



People Groups: UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Photo: IFES

Currently 1,497 registered universities and tertiary institutions in Africa serve approximately five million students. In general, about 60 per cent of the African population identify as Christians and about 30 per cent as Muslims. The North and parts of West Africa have a higher Muslim-Christian ratio, while East, Central and Southern Africa are predominantly Christian. Among Christians there is wide diversity in fundamental beliefs among the Orthodox, Catholics, Evangelicals and Pentecostals.

Historically, the most effective approach to evangelism has been student-to-student, through individual and group initiatives. Students' initiative and commitment to evangelism and mission have resulted in encouraging growth in the number of Christians. Approaches include door-to-door evangelism, sports

evangelism, and distributing evangelistic tracts. And churches and para-church organisations offer their tailor-made student outreach programmes.

At a January 2017 IFES consultation, stakeholders, students and student ministry workers reported a growing tendency for students to be more enthusiastic about off-campus outreaches than about reaching fellow students. Because it is far easier and more effective for students to witness to their peers and do unhurried follow-up, this decreasing enthusiasm for peer evangelism is concerning. Another significant challenge is the infiltration of false doctrine, especially the prosperity gospel. Many students who consider themselves believers need to be tactfully engaged with the authentic gospel of Christ.

**Ranking Web of Universities, July 2017*

At a Glance

- Today 1,497 registered universities and tertiary institutions in Africa serve approximately five million students.
- Organised student ministry and non-denominational Christian Unions can be found in 48 out of 54 African countries.
- In English- and Portuguese-speaking Africa, the number of IFES students actively involved in Christian Unions has grown from 100,000 in 2008 to 185,000 in February 2017.
- The infiltration of false doctrine is a big challenge to student ministry.

Ask God To

- Inspire students and student workers with innovative ways to evangelise.
- Mobilise more student workers to match the increasing demand for higher education in Africa. Ask Him to equip them with practical skills and theological and intellectual knowledge, to effectively engage others.
- Move education stakeholders to make education affordable for all, as costs continue to soar. Pray particularly for students in Southern Africa, where dropout rates are high.
- Protect students in volatile countries where Christian gatherings are not permitted



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