UF Center for African Studies

# TEACH AFRICA

## African Women Rise in Business

**2019 Irohin: Taking Africa to the Classroom**

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# TEACH AFRICA 2019

*Irohin: Taking Africa to the Classroom*

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*The Center for African Studies at the University of Florida*

# OUTREACH PROGRAM

The Center for African Studies is partially funded under Title VI of the Federal Higher Education Act as a National Resource Center on Africa. One of only 10 in the U.S., Florida's only Center is located in the southeastern United States. The Center directs, develops, and coordinates interdisciplinary instruction, research, and outreach on Africa. The Outreach Program includes a variety of activities whose objective is to improve the teaching of Africa in primary and secondary schools, colleges, universities and local communities. The following are some of the regular activities which fall under the Outreach Program:

**Publications**

The Center publishes and distributes teaching resources including Teach Africa, a publication for K-12 teachers.

**Teachers' Workshops**

The Center offers in-service workshops for K-12 teachers about instruction on Africa throughout the school year.

**Community & School Presentations**

Faculty and graduate students make presentations on Africa to local communities and schools.

**Summer Institute on Africa**

Each summer the Center offers a two-week summer institute for K-12 teachers.



2018 Summer institute participants and contributors to this publication: Felicity Aku Tackey-Otoo (Institute Program Assistant), Dr. Jenelle Robinson, Beatrice Torres, Stacia Berben, Megan M Diaz, Alicia-Nicole Archangel, Mayra Daniela Aviles, Lea Crowley, Molly Hays, Abigail Davenport, Juanita Nelson and Dr. Agnes Leslie (institute Director).

# AFRICA

Africa is more than three times the size of the contiguous United States; there are more than 500 extant languages spoken across more than 50 countries; and the landscape spans from desert to rainforest. Languages, cultures, scenery and even the hemispheres change as you traverse Africa. This map may help us understand the true size of Africa and it's diversity.

## The **True Size** of **Africa**

A small contribution in the fight against rampant *Immappancy*, by **Kai Krause**

Graphic layout for visualization only ( some countries are cut and rotated )
But the conclusions are very accurate: refer to table below for exact data

| COUNTRY | AREA<br>x 1000 km² |
|---|---|
| China | 9.597 |
| USA | 9.629 |
| India | 3.287 |
| Mexico | 1.964 |
| Peru | 1.285 |
| France | 633 |
| Spain | 506 |
| Papua New Guinea | 462 |
| Sweden | 441 |
| Japan | 378 |
| Germany | 357 |
| Norway | 324 |
| Italy | 301 |
| New Zealand | 270 |
| United Kingdom | 243 |
| Nepal | 147 |
| Bangladesh | 144 |
| Greece | 132 |
| TOTAL | 30.102 |
| AFRICA | 30.221 |
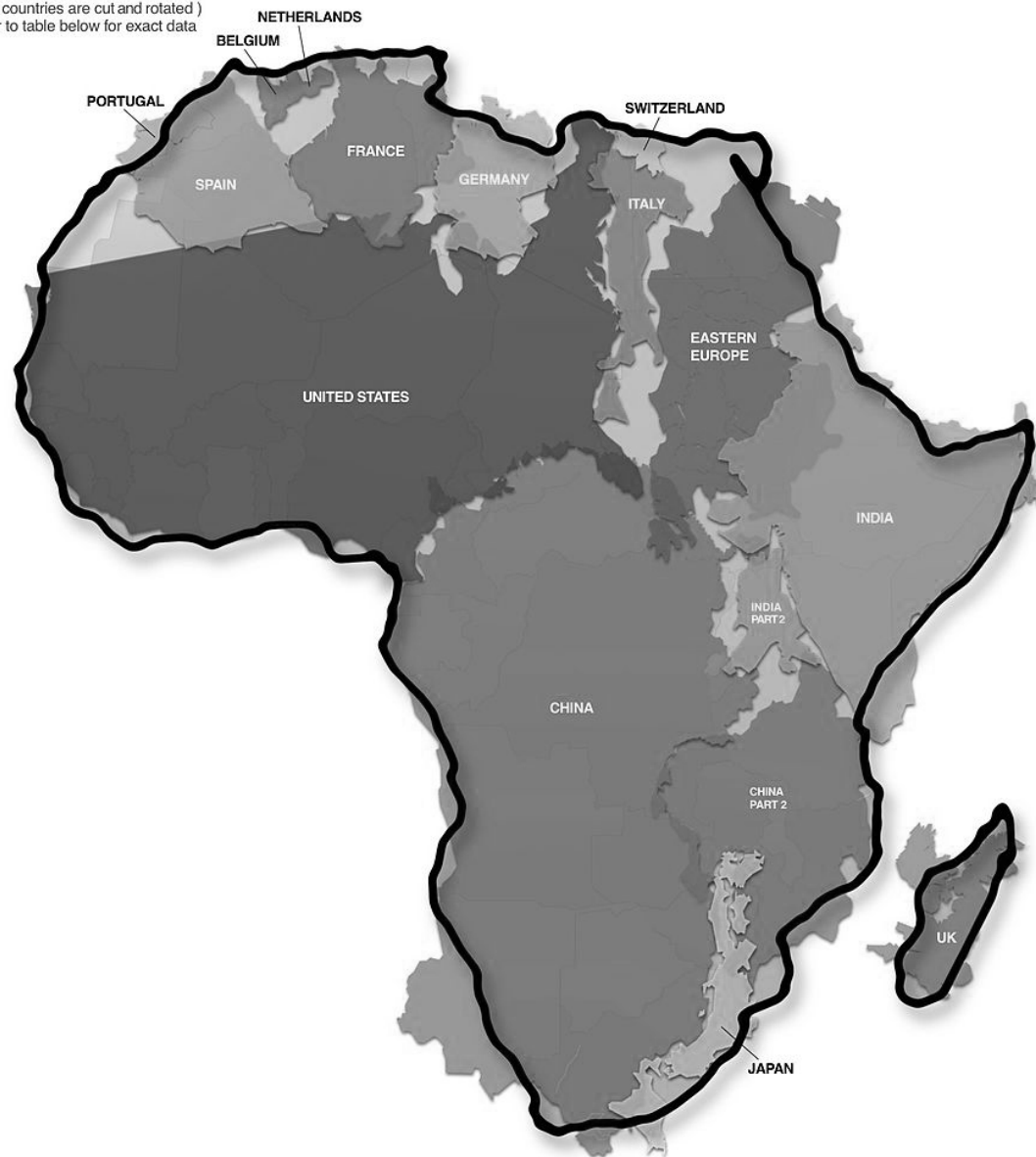
# CORRECTED MAPS

In an age of "fake news" and "alternative facts", authorities in the city of Boston believe their new school map offers something closer to the geographical truth than that of traditional maps, and hope it can serve an example to schools across the nation and even the world.

The school district dropped the Mercator projection, which physically diminished Africa and South America, for the Peters, which cuts the developed world down to size.

The Gall-Peters projection shows land masses in their correct proportions by area, putting the relative sizes of Africa and North America in perspective.

When Boston public schools introduced a new standard map of the world, some young students felt their world had changed.

The USA was small. Europe too had suddenly shrunk. Africa and South America appeared narrower but also much larger than usual. And what had happened to Alaska?

For almost 500 years, the Mercator projection–designed to aid navigation along colonial trade routes–has been the norm for maps of the world.
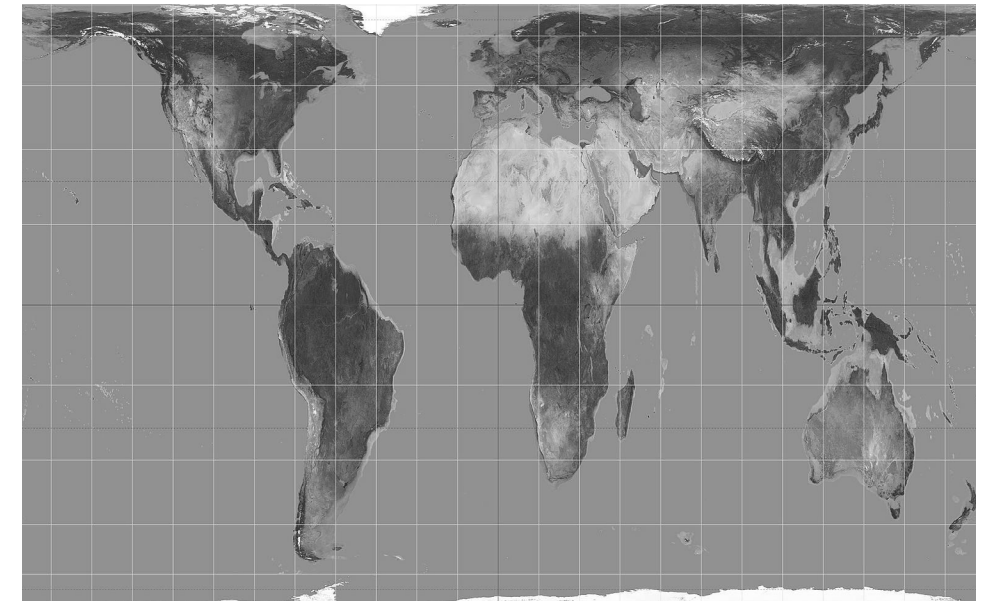


The Sallie-Peter projection shows correct proportions putting the right size of Africa.

In the Mercator system, North America and Europe appear bigger than South America and Africa. Western Europe is in the middle of his map.

South America is made to look about the same size as Europe, when in fact it is almost twice as large, and Greenland looks roughly the size of Africa when it is actually about 14 times smaller. Alaska looks bigger than Mexico and Germany is in the middle of the picture, not to the north.

The switch to the Gall-Peters Projection sees Boston's public schools follow the lead of the United Nations, which has advocated the map as a more 'fair', less Eurocentric representation of the world, as have several aid agencies.

Teachers in the 2nd, 7th and 11th grades received their new maps, and said the reaction from their students has been fascinating. "It's "interesting to watch the students saying 'Wow' and 'No, really? Look at Africa, it's bigger'", Natacha Scott, director of history and social studies at Boston public schools, told The Guardian.

"Some of their reactions were quite funny," she added, "but it was also amazingly interesting to see them questioning what they thought they knew." Mar. 20, 2017 (GIN)
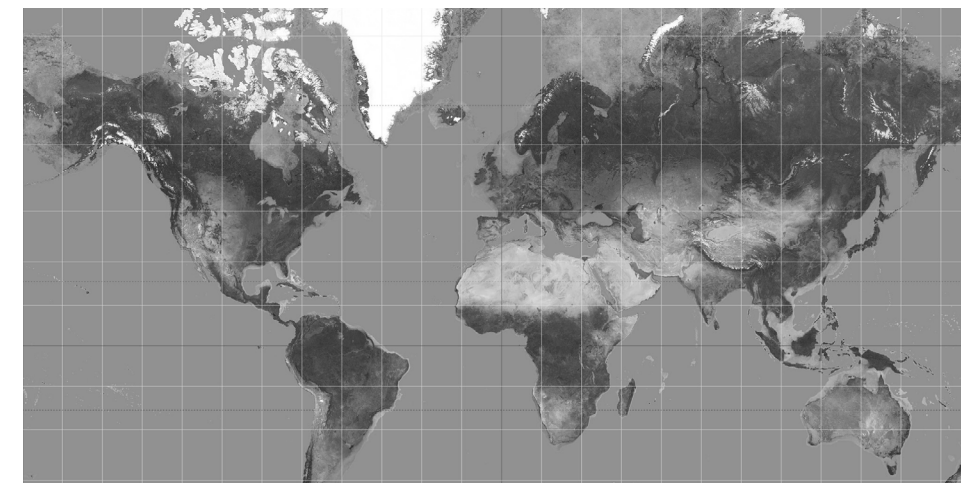


The Mercator projection, the map most commonly seen hanging in classrooms and in textbooks, gives the right shapes of land masses, but at the cost of distorting their sizes in favor of the lands to the north.

