

LAND



Pic. 1: Burkina Faso

FACTS

Surface:	274200 km ²
Capital:	Ouagadougou
Form of government:	democracy
Inhabitants:	ca. 12,5 Mio.
Population Density:	6 Inh/km ² - 332 Inh/km ²
Average Income:	26,5 €/Month
Life Expectancy:	53 (W)/48 (M)
Language:	French
Religion:	50% moslems, 10% christians

INTRODUCTION

Burkina Faso is one of the westafrican states, which was a french colony until 1960. It is one of the poorest countries in the world. They have very few natural ressources, the ground is unproductive and uninteresting for tourism. They have a lot of problems in econmy, ecology, heath and education.

HISTORY

In the 11th century the Mossi came from the east to Burkina Faso. They settled in the upper Volta area in small principalities. Their poltical and religious leader was Mogho Naaba. Since 1898 the Mossi area was part of french western africa. The french colonialists established borders without taking care of tribal friendships or enmeties. Burkina Faso was called Haute Volta. Haute Volta with its dry and unproductive ground was not profitable for the french. 1932 they joined Haute Volta

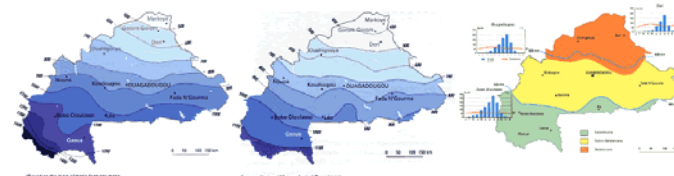
with the Ivory Coast, Niger und Mali, to make it easier for wor- kers from Haute Volta to work on farms for example in the Ivoy- ry Coast. With the prohibition of compulsory labour the union of the Westafrican States was useless and in 1947 Haute Volta was founded in its former boarders. 1960 Haute Volta became independent and since 1984 it is called Burkina Faso.

POLITICAL SITUATION

Burkina Faso is a laical republic based on a french model. Since 1991 it has a modern democratic constitution. Since 1987 Blaise Compaoré is the president. In 1991 and 1998 he was reelected for seven more years by an absolute mayo- rity
The domestic policies are very stable, although there is a conflict with the Ivory Coast since 2002. In the Ivory Coast still live more than 3 million Burkinabe.

CLIMATE

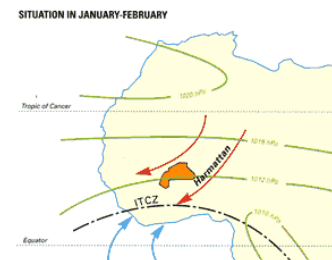
Burkina Faso has three climes: The sahelian zone in the north, the sudane-sahelian zone in the centre and the sudarian zone in the the south.



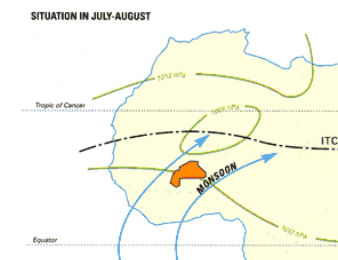
Pic. 2: Rain fall

Pic. 3: Climate zones

The climate is devided into rainy and dry seasons. The rain seasons last from may till october with average temperatu- res between 27°-30°. The rain seasons are conditioned by the Monsoon, a wind which blows from the atlantic towards the country. The rain is often vehement, but irregular, sometimes



Pic. 4: Dry season



Pic. 5: Rain season

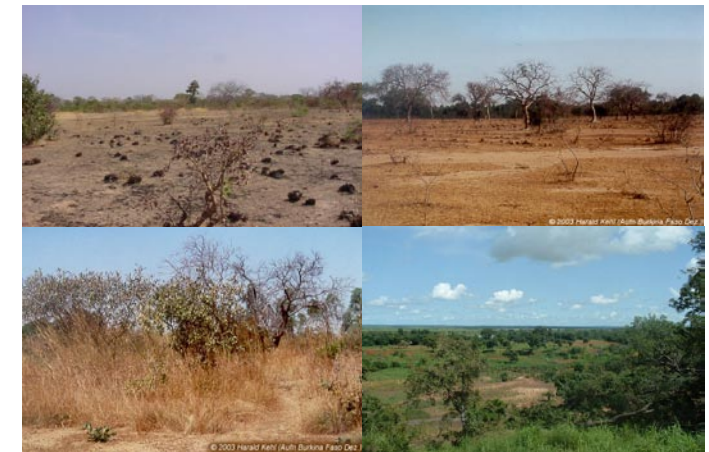
there is almost no rain. The dry season lasts from november till march with average temperatures between 38°-44°. The Harmattan, a warm desert- wind, blows from the sahara over the country and brings a lot of sanddust.

TOPOGRAPHY

Burkina Faso is situated on a plateau, which inclined from the northeast to southwest with an average elevation from 200m to 350m. In the southwest the Sikasso-sandstoneplateau ele- vates untill 700m. This plateau is dewatered by the black, red and white volta and some smaller rivers. No river can be ship- ped and the black volta is the only river, that contains water all over the year.

VEGETATION

The vegetation in Burkina Faso is various, from desert in the north, dry and wet savannah, to tropical rain forest in the south.



