

Literature searching and searching for facts

Marianne Andersson

Revised March 2014

Introduction

This chapter consists of two parts: literature searching and searching for facts and points out some key resources for the study of Africa. Part 1, literature searching, deals with bibliographies, journal indexes, databases, web portals and link collections. Part 2, searching for facts, presents encyclopaedias, yearbooks and other reference materials giving access to basic facts and fundamental information concerning particular countries or subjects. Both printed publications and digital resources will be analysed, mainly within the field of social sciences and humanities.¹

An extensive guide to many different categories of information sources is the publication *African Studies Companion Online* (Brill 2013). This resource is continually updated and contains over 1 800 entries covering websites, library collections, periodicals, organisations as well as subjects such as African languages, maps, film, media and more. Many entries directly link to the Internet. The online resource is available at the Nordic Africa Institute Library. *Selected Internet sources for the study of Africa* (Kagan 2011), is a reference guide with 182 entries. The listings are arranged by format and by subject or discipline. Both open access sources and fee-based sources are listed. Some more general guides for African studies can be found under the heading *Digital archives, web portals and link collections*.

Part 1 Literature searching

Bibliographies, article indexes and journal collections

Bibliographies

Presented below are current bibliographies issued at regular intervals, e.g. quarterly or as annual volumes. These collections usually include references to books and journal articles, and are generally arranged according to countries and

¹ The previous editions of this publication, *Studying Africa* (2011) and (2005), include references to older material.

subjects. By using bibliographies, it is easy to keep up to date with recently published literature. *Africa Bibliography* has published cumulative online and annual print volumes covering work on Africa since 1984. It lists details of monographs, chapters in books, periodical articles, pamphlets and digital materials in the social sciences, development studies, humanities and arts. A bibliographic article relating to a special topic is also included. To access the bibliography online a subscription is needed. It is accessible at the Nordic Africa Institute Library. *International African Bibliography (IAB)* provides a current awareness service of the latest books, articles and papers published internationally on Africa. Materials dealing with the African continent as a whole are indexed. *IAB* is published in four issues per year, print and online (licensed access). [GIGA dok-line Afrika](#) (Sub-Saharan Africa) and [GIGA dok-line Nahost](#) (Middle East and North Africa) are Internet-based current bibliographies produced since 2000 by GIGA Information Centre in Hamburg. Each issue is devoted to a special theme with annotated references in German and English to monographs, chapters in books, journal articles and free Internet sources. The journal *African Affairs* (3 issues per year) contains a bibliography of recently released African literature. It also provides a list of articles on Africa published in non-Africanist journals. The handbook series *Historical Dictionaries of Africa* provides an extensive bibliographic overview of the literature concerning the respective countries. Literature published in Africa is listed in the current *African Books Publishing Record* which is cumulated in *African Books in Print*.

Article indexes and journal collections

There are special journal indexes that exclusively list articles. African Studies Centre in Leiden releases a current publications index with the title [African Studies Abstracts Online](#). This index has been published since 1968, first in print and online from 2003. It provides a quarterly overview of journal articles and edited works on Africa in the field of the social sciences and humanities. All of the articles are annotated in either English or French. [Africana Periodical Literature](#), a shared database in AfricaBib, contains more than 169,700 references to articles on Africa from over 750 journals. There is a strong focus on journals published in Africa. More than 28 000 articles have a link to full text, and more than 69 000 articles have an abstract. The *Quarterly Index of African Periodical Literature* (1991–2011), previously maintained by the Library of Congress office in Nairobi, is now integrated into the *Africana Periodical Literature database*. [AJOL – African Journals OnLine](#) is an online service providing access to African-published research, and is increasing worldwide knowledge of indigenous scholarship. AJOL lists the table of contents of some [467](#) African-published, peer-reviewed scholarly journals from [31](#) countries. Some [130](#) journals contain downloadable full text articles.

The Sabinet [African Journal Archive](#) is a retrospective digitisation project of full-text journal articles published in Africa, in the sciences, social sciences and

humanities. Numerous references to journal articles, mainly in full text, can be found in [ilissAfrica](#) (presented below under the heading *Digital archives, web portals and link collections*). *SA Media* is a database containing more than 4 million newspaper and periodical articles within social sciences, politics, economics and more. It is searchable through keywords and topics with articles viewable as PDFs. The focus is mainly on southern Africa. *SA Media* is hosted by Sabinet in South Africa and accessible via Nordic Africa Institute Library. More journal indexes are presented on the Nordic Africa Institute's web page [Electronic journals and articles](#), and in the chapter [Periodicals](#).

