

Chapter 11

Federal Republic of Nigeria

CHAPTER PREVIEW

People

Hausa people, Yoruba people, Igbo people, Wole Soyinka

Places

Abuja, Gulf of Guinea, Niger River, Niger River delta, Benue River, Lagos

Terms

delta, navigable, tropical savanna climate, harmattan, diverse, Boko Haram, merchant, missionary, Pan-African movement, nationalism, Independent State of Biafra, civil war, military coup, civilian rule, republic, federal government, presidential democracy, Federal Executive Council, National Assembly, Supreme Court, Nollywood, diversified economy, infrastructure, naira, diplomatic relations, African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)



Tucked into the curve of land created by the Gulf of Guinea on the southern side of West Africa is the “Giant of Africa,” Nigeria. Its population of 223 million people makes it the most populated country in Africa and the sixth most populated country in the world. For comparison, that is over half the population of the United States living in an area the size of the southeastern corner of the U.S. Nigeria’s people have worked to use their natural resources to increase their wealth; however, they have faced many challenges.

Nigeria is famous for its wildlife and beautiful, expansive forests. Lions, giraffes, and leopards can be found along with hyenas, elephants, and gorillas. Even camels are native to this country. Nigeria’s location between the Tropic of Cancer and the Equator means that temperatures are warm to hot all year. There is also enough rainfall in parts of the country to support tropical rain forests. Numerous national parks have been created to preserve the natural beauty of the country. The largest, Gashaka Gumti National Park, includes over 2,400 square miles with millions of birds from over 500 known species.

Nigeria also has the largest economy in Africa, with a booming oil business. Despite the wealth that comes from the oil industry, many people in Nigeria are still very poor. Since gaining independence from Great Britain in 1960, Nigeria’s people have faced many challenges including military rule, pollution, and ethnic and religious group conflict. However, in 1999, a new constitution was adopted, and Nigeria became a democracy. Despite the progress toward becoming a democracy, the government of Nigeria must still try to solve ethnic and religious conflicts and continue to diversify its economy.

“Nigeria has no business with poverty. With our human and material resources, we shall strive to eradicate poverty from our country.”

*- Olusegun Obasanjo,
former president of Nigeria*



Background: Nigeria’s Gurara Falls are over 650 feet wide and plunge 100 feet into the rocky riverbed below. **Inset:** Kakaki players from Northern Nigeria.



MAP 11.1 NIGERIA

Map Skill: What is the capital of Nigeria? Why do you think it is located where it is?



Area: 224,080.95 square miles

Rank: 49

Natural Resources:

limestone, soda ash, salt, gemstones, fluor spar, zinc, diatomite, gypsum, wildlife, hydropower

Environmental Issues:

water pollution from urban and industrial wastes; degradation of water quality from increased use of pesticides and fertilizers; water hyacinth infestation in Lake Victoria; deforestation; soil erosion; desertification; poaching

Background: The colorful flyover bridges of Kano, Nigeria's highways shelter marketplaces below.

Figure 11.1

TIMELINE OF NIGERIA

1900

- 1914** Nigeria became a British colony
- 1934** Birth of Wole Soyinka
- 1960** Nigeria gained independence from Great Britain
United States established diplomatic relations with Nigeria
- 1966** Beginning of a period of civil wars and military coups
- 1971** Nigeria became a member of OPEC
- 1986** Wole Soyinka became first black African to win the Nobel Prize in Literature
- 1991** New capital of Abuja created
- 1992** Beginning of Nollywood
- 1999** Nigeria adopted a new, democratic constitution
People's Democratic Party became governing party

2000

- 2003** Presidential elections marred by irregularities and violence
Nigeria's first satellite, NigeriaSat-1, was launched into space by Russia
- 2007** General elections marked first civilian-to-civilian transfer of power
- 2009** Boko Haram Islamist movement begins a campaign of violence
- 2011** Elections regarded as credible
- 2014** Boko Haram kidnaps over 200 girls from a boarding school in Chibok
- 2015** All Progressive Congress defeated the People's Democratic Party
Government forces were accused of violence against civilian protesters
- 2018** Boko Haram attacks increase – targeting military bases
- 2023** Bola Tinubu is elected president



PASSPORT



Official Name: Federal Republic of Nigeria

Capital: Abuja

Form of Government: presidential democracy

Head of Government: President

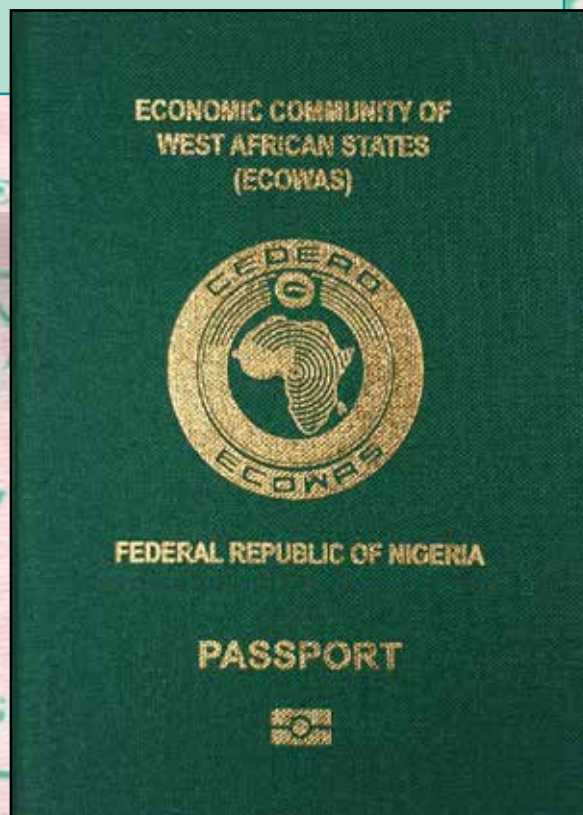
Head of State: President

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal

Currency: Nigerian naira (NGN)



Top: Bola Tinubu became Nigeria's president in 2023.
Above: Nigeria's National Assembly Complex in Abuja.



CULTURE CONNECTION



POPULATION



0

100 million

200 million

Nigeria

236,747,130 (2024)
Population Rank 6

United States

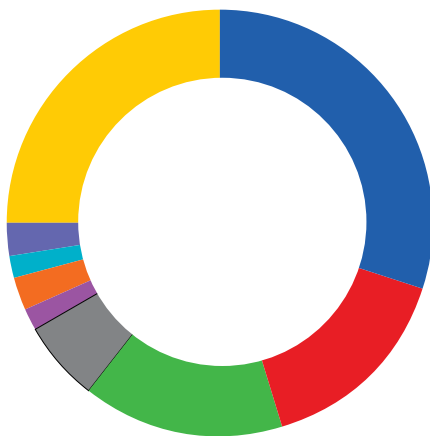
341,963,408 (2024)
Population Rank 3



ETHNIC GROUPS

(Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, is composed of more than 250 ethnic groups; the most populous and politically influential are as follows:)

- Hausa 30%
- Yoruba 15.5%
- Igbo (Ibo) 15.2%
- Fulani 6%
- Ijaw 1.8%
- Kanuri 2.4%
- Ininio 1.8%
- Tiv 2.4%
- Other 24.9%



FUN FACTS

Nigeria has the highest rate of twin births when compared to any other country.

Official Language:
English

(Hausa is the most-used native language.)

Phrases in Hausa

Hello – Salama alaikum

Goodbye – Sai an jima

Good morning – Ina kwa-na

Good afternoon – Barka da yamma

Thank you – Na gode

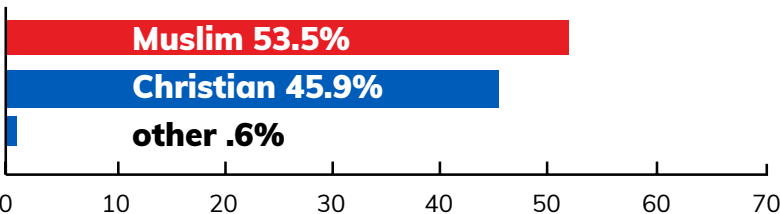
You're welcome – Ba kome

Yes – A (drawn out like ayyy)

No – A'a



RELIGION



LIFE EXPECTANCY

Average 62.2 years

Male 60.4 years

Female 54.2 years



EDUCATION

Literacy total population 62%;

male 71.3% / **female** 52.7%

Education Expenditure

.5% of GDP

Rank 196

SECTION 1

Below: This overlay map compares the size of Nigeria to the contiguous United States.

The Geography of Nigeria

Did You Know?

Nigeria is the most populous African country, with a population of over 236 million people.