*Lea Crowley*

# WOMEN IN KENYA: UP AND COMING ENTREPRENEURS

Kenya, a country located in Eastern Africa, serves as the economic, financial, and transport hub of the region. Since achieving independence from the British Empire in 1963, Kenya has been growing and developing at a rapid pace. In fact, Kenya has reported an average 5% GDP growth over the past ten years (CIA, 2018). Despite the country's remarkable economic growth, many of its citizens have faced an uphill battle to rise to the middle class. According to a report by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 36% of Kenyans lived in poverty from 2015 to 2016 (2018).

Fortunately, Kenyan government officials and corporations have acknowledged this issue facing their community and enacted programs to enable ordinary people to launch their own businesses. A popular method used to alleviate poverty goes by several names, including: microfinance, microenterprise, or microcredit (Lock & Lawton Smith, 2015). Microenterprises begin by sending a small cash transfer – usually in sums of about $100 USD – to a potential entrepreneur, who can use that money to launch a small business in their community (Gobin, Santos,

& Toth, 2017). According to studies from 2008 and 2014, microenterprises employ over half of the labor force in developing countries (de Mel, McKenzie, and Woodruff, 2008; Gindling & Newhouse 2014).

## Kenyan Women and Microenterprise

Women in particular have participated in microenterprise programs, usually due to a lack of access to finance through loans or credit or explicit exclusion from banking institutions (Lock & Lawton Smith, 2015). Most women opt to join a



Ciiru Waweru Waithaka is the founder of FunKidz Limited which produces children's furniture, accessories and educational learning tools inspired by African stories. (Source: Goldman Sachs)

microenterprise program for one of two reasons. The first is out of necessity; they find the labor market to be too restrictive, or they struggle to pass through the glass ceiling of the working world. The other major reason women decide to become entrepreneurs are motivating factors such as independence, new challenges, and the ability to take initiative on their own ideas (Hughes, 2003). Research indicates that Kenyan women still face obstacles in the management and success of their businesses. More specifically, women usually have lower levels of education than their male counterparts, less flexibility to save money, and less time available to work on their businesses as a result of the role they are expected to perform at home as mothers and wives (McCormick, 2001). However, women's movements have precipitated a shift toward female empowerment, higher opportunities for employment, and increased access to education, making it easier for women to pursue their own businesses (Lock & Lawton Smith, 2015). Research has demonstrated that when women successfully run their own businesses, they are better able to support themselves, their families, and even other members of their community (Lock & Lawton Smith, 2015).

## Case Study: REAP

An example of a microenterprise program designed to empower Kenyan women is the Rural Entrepreneur Access Project (REAP), which was implemented in an arid region of northern Kenya (Gobin, Santos, & Toth, 2017). The REAP selected its candidates by establishing local committees, who identified the women in the community in most need of extra income. These committees selected women with no other sources of income, and who seemed most likely to responsibly run a business with a team of two other women. After the participants were selected, business mentors met with them to help develop a business proposal and deliver a training on business skills. Once the participants completed their first business training, REAP sent each group of three women a cash grant of $100 in order to establish their business.



Lorna Rutto is a Kenyan eco-preneur and founder of EcoPost which transforms Kenya's plastic waste into durable fencing poles thus providing a solution to the huge plastic problem and providing more than 300 jobs. (Source: Ecopost)

Each group was required to invest the entire grant in their business, but the members were free to use the cash as they deemed necessary.

After the grants were distributed, the business mentors met with the women at least once a month to monitor their progress and offer guidance as needed for the next six months. When six months passed, the entrepreneur groups were eligible for another grant of $50 if they met specific requirements. Also, the entrepreneurs attended a training on savings to gain knowledge about the formation and function of savings groups, as well as the general rules of savings groups, methods of keeping accurate records, and how loans are issued. Following this training on savings groups, women were then encouraged to join an existing savings group or form their own. These groups allowed members to save money and access loans that are paid back with interest. Only six months after working with REAP, each woman earned a higher monthly income. After one year of participating

in REAP, income per person rose by over 30%. Finally, this study of REAP found that the women who participated were more likely to earn incomes higher than the poverty line, making it a meaningful, viable option for Kenyan women to earn more money and gain economic independence (Gobin, Santos, & Toth, 2017).

## Technology Use Among Kenyan Entrepreneurs

These savvy Kenyan businesswomen often use technology to increase the success of their businesses. For example, many Kenyan entrepreneurs utilize cell phones as a tool to keep track of their inventories, store client contact information, advertise and market their products or services, and receive payments from customers (Orwa, Tiagha, & Waiguchu, 2017). Moreover, Kenyan businesswomen use their cell phones to access virtual banking services and coordinate financial transfers to their suppliers and banks. For example, several women entrepreneurs conduct their businesses using services such as

M-PESA (Orwa, Tiagha, & Waiguchu, 2017). M-PESA actually began as a mobile-money system designed to allow microenterprise loan repayments to be made by phone. However, the service has made a tremendous splash in Kenya, with over 17 million Kenyans using it to transfer money to family, friends, and businesses. M-PESA gained popularity because it enables its clients to securely send cash transfers without the hassle of visiting the bank, bringing the money to someone in person, or asking someone else to deliver the money on your behalf. Additionally, this service allows people to safely and quickly send money to family or friends who reside in different cities or villages. One study of M-PESA in rural Kenyan communities found that when a rural household began using M-PESA, its income rose by at least 5% and as much as 30% (The Economist, 2015).

### Business Training for Kenyan Women

While many Kenyan women utilize technology to increase the chances of success for their businesses, research shows that business training also has a positive effect on women-owned businesses. A World Bank Group study tested how business training affects the profits, growth, and continued survival of women-owned businesses in rural Kenya (McKenzie & Puerto, 2017).



Many women are also playing leading roles in financial institutions including the banking sector where there are currently four CEOs and two Board Chairs. (Source: Kenya Banker's Association/@kenyabankers Twitter)

After the women who participated in this program received real training that included instruction on how to present their place of business, how to market their products or services, and how to establish positive relationships with their clients, they gained more customers and their overall sales increased. Three years after the initial training, participants' businesses have survived, grown, and increased profitability. Additionally, it is important to note that this study emphasized that the women who received training did not grow successful at the expense of other, untrained businesswomen in the area. Instead, offering Kenyan women business training increases the market itself (McKenzie & Puerto, 2017).

### Conclusion

Kenyan women demonstrate a remarkable tenacity and ingenuity through their efforts to found their own businesses. Although these women face obstacles well known to women around the world - such as the glass ceiling in the workplace and pressure to stay at home and care for children – they persevere with the assistance of accessible money transfer technology, microenterprise programs, and business training. These three factors appear to drastically increase Kenyan women's chances of cultivating successful, profitable businesses. I believe that Kenya's economy will continue to grow and flourish at an ever-increasing rate; by including women in the economy and supporting women-owned businesses, Kenya invests in its own future.

### Lesson Plan

**Project Based Learning**
Allow students to work in groups to create a product or service to be sold in a classroom marketplace.

• Use mathematical skills to calculate how much money they will need to spend and how much they earn as profit.
• Using mathematical skills to plot out the area and perimeter of their business location.
• Practice communication and compromising skills through working together to develop and design a marketing campaign in order to convince other students to invest in or purchase their product.
• Include a writing component by requiring students to write a basic business plan, using a model or template provided by the instructor.
• Open a classroom market, giving students an "allowance" to spend as they see fit on other groups' products to address social studies standards.
• Gather and measure data on which groups earned the highest profit, recognize any patterns in which students bought which products, determine which product was the most popular, etc. and give students an opportunity to reflect on the experience.
**This lesson plan is appropriate for grades 3-5, and it can be modified as necessary to meet your students' needs.**

*Alicia-Nicole Archangel*

# TEACHING ENVIRONMENTALISM & SOCIAL JUSTICE THROUGH AFRICAN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie related in her 2009 TED Talk, "The Danger of a Single Story" the importance of diversity and representation in children's literature. Growing up, she shares with the audience, she primarily had access to British and American children's books, causing her as a young writer to assume that books were only about white children. "Because all I had read were books in which characters were foreign, I had become convinced that books, by their very nature, had to have foreigners in them and had to be about things with which I could not personally identify."

Educators at all levels can take this comment as a call to action to curate a classroom library that celebrates diversity and multiculturalism. We can select authors from diverse backgrounds; we can select books with diverse protagonists- diversity in gender, race and ability and diversity in setting and family structure. As the National Council for the Social Studies iterates, "Our global community owes children opportunities to explore the variety and complexity of human experience through a dynamic and meaningful education" (2009).

As educators, our call to action does not end with diversity and representation in children's literature. It also extends to what we chose to do with that literature and what our intentions are. In the spirit of compassion, action and change, "Teachers are often looking for community service-learning projects that will demonstrate that spirit of care and engage their students" (Cowhey 2006). One of the recurring themes from K-12 African Studies Teachers' Summer Institute that struck me as particularly compelling is the presence of African leadership and innovation,

especially in the context of social movements and change.

I was blown away by Wangari Maathai's Green Belt Movement, which brought environmental awareness to rural Kenya through the hands of women. I rejoiced in learning about African female heads of state, such as Liberia's Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Women, I learned, hold more than half of the seats in parliament in Rwanda; the highest level of women's representation in government in the world (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2018). Breakthroughs in the field of medicine and science are made in Africa, such as the bloodless malaria test created by Ugandan engineer Brian Gitta.

In the spirit of the K-12 African Studies Teachers' Summer Institute, I have selected texts highlighting different African countries and diverse protagonists. Thematically, I have selected texts in which I found inspiration. Each of these texts are a seed to me, a seed of hope, of potential action and the change I want to be in the world. A recurring theme in these stories is resilience. By looking at the struggles these protagonists have overcome and what they have accomplished despite the barriers they encounter, these texts can also help build and cultivate student resilience.

These resources can be used to supplement and inform lessons that inspire social justice action and environmental project-based learning opportunities, benefitting our classrooms and communities. They can be used to spark rich conversations about equity, ability, action, diversity, multiculturalism and innovation. These texts, which all highlight Africa, can be used in an interdisciplinary approach to teach social studies, English language arts, science, technology, engineering,

arts, mathematics and world languages.

These resources provide a counter narrative to the many stereotypes that exist regarding the continent of Africa. One negative stereotype that is perpetuated in western media is that of Africa as a land of victims, in need of our charity (Burroughs 2018). The children's literature that I have selected is meant to help us confront and challenge that view, to instead see Africa as a partner in problem solving rather than a party in need. I would like our students to see Africa though a set of different lens, one that encompasses a more nuanced view of contemporary Africa. One that inspires us to creative thinking and grassroot action to counter problems we see in society. It is my hope that these books help us see new ways to bring African innovation into our communities in the form of positive action.

As educators, our interactions shape and reinforce the value system that we hope to pass to future generations. In relating the connection between children's literature and sustainability, Baratz states "with proper education and direction [in environmental conservation and preservation] in the pre-schools and lower grades the children will put pressure on parents from below and on their adult environment and dictate a new code of conduct."

It is my hope that these texts inspire lessons rooted in critical values such as multiculturalism, diversity, tolerance, environmental conservation and social justice through the medium of literature.

A recurring theme in these stories is resilience. By looking at the struggles these protagonists have overcome and what they have accomplished despite the barriers they encounter, these texts can help build and cultivate student resilience.

