim-dominated states in

²⁰⁵ Aaron Shields, "Nigeria Background Information: Why Study Nigeria?" Geographic Alliance of Iowa, University of Northern Iowa, n.d., http://www.uni.edu/gai/Nigeria/Background/why_study_nigeria.html

²⁰⁶ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Nigeria," December 2008, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

²⁰⁷ J. McCord-Rotondo, "Hausaland: Introduction," in *Sacred and Secular in the African Americas* (electronic project), Xavier University of Louisiana, 1998, <http://webusers.xula.edu/jrotondo/Kingdoms/Hausaland/HausaHistNarr.htm>

²⁰⁸ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Nigeria," December 2008, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

²⁰⁹ Robert Ruby and Timothy Samuel Shah, "Nigeria's Presidential Election: The Christian-Muslim Divide," Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, Pew Research Center, 22 March 2007, <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/435/nigeria-presidential-election>

²¹⁰ Geographic Alliance of Iowa, University of Northern Iowa, "Nigeria Background Information: Standard 5: Regions Used to Interpret the Complexity of Nigeria," n.d., <http://www.uni.edu/gai/Nigeria/Background/Standard5.html>

the North then opted to introduce shari'a, or Islamic law, as the regional criminal code.²¹¹ This move was overwhelmingly endorsed by the Muslim public, who saw it as a means to maintain order given the ineffectiveness of the distant federal government.²¹² However, the Christian minorities in the northern cities feared that these laws would be imposed on them. In Kaduna, the proposed introduction of the shari'a criminal code sparked violence between Christian demonstrators and Muslim bystanders, resulting in the deaths of several hundred people.²¹³ One observer noted that the application of shari'a resulted in violence only in places where ethnic tensions were already evident.²¹⁴

The institution of the shari'a criminal code undeniably created a constitutional problem. The Nigerian constitution guarantees a secular state and freedom of religion. Yet under shari'a law, the religious activities of non-Muslims are highly circumscribed. The promotion of the Christian religion is strictly prohibited, and renouncing Islam for another religion is a crime punishable by death.²¹⁵ Thus, at both constitutional and practical levels, the guarantee of religious freedom remains incompatible with shari'a, because Islam rejects the separation of governmental and religious authority.²¹⁶ Indeed, a governor of a state that enforces shari'a law declared that non-Muslims do not have the prerogative to judge its legitimacy.²¹⁷

But some Muslims have questioned the role of shari'a law in the 12 states that have put it into effect. For example, Muslim playwright and human rights activist Shehu Sani, wrote a parody of the application of shari'a law in Nigeria. In it he expressed the view that the poor had been unjustly victimized by harsh punishments for minor sins, such as possessing ostensibly immoral material or drinking alcohol, while more serious transgressions committed by elected officials, such as



© Melvin Baker
Drummers at the New Yam Festival

²¹¹ Some aspects of Islamic civil law were integrated into the legal system in northern Nigeria during the early British colonial period. The extension of these laws in the North to include harsh criminal punishments has generated much controversy.— Dan Issacs, “Islam in Nigeria: Simmering Tensions,” BBC News, International Version, 24 September 2003, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3155279.stm>

²¹² Gilbert Khadiagala, “Islam and Democratic Transition in Nigeria: Paradoxes and Predicaments,” Africa Program, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 11 April 2002, http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=1417&categoryid=09B6BF65-65BF-E7DC-40F567F157F96E15&fuseaction=topics.events_item_topics&event_id=6243

²¹³ Justin Pearce, “Religion: Nigeria’s Latest Flashpoint,” BBC News, 22 February 2000, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/652118.stm>

²¹⁴ The unrest occurred precisely because the proposed extension of shari'a into criminal matters inflamed the already tense relations between the Christian minority tribes in the North and the Hausa-Fulani majority who dominate the state government.—B. Aisha Lumu, “Religious Education in Nigeria: A Case Study,” Oslo Coalition on Freedom of Religion or Belief, University of Oslo, 2002, <http://folk.uio.no/leirvik/OsloCoalition/AishaLemu.htm>

²¹⁵ Phillip Jenkins, “Nigeria as a Global Trouble Spot,” adapted from *The Coming of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), *The Globalist*, 6 December 2002, <http://www.theglobalist.com/StoryId.aspx?StoryId=2874>

²¹⁶ Rosanne Van Vierzen, “Group Backgrounds: Muslims,” Diversity Watch, Ryerson University School of Journalism, n.d., <http://www.diversitywatch.ryerson.ca/backgrounds/muslims.htm>

²¹⁷ BBC News, “Nigeria Sharia Architect Defends Law,” 21 March 2002, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/1885052.stm>

plundering public funds, went unprosecuted.²¹⁸ Public performances of his work were banned in 2007.²¹⁹ In turn, Sani sued the government on grounds of freedom of expression.

Gender Issues

Violence against women at the hands of their male family members is reputed to be widespread in Nigeria. The practice is often tolerated due to the public perception that such occurrences are a private matter for the household, in which women traditionally play a subordinate role. This “culture of silence” reinforces the stigma that women confront if they acknowledge their abuse to outsiders, let alone seek legal help. Despite being victims of abuse, they are often seen as the guilty party.²²⁰



© pjotter05 / flickr.com
Women in Enugu

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is practiced by many tribes in Nigeria, regardless of religion. Some form of FGM affects an estimated 60% of the total female population, although some experts agree that the real numbers may be much higher.²²¹

FGM is regarded as an initiation rite that every girl must undergo in order to be an attractive candidate for marriage, which in most cases is the only way she can secure her future. The common belief is that a woman who has not been circumcised will be “promiscuous, unclean, unmarriageable, undesirable,” and may pose health risks to herself or her children. Traditional practitioners, who may lack either medical training or formal knowledge of anatomy and human hygiene, often carry out the procedure without the use of anesthesia, which is only given in hospitals. Severe complications, including death, can ensue, but the practice remains widespread.²²²

Educational campaigns have spread word throughout Nigeria about the dangers of FGM. The Nigerian government has also publicly opposed the practice, but there is no federal law banning it. Some states have drafted their own laws, with consequences ranging from fines to imprisonment.²²³

Some Nigerian women have chosen to pursue their gender-specific concerns through associations affiliated with their own ethnicity and religious beliefs. These organizations include the Federation for Muslim Women’s Associations and the Federation of Ogoni Women’s Associations. But the divisions among these associations make it more difficult to mobilize women on a national basis

²¹⁸ Reuben Abati, “Shehu Sani and the Sharia Establishment,” The Nigerian Village Square, 18 October 2007, <http://www.nigeriavillagesquare.com/articles/reuben-abati/shehu-sani-and-the-sharia-establis-2.html>

²¹⁹ BBC News, International Version, “Nigerian Sharia Court Bans Play,” 8 October 2007, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7033502.stm>

²²⁰ Amnesty International, “Nigeria’s Unheard Voices: Widespread Violence Against Women in the Family,” The Nigerian Village Square, 3 May 2007, <http://www.nigeriavillagesquare.com/features/nigeria-inglobal-news/nigerias-unheard-voices.html>

²²¹ Office of the Senior Coordinator for International Women’s Issues, U.S. Department of State, “Nigeria: Report on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or Female Genital Cutting (FGC),” AsylumLaw.org, 1 June 2001, http://www.asylumlaw.org/docs/nigeria/usdos01_fgm_Nigeria.pdf

²²² Understanding FGM requires an interdisciplinary background involving anthropology, ethnology, political science, law, health, and medical specialties.—Tobe Levin, “Internet-Based Resources on Female Genital Mutilation,” *Feminist Collections: A Quarterly of Women’s Studies Resources*, University of Wisconsin System Women’s Studies Librarian, 1 August 2002, <http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/fc/fcwebfgm.htm>

²²³ Office of the Senior Coordinator for International Women’s Issues, U.S. Department of State, “Nigeria: Report on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or Female Genital Cutting (FGC),” AsylumLaw.org, 1 June 2001, http://www.asylumlaw.org/docs/nigeria/usdos01_fgm_Nigeria.pdf

against the legal and informal discrimination they face in such areas as employment and inheritance.²²⁴

Traditional Celebrations

Egungun

The *Egungun* festival falls near the end of April when the ancestral spirits are invited to appear in physical form. *Egungun* (ancestors) have individual names that are usually chosen to commemorate prominent members of the community from the past. They are collectively known as *Ara Orun*, or “Dwellers of Heaven.” The supernatural power that they have over the community is conveyed through dances.²²⁵

Dancers masquerade in costumes made of overlapping and stitched segments of fabric.²²⁶ They move in a circular fashion, allowing the costume, which is adorned with pieces of decorated cloth, to fly through the air and occasionally touch members of the audience. This practice is meant to symbolize the presence of the ancestors.²²⁷