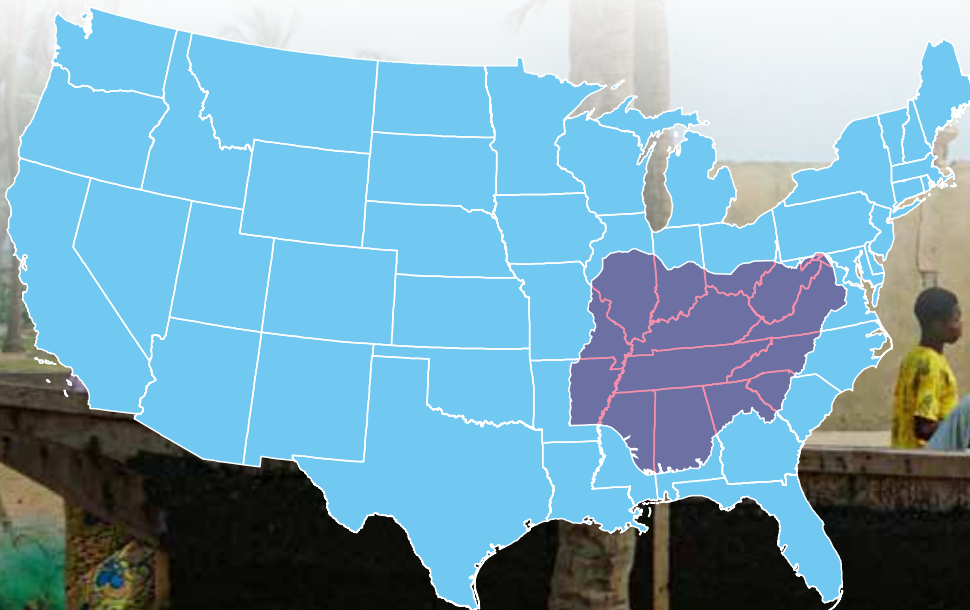


AS YOU READ, LOOK FOR...

- » how Nigeria's location impacts trade;
- » the Niger River delta's impact on people in Nigeria;
- » the most important natural resource found in Nigeria;
- » the number of ethnic groups in Nigeria;
- » the role of religion in Nigeria;
- » terms: **delta, navigable, tropical savanna climate, harmattan, diverse, Boko Haram.**

Location and Size of Nigeria

Nigeria is located on the west coast of Africa. It lies in the eastern and northern hemispheres between the Tropic of Cancer and the Equator. The country of Niger lies to the north of Nigeria. Benin forms the western border of Nigeria with Cameroon and Chad to the east. The capital of Nigeria is Abuja, which is located in the center of the country. In addition to sharing borders with four countries, Nigeria is bordered to the south by the Gulf of Guinea, a part of the Atlantic Ocean. The 530-mile coastline on the Gulf of Guinea helps make trade easier for Nigeria. The coastline is an area rich in oil reserves. This has both benefited and harmed the people and economy of Nigeria.



Nigeria's land area is about 356,000 square miles, making it the 14th-largest country in Africa and the 32nd-largest country in the world. To put that in perspective, Nigeria is about six times the size of Georgia, or a size similar to the combined areas of Georgia, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida.

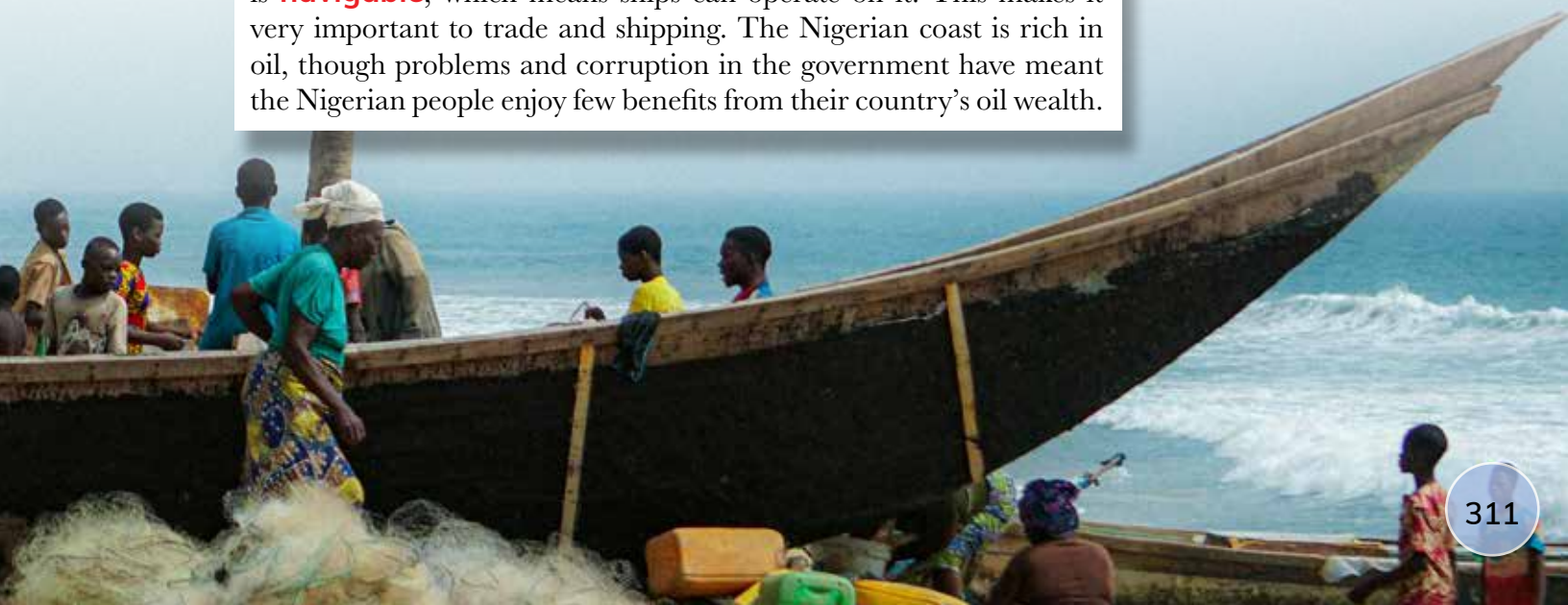
Physical Features of Nigeria

Nigeria is located where the Niger River flows into the Gulf of Guinea. The Niger River is the largest river in West Africa and is the source of the country's name. The river begins in the country of Guinea and flows northeast, then southeast, then south for over 2,600 miles before ending in the Gulf of Guinea. It is the third-longest river in Africa behind the Nile and Congo Rivers. The Niger flows through the countries of Guinea, Mali, Niger, Benin, and Nigeria. Interestingly, the Niger River begins only 150 miles away from the Atlantic Ocean, but instead of flowing west to the Atlantic, it flows north due to changes in elevation. Another unusual thing about the Niger River is that it has an inner delta in the middle of the river instead of just at the mouth. A **delta** is where a river divides into smaller bodies of water as it meets with a larger body of water. This inner Niger River delta is almost the size of the country of Belgium. The area around this delta is good for agriculture and fishing.

The Niger River enters Nigeria in the northwest corner and flows south toward the Gulf of Guinea. It flows through tropical rain forests and swamps before joining with the Benue River near the city of Lokoja. The Benue River flows into Nigeria from Cameroon in the east. The combined rivers flow south creating another large delta at the mouth of the river at the Gulf of Guinea. Most of the Niger River is **navigable**, which means ships can operate on it. This makes it very important to trade and shipping. The Nigerian coast is rich in oil, though problems and corruption in the government have meant the Nigerian people enjoy few benefits from their country's oil wealth.



Background: Fishing in the Gulf of Guinea provides an important source of food. **Above:** A satellite view of the Niger River Delta shows its complex network of waterways.





Landforms vary in the country. In the southeast and along the coast, low-lying plains may be dotted with dense forests or mangrove trees. The central part of the country has rugged highlands and extinct volcanos. The tallest mountain is on the eastern side of this area, Chappal Waddi, at nearly 8,000 feet above sea level in the Gashaka Gumti National Park. Further north, gently rolling plains are interrupted by plateaus (areas of relatively level high ground) that climb as high as 1,500 feet.

Climate of Nigeria

Nigeria's location just north of the Equator means that temperatures will be high. There are several different climates found throughout Nigeria, but the most common climate is the **tropical savanna climate**. That means that monthly average temperatures are above 64°F all year. A dry season in winter is followed by a rainy season that begins in May. Up to thirty inches of rain may fall in that season.

Other climate zones can be found in Nigeria, too. Along the coast it is hot and wet throughout most of the year. There are even tropical rain forests found in this area. To the far north, the climate is hotter and drier as the Sahara Desert grows closer. In this area, few plants will grow and the ground is sparsely covered with short, brush-like vegetation. In winter months, a dry wind called the **harmattan** blows from the northeast carrying dust from the Sahara Desert across West Africa.

