

*For God so loved
the world...
shouldn't we?*

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***Praying for the World
One Country at Time***



**Benin
May 8th, 2011**

Benin

Full Name

Republic of Benin

Capital

Porto-Novo

Location

Western Africa, bordering the Bight of Benin, between Nigeria and Togo

Leadership

President Thomas YAYI Boni (since 6 April 2006); note - the president is both the chief of state and head of government

Overview

Present day Benin was the site of Dahomey, a prominent West African kingdom that rose in the 15th century. The territory became a French Colony in 1872 and achieved independence on 1 August 1960, as the Republic of Benin. A succession of military governments ended in 1972 with the rise to power of Mathieu KEREKOU and the establishment of a government based on Marxist-Leninist principles. A move to representative government began in 1989. Two years later, free elections ushered in former Prime Minister Nicéphore SOGLO as president, marking the first successful transfer of power in Africa from a dictatorship to a democracy. KEREKOU was returned to power by elections held in 1996 and 2001, though some irregularities were alleged. KEREKOU stepped down at the end of his second term in 2006 and was succeeded by Thomas YAYI Boni, a political outsider and independent. YAYI has attempted to stem corruption and has strongly promoted accelerating Benin's economic growth.

Population

9,325,032

Religion

Christian 42.8% (Catholic 27.1%, Celestial 5%, Methodist 3.2%, other Protestant 2.2%, other 5.3%), Muslim 24.4%, Vodoun 17.3% (a hierarchy that range in power from major deities governing the forces of nature and human society to the spirits of individual streams, trees, and rocks), other 15.5%



Economy

The economy of Benin remains underdeveloped and dependent on subsistence agriculture, cotton production, and regional trade. Growth in real output had averaged about 4% before the global recession, but fell to 2.5% in 2009 and 3% in 2010. Inflation has subsided over the past several years. In order to raise growth, Benin plans to attract more foreign investment, place more emphasis on tourism, facilitate the development of new food processing systems and agricultural products, and encourage new information and communication technology. Due to recent reforms Benin has become the most competitive country in the West African Economic

Prayer Concerns

Forced marriage, child trafficking and prostitution are persistent problems in Benin—problems that sprang from and endure because of illiteracy, poverty and traditional customs. The economic, cultural and social practices that are imposed on girls limit their potential for school enrollment and educational performance. Often, parents simply do not understand the importance of educating girls. Like many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, AIDS is problematic. The number of adults and children living with HIV/AIDS in Benin in 2003 was estimated by the Joint United Nations Programme for HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) to range between 38,000 and 120,000, with nearly equal numbers of males and females. In 2003, an estimated 6,140 adults and children died of AIDS. Surprisingly, HIV prevalence is relatively low compared with rates in most other countries in sub-Saharan Africa.