

UNDERSTANDING AND REACHING AFRICANS

What are some commonalities and differences among different African countries?:

- Africa is made up of 54 countries, thousands of languages, and a myriad of people groups and cultures.
- Similarities - physical traits, names, chain migration
- Differences - religion, personality, food

Religions

- It is rare to encounter an African who would not identify as Christian, Muslim, or a Traditional Worshipper.
- African Traditional Religiosity - traditional worship consists of spiritual activities such as prayer, thanksgiving, and making sacrifices.
- Islam - One of the best ways to reach out to African Muslims is by letting them see Christ in our lives.

Common Barriers

- **Colonization** - Africans are often on their guard and suspicious when Westerners reach out to them.
- **Paternalism** - When Westerners take the initiative to do things in Western fashion is often perceived as an updated version of colonization.
- **Stereotypes** - Africans often perceive how the stereotypes of poverty, civil wars, disease, and cultural values can be used to demean and ridicule them.
- **Marginalization** - When it comes to identity, African students, especially of darker skin tones, can often feel overlooked when compared to their international friends from other cultures.
- **Hospitality** - In the African context, community is more like spaghetti where lives and stories of individuals are intertwined.

Love Languages

- **Soccer** - For many Africans, soccer is the anchor of community.
- **Hospitality** - Welcoming Africans into our homes and social circles communicates to them that we are family.

Be a Learner:

Since many Africans find themselves overseas due to some push factors (civil wars) or pull factors (education, jobs, opportunity) it is important to learn and support our friends on their journeys.

Language:

Many African Christians would sometimes prefer a fellowship in their own languages and among their own people instead of joining a diverse church.

Strategy:

- With more than 631 million Christians living in Africa and an additional 141 million Africans living overseas, the global church has a significant opportunity to reach every corner of the globe with the gospel.
 - Thanks to their multiethnic background of navigating languages and their concept of family and joy, Africans can play a significant role in the advancement of the Gospel.
 - It is very common among Africans to refer to different folks that they meet in churches or at schools in terms of uncles, aunts, fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters.
 - The impact of Africans overseas can be seen clearly. (Ghanaian pastor in Canada, Nigerian pastor in Ukraine, African students and immigrants building Christian fellowship in China and Singapore.)
-