

Physical Geography of Africa

Africa is the second largest continent.

Key features: Sahara Desert, Nile River, Congo Rainforest, Great Rift Valley, Mount Kilimanjaro.

Varied climate zones: tropical, arid, Mediterranean, and highland.

Plants and Animals in the Sahara

Adaptations:

- **Plants:** long roots, thick waxy leaves (e.g. cactus, acacia).
- **Animals:** nocturnal, store water, light-coloured fur (e.g. camels, fennec foxes).

People in the Sahara Desert

- Nomadic lifestyles (e.g. Tuareg) adapted to desert life.
- Use of camels, tents, and traditional clothing.
- Modern challenges include water scarcity and desertification.

Natural Hazards in Africa

- Earthquakes and volcanic activity (e.g. Mount Nyiragongo).
- Drought and desertification (especially in the Sahel).
- Flooding and tropical storms in some coastal areas.

Human Geography of Africa

- Over 1.4 billion people, with over 50 countries.

Languages: Arabic, Swahili, French, English, Hausa.

Major cities: Lagos, Cairo, Nairobi, Johannesburg.

- Rural and urban contrast in lifestyle and services.

The Development Gap

- Varying levels of wealth and development.

- North and South Africa are more developed than many central nations.
- Development indicators: GDP, life expectancy, literacy rate.

Food Crisis in Africa

Causes: drought, conflict, poverty, poor infrastructure.

Impact: malnutrition, reliance on food aid, migration.

Solutions: investment in agriculture, irrigation, education.

Aid in Africa

Types of aid: emergency (short-term), development (long-term).

- Can improve healthcare, education, and infrastructure.

Criticisms: dependency, misuse, political issues.

Climate Change in Africa

- Rising temperatures, changing rainfall patterns.
- Increased droughts and floods.
- Impact on farming, water supplies, and human health.

Desertification

- The spread of desert into once-usable land.
- Caused by overgrazing, deforestation, climate change.
- Solutions: planting trees, sustainable farming, education (e.g. Great Green Wall).

Sustainable Development in Africa

- Development that meets needs without harming future generations.
- Use of renewable energy, ecotourism, fair trade.

Challenge: balancing growth with environmental protection.

Nigeria: A Country of Contrasts

- Rich in oil but also has poverty.
- Wealthy urban areas (e.g. Lagos) vs. rural poor.
- Cultural diversity: over 250 ethnic groups.

Life on the Swahili Coastline

- East Africa (e.g. Kenya, Tanzania).
- Mix of African and Arabic cultures.

Economy: fishing, tourism, port trade.

Somalia: The Land of Pirates?

- Stereotype based on piracy in Gulf of Aden.
- Reality: poverty, conflict, and weak government.

- Some communities working for peace and development.

Key Terms

Desertification: The spread of desert conditions.

Development: Improvements in living standards and economy.

Aid: Help given from one country or organisation to another.

Climate Change: Long-term changes in temperature and weather patterns.

Contrast: Large differences within a place.

Revision Questions

- 1) Name two key physical features of Africa.
- 2) How do camels survive in the Sahara?
- 3) What is a nomad?
- 4) Name one natural hazard that affects Africa.
- 5) What is the development gap?
- 6) Give two causes of food shortages in Africa.
- 7) What is desertification?
- 8) How is climate change affecting Africa?
- 9) How is Nigeria a country of contrasts?
- 10) What are some cultural features of the Swahili Coast?

