



Fast Facts

It has been over 2,000 years since Jesus walked the Earth, and over 150 years since missionaries started working in West Africa. STILL today there are people groups in West Africa

who have little or no access to the Gospel.

DEMOGRAPHICS :

The region is composed of 22 countries with a population of 240 million. The country of Nigeria accounts for 45.7% of the region's population. The countries include Cape Verde, Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ghana, Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe, Gabon and Congo.

PEOPLE INFORMATION :

The people of West Africa are subsistence farmers – producers of dark blue cloth – fishermen – nomadic cattle and sheep herders – seamstresses – retailers – government workers - traders and merchants.

Approximately three-fourths of the region's population (72.6%) is under 30 years of age. 45 % of the population are 14 years of age or younger. The region has **1,612 people groups**. Of these groups, 355 or 22%, have not heard the name of Jesus and are not engaged by anyone. Currently, 52 people groups representing 28% of the population are being engaged by IMB personnel.

In a recent report for the countries of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate was estimated at 6.5% in 1999. It is now projected to reach 9.3% in 2010. Also by 2010, it is estimated that there will be 3,288,000 AIDS orphans.

Religions in West Africa:

Of the population, 39.4% claim to be Christians. 50.1 % of the population is Islamic. Islam is a social system as well as a religion; therefore, leaving Islam often means leaving one's family and culture. Another 10.5 % of the population is involved with African Traditional Religion (ATR), sometimes called Animism. ATR, which involves the worship of ancestors, is the way a large number of Africans, including many who claim Islam or Christianity, look at the world and experience life. To all Africans, life is communal rather than individual. Approximately one-half of the region's people groups are Unreached meaning that less than 2 percent are evangelical. One-third of the people groups are Last Frontier peoples. These are people groups who are less than 2 percent evangelical Christians and haven't had a church planted among them in the last two years.

How Can You Help West Africans Come to Know Jesus?

Visit West Africa's web site at gowestafrica.org for additional information about the region and learn about short and long term opportunities to serve or call IMB at 800-999-3113.



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