*These selected works are not the be all, end all definitive list.*
*It is my intention that these serve as an inspiration and a starting point.*

## *Wangari Maathai The Woman Who Planted Millions of Trees*
### by Franck Prévot, Illustrator Aurélia Fronty
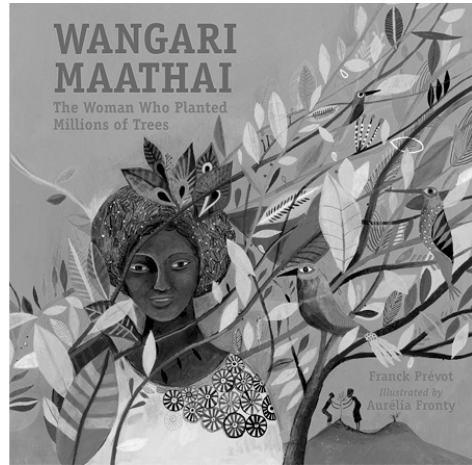
There are several children's books about Wangari Maathai. I chose to highlight *Wangari Maathai The Woman Who Planted Millions of Trees* by Franck Prévot (originally printed in French) due to the way it beautifully highlights her social justice activism as well as her environmental activism. This story, while written for children, does not gloss over the struggles that Wangari Maathai faced, touching on the effects of colonialism in relation to her childhood, her exposure to the American Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's, and the imprisonment and death threats she faced in Kenya. The illustrations, provided by Aurélia Fronty, are vividly sprawling, emotional, and breathtaking. In exploring the life of Wangari Maathai, this book provides learning opportunities for young and older students alike. The book concludes with photographs of Wangari Maathai and her work as well as supplemental educational resources that enrich the context of the story and her life. These include a detailed timeline, a map of Africa, brief articles on contemporary Kenya and the effects of deforestation, as well as quotations from Wangari Maathai and links to additional resources. While being a children's picture book, the depth of the content in the text readily lends itself to an upper elementary and middle school audience.

This book can be used to teach about history, politics, democracy, rights, and economic development. It can be used to supplement lessons on plant life cycles, the environment, or conservation. It can contribute to a deeper discussion on why preserving native plant habitats is vital to preserving biodiversity. More than just rich discussions that incorporate advocacy or women's empowerment, this text can be used as a foundation for project-based learning opportunities rooted in the message of the story of Wangari Maathai's activism to improve conditions in her community.

Published: 2012
Genre: Children's Biography
Setting: Kenya
Themes: Social Justice, Environmentalism, Women's Rights, Democracy, Growth Mindset
Suggested Grade Level: 1-4

## *Sosu's Call*
### by Meshack Asare

Written by Ghanaian author Meshack Asare, *Sosu's Call* tells the story of a young boy named Sosu who is unable to walk. Because of his physical handicap, he is considered bad luck by his village and struggles with feelings of isolation. He faces discrimination which prevents him from participating in village life and attending school. One day, a storm threatens; Sosu and his companion dog bravely leave home with Sosu dragging himself by his arms to the drum shed to warn the others. His call is heard. Sosu's contribution is celebrated and he gains acceptance and mobility. Large blocks of text and water color illustrations carry the story. Young audiences will be able to readily identify the unfairness and injustice towards Sosu and the way he is treated.

This book is written by an African writer in an African context; it features a disabled protagonist and is an excellent springboard for discussions about fairness and tolerance.
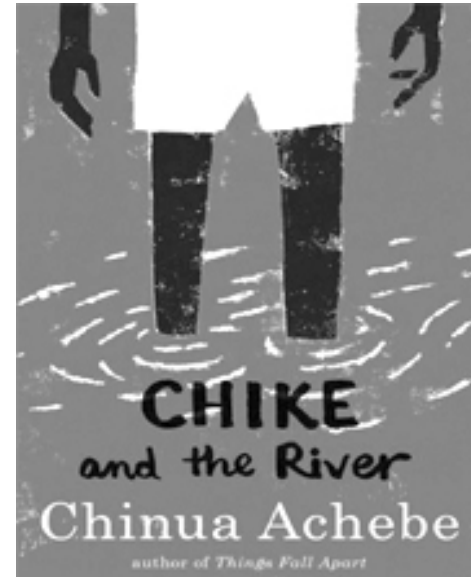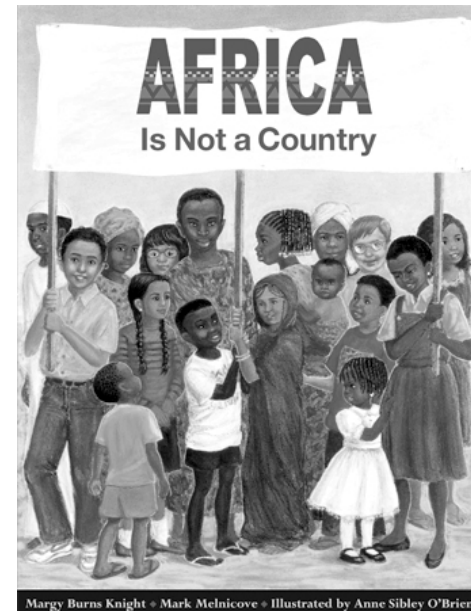
Published: 2002
Genre: Children's Fiction
Setting: Ghana
Themes: Physically Handicapped, Fairness, Tolerance, Access to Education, Resilience
Suggested Grade Level: K-4

## *Chike and the River*
### by Chinua Achebe, Illustrator Edel Rodriguez

By Nigerian author Chinua Achebe, short chapters and small, vivid illustrations paint a story of life in rural and urban Nigeria. The story, fable-like in nature, is sprinkled with proverbs *(time and tide wait for no man; it is bad that a man who has swum the great River Niger should be drowned in its small tributary)* and lessons of morality. The text lends itself to lessons on symbolism; it would be interesting to compare the text's portrayal of life in the "bush" to life in the city. Achebe's prose uses English and pidgin English and is culturally educational. It is a coming of age tale of friendship and right from wrong, of adventure and finding one's way.

Published: 1966
Genre: Fiction
Setting: Nigeria
Themes: Coming-of-Age, Morality, Fables, Journey
Suggested Grade Level: 5-8

## *Africa Is Not a Country*
### by Margy Burns Knight, Mark Melnicove, Illustrator Anne Sibley O'Brien

Published in the early 2000's, this book lists 53 African countries (not included, South Sudan). Starting with morning and progressing through to nighttime, each page is a snap shot of children in each of the 53 countries going about a "typical" day. Large illustrations and accompanying text show us children at home, at school, at work and at play. This story helps to confront the titular misconception in the way we speak and think about Africa. It showcases differences in climate, culture and geography, showing us snowy mountains, bustling urban capital cities, deserts and coastal towns. The way the story weaves together so many vignettes helps to highlight the vastness and diversity that exists in Africa.

While the book opens to a map of the continent, the last few pages serve as reference. In alphabetical order, each of the countries is listed along with some fast facts such as the capital, population, date of independence and national currency. The final page is a parade of flags.

Published: 2002
Genre: Children's Non-fiction
Themes: Geography, culture, diversity,
Suggested Grade Level: 1-6

## One Plastic Bag: Isatou Ceesay and the Recycling Women of The Gambia
### by Miranda Paul, Illustrator Elizabeth Zunon

Beautiful collages and elegant repetition "One… Then two. Then ten" tell the story of Isatou Ceesay and her recycling efforts to improve life in The Gambia. When livestock begin falling ill because of plastic waste they have consumed, Ceesay is inspired into action to reduce the amount of plastic waste polluting the community. She and other women collect and clean the non-biodegradable plastic bags that collect on the streets. They begin a project where they wash the bags and cut them into strips. They then crochet the strips into durable, fashionable purses that they are able to sell. Initially, the women are disparaged by their community.

The story shows how grassroots efforts and the actions of one individual can motivate and create positive change. It paints the realities of how starting a new project can often be isolating and misunderstood by others.

This story readily lends itself to lessons on problem and solution. It is ready inspiration to turn waste into recycled (upcycled!) arts and crafts.
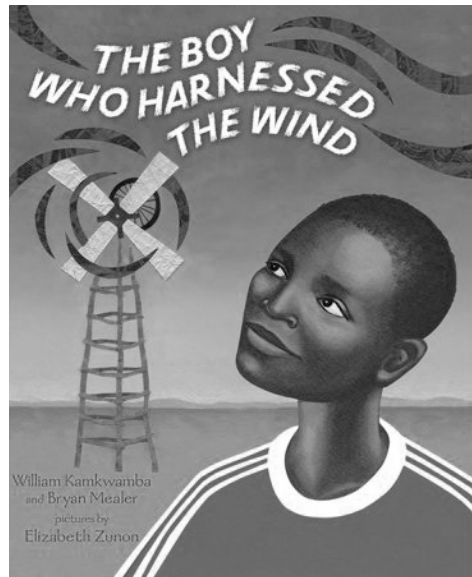
Published: 2015
Genre: Children's Biography
Setting: The Gambia
Themes: The Environment, Recycling, Pollution, Economic Development, Women's Empowerment
Suggested Grade Levels: 1-4

## The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind
### by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer, Illustrator Elizabeth Zunon

Faced with drought and famine in 2001, 14-year-old William had to drop out of school. Thanks to books available to him in a local library, he found inspiration in a science textbook to build a wind turbine and bring electricity and water to his community. At first, his idea is met with doubt and skepticism by others; he is called "crazy". Using an English dictionary to help him understand the diagrams in a science text book and recycled parts, such as a broken bicycle and salvaged scraps of plastic, William builds a windmill that powers first a lightbulb, then four lightbulbs. Several years later, he builds a windmill that pulls water from a well to feed his family's garden. This book tells the story of his first windmill that powered a single bulb but brought him international recognition for his innovation and opened the doors to his continued education.

In addition to the picture book, there is also a young readers edition and a bestselling adult version under the same title. The latter of the three versions was selected as University of Florida's 2010 Common Book to be read by all incoming freshman.

Published: 2012
Genre: Biography
Setting: Malawi
Themes: Renewable Energy, Recycling, Innovation, Engineering, The Environment, Poverty, Innovation, Economic Development
Suggested Grade Levels: 3-7

Jenelle N. Robinson, PhD, CHES

# HIGHLIGHTING FOOD AND FOOD CULTURE FROM AFRICAN NARRATIVES

## African Food Staples

According to Kittler and Sucher (2008), before the 19th century, African core foods depended upon local climate and vegetation. Staples in coastal areas included corn, millet, and rice. Foods were often boiled or fried. Vegetables including yams, plantains, cassava, sweet potatoes, and potatoes were often boiled and pounded. Palm oil was the predominant fat used in cooking. In Ethiopia, millet, sorghum, and plantains were primary foods. Secondary (eaten occasionally) and peripheral (eaten on special occasions) foods included barley, wheat, corn, cabbage, onions, collards, kale, potatoes, peanuts, and other legumes. Some chicken, goat, fish, mutton, and beef were also available pending location. Food was flavored with a hot spice mixture (berbere). Spices included in this mixture were allspice, cardamom, cayenne, cinnamon, cloves, coriander, cumin, fenugreek, ginger, nutmeg, and black pepper. In East Africa, a predominantly vegetarian cuisine was consumed. This diet may have consisted of cassava, millet, sorghum, corn, peanuts, bread, and plantains. Mashed beans, lentils, plantains, and potatoes were also popular. In most areas of Africa, two meals were eaten a day (late morning and evening) while snacking was done throughout the day (Kittler & Sucher, 2008). These staples pre-19th century include generalities associated with the many countries in Africa. Post 19th century, food customs and dietary habits seem to have remained with variations due to urbanization of some communities. Highlights of personal narratives of food and food culture in regions of Africa may supplement and provide descriptive as well as a transitional perspective of current food offerings and customs.

