

A central problem in all developing countries is feeding the growing population. The bigger the city and the buying power of the citizens, the greater is the quest for bushmeat.

While the birth rate is falling in Europe, population growth has reached 2.5-3% per annum in West and Central Africa.

Improved medical care has meant a lower death rate, while cultural and religious beliefs hinder any meaningful birth control. A lower standard of living results.

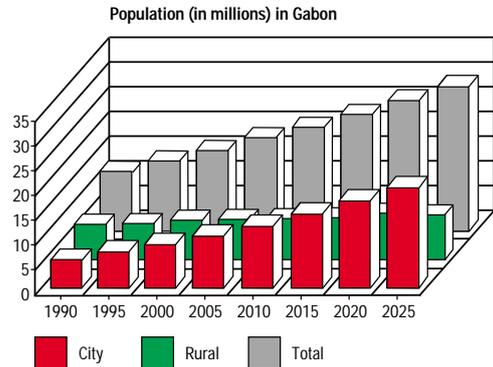


Kampala, capital of Uganda, is one of the fastest growing cities in the country.

Most debt-ridden countries are **strongly dependent upon the world market prices**. Gabon and the PR Congo in 1990 increased their income from exports by 70% and 78%, respectively, because of oil.

African states mostly have **insufficient levels of agricultural self-sufficiency and economic productivity**:

- Poor soils and extensive cultivation make crop production relatively un-profitable. Therefore additional food needs to be imported.
- The economic situation is improved **through allocation of logging concessions to foreign companies**.



Population development in Gabon (IUCN).

Urbanisation process

- more people work in the service industry, fewer on the land
- ➔ resulting in reduced agricultural production
- city dwellers have more money
- ➔ eat four times more animal protein than rural population

As there are not enough sources of income in the countryside, people migrate to larger communities with greater industrialisation. 60% of Gabonese now live in cities.

Country	Area in km ²	Population in Millions	Population	Yearly Gross National Product per capita in US\$
Germany	357.022	82,143	230.1	26,300
DR Congo	2,345 409	46,674	19.9	620
Ivory Coast	322 463	14,0	43.4	660
Gabon	267 667	1,19	4.4	3,830
Cameroon	475 442	14,570	31.6	580
Liberia	111 369	2,602	26.6	210
Nigeria	923 768	103,46	112	260
Rwanda	26 338	7,738	293.8	200
Uganda	241 .038	20,605	104.5	310



Cattle and other domestic animals are illegally driven into National Parks to feed.

The **production of cattle and other domestic animals** for meat is not possible in many tropical areas due to Tsetse flies and other parasites.

In some regions, these domestic animals are kept in large numbers purely as **status symbols** and are butchered only for special events. There are also religious **dietary taboos**, especially in the Islamic communities.

The **preference for bushmeat** stems from tradition. It is believed to be healthier and tastier than domestic meat. Consumption of bushmeat is also sometimes connected with the idea of increasing men's strength. Elephant, gorilla and buffalo meat is expected at weddings or other feasts as ritual food.

The bushmeat trade was recognised as source of income in some countries when falling world market prices made cultivation of coffee and cacao unprofitable.

Estimates of the yearly income through bushmeat show the profitability of the trade:

- Liberia (1991): 22 million US\$
- Gabon (1994): 22 million US\$
- (1999): > 93 million US\$
- Ivory Coast (1997): 110 million US\$