Burkina Faso

From Wikipedia: Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso (UK: , US: (listen); French: [buʁkina faso]) is a landlocked country in West Africa that covers an area of around 274,200 square kilometres (105,900 sq mi) and is bordered by Mali to the northwest, Niger to the northeast, Benin to the southeast, Togo and Ghana to the south, and the Ivory Coast to the southwest. The July 2019 population estimate by the United Nations was 20,321,378. Previously called Republic of Upper Volta (1958–1984), it was renamed "Burkina Faso" on 4 August 1984 by President Thomas Sankara. Its citizens are known as Burkinabé or Burkinabè (bur-KEE-na-bay), and its capital and largest city is Ouagadougou. Due to French colonialism, the country's official language of government and business is French. However, only 15% of the population actually speaks French on a regular basis. There are 59 native languages spoken in Burkina, with the most common language, Mooré, spoken by roughly 50% of Burkinabé.

The Republic of Upper Volta was established on 11 December 1958 as a self-governing colony within the French Community and on 5 August 1960 it gained full independence with Maurice Yaméogo as President. After protests by students and labour union members, Yaméogo was deposed in the 1966 coup d'état, led by Sangoulé Lamizana, who became president. His rule coincided with the Sahel drought and famine, and facing problems from the country's trade unions he was deposed in the 1980 coup d'état, led by Saye Zerbo. Encountering resistance from trade unions again, Zerbo's government was overthrown in the 1982 coup d'état, led by Jean-Baptiste Ouédraogo.

Thomas Sankara, a Marxist and the leader of the leftist faction of the Ouédraogo government, was made Prime Minister but was later imprisoned. Efforts to free him led to the 1983 coup d'état, in which he became president. Sankara renamed the country Burkina Faso and launched an ambitious socioeconomic programme which included a nationwide literacy campaign, land redistribution to peasants, railway and road construction and the outlawing of female genital mutilation, forced marriages and polygamy. Sankara was
overthrown and killed in the 1987 coup d'état led by Blaise Compaoré – deteriorating relations with former coloniser France and its ally the Ivory Coast were the reason given for the coup.

In 1987, Blaise Compaoré became president and, after an alleged 1989 coup attempt, was elected in 1991 and 1998 (elections which were boycotted by the opposition and attracted a notably low turnout), as well as in 2005. He remained head of state until he was ousted from power by the popular youth upheaval of 31 October 2014, after which he was exiled to the Ivory Coast. Michel Kafando subsequently became the transitional president of the country. On 16 September 2015, a military coup d'état against the Kafando government was carried out by the Regiment of Presidential Security, the former presidential guard of Compaoré. On 24 September 2015, after pressure from the African Union, ECOWAS and the armed forces, the military junta agreed to step down and Michel Kafando was reinstated as acting president. In the general election held on 29 November 2015, Roch Marc Christian Kaboré won in the first round with 53.5% of the vote and was sworn in as president on 29 December 2015.

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Burkina Faso community action

Biodiversity

Burkina Faso is largely wild bush country with a mixture of grass and small trees in varying proportions. The savanna region is mainly grassland in the rainy season and semi desert during the harmattan period (defined as the period when stormy and dusty Sahara winds blow dry and hot). Fauna, one of the most diverse in West Africa, includes the elephant, hippopotamus, buffalo, monkey, lions, crocodile, giraffe, various types of antelope, and a vast variety of bird and insect life.

To ensure conservation and preservation of the wildlife of Burkina Faso, four national parks have been established. These are the Po National Park in the south-centre of the country, Arli National Park established in 1954 in the southeast, W of the Niger National Park, a trans frontier park existing since 1957 in the east bordering Benin and Niger and the Deux Balés National Park. The forests, fauna and fish have been declared part of the national estate of Burkina Faso. In addition, the List of national parks of Burkina Faso consist of one UNESCO Biosphere reserve, three Complete Reserves, six Partial Reserves and ten protected forests.
However, according to conservation classification conducted between 1936 and 1957, the country has 78 protected areas that cover 38,369 km² (14,814 sq mi), which accounts to about 14% of the area of the country. 

**Food activism**

**Solar cooking resources in Burkina Faso**

**Yacouba Sawadogo**

Yacouba Sawadogo is a farmer from the west African nation of Burkina Faso who has been successfully using a traditional farming technique called Zaï to restore soils damaged by desertification and drought. A documentary feature film *The Man Who Stopped the Desert* (2010) first screened in the UK portrays his life.

Zaï holes: Zaï holes are holes dug in the soil. Traditionally they were used in a limited way to restore barren land. Yacouba Sawadogo introduced the innovation of filling them with manure and other biodegradable waste, in order to provide a source of nutrients for plant life. The manure attracts termites, whose tunnels help break up the soil further. He also increased the size of the holes slightly over the traditional models. Zaï holes have been used to help cultivate trees, sorghum, and millet.

Outreach: To promote these methods, particularly zaï holes, Yacouba Sawadogo holds bi-yearly "Market Days" at his farm in the village of Gourga. Attendees from over a hundred regional villages come to share seed samples, swap tips, and learn from one another. 

**Food activism**

Burkina Faso is faced with high levels of food insecurity, which links with poverty and challenging climatic variation, ranging from severe flooding to extreme drought. High rates of food insecurity are particularly prevalent in rural populations. The World Food Programme has several projects it is working on that are geared towards increasing food security in Burkina Faso. 

**News and comment**

**2010**

2010 SEED Award Winners, [1] November 3

"Manufacture and Popularization of Biomass Briquettes". Aiming to replace wood and charcoal with biomass briquettes from fallen leaves and other sources of unused biomass, this progressive enterprise of local and international NGOs and a research institution helps to combat desertification, create jobs in rural communities and raise awareness for alternative energy sources.

"Initiative for Promoting and Distributing Bio-Pesticides". The initiative's ambitious goal is to promote and distribute ecological pest control for organic crops, especially cotton,
vegetable and oil-producing crops. In this way, the partnership of local and community-based organizations and research agencies hopes to increase yields and preserve the production environment.

2009


"Nafore & Afrisolar energy kiosks". A small business and international NGOs are cooperating to provide sustainable energy supply to poor communities by expanding the use of "Nafore", a PV-based telephone charger, powered 100% on solar energy.

local information can be found, or shared, via our many location pages

External links

Wikipedia: Burkina Faso, Wildlife of Burkina Faso, Yacouba Sawadogo

References

1. unep.org
2. United Nations Environment Programme