© William Murphy
New Yam Festival

New Yam Festival

Typically held in August, the New Yam Festival is a major celebration for the Igbo people. The event marks the transition from one agricultural cycle to the next, with the primary Igbo food staple, the yam, taking precedence in the festivities.²²⁸ On the last night before the celebration, the prior year’s yams are discarded, as the new year must begin with yams from the latest harvest. The Igbo offer the yam harvest to God and their ancestors before distributing the bounty among the community.²²⁹ The community leader tastes the first yam as part of a traditional rite, and the public shares a multitude of yam dishes in the accompanying feast. Dancing, other rites, and festive activities also take place as part of the harvest celebration.²³⁰

Cuisine

Nigerian cuisine varies according to ethnic group and location. In the South, peppery stews are common, as is palm wine, an alcoholic beverage made from palm trees. Grains and beef comprise a large share of the diet in the North. Palm oil is used as a basic cooking ingredient throughout the country. Fried yam chips, plantains, vegetable soup (*efo*), goat head pepper soup (*isi-ewu*), and a meal called *tuwo*, which is made from maize, rice, or millet, are all popular



© pjotter 05 / flickr.com
Pepper soup

²²⁴ Eghosa E. Osaghae and Rotimi T. Suberu, “A History of Identities, Violence, and Stability in Nigeria,” Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity, University of Oxford, January 2005, <http://www.crise.ox.ac.uk/pubs/workingpaper6.pdf>

²²⁵ Babalorisa Adeyemi Efundeji Oyeilumi, “What is *Egungun*?” *Roots and Rooted*, 25 March 2008, <http://www.rootsandrooted.org/?p=3>

²²⁶ MotherlandNigeria.com, “Festivals: Egungun Festival,” 1998–2002, <http://www.motherlandnigeria.com/festivals.html>

²²⁷ Michael C. Carlos Museum, Emory University, “Africa: Ritual and Ceremony: Egungun,” n.d., http://www.carlos.emory.edu/ODYSSEY/AFRICA/AF_rit_cerem_mask_egungun.html

²²⁸ African yams are quite large, pale-colored, and marginally sweet. They are distinct from American sweet potatoes, which are sometimes also referred to as yams.

²²⁹ MotherlandNigeria.com, “Festivals: New Yam Festival,” 1998–2002, <http://www.motherlandnigeria.com/festivals.html>

²³⁰ BBC Local, Birmingham, “Community Features: Celebrating Iwa-ji (New Yam) Festival, 2005,” 18 August 2005, http://www.bbc.co.uk/birmingham/content/articles/2005/08/16/iwaji_festival2005_feature.shtml

Nigerian dishes.²³¹ Originating with the Hausa, *suya*, a form of barbecued meat, is also popular throughout the country.²³²

Nigeria produces more cassava than any other country.²³³ Accordingly, the cassava (a tuber) is a staple of the diet of many Nigerians. A common dish made from the cassava is *gari*, which consists of toasted cassava flour granules served with a variety of sauces. As *gari* has grown in popularity in Nigeria's densely populated urban centers (where few can afford imported food products), the cassava industry has expanded.²³⁴

Fulani

The Fulani of northern Nigeria are semi-nomadic pastoralists whose dietary intake contains relatively large amounts of fat derived from dairy products and cooking oils. While such a high saturated fat intake would seemingly predispose the Fulani to cardiovascular problems, their active lifestyle helps offset this aspect of their diet. They also rarely smoke or consume alcohol, and they are usually slender.²³⁵

Hausa

Millet, maize, and sorghum are the primary staple crops grown by the Hausa. Combining ground grain and maize, they produce a type of flour that is used to make a variety of different dishes. Porridge, which is served with every meal, is one such dish. Beans and peanuts are a major part of the Hausa diet; meat dishes are less common.²³⁶

Dress Codes

Nigerians are smart dressers and it is not unusual to see business suits in the large cities of the South, even in the high heat. This is a sign of respect. Traditional Nigerian attire is also common. Overall, modes of dress differ depending on the region and ethnic group, although the central theme is modesty, especially for women.

Traditional Dress

Men in the North wear *caftans*, which are long, loose-fitting garments that are typically paired with a colorfully embroidered hat or turban. In the South, Western-style clothing is seen along with traditional dress. Men wear a *buba*,²³⁷ a loose-fitting shirt that reaches mid-thighs, with *sokoto*, or trousers. The round cap often seen on men is called a *fila*.²³⁸



© PineAppler! / Mad African
Ceremonial dress

²³¹ Margot Herrman and Roma Patel, "Nigeria," Rice University, n.d., <http://www.owlnet.rice.edu/~rpatel/>

²³² Ike Okonta, "Pulling Nigeria Back From the Brink," Project Syndicate, September 2002, <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/okonta1>

²³³ Truman P. Phillips, et al., "A Cassava Industrial Revolution in Nigeria: The Potential for a New Industrial Crop," UN FAO Corporate Document Repository, 2004, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/007/y5548e/y5548e01.htm>

²³⁴ UN FAO Corporate Document Repository, "The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2000," 2000, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/x8200e/x8200e05.htm>

²³⁵ The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, "Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factors and Diet of Fulani Pastoralists of Northern Nigeria," December 2001, <http://www.ajcn.org/cgi/content/full/74/6/730?maxtoshow=&HITS=10&hits=10&RESULTFORMAT=&author1=Glew&searchid=1&FIRSTINDEX=0&fdate=//&resourcetype=HWCIT>

²³⁶ Carrie Martin, "Hausa," eMuseum, Minnesota State University, Mankato, n.d., <http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/cultural/oldworld/africa/hausa.html>

²³⁷ The names of the clothing pieces listed in this section are Yoruban and may be different in the other languages of Nigeria.

²³⁸ MotherlandNigeria.com, "Attire," 1998–2002, <http://motherlandnigeria.com/attire.html>

Women wear wraparound skirts or dresses, not pants. Long rectangular pieces of cloth, known as *iro*, are wrapped around the waist and folded. The *iro* is accompanied by a *buba*, a loose top with an open neckline and long sleeves. These garments, as well as their corresponding head-ties or scarves, are made of colorful materials.²³⁹

Ceremonial Dress

A common form of dress in Nigeria is a flowing, loose-fitting robe known as an *agbada* (in Yoruba) or a *riga* (in Hausa). These robes are typically full-length, with wide sleeves and richly decorated patterns. Pants and an undershirt accompany the robe. Traditionally, *agbada* are worn by men of stature, although today they are often donned for special occasions, such as weddings and funerals.²⁴⁰

The Arts

Dance

Bata is a collaborative form of dance and music in Yoruban culture. It is traditionally performed in honor of Sango, a legendary Yoruban king associated with the Oyo and Ife dynasties. According to Yoruban lore, Sango's wife, Oya, provided him with a magic potion to make thunder and lightning, which he used to defeat his enemies in battle. Accordingly, Sango is honored as the god of thunder and lightning.

This theme is reflected in the dance itself, which consists of quick, jerky movements intended to mimic strikes of lightning, while the corresponding drumming approximates the sound of thunder. The dancers carry a small staff (*ose*) depicting a female figure whose head supports a double axe; the axe is symbolic of the bolts of lightning summoned by Sango.²⁴¹ The bata drums are sacred objects, as only special deer or goat hides may be used in their construction and only trained drummers may handle them.²⁴² Today, bata is performed on many special occasions, including weddings and child-naming ceremonies.²⁴³ Variants of this dance are found in the New World, such as in Cuba, where the descendants of slaves have preserved their Yoruban dance heritage.



