

Introduction

This guide introduces a region of Africa that comprises the following countries: Angola, Burundi, Congo, Gabon, Rwanda and Zaïre. Together, they total a population of approximately 57 million and their surface area represents a little less than half of Canada.

This region possesses few modern social and physical infrastructures and is rich in natural resources such as forestry (Zaïre, Gabon, Congo, Angola), petroleum (Angola, Gabon, Congo), minerals (Zaïre, Angola, Gabon), etc. The development of these resources and infrastructures offers interesting commercial opportunities for Canadian exporters of goods and services. The population of these countries is young and dynamic and represents another important asset for this area.

The majority of these countries are going through a difficult economic period which limits their capacity for investments. Nevertheless, the petroleum and mining sectors represent good sources of private financing. Multilateral institutions such as the African Development Bank and the World Bank also finance many projects, particularly in communications, forestry, agriculture, energy and training.