Databases and library catalogues

Numerous types of databases dealing with literature can be found on the Internet and have nowadays more or less replaced bibliographies. *Reference databases* or *bibliographic databases* consist of references to books, reports, articles and conference contributions, etc. Information is given under each reference about the item's author, title, publisher and generally a summary abstract is included. *Full text databases* are sources that provide complete access online to the publication itself, besides giving bibliographic information. On the Nordic Africa Institute's website, there are links that point to the most important [databases](#) and [library catalogues](#).

Africa-specific databases

Only a few literature databases that concentrate on Africa exist. The largest of these by far is *Africa-Wide Information*, hosted by EBSCO and produced by NISC (National Inquiry Services Centre) in South Africa. Here the user is able to search simultaneously in 50 databases sourced from more than 20 special libraries in Africa, Europe and the USA. This collective database concentrates on the social sciences and humanities. At present it covers more than 4 million records, some with links to full text, to books, news articles, journal articles, grey literature and conference contributions, etc. A list of the databases included is available on [NISC's](#) website. *Africa-Wide Information* is a commercial database for which a subscription is required. In the Nordic countries it is accessible for users at the Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala University, and the University of Oslo

[Aluka Digital Library](#) is an international, collaborative initiative and consists of two databases, *African Cultural Heritage Sites and Landscapes* and *Struggles for Freedom in Southern Africa*. The *Aluka* collections consist of primary source materials of scholarly value from and about Africa. The database documenting the anti-apartheid movement in Southern Africa has resources in the form of images, books, periodicals, reports, personal papers, correspondence, UN documents, oral histories and more. Access to full text documents requires a subscription. *Aluka* is accessible at the Nordic Africa Institute Library.

[AfricaBib](#) is a collection of Africana social science titles and consists of two

bibliographic databases: *Africana Periodical Literature* and *African Women*. It also contains three bibliographies: *Women Travelers, Explorers and Missionaries to Africa*, *Islam in Contemporary Sub-Saharan Africa* and *Kenya Coast*. *AfricaBib* is hosted and produced by the African Studies Centre in Leiden.

Subject databases

One category of bibliographic database that cannot be ignored when searching for African literature is the commercial database, which is subject related. A subscription is necessary, although, as a rule, they can be accessed at university libraries and special libraries. They are run by subject experts and are generally of high standard. The emphasis is placed on journal articles and the references are nearly always provided with abstracts. Some examples of these databases are *Sociological Abstracts*, *ISI Web of Science*, *JSTOR*, *Anthropological Index Online*, *EconLit* and *ERIC*. The latter is also freely available on the Internet through the Institute of Educational Sciences, USDE [ERIC/IES](#). The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) produces the bibliographic database [Women in Politics](#), with references to books and journal articles dealing with women's participation in political life. The database has many options for customised searches in the search function. [The Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations \(NDLTD\)](#) provides access to theses and dissertations, mostly in full text. A list of subject-oriented databases of interest to African studies can be found at the end of this chapter. A selection of [databases](#) is available on the Nordic Africa Institute's website. Sometimes it may be of benefit to do a parallel search in a number of databases since, while many of them overlap regarding subject content, none of them provides complete coverage of its area of focus.

Library catalogues

It is also possible to search in individual library catalogues that function as a type of bibliographical database. Besides libraries that specialise in Africa, such as the [African Studies Centre](#) in Leiden, [SOAS](#) (School of Oriental and African Studies) in London and the [Nordic Africa Institute](#), it is also worth searching in the [WorldCat](#), covering major libraries worldwide, with 2 billion items. A list of [library catalogues](#) can be found on the Nordic Africa Institute's website.

Digital archives, web portals and link collections

Open Access publishing means that scholarly research findings are made freely available online, often in an open access repository. Other material besides research results may also be published. Approximately 3.6 % of the open archives are located in Africa, the majority of these in South Africa. There are services that list digital archives, and services that search archives and collect references and links to the publications in their own databases. Large archives have a disadvantage, however, in that Africa-oriented material easily disappears within the enormous flow of information that exists.