© Lisa Goldman
Traditional Yoruba dancing



DLIFLC image
Chinua Achebe

Literature

Nigeria's most famous work of fiction, *Things Fall Apart*, by Chinua Achebe, has sold more than 10 million copies since it was published in 1958. The novel is set in an eastern Igbo village in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Achebe, winner of the 2007 Booker Prize for literature, depicts a world in which violence, conflict, and suffering are prevalent. These conditions are balanced by a strong sense of tradition, ritual, and social cohesion.²⁴⁴ The title refers to a verse in William Yeats' poem, "The

²³⁹ MSN Encarta Online Encyclopedia, "Nigeria: The People of Nigeria: Way of Life," 2007, http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761557915_4/Nigeria.html

²⁴⁰ Adire African Textiles, "Agbada: Men's Robes and Tunics," n.d., <http://www.adireafricantextiles.com/agbadainfo.htm>

²⁴¹ Flickr.com, "Yoruba Ose Sango Dance Wand," 27 November 2008, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/avmoble/3063851816/> (photo to be removed)

²⁴² Outoju Omotayo, "How Well Do You Know Yoruba Drums?" Daily Trust, 13 December 2008, http://www.dailytrust.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=863&Itemid=22

²⁴³ Jean Johnson Jones and Peter Badejo, "Yoruba Bata Dance Technique," Department of Dance Studies, University of Surrey, 10 June 2006, <http://www.surrey.ac.uk/Dance/AHRB/documents/Jean-Peter-full-paper.doc>

²⁴⁴ BBC News, International Edition, "Nigeria Author Wins Booker Honour," 13 June 2007, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/6745609.stm>

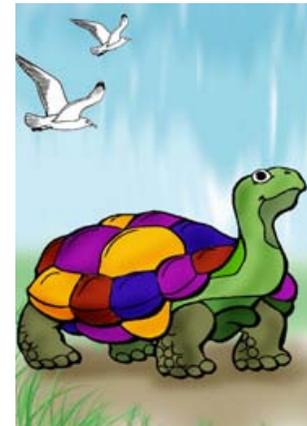
Second Coming,” which describes a world spinning out of control: “Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold.” By linking his novel to the poem, the African author demonstrated his awareness that he, too, was chronicling a period of sweeping change.²⁴⁵

As the narrative progresses, the reader experiences the sea of change which swept through village life after the arrival of colonial administrators and Christian missionaries. Non-Africans who read this novel are educated about the cultural traditions of the Igbos. Readers come to appreciate that the tribal heritage common to Africans is rich in tradition. In Achebe’s day, too many of his compatriots were ready to accept the European judgment that their continent had no history or culture to speak of.²⁴⁶

Folklore

All cultures produce stories that offer both children and adults different ways of making sense of life’s events. These folktales are found in written literature and oral tradition.

“The Tortoise and the Birds,” for example, appears in *Things Fall Apart*. In brief, it is a tale about a feast in the sky at which a tortoise manages to trick birds out of their food, but then falls to the ground and cracks his shell. The story offers an explanation for why his shell is not smooth and, in the process, it makes a moral point about his character. The tortoise is greedy and cunning, and he gets his comeuppance. He is not considered irredeemable; a medicine man patches him up, and he is reintegrated into society as a contributing member.



DoD image
Illustration of “The Tortoise and the Birds”

There are a number of variations on this tale that offer different explanations for how the tortoise cracked his shell. This reflects the difference between oral tradition and text. If a story loses its relevance, perhaps because of changing social mores and living conditions, it can be discarded or modified in a way that a library book cannot. This enables new stories to address changing realities. *Griots* (storytellers) typically mix established tales with improvisation. Their training enables them to adapt stories to fit the occasion and the specific interests of the audience.²⁴⁷



© Coca-Cola South Africa
Tanzania vs Nigeria

Sports

A chronic lack of funding for athletics has affected Nigeria in a number of ways. For example, talented track and field stars have left Nigeria to become naturalized citizens of countries that can offer them better training prospects as well as the opportunity to make more money. This has drained the talent pool in many fields.²⁴⁸ Furthermore, Nigeria failed in its bid to

²⁴⁵ The Economist, “‘Things Fall Apart’: A Golden Jubilee,” 23 October 2008.

http://www.economist.com/displayStory.cfm?story_id=12459705

²⁴⁶ Paul Brians, “Chinua Achebe: *Things Fall Apart* Study Guide,” Washington State University, 13 December 2005, <http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~brians/anglophone/achebe.html>

²⁴⁷ Cora Agatucci, “African Storytelling,” Central Oregon Community College, 31 August 2008, <http://web.cocc.edu/cagatucci/classes/hum211/afirstory.htm>

²⁴⁸ Sporting Life, “Tough Times for Nigerian Sport,” 2006, http://www.sportinglife.com/commonwealth2006/features/story_get.cgi?STORY_NAME=commonwealth/06/02/15/COMMONWEALTH_Nigeria_Overview.html

host the 2014 Commonwealth games in part because of an unwillingness to underwrite the games to the extent that other locales were willing to.²⁴⁹

Football (Soccer)

Football (soccer) is the sport that captures the most public attention in Nigeria. Its universal appeal is rooted in that the game can be played anywhere without the need for special equipment.²⁵⁰ The Nigerian national team, known as the Super Eagles, has demonstrated significant success on the international stage, winning the Olympic gold in 1996 and twice winning the African Nations Cup. A World Cup title has remained elusive for the team.

Dambe

Nigerian boxers have also fared well in international competition, perhaps because of the sport's similarity to an indigenous martial art.²⁵¹ *Dambe*, a Hausa sport, has been described as both wrestling and kickboxing. One hand is bound into a fist and swung at the opponent's head, while the other is used to parry blows and maintain balance. Grappling and kicking are also allowed. The object is to make one's opponent lose his balance and fall to the ground.²⁵² No protective gear is worn.



DLIFLC image
Nigerian boxer called *dambe*

Traditionally, *dambe* was practiced mainly by butchers, who wanted to offset their lowly social status by distinguishing themselves at a sport that draws large crowds of spectators. Competitions were historically held at the end of the harvest seasons, when farmers, having earned money from crop sales, were able to pay for entertainment.²⁵³ Today, excelling at sports is one of the few channels for upward mobility in Nigeria. The prospect of winning cash prizes has enticed many boys to train for *dambe* competitions, which are now included at the All African Games.

²⁴⁹ African Loft, "2014 Commonwealth Games: Glasgow Wins, Nigeria Loses," 10 November 2007, <http://www.africanloft.com/2014-commonwealth-games-glasgow-wins-abuja-loses/>

²⁵⁰ Sean Wilsey, "The Beautiful Game: Why Soccer Rules the World," National Geographic, June 2006, <http://www7.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0606/feature1/index.html>

²⁵¹ Thomas Green, "Dambe: Traditional Nigerian Boxing," *InYo: The Journal of Alternative Perspectives on the Martial Arts and Sciences* (September 2005), Electronic Journals of Martial Arts and Sciences, http://ejmas.com/jalt/2005jalt/jcsart_Green_0905.html

²⁵² Sarah Simpson, "Traditional Boxing Offers Opportunities for Poor Young Men in Northern Nigeria," Voice of America, 19 June 2008, <http://www.voanews.com/english/archive/2008-06/2008-06-19voa49.cfm>

²⁵³ Daily Times, "Traditional Butchers' Boxing is Reborn," 25 April 2002, http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=story_25-4-2002_pg2_7

Chapter 4: Assessments

1. The Hausa of northern Nigeria are the largest ethnic group in West Africa.

True

The Hausa people constitute the largest ethnic group in West Africa. In northern Nigeria, Hausa is the native language of the majority of the population and the regional tongue regardless of a resident's first language.

2. The Yoruba people have given up all of their traditional beliefs and embraced Christianity and Islam instead.

False

The Yoruba have embraced both Christianity and Islam, but they have also maintained many of their beliefs in Yoruban deities, known as Orisha. Yoruban culture can also be seen in the Caribbean and other areas of the world, because many Yorubans were taken in the transatlantic slave trade.

3. People of different Ijaw subtribes can communicate using the same Ijaw language.

False

The Ijaw are the fourth-largest ethnic group in Nigeria and comprise approximately 10% of the population. They are divided into numerous subgroups that speak mutually unintelligible dialects of the Ijaw language. This is because the Niger Delta historically made travel among its disparate regions difficult, thereby ensuring that the local communities were largely self-contained.

4. Nigerians commemorate ancestral spirits during the Egungun festival.

True

The Egungun festival falls near the end of April when the ancestral spirits are invited to appear in physical form. Egungun (ancestors) have individual names that are usually chosen to commemorate prominent members of the community from the past. The supernatural power that they have over the community is conveyed through dances.

5. Dambe is a Hausa martial art.

True

Nigerian boxers have fared well in international competition, perhaps because of the sport's similarity to an indigenous martial art. Dambe, a Hausa sport, has been described as both wrestling and kickboxing.

Chapter 5: Security

Introduction

Problems with insurgent groups, corruption, poverty, and sectarian violence, along with destabilizing coups against successive military and civilian governments, have prevented Nigeria from assuming the role of a regional power, which its population and natural resources could afford it.