Natural Resources of Nigeria

Nigeria has very large deposits of petroleum and natural gas, in addition to other natural resources. The country has oil reserves of about 37 billion barrels. Unfortunately, the money Nigeria gets from selling oil to other nations has not benefited most Nigerians. Mismanagement and corruption have left most Nigerians in poverty while a few have benefited from the country's oil trade.

Did You Know?

Nigeria has been a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) since 1971.

Top: Gashaka-Gumti National Park. **Bottom:** Zuma Rock is located in Madalla. **Opposite Page, Top:** Lagos is the largest city in Nigeria. **Opposite Page, Bottom:** Igbo family in traditional attire.

Did You Know?

Zuma Rock in Nigeria is a stone monolith that rises above the surrounding landscape to a height similar to Stone Mountain near Atlanta.

Nigeria has other valuable natural resources, like arable land, which the government is not investing in because of its investment in the oil industry. Even though Nigeria has a large amount of arable land, it actually has to import food to meet the needs of its people. Nigeria's other valuable resources include talc, gypsum, iron ore, lead, zinc, gold, coal, rock salt, gemstones, and kaolin. The Nigerian government has also not invested in these resources because of its attention to the oil industry.

Impact of Location in Nigeria

Like many countries in Africa, about half of the people in Nigeria continue to live in rural areas, usually following the traditions of their ancestors. The coast of Nigeria is heavily populated because it is easier to trade and it is the center of the oil industry. Areas along the Niger River and the delta are also heavily populated. The city of Lagos was the capital of Nigeria until 1991 and continues to be the largest city in Nigeria. The capital, Abuja, was created in 1991. The city was built to be the capital so no ethnic group in Africa could claim to control it because it is located in the center of the country. It was believed that construction of the city would also help spread development to inland areas of the country.



Environmental Issues in Nigeria

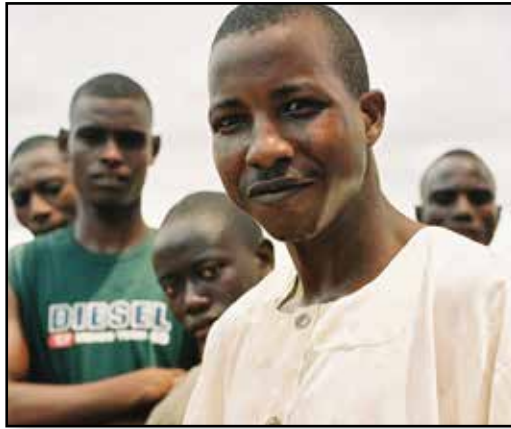
Like many countries, Nigeria faces environmental issues. Deforestation is a problem as land is cleared for farmland and development. Without forests, land can begin to erode and good soil can wash away. Deforestation destroys habitat for plants and animals, but humans can be affected, too. The lack of forest can disrupt the water cycle in a region causing the soil to dry out and become barren.

As urbanization continues, water and air pollution continue to rise. The most significant environmental issue, however, is oil pollution. Pollution from oil spills can contaminate the air, water, and land. The government of Nigeria must figure out how to balance earning money from their plentiful oil reserves with protecting the environment from oil-related pollution.

People of Nigeria

Nigeria is a very **diverse** (varied) country. Over 250 ethnic groups live in Nigeria. The largest ethnic groups are the Hausa in the north, the Yoruba in the southwest and the Igbo (or Ibo) in the southeast. Each of these groups represents about a fifth of Nigeria's total population. As a result of these large populations, the languages of these three groups, along with English, are used by the government of Nigeria.

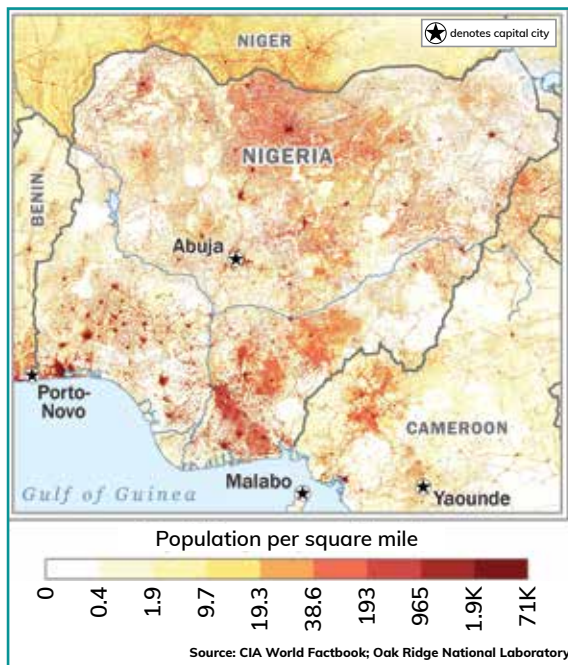




Top Left: Members of the Hausa ethnic group of northern Nigeria. **Top Right:** Ofala Festival of the Onitsha People. **Opposite Page:** Royal Benin ivory mask, one of Nigeria's most recognized artifacts.

Nigeria is also divided by religion. About 54 percent of Nigerians are Muslim, while the remaining 46 percent are Christian. Religious tensions and conflict have been present in Nigeria since it gained independence from British rule in the 1960s. Almost as soon as Nigeria became independent, a war broke out between Christians from the south and Muslims from the north. Tensions remain high today, with a militant Muslim group called **Boko Haram** attempting to control parts of Nigeria.

In Nigeria's northern states, the vast majority of people are Muslim and are Hausa. The Hausa have been Muslims for almost a thousand years, and were converted to Islam by Arab traders and merchants from the 10th century. In the southern states, the majority of Nigerians are Christian, while some groups continue to practice indigenous beliefs. Generally, religion is taken very seriously, and most people will make frequent references to their faith and church activities. Southern indigenous faiths center on a belief in spirits and also in a Supreme Being or creator, known as Olorun/Olodumare in Yoruba culture and Chineke/Chukwu by Igbo people.



MAP 11.2 NIGERIA POPULATION DENSITY

Map Skill: Write a sentence to describe which area of Nigeria is least densely populated. Explain the evidence for making the claim.

REVIEW AND SUMMARIZE

1. How does Nigeria's location affect trade?
2. How does the Niger River Delta affect Nigerians?
3. What is the most important natural resource found in Nigeria? Why are other natural resources not being developed in Nigeria?
4. What is Nigeria's most critical environmental issue?
5. How has the diversity of ethnic and religious groups affected Nigeria?

SECTION 2

A Brief History of Nigeria

AS YOU READ, LOOK FOR...

- » the influence of Arab traders;
- » why Europeans were first interested in Nigeria;
- » the colonial powers' main interests in Nigeria;
- » the Pan-African movement and how it led to independence in Nigeria;
- » the immediate aftermath of independence in Nigeria;
- » terms: **merchant, missionary, Pan-African movement, nationalism, Independent State of Biafra, civil war, military coup, civilian rule.**

Early History

Throughout its long history, Nigeria has had periods of kingdoms, states, empires, and caliphate (rule by a Muslim political-religious caliph) and colonial rule. As a result of Nigeria's location within the continent of Africa, its people have come into frequent contact with traders from different parts of the world. Some of these contacts benefited the people of Nigeria, while others did not.

The first groups of traders who journeyed to Nigeria were **merchants** (people involved in trade) from North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. Along with gold, ivory, iron, slaves, and gum, these Arab traders also brought the Quran and Islam with them. There were four trans-Saharan (crossing the Sahara) trade routes, two of which went through Nigeria. These routes served to connect people and goods from different parts of the continent.

Another group of traders that had a significant impact on the history of Nigeria came from Europe. These traders arrived in the 15th century in search of gold and slave labor. The traders were Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, French, and British. For over 300 years, the human slave trade was conducted along Africa's shores, and Nigeria was a central part of that trade. During this time, more Africans crossed the Atlantic to the New World than did Europeans.





Top: British missionary John Grimley in 1947 received the gift of a goat, considered a valuable gift, from local Nigerians. **Below:** A proud Nigerian displays the country's flag.

British Colonial History

Even after the British abolished the slave trade in Britain in 1807, British interest in Nigeria did not end. The British were interested in Nigeria's exports of cocoa, groundnuts, rubber, and palm oil. As a result, the British began establishing permanent settlements on the coast of Nigeria and continually moving inland. The British used the Niger River as a way to explore further inland. Along with conquest and colonization, the British also brought **missionaries** (people sent to promote Christianity in a foreign country) to convert Nigerians to Christianity. British influence and control over Nigeria grew throughout the 19th century.