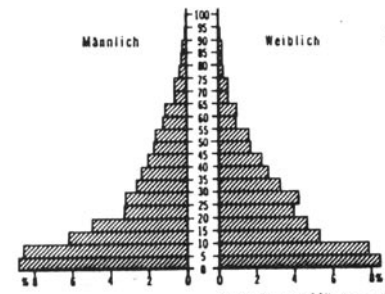
Pic. 6-9: Various kinds of vegetation from north till south

A big problem is the desertification, the expansion of the des- ert. The desert grows ca. 10km/year. This originates from glo- bal-climatic reasons and human influences. The growth of population leads to overgrazing, reduction of fallow periods, deforestation and slashing and burning. Wood is the most important energy source for cooking, hea- ting or light. It is also used as building material. Without forest or particular trees the ground is unprotected

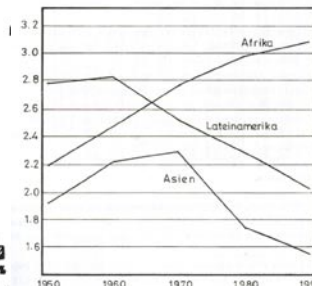
against erosion by wind and rain. The layer of gras and bushes die off, the ground gets hard, crusted and salted.

SOCIETY

Burkina Faso has a population of ca. 12,5 million, almost one million of them live in Ouagadougou, the capital. 27% live in cities and 73% in rural areas. Although there are so many people who live in cities, 90% live on agriculture. The density of population is very different, 332 Inhabitants/km² in Ouagadougou or 6 Inhabitants/km² in the northern desert region. The population grows 3% per year, although the population in other continents is declining. Families have many children to get a position of esteem. They also need children help them working on the fields and as „old age assurance“ for themselves. A strong familiar coherence is very important for Burkina-bes.



Pic. 10: Agepyramid



Pic. 11: Populationgrowth

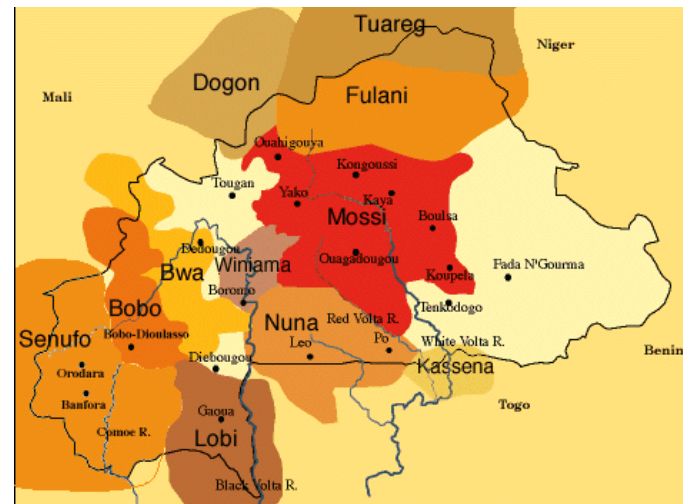
The average expectation of live with 53 years increases, but is far inferior to the developed countries. Africa has a total different agepyramid, there are a lot of children and only few who get old. 18% of the children die in the first five years and many others die of malaria, HIV or bilharzia. They contract diseases because of missing knowledge and because they do not have the possibility to defend them.

The most spoken language is Mòore, even though French is the official language. Only 15% of the population is able to understand french. One of the reasons is the lack of scholar education, there are so few schools, that only 13% of the child-

Images:

Pic. 1: <http://www.demis.nl/mapserver>; Pic. 2-5: <http://www.burkinafaso-link.org.uk>; Pic. 6: <http://www.od.shuttle.de>; Pic. 7-8: <http://www.tu-berlin.de/~keh1>; Pic. 9: ???; Pic. 10-11: <http://www.demis.nl/mapserver>; Pic. 12: <http://www.demis.nl/mapserver>; Pic. 8: <http://www.demis.nl/mapserver>; Pic. 9: <http://www.demis.nl/mapserver>; Pic. 10-11: Kull, Heinz; Pic. 12: <http://www.uiowa.edu>;

ren can go to school, although it is obligatory to go to school. In many cases children can not go to school because they have to work on fields or their families do not have to money to pay it. The illiterate rate is 85%. The educational system got worse since the 80ies when the government of Thomas Sankara supported the education, today it lacks of motivation and money. In some other countries they intended to teach in their originate language instead of the colonial language. This is very difficult in Burkina Faso because there are so many languages. In Burkina Faso live 160 different ethnical groups with more than 50 languages, which are not orientated by the countries boarders.



Pic. 12: Ethnic groups

The strongest group is the Mossi (50%), followed by Mande (17%), Tuareg and Fulbe (10%), Bobo (8%), Lobi (7%) and Senufo (5,5%). They have extremely different styles of living, Tuareg and Fulbe for example are nomadic and the Mossi are settled.

Also their religions are various, the majority are muslime (50%), many have nature religions and some are christians (10%). The religion is independent from the ethnic group, it is so variegated, that in one family exist different religions. Natural Religions are still common. Even moslems or christians often believe at the same time in their traditional nature religion.

Literature:

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