DoD photo
Nigeria Air Force Base, Abuja

Nigeria gained independence from Great Britain in 1960, but shortly erased the hopes that it would become a democratic model for post-colonial African states.²⁵⁴

Beginning in 1966, conflict stemmed from ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic differences among Nigeria's major ethnic groups, and led to a civil war (1967–1970) that was centered on a failed secession by the mostly Christian, Igbo-majority people in the oil-rich southeastern region of Biafra.²⁵⁵ Millions died of starvation, disease, and violence. Despite promises there would be “no victor and no vanquished,” regional differences continue to affect the post-war country.²⁵⁶ A succession of military and civilian regimes governed Nigeria from the 1960s to the 1990s, hampered by frequent coups and continued conflict among ethnic and religious factions.²⁵⁷

In international relations, Nigeria is surrounded by generally weaker and smaller neighbors whose vulnerability to external influences may affect Nigerian security. As the most populous African nation, Nigeria tends to focus on African unity as well as regional economic cooperation and development.²⁵⁸

U.S.–Nigerian Relations

Since relations began in the 1960s, Nigerian oil and U.S. technology and investment have been the main economic interests binding the two nations. Counterterrorism cooperation in the wake of the 11 September 2001 attacks also boosted interaction on security issues.^{259, 260} Relations have been generally good since the 1998 death of General Sani Abacha, whose government's human rights abuses



© Munir Squires
Obasanjo speaking at a conference in Abuja

²⁵⁴ Helen Chapin Metz, ed. “The First Republic,” in *Nigeria: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1991, <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/68.htm>

²⁵⁵ Maj. Abubakar Atofarati, “The Nigerian Civil War, Causes, Strategies, and Lessons Learnt,” U.S. Marine Command and Staff College, 1992, <http://www.africamasterweb.com/BiafranWarCauses.html>

²⁵⁶ Phillips, Barnaby. Phillips, “Biafra: Thirty Yyears oOn.,” *BBC News*, January 13, 2000, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/596712.stm>

²⁵⁷ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., “Military Intervention and Rule,” in *Nigeria: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1991, <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/69.htm>

²⁵⁸ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Background Notes: Nigeria,” 3 February 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#history>

²⁵⁹ John Ayam, “The Development of Nigeria-U.S. Relations,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Journal of Third World Studies, 2008, <http://media.web.britannica.com/ebsco/pdf/435/35011435.pdf>

²⁶⁰ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., “Foreign Relations,” in *Nigeria: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1991, <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/80.htm>

led the United States to impose sanctions on Nigeria (though exempting Nigeria's trade in crude oil).²⁶¹

Abacha's death provided an opening for a transition to democracy, and former military ruler Lt. Gen Olusegun Obasanjo was installed as the first democratically elected president in 16 years. This also paved the way for closer ties between the two countries. Nigeria today serves as a key U.S. economic and security partner in the West African region and the continent.²⁶² With political turmoil in other oil-exporting countries, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa, U.S. policymakers see a stable Nigeria as increasingly important to U.S. energy needs.²⁶³ In 2010, Nigeria was the fifth-largest supplier of oil to the United States.²⁶⁴

To facilitate mutual cooperation, the two countries set up the U.S.–Nigeria Binational Commission in April 2010 to address good governance, energy and investment, food security and agriculture, and Niger Delta and regional security cooperation.²⁶⁵ The United States assists and funds Nigerian government institutions to foster transparency and accountability, promote rule of law, and battle corruption. U.S. funding also provides training and equipment for Nigerian peacekeepers deployed around Africa.

On Christmas Day 2010, a Nigerian student, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, attempted to bomb a Detroit-bound Northwest Airlines flight after transiting through Lagos and Amsterdam.²⁶⁶ As a result, the United States placed Nigeria on a list of over a dozen nations whose travelers would be subject to special screening upon arrival—a reaction the Nigerians considered “unfair” and potentially damaging to relations.²⁶⁷ The United States removed Nigeria from the special screening list in April 2010, and Nigeria announced plans to implement tougher airport security measures.^{268, 269}

Relations with Neighboring Countries

Nigeria has been a leading mouthpiece on African and regional issues with a foreign policy characterized mostly by good neighborliness.^{270, 271, 272} Nigeria has an outstanding record of

²⁶¹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Background Notes: Nigeria,” 3 February 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#history>

²⁶² Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Background Notes: Nigeria,” 3 February 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#relations>

²⁶³ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Background Notes: Nigeria,” 3 February 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

²⁶⁴ U.S. Energy Information Administration, “Crude Oil and Total Petroleum Imports Top 15 Countries,” January 28, 2011, http://www.eia.doe.gov/pub/oil_gas/petroleum/data_publications/company_level_imports/current/import.html

²⁶⁵ Bureau of Public Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “U.S.–Nigeria Binational Commission,” 6 April 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2010/04/139562.htm>

²⁶⁶ Camillus Eboh, “Nigeria Chafes at Tougher U.S. Air Security Rule,” Reuters, 5 January 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/01/05/us-security-airline-nigeria-idUSTRE6044EG20100105>

²⁶⁷ BBC News, “Nigeria Criticises ‘Unfair’ US Air Passenger Screening,” 4 January 2010, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/8439824.stm>

²⁶⁸ David Gollust, “US, Nigeria Establish Bi-National Commission,” VOA News, 6 April 2010, <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/africa/west/US-Nigeria-Establish-Bi-National-Commission-90046022.html>

²⁶⁹ Scott Bobb, “African Countries Step Up Airport Security Measures,” VOA News, January 6, 2010, <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/African-Countries-Step-Up-Airport-Security-Measures-80793337.html>

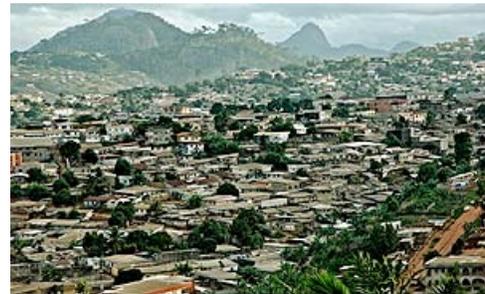
²⁷⁰ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., “Foreign Relations,” in *Nigeria: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1991, <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/80.htm>

²⁷¹ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., “African and Regional Issues,” in *Nigeria: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1991, <http://www.country-data.com/cgi-bin/query/r-9455.html>

commitment to peace and security in West Africa.²⁷³ In addition to being one of the largest contributor nations to UN peacekeeping missions elsewhere, Nigeria is engaged in all UN peacekeeping operations in Africa, including Darfur and Cote d'Ivoire.^{274, 275, 276} Nigeria was particularly crucial to the return of stability in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Nigeria has also championed regional economic cooperation and development. In 1975, Nigeria was a founding member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a regional group formed to promote cooperation, trade, and self-reliance among African nations. ECOWAS now includes neighbors Benin, Guinea, and Niger.²⁷⁷

Cameroon

Relations between Nigeria and Cameroon have historically involved conflicting territorial claims to the Bakassi Peninsula. Dating to the 19th century, this is just one of more than one hundred disputes across Africa resulting from arbitrary boundaries drawn by colonial powers.^{278, 279} Nigeria's boundary with Cameroon—its longest international border—traverses a strategic waterway that controls access to the Calabar Port, which is used by commercial shippers and is the site of the Nigerian Eastern Naval Command.²⁸⁰ The discovery of oil in the area heightened the stakes in the dispute, which periodically escalated into armed clashes.^{281, 282}



© Alvise Forcellini
View of Cameroon

Cameroon submitted its case to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), which in 2002 granted sovereignty over most of the peninsula and its maritime rights to Cameroon, based on colonial powers' correspondence and despite the then-Nigerian majority on the Bakassi Peninsula.^{283, 284,}

²⁷² Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Notes: Nigeria," 3 February 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#relations>

²⁷³ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Examining the U.S.-Nigeria Relationship in a Time of Transition," 23 February 2010, <http://www.state.gov/p/af/rls/rm/2010/137243.htm>

²⁷⁴ UN Peacekeeping, "Current Peacekeeping Operations," n.d., <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/current.shtml>

²⁷⁵ UN Peacekeeping, "UN Mission's Contributions by Country," 31 January 2011, http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2011/jan11_5.pdf

²⁷⁶ UN Peacekeeping, "Contributors to the UN Peacekeeping Operations," 31 January 2011, http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2011/jan11_1.pdf

²⁷⁷ Encyclopædia Britannica, "Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)," 2010, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/178329/Economic-Community-of-West-African-States-ECOWAS>

²⁷⁸ Keith Somerville, "Border Dispute an African Colonial Legacy," BBC News, 10 October 2002, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2316645.stm>

²⁷⁹ Andrew McGregor, "Cameroon Rebels Threaten Security in Oil Rich Gulf of Guinea," The Jamestown Foundation, 24 November 2010, [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=37208](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=37208)

²⁸⁰ Olayiwola Abegunrin, *Nigerian Foreign Policy under Military Rule, 1966–1999* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003).