Pan-African Movement

As the British continued to spread their influence and control throughout Nigeria, another idea was spreading as well. It was the **Pan-African movement**. This movement began as a reaction to European colonial rule. The goal of the Pan-African movement was for all people of African descent to work together and to think of Africa as their homeland. It encouraged Africans to join together for the betterment of everyone and to help every African country's economy. Another goal of the Pan-African movement was to end European colonial rule. As the Pan-African movement began to spread through Nigeria and the rest of West Africa, many Nigerians began to push for their independence from the British.

Independence

A series of constitutions after World War II granted Nigeria greater freedom under British rule. Nigerians were dissatisfied with partial independence and continued pushing for Britain to withdraw completely. The idea of nationalism was spreading throughout Nigeria. **Nationalism** means love for one's country and a desire for independence from other nations. Feelings of nationalism and influence from the Pan-African movement inspired Nigerians to push for their independence.

Nigeria finally gained independence from Britain in 1960. Since the independence movement had been peaceful, most expected the new country to be stable and calm. However, the legacy of European partitioning destroyed the hope for peace in Nigeria.



Within a few months of Britain's withdrawal, war broke out between the Christians in the south and Muslims in the north. The religious war left thousands dead or injured. After the war, Nigeria tried to reorganize into twelve different regions, but this idea led to new problems.

The East's Igbo (Ibo) people declared themselves the **Independent State of Biafra**. This action resulted in a thirty-month-long **civil war** (a war between citizens of the same country). Three million Biafran people may have died due to battle wounds, food shortages, and disease. At the war's end, Biafra was again a part of Nigeria. The violence did not end, however. **Military coups** (when the military overthrows the government) and outbreaks of violence marked the following decades.

Nigerians adopted a new constitution in 1999, transitioning to a civilian government. Both the 2003 and 2007 presidential elections experienced significant irregularities and violence. Still, Nigeria is in its longest period of **civilian rule** (which means that the leaders have not been part of the military) since independence. The general elections of April 2007 marked the first civilian-to-civilian transfer of power in the country's history, and the elections of 2011 were generally regarded as credible. The 2015 contest was considered the best-run election in Nigeria since the return to civilian rule, with the opposition party, the All Progressives Congress, defeating the People's Democratic Party that had governed since 1999. However, the election of 2023 was marked with accusations of voting irregularities and corruption. Supporters of the opposition protested in the streets without military involvement – a sign that freedom of speech is being protected.



Above: New Nigerian newspaper page, January 7, 1970, detailing the end of the Nigerian civil war with Biafra.

REVIEW AND SUMMARIZE

1. How did Arab traders influence Nigerian history?
2. Why were Europeans first interested in Nigeria?
3. Which European power controlled the Nigerian colony, and what was its interest there?
4. What was the role of the Pan-African movement in Nigeria's independence?
5. What evidence is given that conflicts followed Nigeria's independence?

Special Feature

Wole Soyinka



Akinwande Oluwole “Wole” Soyinka is one of the best-known political activists and writers in Nigeria. Born in Abeokuta, Nigeria, on July 13, 1934, Soyinka attended school in Nigeria before leaving to finish his education at the University of Leeds in England. After graduation, Soyinka returned to Nigeria, where he published and produced his first play in 1960. *A Dance of the Forests* was written as part of the Nigerian independence celebrations.

Soyinka was very outspoken in his support for democratic rule in Nigeria. Much of Soyinka’s work focused on his dislike and distrust of authoritarian rulers in Africa. In 1967, Soyinka was arrested for speaking out against the war that broke out when Biafra tried to become a new, independent nation. During his twenty-two months in solitary confinement, Soyinka wrote a poetry collection called *Poems from Prison*. Upon his release, Soyinka published a narrative of his stay in prison called *The Man Died* in 1972.

In 1986, Soyinka was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. He was the first black African to win the Nobel Prize in Literature. To date, Soyinka has published hundreds of works ranging from plays to poems to novels. Many of his works focus on his distrust of dictatorships in Africa, while others focus on Yoruba folklore. All of his major works are written in English. Soyinka has also been a visiting professor at universities in the United States, England, and Nigeria. In 1996, Soyinka was named the Robert W. Woodruff Professor of Arts at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia.

Today, Soyinka is still a political activist who continues to fight for democratic rule in Nigeria. Do you think Soyinka is like Nelson Mandela? Why or why not?

“One thing I can tell you is this, that I am not a methodical writer.”

—Wole Soyinka

SECTION 3

The Government of Nigeria

AS YOU READ, LOOK FOR...

- » the type of government in Nigeria;
- » how citizens participate in the government;
- » freedoms Nigerian citizens enjoy;
- » terms: **republic**, **federal government**, **presidential democracy**, **Federal Executive Council**, **National Assembly**, **Supreme Court**.

Did You Know?

In 2016, Nigeria created a whistleblower policy that allows citizens to report government corruption.

Structure of Government

The official name of Nigeria is the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The name suggests the country is a **republic**, which means it has elected representatives. Nigeria has a **federal government**, meaning power within the government is divided among the national, state, and local governments. There are thirty-six states in Nigeria. The type of government Nigeria has is a **presidential democracy** with a president as the head of government and head of state.

Nigeria's government is based on a constitution that was written in 1999. That constitution allowed for a peaceful transition from military rule to civilian rule. Since then, the constitution has been amended several times. The constitution sets up the structure for the government. The government of Nigeria is divided into three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial.



Opposite Page: Wole Soyinka in 2018. **Top:** The Coat of Arms of Nigeria's government. **Bottom:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Abuja.



Right: Nigeria has put safeguards in place to ensure safe and accurate elections. **Bottom:** The National Assembly Complex is in the capital, Abuja.



Citizen Participation

Since Nigeria is a presidential democracy, citizens can vote for leaders. In Nigeria, citizens aged 18 and over vote directly for the president and the legislature. The Nigerian constitution guarantees freedom of speech, expression, and press; however, these rights are not always protected. There have been incidents when members of the press have been harassed for reporting on government corruption. Additionally, in parts of northern Nigeria where Boko Haram is active, people's rights are often limited by the group. Similarly, while the Constitution gives people freedom of religion, people are sometimes pressured by government officials to follow a particular religion.

Branches of Government

The head of government and the cabinet make up the executive branch. Nigeria has an elected president, so it is a presidential democracy. The president is elected for a four-year term and can serve two terms in a row. The president serves as both the head of government and the head of state. The executive branch also includes the cabinet called the **Federal Executive Council**. The president appoints people to the cabinet.

Nigeria is currently enjoying its longest civilian rule since independence. Even though this shows progress, both the 2003 and 2007 presidential elections were marked with violence and possible cheating. There are eight major political parties in Nigeria, but only two political parties have had a president elected since 1999. The People's Democratic Party ruled Nigeria from 1999, but lost the 2015 election to the All Progressives Congress political party.

The legislative branch is called the **National Assembly** and is made up of two houses: the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate has 109 seats with three senators from each state and one from the capital, Abuja. Senators are elected for four-year terms. The House of Representatives has 360 seats. Members are also elected to four-year terms.



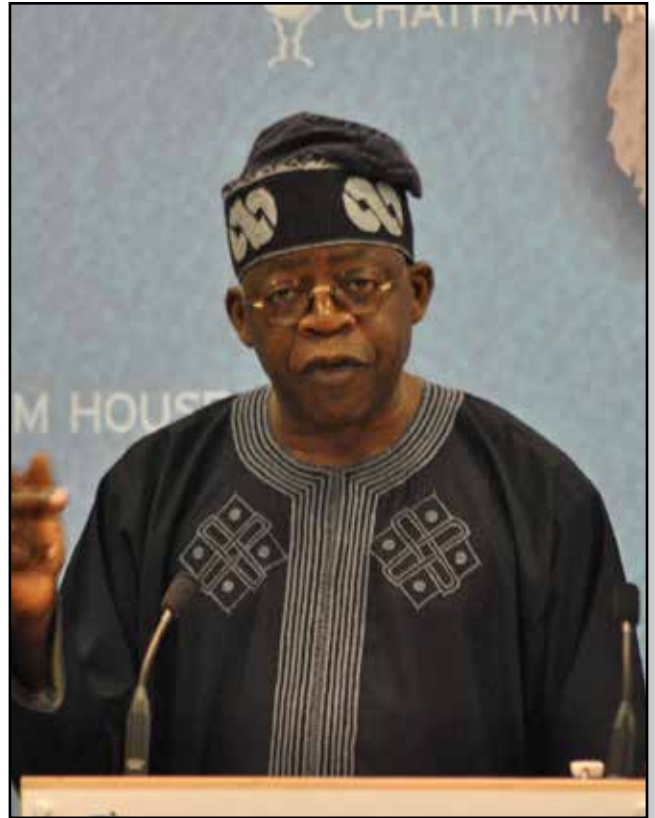
The judicial branch has a **Supreme Court** with one chief justice and fifteen justices, who are appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate. They serve on the Supreme Court until they reach the age of sixty-five. Islamic law, or Sharia Law, is used in some form in the twelve states in the northern part of Nigeria, but not the rest of Nigeria. Because of years of colonial rule, much of the law in Nigeria is based on British law traditions.