[OpenDOAR](#) – The Directory of Open Access Repositories and [ROAR](#) – The Registry of Open Access Repositories.

OpenDOAR and *ROAR* are directories of academic open access repositories around the world. The archives are listed geographically and include in-depth information on each repository. To search full text material a search service based on Google is provided. *OpenDOAR* is hosted at the University of Nottingham, UK and *ROAR* at the University of Southampton, UK.

[Connecting Africa](#)

Connecting Africa is a service that provides access to African research information and materials produced worldwide. It provides access to more than 40,000 publications from 90 repositories as well as information on some 1,350 Africa experts and on nearly 900 organisations. The service is provided by the Africa Studies Centre in Leiden, the Netherlands.

[ilissAfrica](#) – Internet Library sub-Saharan Africa

ilissAfrica is an Internet portal that offers integrated access to relevant scientific literature and digital information resources on Sub-Saharan Africa. The database on [Internet resources](#) has a collection of more than 5,000 websites, mostly from Africa. The websites are searchable and browseable according to region, country and subject area. Under the option '[Resource types](#)' the portal has good and detailed overviews of various full text resources e.g. organisations, web services, full text collections, periodicals, directories etc. The service is provided by the Africa Department at the University Library Johann Christian Senckenberg in Frankfurt, in cooperation with GIGA Information Centre Africa Library in Hamburg.

[ASKIA](#) – Access to Scientific and Socio-economic Knowledge in Africa

ASKIA is the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa's federated search portal for scientific and socio-economic information on Africa from several different sources - including open access literature, commercial databases, online journals, ECA publications etc.

[OAIster](#)

OAIster is a union catalogue of open access digital resources and contains links to more than 30 million records. Theses, reports, research papers, images, movies are types of resources included. The service is provided by OCLC and OAIster records are also fully accessible through the WorldCat.

[The Africa Desk](#)

A portal for Africanist scholars in the UK and Africa prepared by the British Academy and the African Studies Association of the UK .

[*Africa south of the Sahara: selected Internet resources*](#)

An annotated guide prepared by Karen Fung at Stanford University Libraries.

[*African Online Digital Library*](#)

A portal to multimedia collections about Africa built by the African Studies Center at Michigan State University.

[*African Studies Internet Portal*](#)

An Internet research portal produced by Africana Collections and Services at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

[*African Studies Internet Resources*](#)

A compilation of electronic bibliographic resources and research materials on Africa created by the African Studies Department of Columbia University Libraries.

[*Afrique francophone*](#)

A link collection focusing on francophone Africa compiled at Lehman College, CUNY.

[*A Guide to Africa on the Internet*](#)

A link collection with research-oriented Internet resources selected by the Nordic Africa Institute Library.

Part 2 Searching for facts

Part 2 of this chapter introduces yearbooks, encyclopaedias and other reference works giving access to basic facts and fundamental information concerning particular countries or subjects. In the Nordic Africa Institute library's link collection [*A Guide to Africa on the Internet*](#) a selection of good links can be found under the headings [*links sorted by country or region*](#) and [*links sorted by subjects*](#). The same applies to the various link collections previously mentioned in this chapter. An extensive guide to many different categories of information sources is the publication *African Studies Companion Online*. The publication is accessible at the Nordic Africa Institute Library. Suggestions on how to use the general Internet search engines when searching for specific factual information can be found in the chapter [*African information on the Internet*](#).

Country sources

A good way to begin a search would be to look for brief and basic information on the countries concerned in general reference works such as *Nationalencyklopedin Online* or *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*. These are generally available at public libraries. In addition, CIA [World Factbook](#) and BBC [Country Profiles](#) offer brief and up-to-date country information on the Internet. *Länder i fickformat* is a series of small booklets issued by the Swedish Institute of International Affairs. Each booklet deals with one or two countries and briefly discusses aspects such as their history, geography, politics, economics, people and culture. The series is also available as a database entitled [Landguiden](#), and is generally accessible online at public libraries. The database includes maps and statistical data and is updated regularly.

Political Handbook of the World is a yearbook focusing on political conditions. In this volume, a short background, together with information about the government, constitution and political parties of all the world's nations, is given. The wiki [Elections by country](#) and IFES' [ElectionGuide](#), available on the Internet, give insight into political parties, elections and electoral systems, and parliaments of all the world's nations. The [Inter-Parliamentary Union](#) (IPU) gives in-depth information on political conditions, and on issues such as women's participation in political life.

