

Sub-Saharan Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa refers to the region of Africa located south of the Sahara Desert. This vast area encompasses 48 countries and includes diverse landscapes, cultures, languages, and economies.

Sub-Saharan Africa includes 48 countries, each with its unique culture, economy, and geography. Below is a list of those countries, divided by region:

East Africa

West Africa

Central Africa

Southern Africa

Horn of Africa: Ethiopia (also listed in East Africa) Eritrea Djibouti Somalia These countries collectively represent a highly diverse region in terms of language, culture, and economic development. They are often grouped based on geography, but their histories and current conditions vary widely.

Some key features of Sub-Saharan Africa include:

Geography: The region is made up of various ecosystems, including savannas, tropical rainforests, and mountains. It includes countries such as Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, Ghana, and Ethiopia.

Population: Sub-Saharan Africa has a rapidly growing population, currently exceeding 1 billion people. It is home to many ethnic groups, languages, and cultures. Major languages include Swahili, Hausa, Amharic, Yoruba, Zulu, and many more.

Economy: The region's economies are diverse, ranging from resource-rich countries like Nigeria and Angola, which rely heavily on oil, to agricultural economies such as Ethiopia and Kenya. Many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are developing, with challenges like poverty, lack of infrastructure, and political instability. However, some countries, such as Rwanda and Ghana, have seen rapid economic growth in recent years.

Health and Education: The region faces significant health challenges, including high rates of infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis. Access to education is improving but still faces obstacles, particularly in rural areas.

Culture and Heritage: Sub-Saharan Africa is known for its rich cultural heritage, including music, art, dance, and traditional practices. African traditions have a strong influence globally, especially in music genres like jazz, blues, and Afrobeat.

Challenges and Opportunities: Sub-Saharan Africa faces numerous challenges such as climate change, political instability, poverty, and limited access to healthcare and education. However, it is also a region of opportunity, with a young population, rich natural resources, and growing innovation in sectors like technology and entrepreneurship.

Sub-Saharan Africa plays an increasingly important role in global politics, economics, and culture, as the world recognizes its potential and challenges.

A study establishes the feasibility of conducting [neuroimaging](#) research in the SSA, demonstrates many known neuroimaging findings in probable Alzheimer's disease patients hold up using culturally appropriate memory [tasks](#), and suggest cardiovascular problems are a greater issue in SSA than in Western countries ¹⁾.

The College of Surgeons of East, Central, and Southern Africa ([COSECSA](#)) is a regional accrediting body for general and specialty surgical training programs that has recently expanded to include neurosurgery. As neurosurgical services expand in Sub-Saharan Africa, the structure of training and accreditation has become a vital issue.

Henderson et al. reviewed the founding and current structures of COSECSA neurosurgical [training](#), identifying accomplishments as well as challenges facing the expansion of [neurosurgical training](#) in this region.

The COSECSA model has succeeded in several countries to graduate qualified neurosurgeons, but challenges remain. Programs must balance the long duration of training required to promote surgical excellence against an overwhelming clinical need that seeks immediate solutions.

Harnessing global [collaboration](#), rapidly expanding local infrastructure, and a robust multi-national [training curriculum](#), COSECSA has emerged as a leader in the effort to train [neurosurgeons](#), and is anticipated to dramatically improve upon the markedly unmet need for neurosurgical care in Sub-Saharan [Africa](#) ²⁾.

The unmet need for neurosurgery in sub-Saharan Africa is staggering. Resolving this requires strategies that synergize salient local resources with tailored foreign help. This study is a trial of a twinning model adopted by the Swedish African Neurosurgical Collaboration (SANC).

A multi-step neurosurgical twinning technique, International Neurosurgical Twinning Modeled for Africa (INTIMA), developed through a collaboration between African and Swedish neurosurgical teams was adopted for a neurosurgical mission in March 2019. The pioneering steps are evaluated together with data of treated patients prospectively acquired using SPSS Chicago Inc., Version 23. Associations were analyzed using chi-square tests, while inferences were evaluated at 95% level of significance.

The SANC global neurosurgery mission targeted microsurgical brain tumor resection. Fifty-five patients were operated on during the mission and subsequent 3 months. Patients' ages ranged from 3 months to 69 years with a mean of 30.6 ± 2.1 years 95% CL. Seven cases were performed during the first mission, while 48 were performed after the mission. Compared to 3 months before SANC when only 9 brain tumors were resected, more tumors were resected ($n = 25$) within the 3 consecutive months from the mission ($X^2 = 14.2$, $DF = 1$, $P = 0.000$). Thirty-day mortality following tumor resection was also lower, $X^2 = 4.8$, $DF = 1$, $P = 0.028$.

Improvements in capacity and short-term outcome define our initial pioneering application of a neurosurgical twinning paradigm pioneered by SANC ³⁾.

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