Challenges Facing the Government

The government of Nigeria faces many challenges including government corruption and terrorism. The country has a history of violent and nonviolent rule by military dictators. Citizens are learning what it is like to have responsible, elected leaders. The government continues to work toward making sure its democracy is working properly. It is also working to diversify its economy, making it less dependent on oil.

Government forces were accused of killing 150 peaceful protesters in 2015 who were marching in favor of Biafran independence. Later in the same year, the army was accused of killing more than 340 Shia Muslims. International governments expressed concern over the violence. The events were reminders that the Nigerian government forces may have a lack of understanding of how to respond to peaceful protests in a democratic society.

Terrorism is a serious challenge for the Nigerian government. Boko Haram has been a threat to the government since 2009 when it launched a campaign of violence. The kidnapping of over 200 girls from their boarding school in Chibok in 2014 caught the world's attention. Boko Haram continues to launch attacks against the government and people of Nigeria. Its goal is to remove the secular (non-religious) government of Nigeria and replace it with a government based on its interpretation of Islamic law.



REVIEW AND SUMMARIZE

1. What type of government does Nigeria have?
2. How do citizens participate in the government?
3. What freedoms do Nigerian citizens have?
4. When was Nigeria's constitution written? Why is it important?

Top: Nigerian President Bola Tinubu and his government face many challenges including government corruption and terrorism. **Above:** This Nigerian woman attended a march in April 2015 demanding the release of the girls kidnapped by Boko Haram a year earlier. By 2024, of the 276 girls kidnapped, 82 remained with their captors.

SECTION 4

The Economy of Nigeria

 AS YOU READ, LOOK FOR...

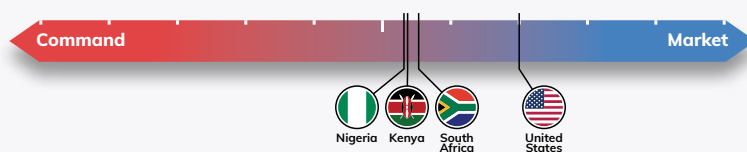
- » the type of economic system in Nigeria;
- » Nigeria's most valuable natural resources;
- » factors driving Nigeria's economic growth;
- » Nigeria's top exports and imports;
- » economic diversification in Nigeria;
- » terms: **Nollywood, diversified economy, infrastructure, naira.**

Type of Economy

Nigeria has the largest economy in Africa. In 2023, Nigeria's gross domestic product (GDP) was over \$362 billion. Nigeria's economy is mixed, leaning toward a market economy. As the government continues to improve and work for freedom for businesses, the economy moves along the economic continuum toward a more market-based economy. An established system of courts and stability in government make the country more attractive for businesses.

As a result of their large oil reserves, Nigeria is a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Oil has been a dominant source of income and government revenues since the 1970s.

Below: Oil production is a dominant source of income for Nigeria.

Figure 11.2 Economic Continuum




Nigeria's economic growth in the 2020s has been driven by growth in agriculture, telecommunications, and services. The entertainment sector, nicknamed **Nollywood**, continues to grow and contribute to the economy. Despite the steady economic growth, it has not been enough to end poverty in Nigeria. Over 40 percent of Nigeria's people still live in poverty.

The most important economic challenge facing Nigeria is developing a **diversified economy** (an economy that is broadened to focus on other resources and industries instead of just oil). The three areas where Nigeria is trying to diversify its economy are telecommunications, financial services, and cement. The government of Nigeria is also trying to improve the infrastructure for all Nigerians. **Infrastructure** includes roads, railways, and communication systems. An improved infrastructure would make Nigeria a better location for business because it would be easier to move people and goods throughout the country.

Above Left: In 2023, Nigeria ranked seventh in the world in cocoa production. **Above:** Cocoa pods hold beans that are processed to become chocolate. **Below:** Railways are an important part of Nigeria's transportation infrastructure.



Special Feature

Nollywood



Chances are, you have never heard of Nollywood, but you might guess that “Nollywood” is one name used to describe the Nigerian movie industry. The Nigerian film industry is the second-largest movie producer in the world, behind India’s Bollywood. Nollywood produces an average of 2,500 films yearly, while Hollywood in the United States produces around 500 yearly. The average Nollywood film is produced in seven to ten days, while the average Hollywood film takes a year to produce. One of the biggest challenges the Nigerian film industry faces is piracy. The industry is valued at \$6.4 billion. Still, the movie industry sees very little of that money as most of it goes to video pirates (people who illegally copy and sell video). Nollywood employs over one million people and is the second biggest employer in Nigeria.

Nollywood began in 1992, when the film *Living in Bondage* was released in Nigeria. Even though it was filmed with a commercial camera and went straight to home video, it was a major success. The first Nollywood directors were all self-made with little experience and very little money. When Nollywood began, there was a scarcity of funding and few movie theaters in Nigeria, but there was not a shortage of original ideas for movies. Most Nollywood films are dramas or comedies, but there are also historical pieces, as well as horror and romance.

Today, Nollywood is continuing to grow at a fast pace. Nollywood is Nigeria’s largest employer after agriculture, making up 2.3 percent of Nigeria’s Gross National Product (GDP). Nigerian movies form about 11 percent of Nigeria’s non-oil exports. You can even find Nigerian films on Netflix.

Nigeria's Factors of Production

As discussed in Chapter 3, societies must have resources to provide goods and services to their people. Economists call these factors of production or productive resources. These factors include natural resources, human capital, capital goods, and entrepreneurship. Here is a summary of the factors of production in Nigeria.

Natural Resources

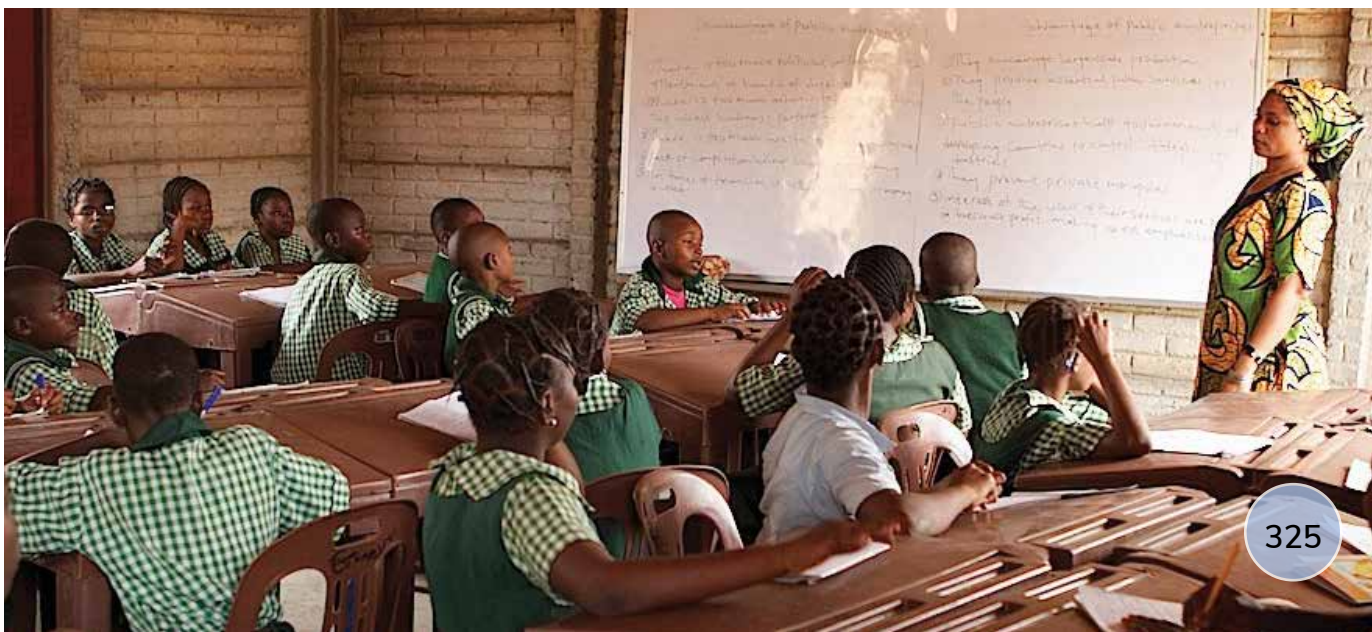
Nigeria has a wide variety of natural resources. It has a reserve of about 37 billion barrels of petroleum and over 209 trillion cubic meters of natural gas. Nigeria is rich in other natural resources, including talc, gypsum, iron ore, lead/zinc, gold, coal, rock salt, gemstones, and kaolin. Despite having other natural resources, Nigeria's government is heavily focused on petroleum and has not developed its other natural resources.