In *Country Reports*, published on a monthly or quarterly basis by The Economist Intelligence Unit, an up-to-date overview is given, chiefly of the economy, but also of the political situation within the country. For more information about the EIU, see the chapter [Periodicals](#).

Country information concentrating on specific topic or problem areas can be found on the websites of various organisations, such as [ELDIS](#) (development research), [Freedom House](#), [Human Rights Watch](#), [IRIN](#) (humanitarian news and analysis), [ReliefWeb](#) (humanitarian information on global crises and disasters), [UNICEF](#), [WHO](#), [OECD](#), [IMF](#) and [World Bank](#).

The Corporate Council on Africa in the USA issues the yearbook *Africa* which contains descriptions of countries, inter alia. With its handy format and affordable price, it is also suitable for smaller libraries. The same applies to the [Norwegian Council for Africa's](#) most useful yearbook, *Afrika-årbok*, which contains [country profiles](#) (only in Norwegian), amongst other information. The annual publication *Africa*, in the *World Today* series, provides information on all the countries of the African continent, including an overview of political and economic histories, current events, and emerging trends. Each country is examined under several categories such as basic facts, land and people, and more. In addition to country chapters, the book has essays on Africa's historical background and the colonial period.

Detailed country profiles appear in the yearbooks *Africa South of the Sahara* and *The Middle East and North Africa*. These include country overviews and introductions to geography, contemporary history and economy. These works

also feature statistical tables dealing with population, production, trade, national accounts, and more. Finally, there is a section with information about the country's constitution and government, its political parties and mass media, schools, transport, defence, and trade and industrial organisations. Development in North Africa can also be followed in [*L'Année du Maghreb*](#), while various aspects of development in the area surrounding the great lakes in Central Africa are discussed in [*L'Afrique des grand lacs*](#). The *Africa Yearbook: Politics, Economy and Society South of the Sahara* contains articles on all Sub-Saharan countries and each of the four sub-regions (West, Central, Eastern and Southern Africa). Detailed information about South Africa can be obtained in the official [*South Africa Yearbook*](#) and in a summary version [*Pocket guide to South Africa*](#). These publications are available in printed format and online via the South African government's website.

Africa-specific encyclopaedias also exist, with references to the various nations. *New Encyclopedia of Africa*, vol. 1–5 (Middleton & Miller 2008), for instance, contains fairly detailed country descriptions including many maps, while the *Encyclopedia of Africa*, vol. 1–2 (Appiah & Gates 2010) has short country information. *Africa A-Z: Continental and Country Profiles* (Esterhuysen 2013), has, in one volume, country surveys and general overviews. The general overviews deal with subjects such as geography, demography, ethnography, history and economics of the continent as a whole. The book, with maps and tables of facts, can be recommended for public or school libraries.

In addition to these publications, the handbook series *Historical Dictionaries of Africa* provides comprehensive information on countries, including a chronology and an extensive bibliography. These reference works tend to be fairly wide-ranging and therefore are not of interest solely to historians. Apart from historical events, entries have also been provided for ethnic groups, geographical names, individuals, organisations, etc.

News services

The most up-to-date information available on a country is to be found in printed or online newspapers and periodicals. A selection of these is introduced in the chapter [*Periodicals*](#). One example is *EIU's Country Reports*, which are excellent for following the economic and political development in a country. Keesing's record of world events (*Keesing's World News Archive*, subscription required), based on daily newspapers and other news sources throughout the world, is a current record of the progress of events both internationally and in individual countries. A corresponding synopsis of development on the African continent can be found in *Africa Research Bulletin*, which consists of a political and an economic series. These are issued monthly and have a detailed annual index. Up-to-date information can also be sought via the Internet through news services, such as [*AllAfrica*](#), [*Panapress*](#), [*Afrol News*](#), [*Newsfromafrica*](#), [*Al Jazeera Africa*](#) and [*BBC News Africa*](#). [*APO-Source: The African News Source*](#) is an online database for

Africa-related news releases. It offers free access to tens of thousands of Africa-related news releases themed by country, industry and subject. [Pambazuka News](#) is a weekly pan-African newsletter for social justice in Africa. The Norwegian Council for Africa publishes the newsletter [Africa News Update](#) twice weekly, which offers news, background and feature articles from African media. Other news agencies and national media can be reached, for example, via the Nordic Africa Institute's [A Guide to Africa on the Internet](#) under the headings [links sorted by subject / News and media](#) and [links sorted by country or region](#).

