

Africa



Literacy in Africa

- An adult literate is a person aged 15 and over who can, with understanding, both read and write a short, simple statement on their everyday life.
- Literacy remains a major barrier to the development of African countries. Despite the progress achieved since 1990 in boosting literacy rates, according to UNESCO, four out of ten adults in sub-Saharan Africa cannot read or write, a total of 182 million people.
- In 2012, the average literacy rate in Sub-Saharan Africa was 68% for men and 50% for women.
- As of 2014, 22% of African children do not attend school, and of those who enroll in primary school, about one third drop out without becoming literate.
- “For everyone everywhere, literacy is...a basic human right,” Kofi Annan, Former UN Secretary-General
- An underlying barrier for literacy programs has been the unavailability of adequate reading materials. This has meant that people are not motivated to read and new literates relapse into illiteracy for want of things to read.
- The transformation that takes place when an individual -- adult or youth -- learns to read and write is inestimable. Literacy provides a sense of pride, competence, and ability to function more effectively as a parent, a farmer or businessperson and as a leader in one's community.

The African Library Project

Since 2005 the African Library Project (ALP) has been developing partnerships with rural communities in African countries. Each community provides the space, furniture and staffing for a library while ALP provides the books and coordinates book distribution. The libraries promote literacy and a love for reading. As of 2015, ALP has developed 1,485 libraries.

Quick Facts

- Africa's population is over 1 billion people.
- There are over 1,000 different languages spoken in Africa.
- Africa is four times the size of the United States.
- Africa's population is about 15% of the total world population.
- In Africa, the average life expectancy is 58 years.
- In sub Saharan Africa, about half the people live on less than \$1.25 per day.
- Africa is a diverse continent of 54 countries.
- Africa is rich in natural resources.
- Africa is also rich in human resources, including Nobel laureates Desmond Tutu, Wangari Maathai, Kofi Annan, Nelson Mandela, and Wole Soyinka, and many children who also have the potential to achieve greatness.