## West Africa

*Growing up [in Ghana], I didn't like cooking. [Most stuff] takes forever to cook. Kenkey takes forever to cook. It comes in a mold like a fist…usually people buy it from vendors and eat it with sauce or soup. [To make it] you cook the ground corn and knead it with your spatula. After it is cooked, you wrap it in corn husk and then re-cook it. You are putting it in the pot and steaming it, so if we were going to eat this on Sunday, we would prepare on Friday nights. My mom would start cooking it on Saturday morning and it wouldn't be ready until 3pm. When it is ready, it's nice [to eat]. We eat it with fried fish and hot [pepper] sauce. We cut tomatoes, peppers, onions and ground them together in a pot. The kenkey is very heavy, so after eating [all of this] you go to bed and sleep. Kenkey [is very high in carbohydrates]. It is eaten with your fingers. You [break pieces of it off] and dip it in your pepper sauce. The fish is the protein around it. This food is typical for the Ga ethnic group. They migrated from Sudan and Nigeria. According to them, they faced famine on the way. In their festival, they cook food and throw it away. It is a symbol of shame to hunger. They have food in abundance now so they sprinkle food on the street to say, "shame unto you hunger." So the kenkey is a typical Ga delicacy, but it has transcended throughout all the ethnic groups in Ghana and everybody eats it. I have some here that I buy in the store. (F. Tackey-Otoo, personal communication, June 12, 2018)*

Felicity's food story about kenkey follows a typical West African food meal pattern. The West African food meal pattern usually includes a "filling starchy carbohydrate" (i.e., rice, millet, sorghum, or even pounded yams), which is usually served with a soup, stew, or sauce (Osseo-Asare, 2005). "Fufu"



Couscous Royale is widely eaten in North African countries. Couscous is the base and may include assorted vegetables and sometimes meats. (Source: AnouarNACH/Wikimedia)

(boiled and stiffened starch like a green plantain) is commonly eaten in this region, accompanied by a thick soup (Williams-Forson, 2014). Soups are often thickened with pureed legumes. In areas where rice is grown, it may be boiled, smashed, or cooked as jollof rice (one-pot dish). Stews are common and typically have large amounts of oil, along with pepper, onions, tomatoes, and other vegetables. Common sources of protein include fish and poultry. Beef may be eaten in areas that raise cattle, but it may often be conserved as it is regarded as wealth. As Felicity's narrative noted the heaviness of the kenkey meal, people in West Africa often associate satiation with a "filling or heavy meal." Throughout the day, snacks might include tropical fruits, roasted peanuts, or skewers of meat. In some places, family members eat as a group out of a common bowl (using their hands). Etiquette includes careful washing of hands, and only eating with the right hand. Conversation is limited while actually eating meals (though it may be abundant during the cooking time). Water is often consumed at the end of the meal versus during the meal. The most common desserts served would be fresh fruit, or a fruit salad sprinkled with grated coconut or chopped peanuts. Hospitality is valued with food traditions tied to prestige. Certain foods (i.e., yams) may be served to guests in order to maintain a social status. Festive occasions warrant special meals that may include jollof rice, roasted meats, stews, greens, cakes, cookies, and kebabs. Brand name soft drinks (i.e., Fanta, Coke) may also be consumed (but have more caffeine and less sugar than Westernized soft drinks) (Osseo-Asare, 2005).

## East Africa

*Many evenings, at the end of a day in the fields, children would gather and listen to stories their mothers would tell as they waited for the meal to cook over an open fire and three stones. Stories were a way to keep children entertained—and awake—as they waited for dinner and could be as short or as long as the cooking required. Green maize or sweet potatoes could take about thirty minutes to cook, while*



Jollof rice is widely eaten in West Africa and may be served with meat and vegetables.
(Source: Noahalorwu/Wikimedia)

*arrowroots could take two hours. The Kikuyu stories served to entertain, educate, and encourage creativity in children… (Maathai, 2007)*

In Maathai's (2007) memoir "Unbowed," Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai recounts food traditions and pathways. A product of the Kikuyu community in Kenya, her story highlights foods and traditions common to East Africa which may include "mix and mingle" or fraternizing often accompanied by food and drink. Consumption of the region's staple foods denotes food identity. Popular staple dishes like *irio* (or *mataha* for the Kikuyu) may include "salt, mashed peas and beans, green corn, green (cooking) bananas, and potatoes; and maybe pumpkin leaves or other greens. It is fried, and onions, cooking fat, and curry may be included." Beer is often consumed, but associated with socialization rather than intoxication (Osseo-Asare, 2005).

*Ugali* (like fufu in West Africa) is held in high regard as a meal and may be made from cornmeal, sorghum or millet. It may be eaten with stew or vegetables. The breakfast form of *ugali* would be termed *porridge* (Osseo-Asare, 2005). Aside from these staples, current concerns in certain parts of Kenya include the rise of processed food consumption, the replacement of maize with readily available wheat and rice-based products, as well as the rise of available fast-service restaurants (Neven & Rearden, 2004; O'Neill, 2015; Rischke, Kimenju, Klasen, & Qaim, 2015). Close to 25 hours from Kenya, but still in East Africa, the country of Rwanda and surrounding countries (Congo, Uganda, Tanzania, and Burundi) include a food culture based on a similar vegetarian diet.

*One of the simplest dishes that will be cooked [in Rwanda] is sweet potatoes or cooked green bananas eaten while drinking ikivuguto (curdled milk which is comparable to a heavy drinkable yogurt). Growing up, we were told that girls are supposed to drink a lot of that curdled milk so they can avoid having big stomach and that was a common belief. (M. Musingo, personal communication, June 14, 2018)*

Meals in Rwanda may include beans, sweet potatoes, green bananas, Irish potatoes and leafy vegetables (Custom and Cuisine of Rwanda, 2018). Meat like beef and chicken may be consumed in more urban areas. The heaviest meal is usually dinner, while tropical fruits may be consumed as snacks throughout the day. Refusal of food is considered an insult in this culture.

## African and African American Food and Cultural Connections

*Growing up in the 50s as an African American, beans and cornbread and different pork products (bologna and pressed ham) were staples in my family. We also had a garden. We ate some of the vegetables out of the garden. We also went to an orchard to pick peaches and pears and blackberries…which my mom canned and made as reserves. We had fresh chickens. We cut and cleaned them up so that they would eventually look like chickens you would see in the grocery store. We had hens that would lay eggs so we had fresh eggs. There wasn't much talking around the table at dinnertime. We had to eat whatever was served and not leave food on our plates. During holidays like Thanksgiving, we ate turkey, hen, or duck, dressing, peas, greens, candied yams, pickled peaches, macaroni and cheese, cream potatoes, and all kinds of desserts including cakes and pies. We usually would have visitors too. There was a different spirit in the air. My mother put a lot of love into her food…she grew up cooking for wealthy white folks, so she cooked that stuff for us during the holidays. (H. Robinson, personal communication, June 13, 2018)*

As Stanfield and Hui (2010) describe it, Southern African American food staples have often consisted of varying meat and protein sources (especially pork), beans, cornbread, biscuits, white bread, starchy carbohydrate sources (i.e., corn, yams), greens, heavy seasoning; and cooking practices that include frying and cooking vegetables for extended time. As described in the personal story of H. Robinson (2018), stories of food in African American culture signify more than simply sustenance. The preparation, accessibility, and variety of foods seem to symbolize familial values and systems that drive our current cultural norms for food choices, cravings, preferences, and food significance. Similar to the context of narrative provided in African stories, Airhihenbuwa and Kumanyika (1996) noted that African American food choices are influenced by customs (eat what parents ate), food accessibility; taste; social and spiritual experience with cultural group; and family traditions. These habits, customs, and the cultural significance of food emphasize the importance of food pathways in this community and provide a connective view between African American and traditional African dietary staples, eating patterns, and associated habits and customs. A comparative analysis illustrates similarities in food content (starchy carbohydrates, varying vegetables and heavy oils), ideas about hospitality, communal value and the etiquette (silence observed; non-refusal of offered food) dedicated to meals in both African and African American households. This gives credence to learning the global impact, context, and connections that food has in both African American and African households (before and beyond slavery). It also can be used to expand cultural conversations among groups of African descent while enforcing ethnic pride.

## Using African Food Narratives in Nutrition Courses at an HBCU

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are learning communities that often highlight ancestral honor and cultural awareness among students with special regard to Africa, as most students are usually African Americans. At Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU), multiple courses include African history and curricular activities that emphasize African culture. Students are also provided opportunities for service and experiential learning in Africa through international programming. However, this academic tie to global cultural responsiveness is not as evident in the basic nutrition course pedagogy at FAMU. The current course lacks detail of food from a global perspective, especially including African food traditions. Nutrition education might be more effective when cultural and social relevancy are provided for African Americans (Airhihenbuwa & Kumanyika, 1996). As well, FAMU's strategic plan emphasizes the need for global impact through directly engaging with the international community, and indirectly providing this impact through instruction (FAMU, 2018). Providing an opportunity for students to interact and engage with African food traditions through African food stories may be a viable avenue to introduce a global nutrition perspective to the classroom while further encouraging cultural awareness and changing the stereotypical narrative (malnutrition; poor, etc.) of African culture. This would not only be beneficial to an HBCU environment, but any secondary and higher education environment that seek to promote diversity and inclusion. Health and nutrition faculty could incorporate African food perspectives into lesson plans to globalize health discussions while advancing the health and dietary behaviors of diverse groups.



Plantains are widely eaten in most parts of Africa including East and West Africa.
(Source: Nonijaz/Wikimedia)

Ugali or nshima made out of corn meal is widely eaten with meats and vegetables. (Source: Mvuli-Girl/Wikimedia)

**Food and Nutrition Lesson Plan Idea**

• Read or have students read a food narrative from Africans (make note of the location in Africa).
• Comparative discussions:

  What are some of the foods you remember hearing in the story?
  What may have been the reasons for the food choices (i.e., geographical location, environment, access, custom, etc.)?
  What were the cultural associations with food in the story?
  Based on the foods you can identify from the story, how nutritious do you think these foods were?
  How do these foods compare to the food in an American diet?

• Activity: Students select at least two foods mentioned and find the nutritional content (macronutrients and micronutrients). Students present the major nutrients found in these foods and their value in the human diet.
• Reflection: Students write their own story of how food has played a role in their culture and history and share with the class or in a personal journal.

*Abbie Davenport*

# ON THE ROAD TO CONFLICT-FREE DIAMONDS

It is wedding season, and many brides are donning sparkling diamond rings to symbolize the true, everlasting love between themselves and their partner. Diamonds are not the only precious gem in the world, but by the way they have been advertised, people associate diamonds with being the most sought after gem on earth. This type of genius advertising was created by a British man named Cecil Rhodes (Gibson & McGrath).

In 1866, while South Africa was under British rule, a young boy discovered one of Africa's first diamonds, near the Orange River (De Beers). The British soon took notice of these gems, and desired control over the precious stones. The First Boer War began between Britain and South Africa, with one of the fueling reasons being diamonds. After the British gained control of the South African mines, Cecil Rhodes started the company De Beers, which used to control 90% of the earth's diamonds trade, but has declined to about 30% today.

**Conflict Diamonds**

Since the 1860s, Africa has been criticized for the many civil wars and uprisings that have become associated with diamond mining. In the early 1990s, there was a violent uprising in the West African country of Sierra Leone. A group of rebels challenged the government by attacking people around the mine and forced them into labor. Over 75,000 people were killed in the process (Hoyt).

The Sierra Leone civil war lasted nine years. The rebel leaders were "very aware that whoever controls the diamond mines controls Sierra Leone, and profits from smuggled diamonds funded its attack (Johnson, 2002)." Many people fled the area they called home in fear of losing their lives. Some of these families have not been able to return home since, due to lack of finances (Gibson & McGrath). It is no surprise that diamonds that fuel civil wars are often called "conflict" or "blood" diamonds (Brilliant Earth). It is estimated that conflicts surrounding diamonds have led to the death of more than 4 million people worldwide (Hoyt).