Human Capital

Nigeria is an example of a country that should have a strong economy because it has rich deposits of oil. However, years of government corruption, civil war, and military rule have left Nigeria poor. Nearly 40 percent of the people in Nigeria have to live on less than one dollar a day. Even though it has good farmland, it must import food to keep its people from starving.

Investment in human capital is one way the Nigerian government can help its economy continue to grow. The literacy rate in Nigeria is about 62 percent, which shows that about 40 percent of the population in Nigeria cannot read and write. Breaking the literacy rate down by gender shows that about 71 percent of men are literate, while only 52 percent of women are literate. One reason for the difference in literacy rates is that many girls do not attend school because it is believed to be more important to marry at a young age.

Opposite Page, Background: A set in a Nollywood film studio. **Opposite Page, Bottom:** The Nollywood sign on a hill imitates the Hollywood sign in Los Angeles, California. **Below:** Nigerian librarians updating the Wikipedia database. **Bottom:** Students at a public school in the state of Kwara in Western Nigeria.

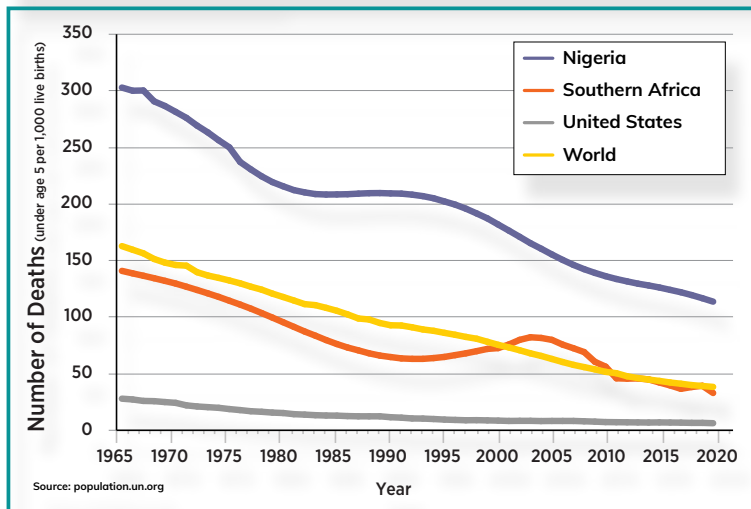




Above: Investments in healthcare have improved the lives of many Nigerians. **Below:** Modern capital goods such as this floating oil production vessel make Nigerian offshore oil production more profitable. **Bottom:** Young Nigerians in this training program learn entrepreneurial skills to start their own businesses.

Investments in healthcare by the government and support from international groups have improved the child mortality rate. Although child deaths remain high, the number has declined over the last decades. Nigeria also faces the second-highest rate of HIV/AIDS in the world. An estimated two million people in Nigeria are living with HIV/AIDS.

Figure 11.3 Child Mortality Rate



Capital Goods

Nigeria has invested heavily in capital goods for its oil industry. New technology is required to compete in the global market. The concentration on capital goods for this part of the economy, however, has left many Nigerians without proper food and housing. Nigeria does not have a large manufacturing or industry sector. In fact, most of their capital goods that are not oil related come from imports from other countries. The government of Nigeria has invested in the country's infrastructure. Improved infrastructure makes transporting goods and people faster and more reliable.

Entrepreneurship

Currently, it is not very easy to be an entrepreneur in Nigeria. However, Nigeria's government is working to improve the environment for small business to thrive. While the requirement to have a minimum amount of money to start a business has been eliminated, it still costs about four times the average yearly income to get a license to start a business. In addition to being expensive, starting a business takes a long time.



Trade

Trade is vital to the Nigerian economy. In 2023, Nigeria's exports were valued at over \$60 billion, while its imports were valued at \$72 billion. Since Nigeria has large petroleum deposits, it is a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Nigeria's major exports are crude petroleum, natural gas, fertilizer, refined petroleum, and gold. Nigeria mainly exports its goods to Spain, India, France, the United States, and the Netherlands. The major imports of Nigeria are refined petroleum, wheat, garments, plastics, and automobiles. Nigeria mainly imports goods from China, Belgium, the Netherlands, India, and the United States.



Currency

Foreign visitors to Nigeria must exchange their currency for Nigeria's **naira** (₦). Currency can be exchanged at banks or electronically so that trade in goods and services can occur. In 2024, one U.S. dollar could be exchanged for about 1,591 Nigerian nairas.



REVIEW AND SUMMARIZE

1. What type of economy does Nigeria have?
2. What are two of Nigeria's most valuable natural resources?
3. What are four things that are driving Nigeria's economic growth?
4. What are Nigeria's top exports and imports?
5. How would Nigeria benefit from a diversified economy?

Top: Miners in Itagun, Osun gathering their gold finds in the pan.

Above: The naira is Nigeria's currency.

SECTION 5

U.S.-Nigeria Relations



AS YOU READ, LOOK FOR...

- » when the U.S.-Nigeria relationship began;
- » reasons the relationship between the two countries was strained;
- » areas of focus in the current United States-Nigeria relationship;
- » imports and exports between the two nations;
- » how being a member of international organizations helps the people of Nigeria;
- » terms: **diplomatic relations**, **African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)**.



Above: U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris (right) and Nigerian Vice President Yemi Osinbajo (left) met in Washington, D.C., in September 2022. They discussed topics including U.S. humanitarian assistance and funding to help ensure that elections in Africa's largest democracy were safe and secure.

Improving Relations

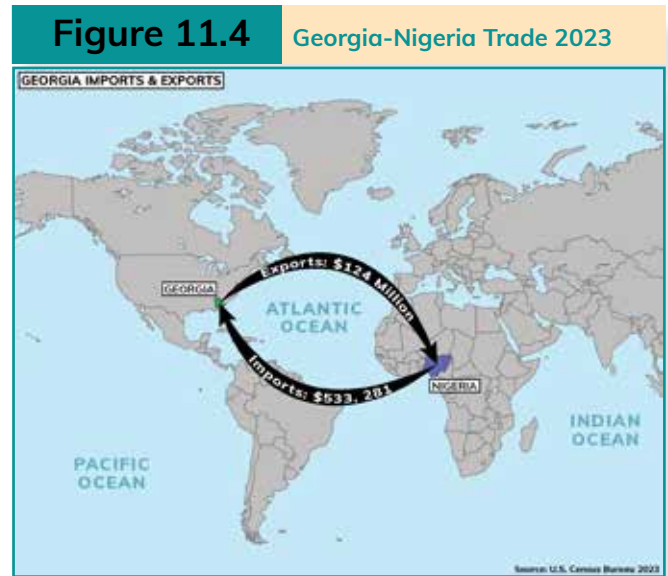
The United States established **diplomatic relations** (an arrangement where two nations have representatives in each other's country) with Nigeria in 1960, following Nigeria's independence from the United Kingdom. From 1966 to 1999, Nigeria experienced a series of civil wars and military coups. Following the 1999 inauguration of a civilian president, the U.S.-Nigerian relationship improved, as did cooperation on foreign policy goals such as regional peacekeeping. Under the U.S.-Nigeria Binational Commission, the two countries hold talks on several points: good governance, anti-corruption, trade, investment, food security, security, and counterterrorism.

U.S. Assistance to Nigeria

The United States wants to help improve economic stability, security, and well-being for Nigerians by strengthening their democratic government and improving transparency. As Nigeria works to combat corruption in government, improving transparency and accountability will help people begin to trust the government again. The United States also wants to help with health and education services, as well as improving agricultural productivity.

Bilateral Economic Relations

Trade between the United States and Nigeria was over \$8 billion in 2022. Nigeria is the second largest export destination in sub-Saharan Africa for the United States. U.S. exports to Nigeria include wheat, vehicles, machinery, oil, and plastic. Nigeria is eligible for preferential trade benefits under the **African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)**, the 2000 Act of the United States that increased market access to the United States for qualifying countries in sub-Saharan Africa. U.S. imports from Nigeria include petroleum, cocoa, cashew nuts, and animal feed. The United States and Nigeria have signed a bilateral trade and investment framework agreement, and many U.S. film companies are active in the country.