Subject related information

Reference works

The *New Encyclopedia of Africa*, vol. 1–5 (Middleton & Miller 2008), was mentioned in the previous section on country information. It also contains articles on different subject areas, and has a well laid-out index as well as a chronology. *The Encyclopedia of Africa*, vol. 1–2 (Appiah & Gates 2010), focuses on African history and culture with articles that cover prominent individuals, events, places, political movements, art forms, business and trade, religions, ethnic groups and organisations. The *Oxford Encyclopedia of African Thought*, vol. 1–2 (Irele and Jeyifo 2010), covers the intellectual tradition in Africa and the African diaspora. African philosophy, political theory, and religion are subjects covered, as well as significant historical individuals and social movements. The *Encyclopedia of South Africa* (Johnson & Jacobs 2011), covers South Africa's history, government and politics, law, society and culture, economy, demography, and more, from the earliest times to the present day.

Some examples of handbooks that relate to the history and culture of Africa are *A History of Sub-Saharan Africa* (Collins & Burns 2014), *History of Africa* (Shillington 2012), *A History of Modern Africa* (Reid 2012) *Africa Since Independence* (Nugent 2012) and *The Oxford Handbook of Modern African History* (Reid & Parker 2013). The book *Modern Middle East and North Africa: a History in Documents* (Clancy-Smith & Smith 2014) contains a mix of documents such as photographs, posters, diaries, diplomatic records, archival sources, and literary works. The *Cambridge History of South Africa*, vol. 1–2 (Hamilton and Mbenga 2010–2011) presents historical events, developments, and records of South Africa. [General History of Africa](#), a set of 8 volumes published 1981–1993, has been made freely available online by UNESCO. Volume 9 is forthcoming covering the recent history since the decolonisation, the end of Apartheid and the place of Africa in the world. The *Historical Dictionaries series* also publishes topical dictionaries, for example on women: *The A to Z of Women in Sub-Saharan Africa* (2010) and *Historical Dictionary of Women in the Middle East and North Africa* (2013).

The yearbooks *Africa South of the Sahara* and *The Middle East and North Africa* begin with background articles on the political and economic development in the area. The *Africa Yearbook: Politics, Economy and Society South of the*

Sahara covers major domestic political developments, the foreign policy and socio-economic trends in sub-Saharan Africa. It also has articles focusing on major cross-border developments and sub-regional organisations as well as continental developments and African-European relations. A detailed analysis of economic and social developments in Africa and worldwide can be found in annual reports from international and African organisations. Examples of these are [World Development Report](#) (World Bank), [Human Development Report](#) (UNDP), [African Development Report](#) (African Development Bank) and [Economic Report on Africa](#) (ECA). These organisations are also excellent sources for statistical information. Read more about this in the chapter titled [Statistics](#).

Regional and international organisations

In the yearbooks *Africa South of the Sahara* and *The Middle East and North Africa*, overviews are provided of UN and other international organisations' presence in Africa, as well as of regional African organisations, trade and industrial organisations, and trade unions. *Directory of African Organizations* (2014) provides an up-to-date and comprehensive reference to thousands of intergovernmental and international nongovernmental organisations active in nearly 60 African countries and territories. The [Non-governmental Organizations, NGO Database](#), developed by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA), is a database of civil society organisations active in Africa. The search function allows many combinations, including by region and country, organisation name, areas of expertise, language, and more. Examples of Internet-based lists of organisations are Columbia University Libraries' [International Organizations in Africa](#) and in the Nordic Africa Institute's [A Guide to Africa on the Internet](#) under the headings *Research Institutes, Universities and Organizations* as well as on the *ilissAfrica* website under the option [Resource types/Organizations](#).

Biographical information

The *Dictionary of African Biography*, vol. 1–6 (Akyeampong and Gates 2012), provides a comprehensive overview of African individuals, including philosophers, politicians, activists, entertainers, scholars, poets, scientists, religious figures, kings, and everyday people. *Biographical Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East and North Africa*, vol. 1–2 (Fischbach 2008), contains more than 300 profiles of contemporary leaders in the region. Indexes of subject, nationality and ethnicity are included. *An African Biographical Dictionary* (Brockman 2006) has more than 700 entries on current and historically famous personalities within various areas of activity. Biographical main entries are also included in *Historical Dictionaries of Africa* series and in the encyclopaedias already mentioned. Information about people of topical interest can be found in, inter alia, *Africa Research Bulletin* and *Afrique contemporaine*. On its website, Columbia University Libraries have compiled the list [African Biography on the Internet](#).