**The Kimberley Process**

In the year 2000, the world's major diamond producers and buyers met in Kimberley, South Africa to address the brutal civil wars that were happening in both Angola and Sierra Leone. These leaders were also aware of the threat of a consumer boycott, which would cripple the growing economy of African mining countries (Baker). The Kimberley Process was formed, which was included as an item on the agenda of the 55th session of the United Nations Assembly (Kimberley Process). By 2003, there were 81 nations, including all members of the European Union, involved in the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS). The plan was that every shipment of diamonds being exported out of a country had to be accompanied by a paper passport issued from their country of origin. If a country couldn't prove that their diamonds were conflict-free, they would be suspended from the international diamond trade (Baker).

While it is apparent that those behind KPCS have good intentions, it has stopped short of truly reforming the industry. "Conflict diamonds under the Kimberley Process are defined as gemstones sold to fund a rebel movement attempting to overthrow the state – and only that. Unfair labor practices and human-rights abuses don't disqualify diamonds under the protocol, while the definition of conflict is so narrow as to exclude many instances of what consumers would, using common sense, think of as a conflict diamond (Baker)."

In 2008, two billion dollars worth of diamonds disappeared, rumored to have ended up in the hands of the allies of President Robert Mugabe, who was Zimbabwe's dictator until 2017. The KPCS banned diamonds from being exported out of Zimbabwe in 2009, however, the ban was removed in 2011 regardless of the apparent child worker abuse and torture camps that miners were being held in (Brilliant Earth). According to Ian Smillie, an expert on conflict diamonds, "Thousands had been killed, raped, injured and enslaved in Zimbabwe, and the Kimberley Process had no way to call those conflict diamonds because there were no rebels (Baker)."

Another example of the KPCS's attempt to control diamond trade was apparent in the Central African Republic. In 2013, a group of rebel Muslims seized the capital of Bangui, overthrew the dictator, and seized control of the diamond fields. Christian militia counterattacked, killing thousands of innocent Muslims (Brilliant Earth). In accordance with the KCPS, a ban was placed on diamond exportation from the Central African Republic. Since gems are such small items, it is nearly impossible to keep them from being smuggled out of the country. One miner even went as far as hiding diamonds in his mouth to transport them to the place he knew he could get the most revenue from his stones (Siegel, 2009, p. 23).

As far as the eye can see, it is nearly impossible to know today which diamonds are from legitimate sources and which ones have a not so shiny history. In 2006, it was stated that over $23 million worth of illegal diamonds have been smuggled into the legitimate diamond trade. Yet, even with that statistic, diamond companies claim that 99.8% of the world's precious gems are now conflict free (Gibson & McGrath). Is sending diamonds around the world with a paper passport the most efficient way to track diamonds in this modern age?

In 2016 Botswana mined the largest diamond of the century at 1,109 carats! The rough diamond has been named the "Lesedi La Rona" — which means "Our Light" in Botswana's official language of Tswana. It is valued at $70 million. Botswana is known for its use of diamonds for development and good governance. (Source: Seth Wenig/AP Photo)

## A Technological Solution

According to Forbes, "At the beginning of this year, De Beers announced that it will create the first blockchain ledger for tracing stones from the point they are mined right up to when they are sold to consumers." What is a blockchain ledger? It is an up-and-coming technology that is "backed by highly sophisticated computer encryption (Marr, 2018)." Only those with permission can enter or edit data as it relates to an object, or in this case, a precious stone. These few people would include those who oversee the mining, cutting, and wholesale retail of these diamonds (Marr, 2018).

It is unlikely a scammer would have the access to illegally alter any data in this system, but if they did, any changes would be made visible to each member of that blockchain. In other words, all edits become public information and are easily traceable back to the person who made them. This makes it nearly impossible for anyone to smuggle, scam, or steal diamonds that are part of this secure technology.

Vikram Pathak, head of investor relations at Fura Gems, which is another mining company looking at using the same blockchain technology, gives an example of how gems are so easily traceable using this system. He states, "What we will be able to say is that these minerals have come from a mine in Colombia, where they were shipped to India to be cut and polished, and combined in a bulk container and transferred to a wholesaler in Switzerland, and from there they were sent to multiple retailers in the UK and Canada. And we're tracking every single movement of these stones around the world and know exactly where they are going (Marr, 2018)."

Pathak goes on to say that blockchains are decentralized, the exact opposite of how some companies build their software (Marr, 2018). When a company, or in this case, a diamond mine, has only one access point at which information is edited, someone could hack into the system unnoticed, or completely shut down the software without anyone knowing who did it. In a blockchain system, any changes made to previous information is automatically timestamped and made visible on all computers involved in that blockchain. What makes this idea so successful is its transparency. Consumers will be able to track exactly when and where the diamond was mined, and all movements the gem encounters along the process are documented. As Marr (2018) states, "Although De Beers and Fura's blockchain initiatives are still in the very early stages, it's certainly good to see practical uses and real-world problem solving involving this undoubtedly revolutionary technology."

## Boycotting Africa's Diamonds Could Add to Poverty

In the meantime, one way to be confident that the diamond you are looking at is conflict-free is to ask for a certificate from the seller. Companies are also exploring the idea of laser engraving diamonds to put their conflict-free mark on them (Gibson & McGrath). However, one thing we should not do is boycott diamonds from Africa. Some people might say that we should avoid buying diamonds from Africa, and only purchase gems mined in conflict-free regions. Statements like these can stifle African economies, because most of the diamond trade in Africa is in fact legitimate, and relies heavily on consumers.

In fact, ten million people survive off of legitimate diamond mining worldwide (Gibson & McGrath). As stated in the book *The Mazzel Ritual*, "trying to convince consumers not to buy diamonds also means depriving the local diggers and their families of their only way to get their cup of rice or earn some money (Siegel, 2009, p. 156)." Activist Martin Rapaport says, "Conflict diamonds are not the main problem now. What we need to do now is find ways to help the poorest people in world, artisanal diamond workers (Kennard, 2008)."

## The Booming Botswana

Not all African countries have struggled with the potential issues that arise in the mining industry. Botswana went from being one of the poorest African countries to now having one of the fastest growing economies. This is in large part due to legitimate diamond trade (Gibson & McGrath). In 1971, the Orapa diamond mine, which is now the second largest in the world, began production. Botswana developed a diverse mining sector including three major diamond mines, as well as other materials such as coal, copper-nickel, and gold. "Diamonds swiftly became the key sector of the economy and the ultimate source of the country's rapid economic expansion up to the present day (Looney)."

All countries that have diamond mines, or any mines for that matter, have the likelihood of falling into the "resource curse." "The resource curse occurs as a country begins to focus all of its production means on a single industry, such as mining, and neglects investment in other major sectors (Investopedia)." How has Botswana managed to rise above the challenges that come with what is known as the "paradox of plenty"? Their secret is wisely managing their diamond revenues. Much of the income made from Botswana's diamonds goes into a government-owned wealth fund called the Pula Fund, which gives Botswana the highest sovereign rating in all of Africa (Looney). "The Pula Fund is a long-term investment portfolio. The fund was established in 1994 with the aim of preserving part of the income from diamond exports for future generations (Bank of Botswana)."

## Hope for the Future

For being so beautifully stunning, diamonds have caused a lot of destruction in many African countries, but there is hope for the future. As conflicts begin to settle, and legitimate trade becomes more widespread, these countries can rely on safe practices and technological advances, like the use of blockchain ledgers to more transparently track the movements of their diamonds. Finally, countries that are still struggling with the "resource curse" can look to countries like Botswana that have been able to not only stabilize their economy in the present, but have financial plans for future generations.
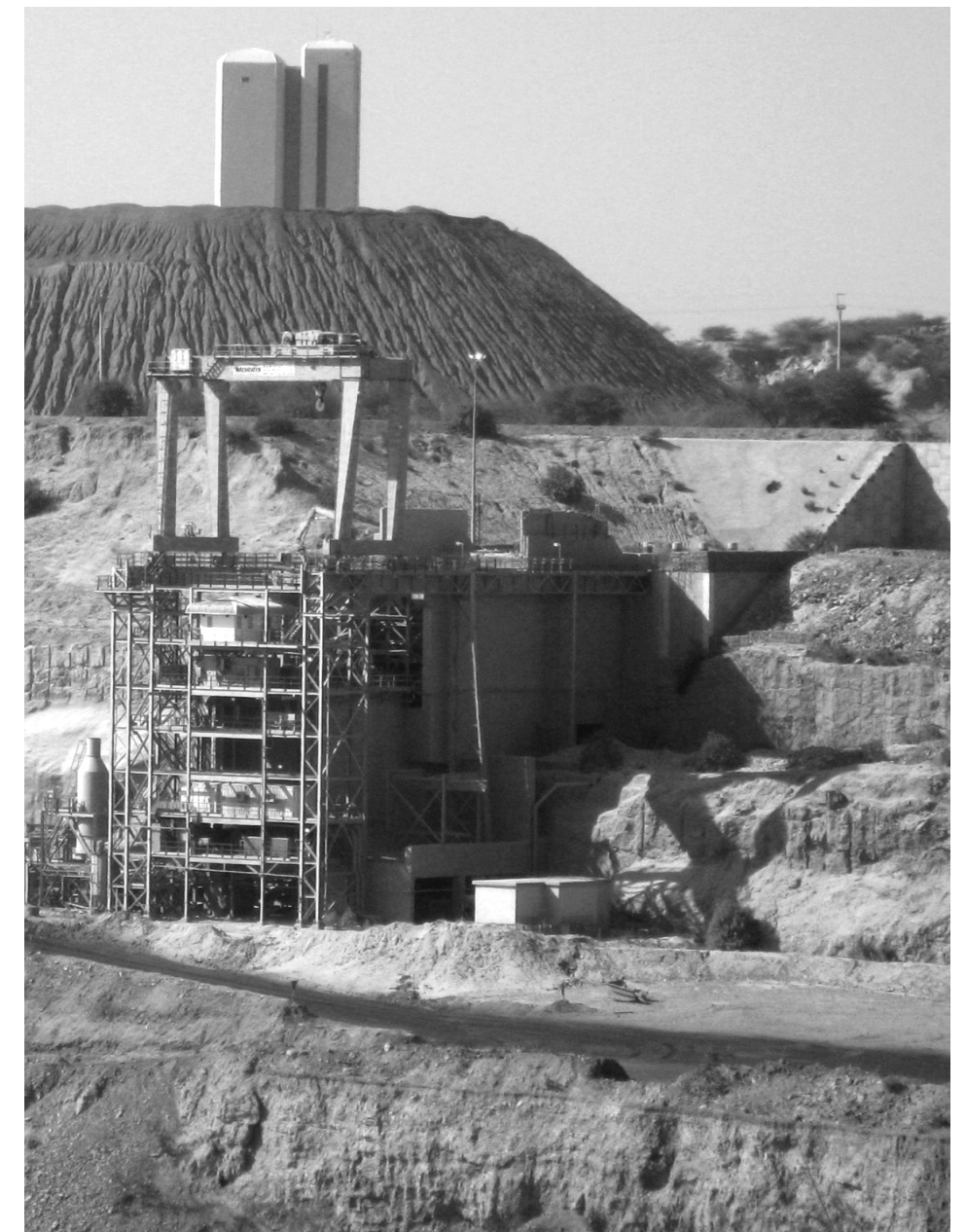


Jwaneng Diamond Mine in Botswana is considered as the world's richest diamond mine in the world. It has an average production of 12 to 15 millions carats per year! (Source: Cretep/Wikimedia)

*Megan M. Diaz*

# THE STORY BEHIND AFRICAN NAMES

## Introduction

As individuals, there is one thing we carry with us no matter what and that is our names. Our names are given to us by our parents and most of the time, there is a meaning attached to that name. There are some cases where the meaning of our names is not very relevant in our lives. For example, I am Hispanic (my family is from Cuba) but I have what most people like to say, "an American name." My first name, Megan, does not really match my identity or who I am. When I asked my mom for the meaning behind my name, she explained to me that she named me after an American actress. Unfortunately, my name does not hold much meaning for me.