Nigeria's Membership in International Organizations

Nigeria and the United States belong to several international organizations, including the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization. Nigeria is also an observer of the Organization of American States. As a result of its large petroleum reserves, Nigeria is a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). The goal of OPEC is to control the price of oil by controlling the supply in the global economy. The United States is not a member of OPEC. Finally, Nigeria is home to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and a member of the African Union.



REVIEW AND SUMMARIZE

1. When did the U.S.-Nigeria relationship begin?
2. What event improved the relationship between Nigeria and the United States in 1999?
3. What are five focus areas for U.S.-Nigeria relations?
4. What are Nigeria's top exports to the United States? What are the United States' top exports to Nigeria?

Above: Nigeria hosted a meeting of leaders from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in July 2024.

Chapter Review

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Section 1: The Geography of Nigeria

- Nigeria is named for the long Niger River, which is important for trade.
- Nigeria has large oil reserves and has been a member of OPEC since 1971.
- Nigeria has the largest population in Africa, which includes over 250 ethnic groups and diverse languages and religions.

Section 2: A Brief History of Nigeria

- Arab merchants were some of the first people to interact with Nigerians and influence the culture.
- The British used the Niger River to colonize further into Nigeria for its natural resources.
- Nigeria gained independence in 1960, but civil war broke out between different religious groups.
- In the 21st century, the country has improving political stability, free elections, and decreasing violence.

Section 3: The Government of Nigeria

- The government is a presidential democracy where all citizens over 18 can vote.
- The executive branch includes the president and the cabinet called the Federal Executive Council.
- The legislative branch is made up of the bicameral National Assembly.
- The judicial branch is the Supreme Court with justices appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate.

Section 4: The Economy of Nigeria

- Nigeria has Africa's largest economy. Its main export is oil.
- The country is working to diversify the economy with investments in telecommunications, financial services, and cement.
- Due to government corruption and lack of investment in human capital, the Nigerian economy has not reached its potential, and many Nigerians live in poverty.

Section 5: U.S.-Nigeria Relations

- Once Nigeria inaugurated a civilian president in 1999, the United States began providing aid to Nigeria.
- The United States is the largest foreign investor in the country and works to combat government corruption.

ACTIVITIES FOR LEARNING

Reviewing People, Places, and Things

Imagine you are a journalist in Nigeria focusing on the economy. Write a realistic article using the words and names below. Underline each word as you use it.

Abuja
Niger River
diversified economy
infrastructure
Boko Haram
OPEC
entrepreneurship
literacy

Understanding the Facts

1. Why is the Niger River important?
2. What is the capital of Nigeria?
3. Why did the British stay in Nigeria after the abolition of the slave trade?
4. What is the Independent State of Biafra?
5. How do advisors get on the Federal Executive Council?
6. What happened to the government in 1999?
7. What percentage of Nigerians live in poverty?
8. Why is Nollywood important for the economy?
9. Why does Nigeria need to diversify its economy?
10. Name three international organizations of which Nigeria is a member.

Developing Critical Thinking

1. Although Nigeria is a rich country, this wealth has not improved the lives of many poor Nigerians. How do you think this poverty affects decisions made by individuals, thereby promoting tensions between various religious and ethnic groups? Provide specific examples.

2. Nigeria had a marked improvement in 1999 after a civilian leader took control. How are military and civilian leaders different? Why do you think a civilian president has created a more peaceful transition of power?
3. Twelve of Nigeria's states follow Islamic law and the others follow a system similar to the United States. Why do you think there are different systems across the country? What do you think this indicates about the multiculturalism of Nigeria?

Writing across the Curriculum

1. Write a short report on the struggles Nigeria faced after independence. Include specific examples and what led to these problems.
2. Nigeria is working to diversify its economy. Write a short report on why this is a good idea, and identify the natural resources in Nigeria that have been ignored.

Applying Your Skills

1. Compare and contrast the Nigerian and American branches of government. Create whichever graph or chart you think best displays this information, and summarize in one or two sentences what you have illustrated.
2. What interested you in Section 5? Formulate a thesis question that you would like to research. What sources do you think would help you answer this question?

Exploring Technology

1. Nollywood is important for Nigeria's economy and provides cultural benefits. Use the internet to research the Nollywood film industry. How do Nollywood movies help viewers understand Nigerian culture?
2. Use the Internet to research Nigeria's currency, the naira. How strong is the naira compared to the U.S. dollar and the currency of Nigeria's other trading partners? How does this affect imports and exports?

Physical Geography

	South Africa	Kenya	Nigeria
Area Comparison Map	470,693 sq mi 25 th largest	224,080.95 sq mi 49 th largest	356,669 sq mi 32 nd largest
Relative Size			
Location			
Natural Resources	gold, chromium, antimony, coal, iron ore, manganese, nickel, phosphates, tin, rare earth elements, uranium, gem diamonds, platinum, copper, vanadium, salt, natural gas	limestone, soda ash, salt, gemstones, fluorspar, zinc, diatomite, gypsum, wildlife, hydropower	natural gas, petroleum, tin, iron ore, coal, limestone, niobium, lead, zinc, arable land
Environment	lack of important arterial rivers or lakes requires extensive water conservation and control measures; growth in water usage outpacing supply; pollution of rivers from agricultural runoff and urban discharge; air pollution resulting in acid rain; deforestation; soil erosion; land degradation; desertification; solid waste pollution; disruption of fragile ecosystem has resulted in significant floral extinctions	water pollution from urban and industrial wastes; water shortage and degraded water quality from increased use of pesticides and fertilizers; flooding; water hyacinth infestation in Lake Victoria; deforestation; soil erosion; desertification; poaching	serious overpopulation and rapid urbanization have led to numerous environmental problems; urban air and water pollution; rapid deforestation; soil degradation; loss of arable land; oil pollution - water, air, and soil have suffered serious damage from oil spills

Physical Geography Comparison Questions

1. Which country is the largest?
2. Which country has the most valuable resources?
3. Based on each country's location, which country has the best location for trade? Why?
4. Based on each country's location, which country has the worst location for trade? Why?
5. What similarities are there between the environmental issues of South Africa, Kenya, and Nigeria?

Cultural Geography

	South Africa	Kenya	Nigeria
Ethnic Groups	Black African 80.9% White 7.8% Colored* 8.8% Indian/Asian 2.6% *Colored is a term used in South Africa to describe mixed race people who have developed their own distinctive culture over hundreds of years	Kikuyu 17.1% Luhya 14.3% Luo 10.7% Kalenjin 13.4% Kamba 9.8% Kisii 5.7% Meru 4.2% Other 9.2% Somali 5.8% Mijikenda 5.2% Maasai 2.5% Turkana 2.1%	Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, is composed of more than 250 ethnic groups; the most populous and politically influential are: Hausa 30% Yoruba 15.5% Igbo (Ibo) 15.2% Fulani 6% Ijaw 1.8% Kanuri 2.4% Ininio 1.8% Tiv 2.4% Other 24.9%
Religion	Christian 86% Traditional religions 5.4% Muslim 1.9% Other 1.5% None 5.2%	Christian 85.5% Muslim 10.9% Other 1.8% None 1.6% Unspecified .2%	Muslim 53.5% Christian 45.8% Other .6%
Population	60,414,495 (2023) Rank 25th	55,100,586 (2023) Rank 27	223,804,632 (2023) Rank 6
Life Expectancy	Average 65.3 years Male 63.9 years Female 66.7 years	Average: 70.4 years (2024) Male 68.6 years Female 72.2 years	Average 62.2 years Male 60.4 years Female 64.2 years
Literacy	Total population 95% Male 95.5% Female 94.5%	Total Population: 82.6% Male 85.5% Female 79.8%	Total Population 62% Male 71.3% Female 52.7%
Education Expenditures	6.6% of GDP Rank 29	4.8% of GDP (rank 83)	.5% of GDP (2024) 196th Rank

Cultural Geography Comparison Questions

1. Which country has the most diverse population?
2. What is the most common religion found in the three countries?
3. Which country has the largest population?
4. Which country has the longest life expectancy? What does that tell you about healthcare in that country?
5. Which country spends the most on education? What does that tell you about education in that country?

Government

	South Africa	Kenya	Nigeria
Government Type	Parliamentary democracy	Presidential democracy	Presidential democracy
Capital City	Pretoria (administrative capital) Cape Town (legislative capital) Bloemfontein (judicial capital)	Nairobi	Abuja
Head of Government	King	Prime minister	President
Suffrage	18 years of age; universal	18 years of age; universal	18 years of age; universal
Citizen Participation	Citizens elect members of the legislature	Citizens elect the president and legislature	Citizens elect the president and legislature
Flag			
Political Map			
Currency	South African Rand 	Kenyan Shilling 	Nigerian Naira 

Government Comparison Questions

1. In which country do citizens have the most power?
2. In which country do citizens have the least power? Explain your thinking.
3. What is one thing all three countries' governments have in common?
4. How are the governments of Kenya and South Africa different?