Ethnic groups and languages

Literature in the areas of language and ethnography are not currently included in *Studying Africa*. In this section only a small selection of reference works dealing with this extensive area are mentioned. The handbook *Ethnic Groups of Africa and the Middle East* (Shoup 2011) contains encyclopedic entries arranged alphabetically according to ethno-linguistic groups. [*Ethnologue: Languages of the World*](#) is issued by Summer Institute of Linguistics in the USA, in continually updated editions. It is available as a printed book and in a web version (the latest is the 17th edition, 2013). Here, one can search for [regions](#), [countries](#), particular [languages](#) or [language groups](#), or alternative language names. The online database [World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples](#) provides a country-by-country profile of the history and contemporary situation relating to minorities and indigenous peoples. It is published by Minority Rights Group and updated regularly. The directory also includes an integral database of organisations concerned with minorities, relevant publications and websites. Entries for ethnic groups are also included in *Historical Dictionaries of Africa* series and in the encyclopaedias already mentioned. Columbia University Libraries has compiled a list of [African Language Resources on the Internet](#)

References

- Africa* (annual). New Caanan: Business Books International for Corporate Council on Africa
- Africa (the World Today series)* (annual). Washington: Stryker-Post Publications
- [AfricaBib](#) Leiden: African Studies Centre
- Africa Bibliography* (annual) Edited by Terry A. Barringer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press in association with the International African Institute
- Africa South of the Sahara* (annual). London: Europa Publications
- Africa Research Bulletin*. Economic series (12 issues/year). Political series (12 issues/year). Exeter: Africa Research Ltd.
- Africa-Wide Information* Grahamstown: National Inquiry Services Centre
- Africa Yearbook: Politics, Economy and Society South of the Sahara* Leiden: Brill
- African Affairs* (3 issues/year). Oxford: Royal African Society.
- The African Book Publishing Record* (4 issues/year) Munich: K.G. Saur
- [African Development Report](#) (annual). Abidjan: African Development Bank
- [African Journal Archive](#) South Africa: Sabinet Gateway
- [African Studies Abstracts Online](#) 2003 – Leiden: African Studies Centre.
- Afrique contemporaine* (6 issues/year). Paris: La Documentation Française.
- [L'Afrique des grands lacs](#). Paris: Harmattan
- [AJOL](#) Grahamstown: AJOL
- Akyeampong, Emmanuel Kwaku, and Henry Louis Gates. *Dictionary of African Biography*. 6 vols. New York ; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- [Aluka Digital Library](#) Princeton, NJ: Aluka, ITHAKA/JSTOR

- [*L'Année du Maghreb*](#) (annual). Paris: Edition du CNRS.
- Appiah, Kwame Anthony and Henry Louis Gates Jr, eds. *Encyclopedia of Africa*. 2 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Brockman, Norbert C. *An African Biographical Dictionary*. 2. Ed. New York: Grey House Pub., 2007
- EIU Country Reports* (4 issues/year). London: Economist Intelligence Unit.
- Esterhuysen, Pieter, ed. *Africa A-Z: Continental and Country Profiles*. 3. ed. Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa, 2013
- Fischbach, Michael R., ed. *Biographical Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East and North Africa*. 2 vols. Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2008
- [*GIGA dok-line Afrika*](#) & [*GIGA dok-line Nabost*](#), Hamburg: GIGA Information Centre
- Hamilton, Carolyn and Bernard Mbenga, eds. *The Cambridge history of South Africa*. 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010
- Historical Dictionaries of Africa*. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press
- [*Human Development Report*](#) (annual). New York: United Nations Development Programme
- International African Bibliography* (4 issues/year) Compiled and edited by David Hall in association with the Library at School of Oriental and African Studies, London. Munich: De Gruyter Saur.
- Johnson, Krista and Sean Jacobs, eds. *Encyclopedia of South Africa*. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2011.
- Kagan, Alfred. "Selected internet sources for the study of Africa." *African Research and Documentation*, No. 117 (2011); 19–47.
- Keesing's Record of World Events*. London: Keesing's Worldwide LLC.
- Lewis, M. Paul et al., eds. [*Ethnologue: Languages of the World*](#). 17.ed. Dallas, Tex: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 2013.
- Lomer, Cécile, ed. *African Books in Print: An Index by Subject, Author and Title*. 6. ed. 2 vols. Munich, K.G. Saur, 2006
- Länder i fickformat*. Stockholm: Utrikespolitiska institutet.
- The Middle East and North Africa* (annual). London: Europa Publications
- Middleton, John & Joseph S. Miller, eds. *New Encyclopedia of Africa*. 5 vols. Detroit: Thomson/Gale, 2008
- [*Norwegian Council for Africa's Afrika-årbok*](#) (annual). Oslo: Fellesrådet for Afrika
- Political Handbook of the World* (annual). New York: McGraw-Hill
- [*Pocket Guide to South Africa*](#) (annual). Pretoria: Government Communication and Information System
- Sheldon, Kathleen. *A to Z of women in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2010.
- Shoup, John A., ed. *Ethnic Groups of Africa and the Middle East: an Encyclopedia*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2011
- [*South Africa Yearbook*](#) (annual). Pretoria: Government Communication and Information System.
- Studying Africa* ([2011](#)), ([2005](#)). Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.