²⁸¹ Keith Somerville, "Border Dispute an African Colonial Legacy," BBC News, 10 October 2002, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2316645.stm>

²⁸² Ntaryike Divine, Jr., "End of Nigeria-Cameroon Boundary Dispute in Sight," VOA News, 10 January 2010, <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/africa/central/cameroon-nigeria-boundary-demarcation-voa-81094267.html>

²⁸³ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Notes: Nigeria," 3 February 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#foreign>

²⁸⁴ BBC News, "Bakassi Nigerians Promised Safety," 22 August 2008, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7576253.stm>

²⁸⁵ In 2006, the two countries signed an agreement to implement the ICJ decision and Nigeria removed its troops from the area. In August 2008, Nigeria formally ceded the Bakassi Peninsula, after the death of scores of people in clashes and the movement of 100,000 from the peninsula to Nigeria.²⁸⁶ The mostly peaceful resolution was widely touted as a model for other African nations.^{287, 288}

Benin

Nigeria has stable relations with Benin, a major trading partner eight times smaller, and they share a porous western border that neither government has adequately policed.^{289, 290, 291} A flourishing black market exists, particularly in oil smuggled from Nigeria into Benin.²⁹² Since 2005, trade between the two countries has been regulated and restricted to companies with government licenses, and Nigeria has periodically closed the border in an effort to deter crime. The problem of trafficking Beninese women and children into Nigeria has brought attention and reform proposals from the European Union.^{293, 294, 295}



© Martin Wegmann
Atakora mountains, North Benin

Chad

Nigeria and Chad both attained independence in 1960. Relations between them were good until the discovery in the late 1970s of oil under Lake Chad, which led to competing jurisdictional claims that have since been resolved.^{296, 297, 298} Lake Chad, West Africa's second-largest lake and

²⁸⁵ Andrew McGregor, "Cameroon Rebels Threaten Security in Oil Rich Gulf of Guinea," The Jamestown Foundation, 24 November 2010, [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=37208](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=37208)

²⁸⁶ BBC News, "Nigeria Cedes Bakasi to Cameroon," 14 August 2008, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7559895.stm>

²⁸⁷ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Notes: Cameroon," 28 December 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/26431.htm#foreign>

²⁸⁸ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, United Kingdom, "Country Profile: Cameroon: International Relations," 7 January 2008, <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/country-profiles/sub-saharan-africa/cameroon?profile=intRelations&pg=4>

²⁸⁹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Notes: Benin," 22 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/6761.htm>

²⁹⁰ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, United Kingdom, "Sub Saharan Africa: Benin," 13 January 2011, <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/travel-advice-by-country/sub-saharan-africa/benin>

²⁹¹ Mohammad S. Shehu, "Nigeria: Benin President Calls for Transparent Elections in 2011," All Africa, 12 November 2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201011120226.html>

²⁹² BBC, International Version, "Nigeria Re-Opens Benin Border," 15 August 2003, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3147989.stm>

²⁹³ Anthony Osae-Brown, "Nigeria's Tariffs, High and Unproductive," Business Daily Online, 30 November 2010, http://www.businessdayonline.com/NG/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=16439:nigerias-tariffs-high-and-unproductive&catid=1:latest-news&Itemid=18

²⁹⁴ UNICEF, "Benin and Nigeria Pledge to Fight Human Trafficking," 9 June 2005, http://www.unicef.org/media/media_27309.html

²⁹⁵ Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report 2010, Country Narratives: Countries A Through F," 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2010/142759.htm>

²⁹⁶ Freshwater Ecoregions of the World, "520: Lake Chad," 7 November 2010, http://www.feow.org/ecoregion_details.php?eco=520

²⁹⁷ Thomas Collelo, ed., "Relations with Nigeria and Sudan," in *Chad: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1988, <http://countrystudies.us/chad/53.htm>

²⁹⁸ Everyculture, "Chad: Food and Economy," 2011, <http://www.everyculture.com/Bo-Co/Chad.html>

an important wetland along the border between the two countries, has shrunk because of irrigation demands and drought, creating new disputes over water-use rights.^{299, 300} The livelihoods of 20 to 30 million people are reliant on Lake Chad.^{301, 302} Nigerians, disproportionately affected by the lake's reduction, have become environmental refugees.³⁰³

Equatorial Guinea

Equatorial Guinea is a former Spanish colony and is one of the smallest African countries in population and area. In 2000, Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea settled a maritime boundary dispute allowing them to explore their respective sides of the border for oil.³⁰⁴

Niger

The border between Nigeria and Niger is inhabited by the predominately Muslim Hausa ethnic group, who are also common in northern Nigeria.³⁰⁵ Niger was suspended from ECOWAS in October 2009 following the controversial reelection of President Mamadou Tandja, who dissolved parliament and changed the constitution to seek a third term in office.^{306, 307}

After the adoption of shari'a law in northern Nigerian states along the border, many illicit activities, such as prostitution, moved to Niger.^{308, 309} The border has also been identified as part of a human trafficking route in which Nigerian girls are trafficked to Nigeria for domestic servitude and boys for manual labor.³¹⁰ Nigerian women and children are trafficked to Niger for the same purposes.

Military and Police Structure

The Nigerian military grew the most during the civil war for Biafran secession. The number of men in uniform went from 10,000 in 1967 to over 250,000 in 1970. Although the military could not justify such a large force after the war, they were rewarded with budget increases under



DoD photo
Nigerian troops

²⁹⁹ Senan Murray, "Lake Chad Fishermen Pack up Their Nets," BBC News, International Version, 15 January 2007, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6261447.stm>

³⁰⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, "Disputes—International" in *The World Factbook*, n.d., <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2070.html>

³⁰¹ VOA News, "Experts Look for Ways to Save Lake Chad," 16 October 2009, <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/a-13-2009-10-16-voa22.html>

³⁰² Shantha Bloeman, "Lake Chad's Receding Water Level Heightens Risks of Malnutrition and Disease," UNICEF, 9 February 2011, http://www.unicef.org/chad_57642.html

³⁰³ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Local and Bilateral Issues," in *Nigeria: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1991, <http://www.country-data.com/cgi-bin/query/r-9454.html>

³⁰⁴ Mannir Dan-Ali, "Oil Deal for Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea," BBC News, 3 April 2002, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/1909455.stm>

³⁰⁵ Encyclopædia Britannica, "Hausa," 2010, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/257081/Hausa>

³⁰⁶ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Niger," 12 October 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5474.htm#gov>

³⁰⁷ BBC News, "Niger-Nigeria 'Blockade' Mystery," 6 November 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8346697.stm>

³⁰⁸ Matthew Kirwin, "Nigerian Shari'a and Its Effect on Nigeria-Niger Trans-Border Political Economy," AllAcademic, 12 April 2004, http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/0/8/3/6/7/pages83677/p83677-1.php

³⁰⁹ Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report 2010, Country Narratives: Countries N Through Z," 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2010/142761.htm>

³¹⁰ Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report 2010, Country Narratives: Countries N Through Z," 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2010/142761.htm>

successive military dictatorships. Since the restoration of democracy in 1999, the federal Nigerian Police Force (NPF) has approximately doubled in size, to over 300,000.³¹¹

Today, active duty military personnel number approximately 76,000.³¹² The army, the largest branch of service, claims 60,000 troops. The army is complemented by an air force numbering 9,000 and a navy comprising 7,000 members.³¹³ The Nigerian military is active within its borders and throughout the world. Nigeria has supported peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Angola, and Yugoslavia, among others.³¹⁴ As of January 2011, Nigeria has approximately 6,000 police, military experts, and troops serving UN missions in 8 different fields of operation worldwide, including Haiti, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.^{315, 316, 317} Approximately 2,000 Nigerians have died in peacekeeping operations.³¹⁸

Both the military and police force need professional reform that focuses on respect for the rule of law and human rights, and effective oversight of civilians.³¹⁹ The Nigerian military and police have developed a reputation for dealing with civilians ruthlessly; their actions include unlawful executions, arbitrary arrest and detention, and excessive force.^{320, 321} The military is inefficient, partly because of low morale and low education among recruits, who also are inadequately paid and housed. Prisons and detention centers are harsh and life-threatening because of such conditions as lack of medical supplies, disease, and poor ventilation.³²² Corruption in the police force is also widespread.³²³

In the 12 northern states that adopted shari'a law, compliance is monitored by the unarmed Hisbah police, who lack the authority to issue warrants but may make arrests in some instances. Hisbah groups are required to register with the state government that funds and supports the

³¹¹ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, "Nigeria: Structure and Size of the Police Force; Availability of Complaint Mechanisms; Whether There is Communication Between the Divisions and Commands Across the Country; Whether Authorities in Sharia States Can Execute Their Warrants, Make Arrests and Lay Charges in Non-Sharia States," Refworld, UNHCR, 31 July 2008, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/48d2237ac.html>

³¹² Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Notes: Nigeria," 3 February 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#defense>

³¹³ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: Nigeria," 3 February 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

³¹⁴ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, "Country Profile: Nigeria: National Security," July 2008, 20, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Nigeria.pdf>

³¹⁵ UN Peacekeeping, "Current Peacekeeping Operations," n.d., <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/current.shtml>