## Traditional African Names

In many traditional African cultures, children are given names based on many different circumstances. However, most African names usually have a unique story behind them. In some cultures in Southern Africa, including Zimbabwe, children are named based on emotions and events surrounding their birth. In East Africa, some names are given based on the order of birth. In some traditions in West Africa children are named according to the day on which they are born. Parents may also give children faith-based and/or day and night names.

## Names Based on Events

Most countries in Southern Africa tend to give their children names based on the events surrounding birth as well as the mood of the family. The situation when the child was being brought into the world helps determine the name that will be given. When thinking about the events surrounding birth, most parents consider whether they had a positive and negative experience. Was it a fairly smooth delivery or were there struggles and challenges throughout?

Here are some examples:
**Ayodele** is a typical Yoruba name given to a baby whose birth was positive. It is usually given to a child who has brought joy to a family. The name means: joy has come home.
**Yetunde** or **Yewande** are typical Yoruba names given to babies who have been born after a female family member has passed away. The name means: mother has come back.
**Adetokunbo** is a typical Yoruba name given to a child who has been born overseas. The name means: wealth or crown has come back home.
**Ajuji** is a typical Hausa name given to a baby who has survived birth. Usually, babies born before may not have survived. The name literally means: born on a rubbish heap.
**Kgomotso** is a Tswana name and **Pumza** is a Xhosa name. They are typical names given to babies who have been born during a time of tragedy. The names mean: comfort.
**Kiptani** name from Elgeyo Marakwet county in Kenya is a typical name given to babies whose mothers have undergone extreme pain during labor.

## Names Based on Emotions

In some Southern African traditions children's names may depend on the emotions and/or mood of the family during the time the child was born.

The following Shona names are some examples:
**Nhamo** meaning "misfortune"
**Maidei** asks "What did you want?"
**Manyara** states "you have been humbled"
**Melevevio** means "not necessary"
**Yananiso** means "family is brought together."

## Names Based on Order of Birth

As previously mentioned, many African names have a story behind them. Africans usually know the story. In other words, there is no need for someone to explain why they gave a person a particular name. Specifically, some names are given which symbolize whether they are the eldest or youngest of their brothers and sisters. These names are special for twins, as they reveal which twin was born first and which was born last.

The following names are specifically reserved for twins in Uganda:
**Kakuru** and **Wasswa** (eldest twin) while **Kato** is the younger male twin.

The following names are specifically reserved for twins in Kenya:
**Yator** and **Towett**. Yator meaning the first while Towett means the last. In Yoruba, **Taiwo** and **Kehinde** are names given to twins. Taiwo meaning "taste the world" and Kehinde meaning came after or last.

In Ghana, twins are given the following unisex names among the Asante:
**Panyin** (older) and **Kakra** (younger).

## Day-Born Names

As with the names given based on order of birth, day born names are given immediately after a child is born. A day born name tells which day a child was brought into the world. I thought this was interesting because in the United States of America, most people know the date they were born but not the day. In some cultures in Africa, children are given a day-born name. However, their day-born names may not appear on official government documents because it is a name that is automatically given. Although everyone is given a day born name, the names may differ a bit depending on the ethnic group being discussed.

Here are some Ghanaian examples:
**Kojo** (m), **Adwoa** (f) - Monday
**Kwabena** (m), **Abena** (f) - Tuesday
**Kwaku** (m), **Ekua** (f) - Wednesday
**Yaw** (m), **Yaa** (f) - Thursday
**Kofi** (m), **Efua** (f) - Friday
**Kwame** (m), **Ama** (f) - Saturday
**Akwesi** (m), **Akosua** (f) - Sunday

## Names Based on Faith

Many African parents tell a story or express their faith through their child's name. In other words, many African names have religious ties. Many times, depending on the region being discussed, some beginnings may refer to God. For example, in Nigeria, a name that starts or ends with Chi, Chukwu or Oluwa are considered faith-based names.

Below are some examples:
**Olusegun** meaning God conquers
**Hailemariam** meaning the power of Mary
**Mawufemor** meaning God's way
**Makafui** meaning I will praise God

## Names Based on Time of Day

Other African names may depend on what time of day the child was born. Names may also be given depending on the season a child is born.

Below are some Kenyan examples:
**Kibet** is a name given to a child born during the day while   is given to a child born at night.
**Mumbua** and **Wambua** are typical names given to children who are born during rainy seasons.
**Olweny** is a name given to a child who was born during a time of war.
**Yunwa** is a name given to a child who was born during a time of hunger or famine.

The Luo are more specific when giving names. Below are some examples:
**Omondi** is given to a child who was born at dawn.
**Okinyi** is given to a child who was born in the morning.
**Onyango** is given to a child who was born in mid-morning.
**Ochieng'** is given to a child who was born on a sunny mid-day.
**Otieno** is given to a child who was born at night.
**Oduor** is given to a child born at midnight.

## Lesson Plan

### Classroom Application

I think this is applicable to many grade levels. Since I taught first grade while conducting the research I thought I could apply it to the younger students. I believe it is important to make the classroom diverse and welcoming. In this way, every student feels as if they are a part of our big family. In order to do this, we must discuss many different cultures and nationalities as everyone has a different background. The rituals and traditions of their culture should be discussed and celebrated in the classroom.

1. One way I aim to make my classroom diverse is through my classroom library. I make sure I have books with characters from many different backgrounds. In order to get students engaged in learning about African names I will read to them an African book. In this way, when they learn about the story behind African names, they can apply it to the story that was read in class.
2. After learning more about African names and the meaning behind them, I thought it would be a good idea to have students learn a bit about their names. I may have them do an activity/assignment where they interview their parent/guardian to determine why they were given the name they were given. In the interview, students may ask questions such as: *What day was I born?* This question will help students determine their day-born name. *Under what conditions was I born?* This question will help students determine their name based on emotions/events. *Do I have a younger or older sibling?* This question will help students determine their name based on order of birth. *When (time) was I born?* This question will help students determine their day or night name.
3. As a class, we would create nametags of our African names. Students would be able to select what name they would like to have (day born name, day or night name, order of birth, emotions/events). It would be something that is unique to our classroom but at the same time, something practical allowing the students to learn more about themselves while also learning about the continent of Africa.

*Beatrice Torres*

# FRENCH IN AFRICA

## Exploring Languages in Africa: Who Speaks...What, Where?

There are about 1500 to 2000 African languages which are divided in four main groupings:

• Afro-Asiatic
(about 200 languages) found in Northern Africa (including the horn of Africa, Central Sahara at the top Nile)
•Nilo-Saharian
gathering about 140 languages with some eleven millions speakers all over Central and Eastern Africa.

•Niger-Saharian (Niger-Congo) covering the two thirds of Africa with as a principal branch the Niger-Congo with more than 1000 languages and some 200 millions speakers. The Bantu languages of Central, Southern, and Eastern Africa create a sub-group of the Niger Congo branch.
• Khoisan
with about thirty languages in Western part of Southern Africa.
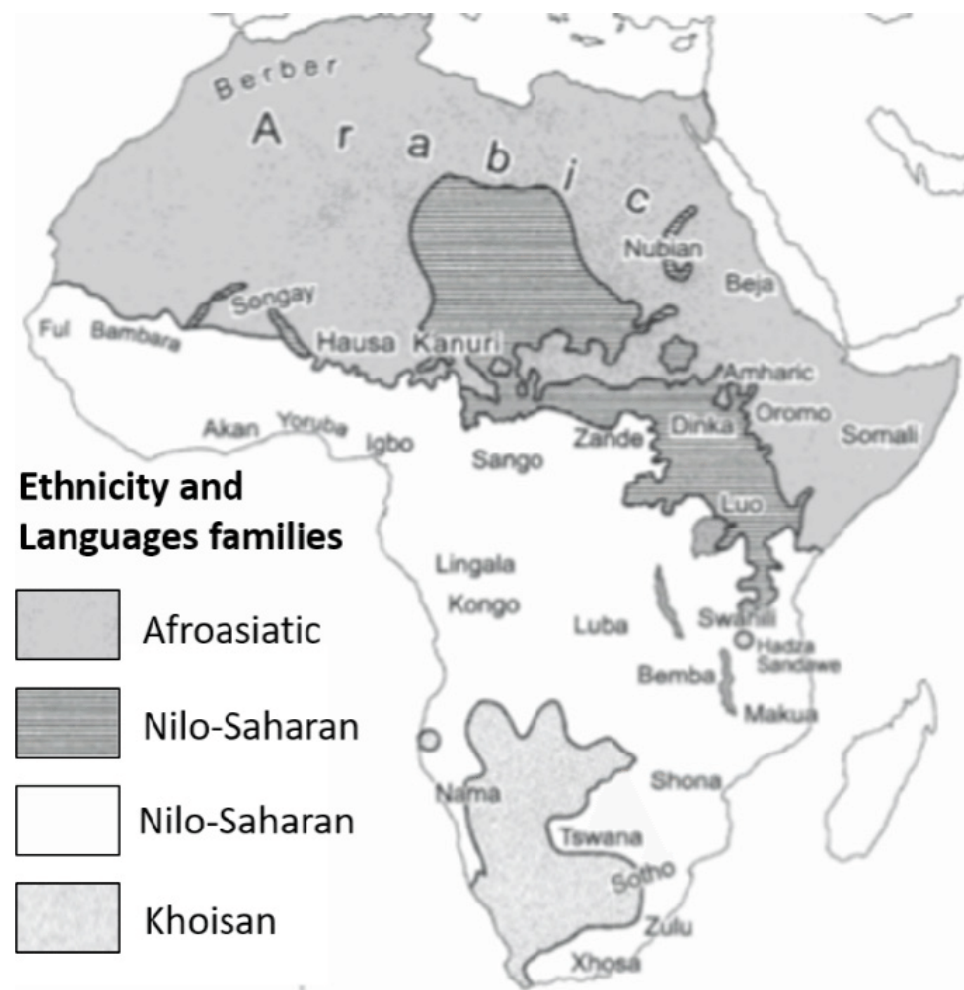


**Ethnicity and Languages families**

- Afroasiatic
- Nilo-Saharan
- Nilo-Saharan
- Khoisan

Map showing the distribution of African language families and some major African languages, map based on a map. (Source: Mark Dingemanse)

## Who Speaks Mostly French in Africa:

Gabon 80%
Mauritius 72.7%
Cote d'Ivoire 70%
Senegal 70%
Sao Tome and Principe: 65%
Tunisia 63.6 %
Guinea 63.2 %
Seychelles 60%
Republic of Congo 60%
Equatorial Guinea 60%
Democratic Republic of Congo 47%

## The History and Survival of the French Language

During the 19th and 20th centuries, France was second in the colonial empire after the British and represented just about one tenth of the world surface. Today, French is the official language in 29 countries in the world, mainly in Africa and is used administratively in another nine countries.

## Historical Background

**French Colonization: How, where, why; an example: The Four Communes of Senegal (1887-1960)**

As early as 1840, the French acquired and established the four communes of Goree, Dakar, Rufisque and Saint Louis because of their key positions as trading settlements. Accordingly, a General Council was established in each colony and in 1848, the Second French Republic gave the colonies the right to send an elected representative to the French National Assembly. Each Commune had an African majority, but political representatives were usually European colonists. The African dwellers called "originaires" in the four communes had the French citizen status. In theory if they were literate in French and familiar with French customs, inhabitants they could work in administration and become part of the political and social life of the colony. Unfortunately, they were often blocked in their career advancement and rights.

Several Senegalese politicians such as Diagne and Gueye fought for voting right for all African subjects in Senegal. Senegal finally became independent in 1960.

French in Africa, with today's high focus on the West coast, has origins in North, Central, and Eastern parts as well. It is estimated that there are presently 115 million French speakers on the African continent, which is the majority of the world's French speaking population, and taking into account the current population growth, this number is predicted to grow to 700 million by the year 2050.