Talhami, Ghada Hashem. *Historical dictionary of women in the Middle East and North Africa*. Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2013.

Wijntjes, Marie-José, ed. *African Studies Companion Online*. Brill Online
[World Development Report](#) (annual). Washington D.C.: World Bank.

Subject related databases

Some databases require a subscription, but are usually available at public libraries, and some are freely available.

Interdisciplinary

PAIS – Public Affairs Information Service, (ProQuest) 1915–

Anthropology

Anthropological Index Online, 1957– (EBSCO)

[AnthroSource](#) - American Anthropological Association

Theses and Dissertations

Dissertations & Theses (ProQuest)

[National ETD Portal](#) - ETDs produced in South Africa Freely available

[The Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations](#) Freely available

Library and information science

Library and Information Science Abstracts (LISA), 1969– (ProQuest)

[Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts \(LISTA\)](#) Freely available (EBSCO)

Environment

Environmental Sciences and Pollution Management, 1967– (ProQuest)

[GreenFILE](#) Freely available (EBSCO)

SCOPUS (Reed Elsevier)

Economics

EconLit, 1969– (EBSCO)

Geography, geology and related subjects

Geobase, 1980– (Elsevier)

History

Historical Abstracts, 1955– (EBSCO)

Humanities

Arts and Humanities Citation Index (ISI) (Thomson Scientific)

Art, design

ARTbibliographies Modern, 1974– (ProQuest)

Agriculture

[AGRICOLA Articles](#) Freely available (National Agricultural Library, USDA)

[AGRIS](#), 1975– Freely available (FAO)

CAB Abstracts 1973– (EBSCO)

Literature, language, linguistics

Linguistic bibliography 2010– (Brill)

Linguistics and Language Behaviour Abstracts, 1973– (ProQuest)

Literature Resource Center (Gale)

MLA International Bibliography (Modern Language Association), 1925– (ProQuest)

Medicine

African Healthline (includes several databases, available via *Africa-Wide Information*)

PubMed, 1950– (NLM)

Music

International Library of African Music (ILAM), 1900– (Available via *Africa-Wide Information*)

RILM Abstracts of Music Literature (Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale), 1967– (ProQuest)

Education, pedagogy

ERIC (Educational Resources Information Centre) 1966– (ProQuest)

[ERIC/IES](#) (Institute of Education Sciences, USDE) a free version of ERIC

Psychology

PsycINFO 1887– (EBSCO)

Religion

ATLA Religion Database 1949– (EBSCO)

Social sciences, gender studies

[African women](#), *AfricaBib*, 1986– Freely available

Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts, ASSIA, 1987– (ProQuest)

International Bibliography of the Social Sciences, IBBS, 1951– (ProQuest)

Sociological Abstracts, 1952– (ProQuest)

Social Sciences Citation Index (ISI) (Thomson Scientific)

Social Services Abstracts, 1979– (ProQuest)

Women in politics, Freely available
Women's Studies International, 1972- (ProQuest)