³¹⁶ UN Peacekeeping, "UN Mission's Contributions by Country," 31 January 2011, http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2011/jan11_5.pdf

³¹⁷ UN Peacekeeping, "Contributors to the UN Peacekeeping Operations," 31 January 2011, http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2011/jan11_1.pdf

³¹⁸ Kingsley Omonobi, "Nigeria: Peacekeeping Operations—Jonathan Decries Killing of Country's Soldiers," All Africa, 2 August 2010, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201008030777.html>

³¹⁹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Notes: Nigeria," 3 February 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#relations>

³²⁰ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "2009 Human Rights Report: Nigeria," 11 March 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135970.htm>

³²¹ Human Rights Watch, "Nigeria: Events of 2009," 2010, <http://www.hrw.org/en/node/87680>

³²² Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "2009 Human Rights Report: Nigeria," 11 March 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135970.htm>

³²³ Encyclopædia Britannica, "Nigeria: Economy," 2010, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

groups.³²⁴ Aside from questioning people whose behavior they deem suspicious, Hisbah groups' powers vary according to state law.³²⁵ People suspected of violating laws governing Muslim conduct (through actions such as prostitution or consuming alcohol) are turned over to the NPF because the Hisbah do not run their own detention facilities.³²⁶

Internal Threats

Insurgent Groups

The Niger Delta has long been a site of conflict between local groups, the federal government, and multinational oil corporations. The oil-rich area has remained impoverished despite five decades of oil production.³²⁷ The wealth that the region's natural resources generate does not trickle down to the millions living in the delta; rather, it is stolen or wasted.³²⁸ Poverty and unemployment among the population have led to popular protests against regional underdevelopment and the environmental degradation of the swamps and creeks where many residents work as fishermen.³²⁹



© ISN Security Watch
MEND fighters and hostages

A number of militant groups emerged beginning in the 1990s, but the most successful so far is the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND).³³⁰ MEND is a loosely linked group of armed factions who have kidnapped foreign oil workers, damaged pipelines, attacked oil fields, and fought the Nigerian military in order to bring attention to their grievances.³³¹ Their actions cut Nigerian oil production by one-third between 2006 and 2010, so the nation lost billions in revenue.^{332, 333} Their primary demand is a fairer share of the oil wealth to invest in the community for schools, roads, hospitals, power supplies, and clean water.³³⁴

³²⁴ United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, "USCIRF Annual Report 2010—Countries of Particular Concern: Nigeria," UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 29 April 2010, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,USCIRF,,NGA,,4be2840c6.0.html>

³²⁵ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "International Religious Freedom Report 2010: Nigeria," 17 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148713.htm>

³²⁶ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "2009 Human Rights Report: Nigeria," 11 March 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135970.htm>

³²⁷ Caroline Duffield, "Who are Nigeria's Mend Oil Militants," BBC News, 4 October 2010, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-11467394>

³²⁸ Council on Foreign Affairs, "Backgrounder: MEND: The Niger Delta's Umbrella Militant Group," 22 March 2007, <http://www.cfr.org/nigeria/mend-niger-deltas-umbrella-militant-group/p12920>

³²⁹ Council on Foreign Affairs, "Backgrounder: MEND: The Niger Delta's Umbrella Militant Group," 22 March 2007, <http://www.cfr.org/nigeria/mend-niger-deltas-umbrella-militant-group/p12920>

³³⁰ Council on Foreign Affairs, "Backgrounder: MEND: The Niger Delta's Umbrella Militant Group," 22 March 2007, <http://www.cfr.org/nigeria/mend-niger-deltas-umbrella-militant-group/p12920>

³³¹ Caroline Duffield, "Who are Nigeria's Mend Oil Militants," BBC News, 4 October 2010, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-11467394>

³³² United Press International, "Nigerian Clamps Down on MEND Militants," 13 October 2010, http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2010/10/13/Nigerian-clamps-down-on-MEND-militants/UPI-70431286993792/

³³³ Gilbert Da Costa, "Nigerian Oil Militants Declare Resumption of Hostilities," VOA News, 30 January 2010, <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/Nigerian-Oil-Militants-Declare-Resumption-of-Hostilities-83147147.html>

³³⁴ Caroline Duffield, "Who are Nigeria's Mend Oil Militants," BBC News, 4 October 2010, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-11467394>

In Abuja, the situation is viewed as a security problem rather than one driven by unequal access to the oil revenues and the destruction of the local environment.³³⁵ Accordingly, thousands of troops have been deployed to interdict oil thieves.³³⁶ To avoid the risk of the militarized response uniting disparate groups against a common enemy, the Nigerian government offered amnesty in June 2009 to both the jailed MEND leader, Henry Okah, and to foot soldiers.^{337, 338,339} Okah and MEND militants accepted the three-month amnesty but resumed hostilities in January 2010.³⁴⁰
³⁴¹ Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan has stated that the Niger Delta will not remain a safe haven for gangs and criminals much longer.³⁴² The Niger Delta's labyrinth of swamps and creeks makes it difficult to protect oil infrastructure that comprises 1,000 oil wells connected by 6,035 km (3,750 mi) of pipeline.³⁴³

Islamic Fundamentalism

Boko Haram (meaning “Western education is sinful” in the Hausa language) is a militant Islamic group operating mainly in the northern states of Borno, Kano, Yobe, Bauchi, and Kaduna.³⁴⁴ Active since around 2003, they demand full adoption of Islamic shari’a law in northern Nigeria. The sect, led by Mohammad Yusuf before he was executed in detention in July 2009, is now headed by its former deputy, Abubakar Shekau, who has claimed solidarity with the al-Qaeda terrorist group.³⁴⁵ The sect’s recruits include the young, the jobless, and university students, as well as citizens of neighboring countries such as Niger, Chad, and Cameroon.^{346, 347} According to some, the organization seeks to define its own territorial boundaries and create its



© Moisés Nazário
Mosque in Abuja, Nigeria

³³⁵ IRIN News, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Nigeria: Under-development Continues to Fuel Oil Theft,” 17 November 2008, <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=81507>

³³⁶ Gilbert Da Costa, “Nigerian Army Pursues Oil Thieves in Niger Delta Crackdown,” VOA News, 26 November 2008, <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/a-13-2008-11-26-voa28.html>

³³⁷ The Economist, “Risky Toughness,” 18 September 2008, http://www.economist.com/research/Backgrounders/displaystory.cfm?story_id=12267373

³³⁸ *Wall Street Journal*, “Top Militants Accept Nigeria’s Amnesty Program,” 5 October 2009, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125461198947462111.html>

³³⁹ BBC News, “‘Attack’ Mars Nigeria Oil Amnesty,” 26 June 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8120378.stm>

³⁴⁰ Gilbert Da Costa, “Nigerian Oil Militants Declare Resumption of Hostilities,” VOA News, 30 January 2010, <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/Nigerian-Oil-Militants-Declare-Resumption-of-Hostilities-83147147.html>

³⁴¹ Thomas Strouse, “Will Nigeria’s Amnesty Campaign Have a Lasting Impact on the Delta Insurgency?” The Jamestown Foundation, 30 October 2009, [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=35674&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=26&cHash=74043836db](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=35674&tx_ttnews[backPid]=26&cHash=74043836db)

³⁴² United Press International, “Nigerian Clamps Down on MEND Militants,” 13 October 2010, http://www.upi.com/Science_News/Resource-Wars/2010/10/13/Nigerian-clamps-down-on-MEND-militants/UPI-70431286993792/

³⁴³ Steven Mufson, “Nigeria’s Oil Morass,” *Washington Post*, 1 February 2008, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/01/31/AR2008013103634.html>

³⁴⁴ Reuters, “Factbox: What is Nigeria’s Boko Haram?” 28 December 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/12/28/us-nigeria-violence-boko-idUSTRE6BR2GT20101228>

³⁴⁵ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, “International Religious Freedom Report 2010: Nigeria,” 17 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148713.htm>

³⁴⁶ Joe Boyle, “Nigeria’s ‘Taliban’ Enigma,” BBC News, 31 July 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8172270.stm>

³⁴⁷ Frank Gargon and Sharon Bean, “Northern Nigeria’s Boko Haram Movement: Dead or Resurrected,” The Jamestown Foundation, 26 March 2010,

own government, with the goal of practicing Islam free from the “moral and political corruption” of the state.^{348, 349} Others see the sect’s attacks as the work of politicians and religious leaders who manipulate the people in order to retain power.^{350, 351, 352}

