

CHAPTER 23

WEST AFRICA

Section 4

“The Coastal Countries”

Objectives

The students will be able to:

- 1) Describe life in Nigeria today.
- 2) Identify the economic challenges faced by other coastal West African countries.

Nigeria

- Nigeria has the largest population of Africa - over 113 million

Nigeria's People

- Once a British colony
- Over 200 languages spoken
- Many ethnic groups (including):
 - Yoruba
 - Fula
 - Hausa
 - Ibo
- Many ethnic groups have not gotten along

Nigeria's People (cont.)

- In the 1960s, the Ibo tried to SECEDE (to break away from a country to form another)
- Tried to form a separate country called Biafra
- Ibo lost the bloody war that followed secession

Nigeria's People (cont.)

- Avoiding ethnic conflicts is an ongoing issue in Nigeria - frequent conflicts
- Abuja was chosen new capital in 1970s because it is centrally located in an area of low population density

Nigeria's Economy

- Rich in natural resources
- Oil is most important resource
 - Oil accounts for 95% of export earnings
 - Oil accounts for 20% Nigeria's GDP
 - Oil revenues pay 65% governments budget
- Major oil fields are located in Niger River delta & just off the coast
- Also has good roads & railroads

Nigeria's Economy (cont.)

- Lagos
 - Largest city (former capital)
 - Busy seaport & trade center
- Poverty is a major problem
- Major cause of poverty is high birthrate
 - Nigeria has to import food
- When prices of oil are low, whole country suffers

Nigeria's Economy (cont.)

- History of bad government has also led to poverty for many in Nigeria
 - Corrupt government officials enrich themselves

Other Coastal Countries

- There are many small countries in West Africa along the Atlantic Ocean & the Gulf of Guinea - many struggling to develop economies

Senegal & Gambia

- Senegal & part of Gambia - once part of the Wolof Empire
- French & British established posts in 1600s
- British gained control of Gambia (and Gambia River)
- French gained control of Senegal

Senegal & Gambia (cont.)

- French colonizers exerted direct control over colony
 - Tried to assimilate Senegalese into a French way of life
- British colonizers controlled colony through Gambian rulers

Senegal & Gambia (cont.)

- Odd borders of Senegal & Gambia created by diplomats
- Senegal - former French colony
 - Larger & richer than Gambia
 - Dakar - capital, important seaport, manufacturing center
- Gambia - former British colony

Senegal & Gambia (cont.)

- Similarities:
 - Peanuts most important crop
 - Common foods: chicken stew & fish with a peanut sauce
 - Tourism is growing slowly
 - Many speak Wolof language
 - Griots are important - pass on oral history

Senegal & Gambia (cont.)

- Wolof women wear complex hairstyles & gold jewelry

Guinea, Guinea-Bissau & Cape Verde

- Guinea - main natural resource is huge supply of bauxite (aluminum)
- Guinea-Bissau - undeveloped resources
- Cape Verde - group of volcanic islands in the Atlantic
 - Farming & fishing bring in most money

Liberia & Sierra Leone

- Liberia is Africa's oldest republic
- Monrovia - capital of Liberia
 - Named after President James Monroe
- Settled by freed American slaves that lived in coastal towns
- Clashed with Africans already living there, usually poorer & from rural areas
- 1980s - bitter civil war

Liberia & Sierra Leone (cont.)

- Sierra Leone also experienced civil war
- Civil war wrecked the economy of Sierra Leone
- Both countries are still rebuilding from civil wars
- Liberia - produces iron ore & rubber
- Sierra Leone - exports diamonds

Ghana & Cote d'Ivoire

- Have rich natural resources
- Ghana is named for the ancient kingdom, although kingdom was northwest of modern country
- Ghana has one of largest human-made lakes in the world: Lake Volta
- Major products of Ghana: gold, timber, cacao

Ghana & Cote d'Ivoire (cont.)

- CACAO: small tree on which cocoa beans grow (used for cocoa & chocolate)
 - Tree originally came from Mexico & Central America
- Cote d'Ivoire is a former French colony
- Cote d'Ivoire means “Ivory Coast”

Ghana & Cote d'Ivoire (cont.)

- Cote d'Ivoire is a world leader in cacao and coffee exports
- Cote d'Ivoire also has Africa's largest Christian church building

Togo & Benin

- Both have had unstable governments since their independence
- Both had periods of military rule
- Fragile & unstable economies
- Both are long, narrow countries
- Both are poor
- People depend on farming & herding

Togo & Benin (cont.)

- Main crops are: palm tree products, cacao, coffee

Country, Li Ex, Lit R, pcGDP

- Sierra Leone, 43, 31%, \$ 510
- Cape Verde, 66, 72%, \$1,700
- Senegal, 61, 33%, \$1,600
- Ghana, 56, 65%, \$1,900
- Guinea-Bissau, 47, 54%, \$ 850