African French has developed into a number of different dialects. Most African countries already have multiple languages, and under the colonial French influence, they have formed a number of hybrid languages.

## Africa Today, Where the French Were...

France remains present in Africa, namely in its former colonies. After the difficult process of decolonization in the 1960s and 1970s, France has not lost sight of its interests. The use of the French language in the former French territories remains obligatory. Also, French companies such as the oil company Total and the telecoms groups Orange have a strong presence in the ex-colonies.

French companies import raw materials such as uranium from Niger and Gabon and Cocoa from Ivory Coast. About 9,000 French soldiers are stationed in those countries in order to fight terrorists and train African troops.

Former French President, Francois Hollande was believed to be a strong advocate for Africa.

Crowds gathered to welcome him in Timbuktu, Mali, in February, 2013. Hollande was warmly welcomed in the city, which French forces retook from Islamist militants, (Tyler Hicks/The New York Times/Redux).

Philippe Hugon, a French Africa specialist, reported that "France is now less involved in trade, finance and investment, but it is maintaining its influence on monetary policy and its military presence."

However, the French are facing growing competition. China has established close ties with many African countries and the United States has been also displaying greater commitment to Africa in recent years.

## The Future of the French Language

With English now being the dominant global language, Francophone Africa really is the key to the development of the French language as a whole. "Many languages are becoming endangered by the spread and evolution of dominant tongues, such as English and increasingly now Chinese." Economies grow and the political influences change, accordingly language plays a very important role. If French is to survive this period of "language globalization," then the development of the language in Africa is a very important matter. "As the African continent continues to develop economically and politically, the linguistic impact could very well determine the future of global languages."



**French Here, There, Everywhere...Who Speaks French in the World?** Countries in orange are members of the International Organization of La Francophonie and countries in green have the status of "observers" (Francophile countries interested in membership) (Source: International Organization of La Francophonie)
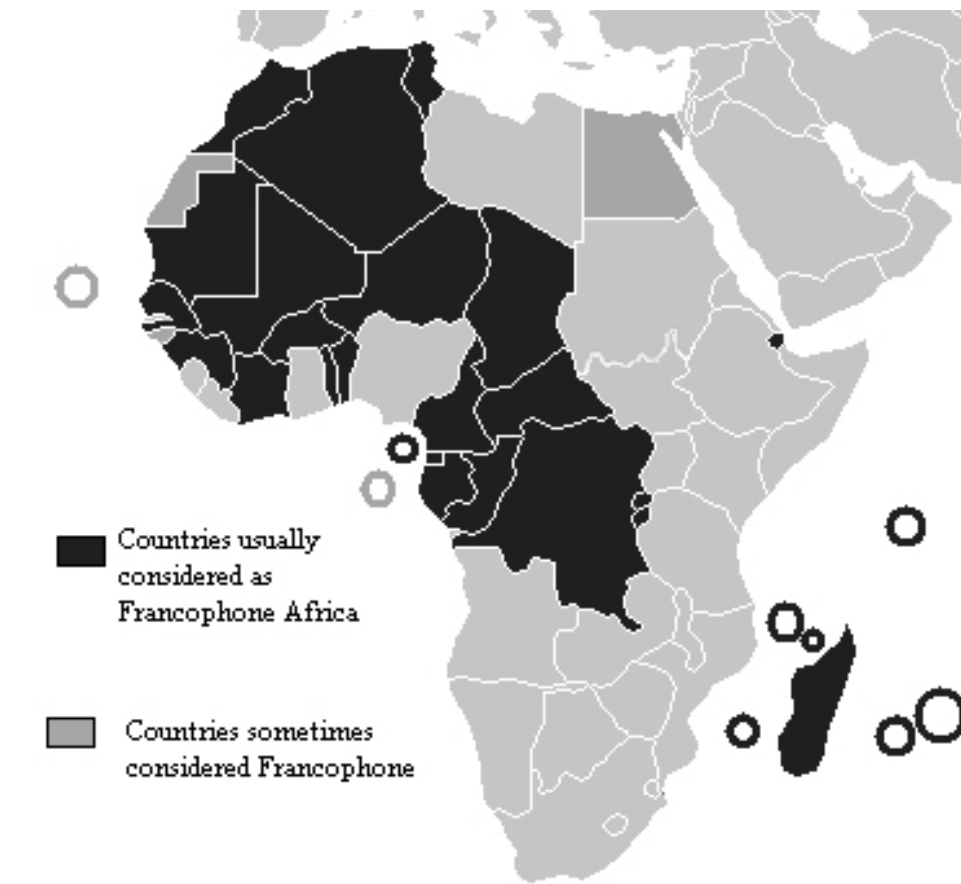
## Why Write in French? The Impact of French Language and Culture on African Literature

Congolese poet and author Alain Mabanckou states in an essay entitled "La Francophonie, oui ... Le ghetto, non!" He continues "to be a francophone writer is to be a repository of cultures, a whirlwind of universes." Indeed, a francophone writer benefits from the heritage of French literature in general, but also brings a personal touch to an entity, "one that dissolves borders, erases race, reduces the distance between continents in order to achieve a fraternity in both language and the universe."

Many Africans learned to read and write in French instead of their own language in school as pointed out in the postscript of *J'ai mangé tout le pays de la nuit* by the Senegalese poet Amadou Lamine Sall. Imposed in schools by the colonial administrations, French became the choice for many nations' official national language. French was learnt and used by speakers of all local languages and did not privilege any one ethnic group over another. It has also been the primary literary language in the former French colonies because it is a commonly adopted language and allows writers to reach the public at an international level. Furthermore, French

education had become the primary vehicle for instilling a sense of literature and literary culture in writers. Therefore, Sall explains that "although his first language is Peulh, writing in French came naturally to him when he began to write poetry." This is also the case of the Algerian poet Tahar Djaout who explained in a 1996 interview that, "despite the decision to change Algeria's official language to Arabic after the Franco-Algerian War, French is the primary language of literary expression in Algeria." He is of the opinion that one should be interested in what it is being said rather than the language used to say "it."

Despite the complications surrounding the use of the colonizer's tongue, French does reach beyond national borders. There is a ready literate public both in those former colonies and abroad. Prix Goncourt winner Tahar ben Jelloun half-joked that "Arabic is his wife and French is his mistress". Novelist Assia Djebar, in her acceptance speech for the "Prix de la Paix" in 2000, "referred to her own triple linguistic inheritance: French, the language of the former colonizers in which she writes and thinks; Arabic, her mother tongue in which she loves, suffers and, on occasion, prays; and Berber, the ancestral tongue which she does not speak but which is present within her as the language of resistance and refusal." Ivoirian writer Véronique Tadjo points out that Léopold Sédar Senghor and Aimé Césaire, often called the founding fathers of the Négritude movement, supported the use of French as "a tool, a possibility" even while calling for

African unity, pride, and independence from France.

Tadjo is the one who possibly provides the best compromise when thinking about French and Africa when she mentions that she does not necessarily agree with France's politics in Africa. However, regarding the French language, she continues by saying... *"I think we can say today that it has become an African language in the sense that there are generations of Africans who have been not only*

schooled in French but raised in French. French has been with us long enough to be part of our lives and to be able to translate our urban reality. In this sense, French, side by side with our national languages, is here to stay. It has allowed us to have access to the modern world, to communicate with it."*

French, in the minds of these writers, does not mean accepting and bowing down to colonial powers, but accepting that French has become a part of the African reality.



Mapping of Francophone Africa (Source: Rosss/Wikimedia)

**Lesson Plan**

**Teaching French level 1 to High School Major Program**
• Presentation of Francophone Africa (map) with its corresponding capitals.
• Basic geography (mountains and rivers).
• Distribute blank maps to students.
• Have them color francophone countries in various colors and capitals written in red.
• Play video on "Francophonie" and "organisation internationale de la Francophonie".
• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJBvVuEUtfk
• Pause video and have students take notes (minimum of 20 facts or so).
• Ask them to summarize information orally.
• Play song on the French countries of Africa to help students memorize countries and capitals.
• Play game with index cards (country name in front / capital in back) and play a "quiz quiz trade" game (Kagan structures).

*Mayra D. Avilés*

# THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE INDIGENOUS MOVEMENT IN BOTSWANA

**Introduction**

While most of the African continent had gained independence by the 1970s, many countries still face adversities in trying to mend and resolve the plethora of issues resulting from and exacerbated by the destructive legacy of colonialism. Among those issues is also that of the rights of indigenous peoples. This article touches briefly on what defines being indigenous and the global indigenous movement and how that translates to the African context. The main focus will be on the case of the struggle for indigenous rights in Botswana, a country that usually stands out for its efficient democracy and good record on human rights.

**Redefining Indigenous: The African Context**

Africa is the second largest continent, with fifty four countries and more than two thousand languages and cultures (Grosz-Ngae, Hanson, and O'Meara, 2014, 2). How does the indigenous movement frame fit into the African context? Indigenous organizations and activism have had a strong presence in the Americas where their 'first people' status is what forged the definition of their identity. In Africa, however, where the vast majority are descendants from the continent's original peoples, the indigenous status becomes more complicated and contested. By the 1990s the indigenous movement had expanded to include

peoples from Africa and Asia (Igoe, 2006, 402).

Hodgson explains that the term indigenous in Africa was adopted "as a tool for social and political mobilization" (Hodgson, 2002, 1037). Nowadays, due to its increasing diversity, the indigenous movement can be defined as the movement of peoples who are culturally distinct from Western societies and/or the predominant culture of the nation state to which they belong and that in their resistance to global capitalism and assimilation to the national society have maintained their cultural traditions as much as they have been able to. Currently the only definition that legally binds the countries who ratify it is that of Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization (ILO): *peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country... at the time of conquest or colonization, or the establishment of present state boundaries, and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural, and political institutions. (Article 1 b)*

The ILO definition as well as the consensus on the indigenous concept developed through political, legal and anthropological discourse not only includes the criteria of first come, non-dominance, and cultural difference, but also the very important and empowering criteria of self ascription (Saugestad, 2001, 43). Moreover, the Convention 169 also outlines various responsibilities for governments in regards to indigenous rights including consultation on matters that affect the livelihoods on indigenous peoples,



Although the San live a more sedentary life and their children like these, can go to a school provided by the government, they still want their right such as the right to hunt and gather in the reserve. (Source: Moonju Kim/@juyapics Instagram)

healthcare services and education in cooperation and participation with indigenous peoples to support indigenous language instruction for children (Hodgson, 2002, 1038).

## Indigenous Movement in Botswana

Botswana has a population of over 2,200,000. The majority of the population, 79%, is Tswana, after who the country is named and whose language, Setswana, is the national language. Only about 3.3% considers itself indigenous, the largest group of which is the San with a population of 64,000 (IWGIA n.d.). This article will focus on the San as an illustration of the status of indigenous rights and issues in Botswana.

The *San* belong to the *Khoisan* speaking larger group that has been traditionally present in the South of Africa, in the present day countries of Botswana, South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe. The *San* are represented through more than 15 sub groups each with their own language. Many live in Eastern Botswana and the Kalahari Desert and while traditionally perceived as hunter gatherers, today some also live as agro-pastoralists, as well as in urban and other rural areas (Cultural Survival, 2018).

Botswana has a reputation for low levels of poverty and being an efficient democracy with a constitution that guarantees individual rights and freedoms regardless of race, political opinion, or sex, as well as no discriminating laws and a good human rights record (Saugestad, 2001, 27-28). Unfortunately, that does not extend to the *San* who according to Observations of the State of Indigenous Human Rights in Botswana prepared for the UN Human rights Council, live at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder and face food and water scarcity and lack of access to education (Cultural Survival, 2018). Many studies conclude that the *San* can be considered the most marginalized ethnic groups in Botswana because of their lack of land rights and access to resources, poverty, dependency on welfare, weak representation in government and even discrimination (Nthomang, 2004, 420).