Boko Haram’s attacks range from small to large. In July 2009, their attacks on a police station in Bauchi in retaliation for arrests of their members led to a counterattack and violence that spread to other states.³⁵³ More than 700 people (mostly Boko Haram members) died and over 4,000 were displaced after a 5-day uprising in Bauchi, Maiduguri, Potiskum, and Wudil cities. While religious leaders condemned Boko Haram’s actions, others criticized the use of excessive force by the police. In addition, the government’s failure to resolve the social problems that motivated the violence was criticized. Boko Haram vowed to continue the attacks and to avenge the Muslims killed by the police in Jos and Bauchi.³⁵⁴ In September 2010, armed attackers freed over 700 inmates, most of whom were Boko Haram followers, during a prison raid in Bauchi.³⁵⁵

Since 1999, 12 Nigerian states in the north have established shari’a law in their criminal codes.^{356, 357} After independence in 1960, the new nation’s leaders had created a legal code that drew from British common law and shari’a, but they maintained separate jurisdictions between the two. Criminal cases were tried in secular courts, where punishments were meted out in prison time rather than flogging or amputation. By contrast, family and civil matters (such as divorce) were handled by shari’a courts for Muslims. For those who are found guilty under the shari’a penal code, public floggings are common; harsher punishments, such as amputations, are rare.³⁵⁸

[http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=36195&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=26&cHash=dcefd12f8](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=36195&tx_ttnews[backPid]=26&cHash=dcefd12f8)

³⁴⁸ Frank Gargon and Sharon Bean, “Northern Nigeria’s Boko Haram Movement: Dead or Resurrected,” The Jamestown Foundation, 26 March 2010,

[http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=36195&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=26&cHash=dcefd12f8](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=36195&tx_ttnews[backPid]=26&cHash=dcefd12f8)

³⁴⁹ Andrew Walker, “Boko Haram Killings Shake Nigeria,” Global Post, 5 February 2011,

<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/nigeria/110131/nigeria-shaken-borno-killings>

³⁵⁰ Al Jazeera, “Profile: Boko Haram,” 9 February 2010,

<http://english.aljazeera.net/news/africa/2009/07/200972913529620235.html>

³⁵¹ International Crisis Group, “Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict,” 20 December 2010,

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/africa/west-africa/nigeria/168-northern-nigeria-background-to-conflict.aspx>

³⁵² The Economist, “Religion or Realpolitik?” 18 October 2001, <http://www.economist.com/node/825403>

³⁵³ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, “2009 Human Rights Report: Nigeria,” 11 March 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135970.htm>

³⁵⁴ Radio France International, “Boko Haram Vows to Continue Attacks,” 30 July 2009,

http://www.rfi.fr/actuen/articles/115/article_4552.asp

³⁵⁵ Adam Nossiter, “Killings in Nigeria Are Linked to Islamic Sect,” *New York Times*, 18 October 2010,

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/19/world/africa/19nigeria.html?pagewanted=1&r=1>

³⁵⁶ United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, “USCIRF Annual Report 2010—Countries of Particular Concern: Nigeria,” UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 29 April 2010,

<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,USCIRF,,NGA,,4be2840c6,0.html>

³⁵⁷ John Campbell, “Why Nigeria’s North South Distinction is Important,” Council on Foreign Affairs, 7 February 2011, <http://www.cfr.org/nigeria/why-nigerias-north-south-distinction-important/p24029>

³⁵⁸ United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, “USCIRF Annual Report 2010—Countries of Particular Concern: Nigeria,” UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 29 April 2010,

<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,USCIRF,,NGA,,4be2840c6,0.html>

Intra-Islamic sectarian violence has also been an issue in Nigeria.³⁵⁹ A radical Islamic group called Kalo Kato has killed other Muslims for failing to follow their strict rules, which ban all books but the Quran and forbid modern conveniences. They deem as infidels all who break their unorthodox beliefs, and reportedly use young children to commit violence for the group. Kalo Kato's leader, Mallam Muhammadu Marwa Maitatsine, has named himself a prophet and successor of Muhammad.³⁶⁰

Communal Violence

Communal violence is most prevalent in the middle belt, particularly Plateau State—the fault line between the Muslim North and Christian South.^{361, 362} The violence has complex roots in resource conflict, ethnic divisions, and a policy called “indigeneship,” which means the person able to claim they were first on the land has the rights to support from the state.^{363, 364} In Plateau State, Hausa-Fulani Muslims live alongside Yoruba and Igbo Christians, but northern Muslim cattle herders collide with southern Christian farmers over land use and the threat posed to crops by encroaching livestock.^{365, 366} As established residents and newer settlers battle over jobs, resources, and political patronage, their religious affiliation often motivates violence against them, either as a primary justification or as a substitute target for political or social discontent.^{367, 368, 369}



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Downtown of Jos

³⁵⁹ United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, “USCIRF Annual Report 2010—Countries of Particular Concern: Nigeria,” UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 29 April 2010, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,USCIRF,,NGA,,4be2840c6,0.html>

³⁶⁰ Patience Ogbodo, “Nigeria: Kalo-Kato—Death Toll Hits 38 as Police Kill Sect Leader,” All Africa, 29 December 2009, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200912290936.html>

³⁶¹ National Public Radio, “Christians, Muslims at War in Nigeria,” 10 March 2010, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=124531034>

³⁶² Scott Baldauf, “Nigeria Violence: Muslim-Christian Clashes Kill Hundreds,” Christian Science Monitor, 8 March 2010, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Africa/2010/0308/Nigeria-violence-Muslim-Christian-clashes-kill-hundreds>

³⁶³ National Public Radio, “Christians, Muslims at War in Nigeria,” 10 March 2010, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=124531034>

³⁶⁴ United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, “USCIRF Annual Report 2010—Countries of Particular Concern: Nigeria,” UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 29 April 2010, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,USCIRF,,NGA,,4be2840c6,0.html>

³⁶⁵ Scott Baldauf, “Nigeria Violence: Muslim-Christian Clashes Kill Hundreds,” Christian Science Monitor, 8 March 2010, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Africa/2010/0308/Nigeria-violence-Muslim-Christian-clashes-kill-hundreds>

³⁶⁶ Meg Handley, “The Violence in Nigeria: What’s Behind the Conflict?” Time, 10 March 2010, <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1971010,00.html>

³⁶⁷ United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, “USCIRF Annual Report 2010—Countries of Particular Concern: Nigeria,” UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 29 April 2010, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,USCIRF,,NGA,,4be2840c6,0.html>

³⁶⁸ Andrew Walker, “Boko Haram Killings Shake Nigeria,” Global Post, 5 February 2011, <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/nigeria/110131/nigeria-shaken-borno-killings>

³⁶⁹ BBC News, “Nigerian Army ‘Ignored Warning of Massacres’ in Jos,” 10 March 2010, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8558246.stm>

Ineffective and inadequate action by all levels of government to address the poverty and discrimination at the root of the conflict has led to criticism.^{370, 371} It has also led to a climate of impunity and the deaths of over 12,000 people since 1999.³⁷² In January and March 2010, violence in Jos and surrounding villages in Plateau State resulted in the deaths of nearly 1,000 people and the displacement of thousands of others.^{373, 374}

Issues Affecting Stability

Poverty

Around 70% of the nation's population is classified as below the poverty line according to 2007 statistics.³⁷⁵ This figure has worsened in recent decades despite the country's billions in oil revenues and its recent middle-income status.^{376, 377, 378} Oil profits have not been invested in education, health care, and public works, which could increase productivity and generate economic development for the benefit of all Nigerians. Rather, the vast majority of energy profits have been pocketed by a privileged class who enjoy lavish lifestyles.³⁷⁹

The poor are disproportionately found in rural areas, which lack basic infrastructure and access to social services.^{380, 381} Such conditions and the economic marginalization of the agriculture sector force many residents to migrate to urban areas.³⁸² Urban migrants usually find work in the informal economy and have a marginally better life, but some end



© Mike Blyth
Malnourished child

³⁷⁰ Tom Heneghan, "Christian-Muslim Identity Tags in Nigerian Struggle for Land," Reuters, 11 March 2010, <http://blogs.reuters.com/faithworld/2010/03/11/christian-muslim-identity-tags-in-nigerian-struggle-for-land/>

³⁷¹ Human Rights Watch, "Nigeria: Events of 2009," 2010, <http://www.hrw.org/en/node/87680>

³⁷² United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, "USCIRF Annual Report 2010—Countries of Particular Concern: Nigeria," UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 29 April 2010, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,USCIRF,,NGA,,4be2840c6,0.html>

³⁷³ United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, "USCIRF Annual Report 2010—Countries of Particular Concern: Nigeria," UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 29 April 2010, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,USCIRF,,NGA,,4be2840c6,0.html>

³⁷⁴ BBC News, "Nigeria Ethnic Violence 'Leaves Hundreds Dead,'" 8 March 2010, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8555018.stm>

³⁷⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, "Nigeria: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 24 January 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>

³⁷⁶ U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Nigeria: Background," No date, <http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/Nigeria/Background.html>

