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Country Information Library: Nigeria

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KEY INFORMATION: Oil revenue accounts for roughly 80% of government revenue, creating an economy that is highly vulnerable to global oil pricing. Nigeria is the third-richest country in Africa; however, government corruption, poor wealth distribution, and lack of infrastructure have led to staggering rates of poverty; over 70% of the population lives in absolute poverty. Since 2002, the North East of the country has seen sectarian violence by Boko Haram, an Islamist movement that seeks to abolish the secular system of government and establish Sharia law. A 2014 Ebola outbreak was contained relatively quickly compared to other countries in the West African region.

A visa is required to visit or transit Canada. As of October 23, 2013 Nigerian citizens are required to provide biometrics when applying for a visa.

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- The embedded microchip stores personal information and biometric data, preventing the duplication of documents.
- There are concerns regarding the number of lost e-passport claims – forming 90 percent of passport application rejections.

Identity card

- All citizens and legal residents, 16 years of age and older, may enrol for a National Identification Number (NIN).
- Enrolment for the NIN consists of recording an individual's demographic data and biometrics (ten fingerprints, picture, and signature). This data is cross-checked with the National Identity Database to confirm that there is no previous entry of the same data.
- Smart Identity Cards containing biometric enrollment data were introduced in October 2013.

▼ Civil documents

- **FLAG:** Both marriage and birth certificates are easy to fake and difficult to verify.

Birth certificates

- Birth certificates are often registered late and lack reliability as they are easily obtained with little or no verification.
- Prior to 2007, birth certificates were issued in black and white. Since 2007, they have been printed in color and contain a logo.
- Birth certificates are more common among people born after 1988, when the National Population Commission was established.

Marriage certificates

- Marriage certificates are easy to fake and difficult to verify.
- There is no minimum age of marriage established by the Nigerian Constitution; however, 23 of 36 states have adopted the Childs Rights Act (2003) which sets the age of marriage at 18 years old.
- Marriages take place under three legal systems: common law (statutory law), customary law, and Muslim personal law.

Divorce certificates

- Divorces are based on the same legal system of the marriage.
- Divorce is prohibited under most Christian denominations.
 - An annulment may be granted in lieu of a divorce.
 - Couples married under common law can petition for a divorce under the Matrimonial Causes Act.

Death certificates

- The process for obtaining a medical certificate of cause of death varies:
 - For deaths occurring after admittal to a health facility for 24 hours, the medical doctor who certified the death issues the certificate on behalf of the health facility.
 - All coroner cases undergo an autopsy by a pathologist who issues the death certificate on behalf of the Morbid Anatomy Department of the health facility where the autopsy was conducted.

▼ Notarized documents

- No information is available at this time.

▼ Police certificate

- For more information and examples of Police Certificate, please visit the [Police Certificate Image Library](#).

▼ Education documents

- There are two examination bodies that award secondary education certificates; both are verifiable online.
 - Senior School Certificate (SSC) by the West African Examination Council (WAEC).
 - The General Certificate of Education (GCE) is awarded by the National Examinations Council (NECO).

▼ Financial documents

- Financial documents are frequently targets for fraud.
- A significant number of misrepresentation findings in the TR caseload are based on submittal of fraudulent letters of financial sponsorship and bank statements.
- Bank statements are the most commonly detected fraudulent document as they are difficult to verify with a high degree of confidence.
- Three major types of fraud are seen:
 - Non-existent accounts.
 - Genuine accounts with altered entries.
 - Genuine accounts with genuine entries from applicants that have no legal access or have been submitted without the owner's knowledge.
- Each bank uses a unique format of bank statement. Formats are generally consistent within bank chains, regardless of branch. A fee is usually charged for their issuance.