Economy

	South Africa	Kenya	Nigeria
GDP	\$377.782 billion (2023 est.) Rank 33rd	\$107.441 billion (2023 est.) Rank 60th	\$362.815 billion (2023 est.) Rank 26th
GDP per capita	\$14,300 (2023 est.) Rank 126th	\$5,700 (2023 est.) Rank 170th	\$5,700 (2023 est.) Rank 171st
GDP by sector			
Agriculture	2.8%	34.5%	21.1%
Industry	29.7%	17.8%	22.5%
Services	67.5%	47.5%	56.4%
Imports	refined petroleum, cars, crude petroleum, vehicle parts/accessories, broadcasting equipment	refined petroleum, palm oil, garments, wheat, plastics	gold, refined petroleum, plastics, scrap iron, cars
Exports	gold, platinum, coal, cars, diamonds	tea, cut flowers, garments, coffee, titanium ore	crude petroleum, natural gas, fertilizers, refined petroleum, gold
Import Partners	China 21% Germany 9% India 7% U.S. 5% Saudi Arabia 4%	China 26% UAE 14% India 11% Malaysia 4% Saudi Arabia 4%	China 32% Belgium 11% Netherlands 10% India 8% U.S. 5%
Export Partners	China 16% U.S. 7% Germany 7% India 6% Japan 6%	U.S. 10% Uganda 9%, Pakistan 7% Netherlands 7% Rwanda 6%	Spain 13% India 12% France 7% U.S. 7% Netherlands 6%
Value of Imports	\$123.541 billion (2023 est.)	\$24.406 billion (2022 est.)	\$72.251 billion (2023 est.)
Value of Exports	\$124.731 billion (2023 est.)	\$13.859 billion (2022 est.)	\$60.261 billion (2023 est.)

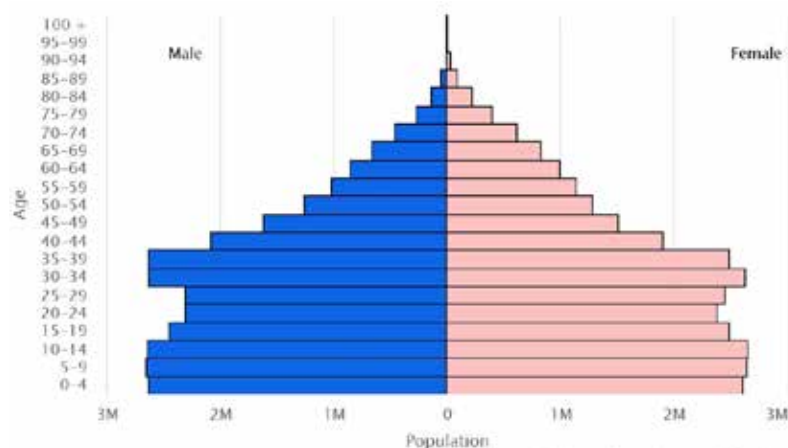
Economic Comparison Questions

1. Which country has the highest GDP?
2. Look at the GDP per Sector. What conclusions can you make about the three countries' economies?
3. Which country has the most valuable exports? Why?
4. What similarities are there between the export and import partners?
5. Which countries import more than it export? Why could that be a problem?

Population Pyramid

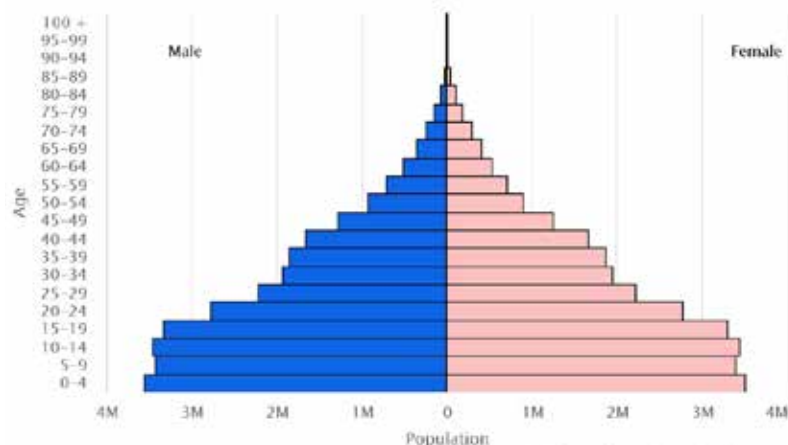
A population pyramid illustrates the age and sex structure of a country's population and may provide insights about political and social stability, as well as economic development. The population is distributed along the horizontal axis, with males shown on the left and females on the right. The male and female populations are broken down into 5-year age groups represented as horizontal bars along the vertical axis, with the youngest age groups at the bottom and the oldest at the top. The shape of the population pyramid gradually evolves over time based on fertility, mortality, and international migration trends.

South Africa



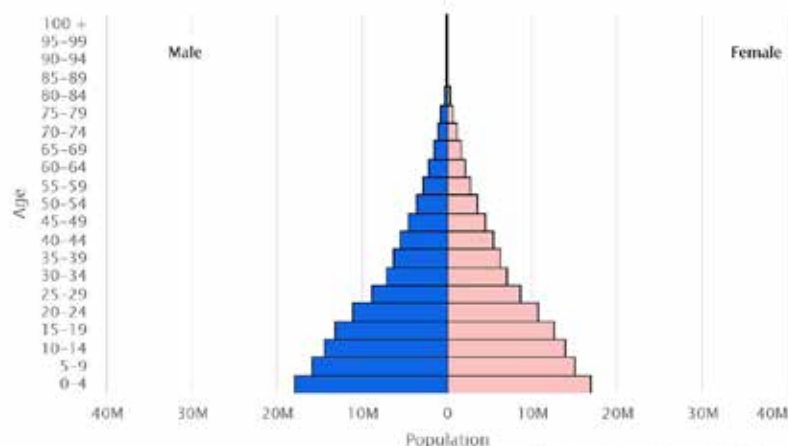
U.S. Census Bureau, International Database

Kenya



U.S. Census Bureau, International Database

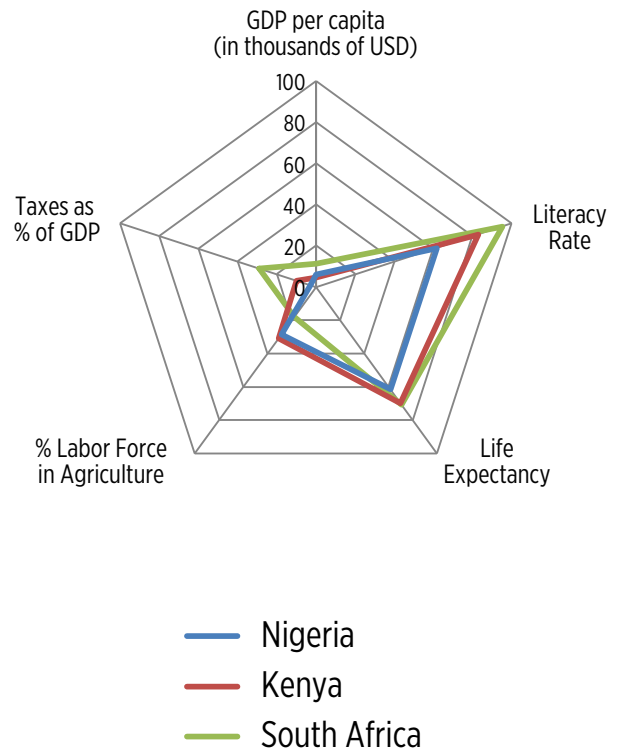
Nigeria



U.S. Census Bureau, International Database

Spider Graph

A spider graph consists of plotting data on a series of spokes, called radii, with each spoke representing one variable (for example: GDP per capita, literacy rate, life expectancy). The length of each spoke from the center of the graph is proportional to the other spokes. A line is drawn connecting the data points for each spoke. This gives the graph the look of a spider web. The spider graph can be used to answer such questions as: Which characteristics are most similar between countries? Are there outliers?



Comparisons 2 Questions

Use the population pyramids and spider graph to complete each item comparing the three focus countries.

- Which country has the highest number of young people?
- Which age group is the largest in Kenya?
- How is South Africa's population pyramid different from Nigeria's?
- Using the spider graph, what similarities do you notice about the three countries?
- Using the spider graph, what differences do you notice about the three countries?

Challenge: Compute the dollar amount spent per year, per person, educating the population in each country. Assume that one-fourth of the population is in school and round off decimals to the nearest whole number, as needed. Hint: You will need the GDP, percentage of GDP spent on education, and population of each country to complete the task

South Africa

Kenya

Nigeria