³⁷⁷ Briony Hale, "Nigeria's Economy Dominated by Oil," BBC News, 16 January 2002, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/1763464.stm>

³⁷⁸ The Economist, "Measuring Global Poverty—Whose Problem Now," 30 September 2010, <http://www.economist.com/node/17155748>

³⁷⁹ Larry Diamond, "Chapter Eleven: Africa: Overcoming Personal Rule," in *The Spirit of Democracy: The Struggle to Build Free Societies Throughout the World* (New York: Times Books, 2008), 248,

³⁸⁰ Global Action on Aging, "Rural Poverty in Nigeria," 28 February 2008, <http://www.globalaging.org/ruralaging/world/2008/nigeria.htm>

³⁸¹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Notes: Nigeria," 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

³⁸² Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Notes: Nigeria," 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

up in shantytowns or slums where inadequate sanitation creates health and waste problems.^{383, 384} Even with a committed government, the volatility of international oil prices makes it hard to provide the resources necessary for improving the lives of the impoverished majority.³⁸⁵

Corruption

Corruption in Nigeria is pervasive in both government and society.³⁸⁶ Transparency International's 2009 Corruption Perception Index ranked Nigeria 130th out of 180 nations.^{387, 388} A recent European Union-funded survey found that corruption and crime were the major disincentives to doing business in Nigeria. Over one-third of firms indicated they were forced to pay bribes in their dealings with the public sector—specifically to police and customs services.³⁸⁹ Some reports indicate that between 1960 and 1999, government leaders stole nearly USD 400 billion, but high-ranking government officials, including the president, vice president, and governors, are immune from prosecution due to constitutional rights.³⁹⁰ Continued corruption over many decades has deterred foreign investment, impeded economic growth, and stalled poverty reduction. This has particularly exacerbated the conflict in the Niger Delta.^{391, 392}



DLIFLC image
Nuhu Ribadu

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) is Nigeria's main anti-corruption agency and has taken some steps, but continues to underperform.³⁹³ The Nigerian Central bank fired several senior bankers in the 2009 debt crisis that was precipitated by lax governance.³⁹⁴ Charges of bribery have even been levied against foreign oil firms, including KBR, a former subsidiary of oil services giant Halliburton.³⁹⁵

³⁸³ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Notes: Nigeria," 1 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

³⁸⁴ Encyclopædia Britannica, "Nigeria: Economy," 2010, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

³⁸⁵ Michael L. Ross, "Nigeria's Oil Sector and the Poor," Department of Political Science, University of California Los Angeles, 23 May 2003, 4, <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/faculty/ross/NigeriaOil.pdf>

³⁸⁶ The Heritage Foundation, "2011 Index of Economic Freedom: Nigeria," 2011, <http://www.heritage.org/index/Country/Nigeria>

³⁸⁷ Bureau of Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "2010 Investment Climate Statement: Nigeria," March 2010, <http://www.state.gov/e/eeb/rls/othr/ics/2010/138123.htm>

³⁸⁸ Transparency International, "Corruption Perception Index 2009," n.d., http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2009/cpi_2009_table

³⁸⁹ Reuters, "Graft Main Obstacle to Business in Nigeria—Study," 1 July 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/07/01/idUSLDE660204>

³⁹⁰ UN Office on Drugs and Crime, "Nigeria's Crime Busters," 20 November 2007, <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/nigerias-corruption-busters.html>

³⁹¹ Bureau of Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "2010 Investment Climate Statement: Nigeria," March 2010, <http://www.state.gov/e/eeb/rls/othr/ics/2010/138123.htm>

³⁹² Felix Onuah and Sue Fleming, "Clinton Says Bad Governance Fuels Nigeria Poverty Gap," Reuters, 12 August 2009, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2009/08/12/us-nigeria-clinton-idUSTRE57B34620090812?pageNumber=1>

³⁹³ Bureau of Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "2010 Investment Climate Statement: Nigeria," March 2010, <http://www.state.gov/e/eeb/rls/othr/ics/2010/138123.htm>

³⁹⁴ Nick Tattersall, "Nigeria's Bankers Fall in Symbolic Step in Graft War," Reuters, 11 October 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/10/11/nigeria-banker-idUSLDE69A0VJ20101011>

Those in power see opportunities for personal enrichment as a high-return, low-risk activity. Expectations about how public officials conduct business reinforce the politics of personal rule.³⁹⁶ In effect, citizens become clients of the rulers, turning to the government as a source of jobs, sweetheart deals, and easy favors rather than demanding accountability of their public servants.



DoD image / Spc. Saul Rosa
African Land Forces Summit

Nuhu Ribadu, former head of Nigeria's anti-corruption agency, is expected to run for president in April 2011. He was fired after prosecuting several politicians and his chances of winning are slim, but his campaign of conscience is a sign of a new political vision in the country.

Looking Ahead

The transition from decades of military rule to a civilian government has not yet led to improved national security or better socioeconomic conditions for the vast majority of Nigerians. Most people remain mired in abject poverty despite the country's enormous oil wealth. Nor has democratization stopped violence or systemic corruption across the country.³⁹⁷ The government continues to confront the volatile situation in the Niger Delta. There, ongoing ethnic and religious clashes tied to limited resources are present, along with the threat of Muslim extremism. Addressing the underlying social, economic, and institutional issues that create unrest, corruption, and poverty is the key for Nigeria to realize its potential as a leader among African states.

³⁹⁶ Melanie Manion, "Introduction," in *Corruption by Design: Building Clean Government in Mainland China and Hong Kong* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 5.

⁴¹¹ Melanie Manion, "Introduction," in *Corruption by Design: Building Clean Government in Mainland China and Hong Kong* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 5.

Chapter 5: Assessments

1. The Nigerian government has been supportive of U.S. counterterrorism efforts.

True

The Nigerian government has been an adamant supporter of Washington's counterterrorism efforts in the aftermath of 11 September 2001. In official statements, Abuja condemned the terrorist attacks and supported military action against the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

2. Lake Chad has shrunk due to irrigation demands and drought, creating disputes over water-use rights.

True

Lake Chad provides 20 to 30 million people with water to support their livelihoods. Nigerians, disproportionately affected by the lake's reduction, have become environmental refugees.

3. Nigeria's army accounts for one-third of the nation's active-duty military personnel.

False

Nigeria's active-duty military personnel number approximately 76,000. The army, the largest branch of service, claims 60,000 troops. The army is complemented by an air force numbering 9,000 and a navy comprising 7,000 members.

4. Between 2006 and 2010, oil output in the Niger Delta decreased by one-third due to illicit activities by militant groups.

True

The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), an loose umbrella group of armed factions, have kidnapped foreign oil workers, damaged pipelines, attacked oil fields, and fought the Nigerian military. Their goal is to bring attention to the underdevelopment and environmental degradation of their homeland. Their actions cut Nigerian oil production by one-third between 2006 and 2010.

5. The border region between Nigeria and Niger is inhabited by many different ethnic groups.

False

The border between Nigeria and Niger is inhabited primarily by people of the Hausa ethnic group.

Final Assessment

1. Nigeria is the most populated country in Africa.
2. The Niger Delta is one of the largest river deltas in the world.
3. Nigeria's safari tourism industry provides economic incentive for farmers to preserve the environment.
4. Lake Chad, decreased to a fraction of its original size over the last four decades, is no
5. Floods rarely occur in Nigeria.
6. The Hausa civilization was once organized around five city-states.
7. In 1914, the British merged separate protectorates of northern and southern Nigeria into one colony.
8. Nigeria gained independence in 1960.
9. Nigeria's Second Republic, created in 1979, was a long-lived economic success.
10. Independent observers lauded the Nigerian elections in April 2007 for their fairness and transparency.
11. Nigeria is among the poorest nations in the world.
12. Nigeria's natural resources are limited to oil.
13. Nigeria paid off most of its external debt by 2006.
14. Nigeria's per capita income has decreased in the past few decades.
15. Nigeria is forced to import food staples in order to feed its population.
16. Nigeria is home to about 100 different ethnic groups.
17. Nigerians from different linguistic groups typically communicate in English.
18. The Nigerian constitution guarantees a secular state and freedom of religion.
19. Female genital mutilation (FGM) is no longer practiced by tribes in Nigeria.
20. There are twice as many Muslims in Nigeria than there are Christians.
21. Nigeria continuously refuses to relinquish control of the contested Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon.
22. In twelve northern Nigerian states, compliance with Shari'a law is monitored by the Hisbah police.
23. The economic losses caused by criminal activities in the Niger Delta region are negligible.

24. Islamic radicals in northern Nigeria are not interested in establishing an autonomous Muslim region.
25. Profits from oil revenue have not been used to make investments in education, health care, and public works.

Further Readings

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