In order to understand the root causes of this disconnect it is essential to consider colonial history and its ramifications. Even if colonialism in Botswana was not as rampant and devastating as it was in other parts of Africa, it still had major negative effects in the development of the nation state for Botswana inherited the colonial economy, structures, bureaucracy, values and practices which helped shape what we see today in the country's practice of development (Nthomang, 2004, 416). This practice of development has not only been ineffective with, but also harmful to indigenous groups like the *San* whose way of life is distinct from that of, first, the colonial power and later, from that of the majority of the nation state. Nthomang uses the concept of relentless colonialism to explain how the independence of Botswana from colonial rule did not mean independence to the San because it over spilled to the post colonial period, not necessarily in overt repression, but more in the form of a dominant-subordinate relationship with the hegemonic culture of the nation state (Nthomang 2004, 418).

### In the Name of 'Development'

Perhaps the best way to illustrate the dynamic of this relationship and the one-sided view of development is analyzing the Remote Area Development Program (RADP). While in accordance with Botswana's non-racial policy there is not an official recognition of the San as a distinct ethnic group, there is however a recognition of the problems members of this group are facing. It is in this frame and with the aim to improve their situation that the RADP was created in the early 1970s. The goal of the program was to help settle the San in a more Tswana like kind of way and bring them closer to the areas settled by the national society so as to make it easier for the state to provide water and, social services like education and healthcare, and improve their overall socioeconomic conditions so that it could be more equal to that of the rest of the country.

While the design and implementation of the RADP was well intended and has in fact provided some social services and infrastructural improvements, it has also been ineffective in some ways since it has not delivered the quality of life improvement it proposed. More importantly, it came with shortcomings with regards to respecting the San nomadic and semi nomadic way of life and protecting their right to live in their ancestral lands in accordance with their cultural traditions. The San now live a more sedentary way of life instead of their hunter-gatherer livelihood and find themselves immersed in a disadvantaged position within a cash economy. This is a typical result of top-down approaches of designing and implementing development programs that do not consult at the grassroots level and make the target beneficiaries active participants of their own development (Nthomang 2004,421).

### Land Rights, the Central Kalahari Game Reserve and Relocation

Land rights is the primary concern of the San indigenous movement as it is for all other indigenous groups because ties to their land go beyond the basics of a place to live but it is also tightly intertwined with their cultural heritage and whole way of life (Survival, 2018). When the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR) was created the San thought that meant demarcation of their ancestral lands. But nature reserves are not the same as indigenous territory demarcations when it comes to securing the rights of indigenous peoples. This was to be the case when in the 1980s the discovery of diamonds in the CKGR led to the forced relocation of the San to resettlement camps on the outskirts of the reserve. The government of Botswana (GOB) denies the link between the two. Instead they argued that the reasons behind the relocation were a) trying to solve logistic difficulties of the government providing services in remote areas, b) the protection of wildlife since that was the purpose of the CKGR and people living there defeated that purpose, and c) that the San would be better off living closer to the developed infrastructure of the national society (Winters, 2014). This policy was put in place in 2002 and was contested by San activists who took it to court in the Roy Sesana vs the Attorney General of the Republic of Botswana case. This kind of conflict between indigenous peoples' land rights, environmental legislation and concerns and the pressure for certain countries to rely on the exploitation non-renewable resources is common place in the context of global indigenous movements. Indigenous peoples in different Amazonian countries have had long struggles with national and multinational oil companies and their nation-states. Even when indigenous peoples have had their land demarcated as indigenous territory, in former Spanish colonies the subsoil belongs to the state, posing a conflict of contradicting legislations vis a vis the economic need of a "developing" nation trying to benefit the majority of its citizens by relying on the environmentally taxing exploitation of non-renewable resources. Countries with the strongest economies also push forward environmentally high-risk enterprises that violate indigenous rights, as seen in the case of the US push for the Dakota Access Pipeline that has encountered great opposition from Native American and environmental groups as well as the concern of the broader population. Taking into account the plea of indigenous peoples' organization in such matter, it is worth adjusting our point of view to consider Schimmel's position on forced modernity:

'Developing' a semi nomadic or nomadic people by dispossessing them of their lands and forcibly settling them in a distant location has the same psychological and social implications of forcing a people who lead a settled life to become nomadic. It is a totalitarian attempt to uproot a people and culture and coercively transform them into something they are not. Such coercive settlement traumatizes the people and destroys the integrity of their culture and their ability to maintain their relationships between people, land, ancestors, spirits, and animal and plant life that encompass their way of life (Schimmel, 2009, 515).

### San Indigenous Movement Achievements and Continuing Struggle

In the landmark case of Roy Sesana vs the Attorney General of the Republic of Botswana the court ruled in favor of the Gana and Gwi groups of the indigenous San people marking one of the biggest achievements in Botswana's indigenous movement. The court condemned the government for forcefully relocating San hunters and gatherers from their ancestral lands in the CKGR and declared the relocation "unlawful and unconstitutional". Moreover, the court also ruled that the San applicants have the right to hunt and gather in the reserve and no longer had to apply for permits to enter the reserve (Afrol News 2006).

Unfortunately, despite this ruling the San continue to struggle for their rights since only San *plaintiffs* from the case were allowed to return and still have to apply for monthly permits to live on their land and for hunting licenses in order for these traditionally hunter gatherers to hunt in the CKGR. Some important points brought up in the Observations on the State of Indigenous Human Rights in Botswana report concerning the hunting ban debate are that while the government
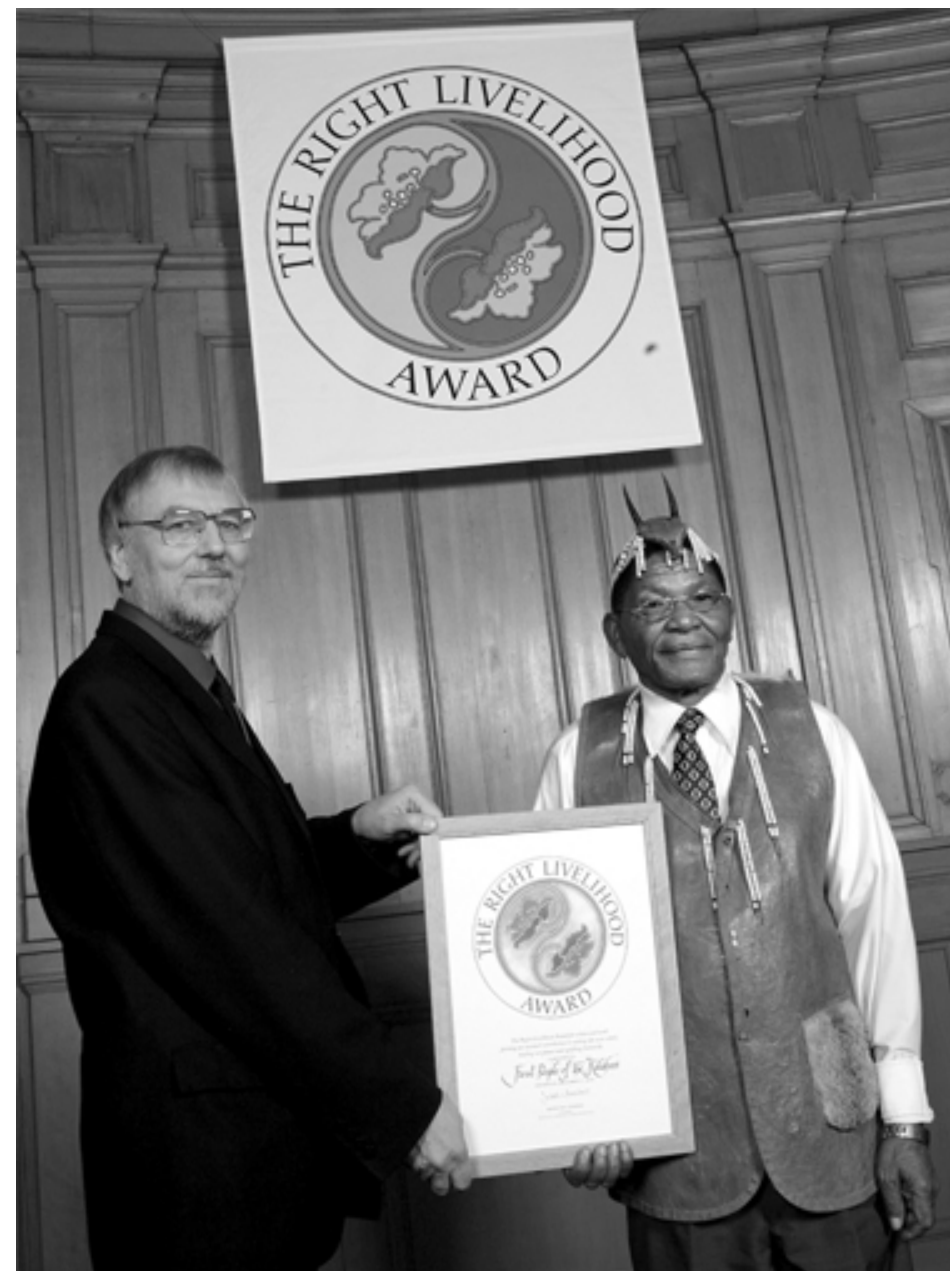


Roy Sesana is an activist and leader of the San people of Botswana who represented them in the landmark case of Roy Sesana vs the Attorney General of the Republic of Botswana. The high court ruled in favor of the Gana and Gwi groups. (Source: "Right Livelihood Award Foundation Archive" www.rightlivelihood.org)

claims it is intended for the protection of wildlife, wealthy tourists and trophy hunters can still hunt for a steep prize. Furthermore, it was argued that indigenous people that have lived in their lands using its resources for centuries have proven to be adept for sustainable use (Survival, 2018). In addition, the shoot-to-kill policy that has been unofficially adopted against poachers can target San people trying to provide for their family.

The San indigenous movement has gained recognition through the court rulings and its networking with the global indigenous movement. San activists and supporting NGOs attending the UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues have communicated other concerns and demands besides land rights, which include: right to their livelihoods, consultation and equal participation that have been affected by the privatization of water and tourism. While the struggle for their rights is far from over, it is important to recognize San agency and the significance of social movements in helping to build better and more just societies.

## Conclusions

Looking at this overview of the indigenous movement in Botswana and the current situation of Indigenous groups like the San reminds us that even countries with the best human rights and democracy records have room for improvement when it comes to guaranteeing the well-being of all its citizens. In considering this, it is important to remember that Botswana, like many other countries with a relatively new colonial legacy has had to address the issue of nation building in an attempt to create a more unified and unitary nation-state in a diverse territory while trying to adapt old Western concepts of nationalism to the African context of post-colonial states with arbitrary boundaries (Saugestad, 2001, 28). It is also important to consider the point of view that Botswana's reputation of an efficient democracy can be supported by the possibility of the emergence of social movements that have made legal gains like in the case of the San. Indigenous rights is a complex issue and no country can claim to 'have it right' when it comes to that. It is the role of social movements

to continually push for change and improvement. Indigenous movements push us to questions old beliefs and narrow, antiquated and hegemonic views of development that confuse integration with assimilation. They challenge us to rethink whether same equals fair and reminds us that law does not always means justice.

Some actions recommended for the government of Botswana to take towards improving the state of indigenous human rights include giving official recognition to the San and other indigenous minorities as indigenous people in its constitution. Botswana ratified the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples but has not adopted the ILO convention 169 which is the one that is legally binding. It would also be wise to revisit development programs like the RADP to make the San active participants and decision makers. Indigenous movements in Botswana, Africa and the world should be seen as an opportunity and a challenge for countries to work towards a more equitable society.



An aerial view of Gaborone, the capital of Botswana. Many have welcomed the recent changes but this lifestyle may be difficult for some indigenous groups (Source: BenAOhio/Imgur)

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