Political science

CIAO Columbia International Affairs Online 1981- (Columbia University Press)
Worldwide Political Science Abstracts, 1975- (ProQuest)

Web resources

AfricaBib – <http://www.africabib.org>
Africa Desk – <http://www.africadesk.ac.uk/>
Africa Journal Archive – <http://www.ajarchive.org/>
Africa south of the Sahara – <http://www.sul.stanford.edu/depts/ssrg/africa/guide.html>
African Biography on the Internet – http://library.columbia.edu/locations/global/virtual-libraries/african_studies/biographies.html
African Development Report – <http://www.afdb.org/en/documents/publications/african-development-report/>
African Online Digital Library – <http://www.aodl.org/>
African Studies Abstracts Online – <http://www.ascleiden.nl/Library/Abstracts/ASA-Online>
African Studies Centre – <http://www.ascleiden.nl/?q=content/asc-catalogue/>
African Studies Internet Portal – <http://uiuc.libguides.com/africa-research-links>
African Studies Internet Resources – http://library.columbia.edu/locations/global/virtual-libraries/african_studies.html
Afrol News – <http://www.afrol.com/>
AllAfrica – <http://allafrica.com/>
Afrique des grand lacs – <https://www.uantwerp.be/en/faculties/iob/research-and-service/centre-for-the-study/l-afrique-des-grands/>
Afrique francophone – <http://www.lehman.cuny.edu/deanhum/langlit/french/afrique.html>
AGRICOLA Articles – <http://agricola.nal.usda.gov/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?DB=local&PAGE=bbSearch>
AGRIS – <http://agris.fao.org/>
AJOL – <http://www.ajol.info>
Aluka Digital Library – <http://www.aluka.org/>
L'Année du Maghreb – <http://anneemaghreb.revues.org/>
AnthroSource – <http://www.anthrosources.net/AdvancedSearch.aspx>
ASKIA – <http://askia.uneca.org/>
BBC News – Africa – <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/africa/>
CIA World Factbook – <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>
CIAO – <https://www.ciaonet.org/>
Connecting Africa – <http://www.connecting-africa.net/>

Country Profiles (BBC) – http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country_profiles/default.stm
dok-line – <http://www.giga-hamburg.de/en/ic/bibliographies/dok-line>
ELDIS – <http://www.eldis.org/>
ElectionGuide – <http://www.electionguide.org/region.php?ID=1>
Election by country – http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elections_by_country
Ethnologue: Languages of the World – <http://www.ethnologue.com/>
ERIC/IES – <http://eric.ed.gov/>
GreenFILE – <http://www.greeninfoonline.com>
A Guide to Africa on the Internet – <http://www.nai.uu.se/library/resources/guidetoafrica/>
Freedom House – <http://freedomhouse.org/>
Human Development Report – <http://hdr.undp.org/en/global-reports>
ilissAfrica – <http://www.ilissafrika.de/en>
IMF – <http://www.imf.org/external/country/index.htm>
International Organizations on Africa – http://library.columbia.edu/locations/global/virtual-libraries/african_studies/intlorgs.html
Inter-Parliamentary Union – <http://www.ipu.org/>
IRIN – <http://www.irinnews.org/>
Landinformasjon – <http://www.afrika.no/Landinformasjon/index.html>
Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts – <http://www.libraryresearch.com>
The Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations – <http://thumper.vtls.com:6090/search/query?theme=NDLTD>
News from Africa – <http://www.newsfromafrica.org/newsfromafrica/index.html>
Nordic Africa Institute – <http://www.nai.uu.se>
OECD – <http://www.oecd.org/>
OAIsster – <http://www.oclc.org/oaister>
OpenDOAR – <http://www.opendoar.org/>
Panapress – www.panapress.com
Pocket Guide to South Africa – http://www.gcis.gov.za/resource_centre/sa_info/pocket-guide/index.html
ReliefWeb – <http://reliefweb.int/>
ROAR – <http://roar.eprints.org/>
SOAS – <http://www.soas.ac.uk/library/>
South Africa Yearbook – http://www.gcis.gov.za/resource_centre/sa_info/yearbook/index.html
UNICEF – <http://www.unicef.org>
WHO – <http://www.who.int/en>
Women in Politics – <http://www.ipu.org/bdf-e/BDFsearch.asp>
WorldCat – <http://www.worldcat.org/>
World Development Report – <http://econ.worldbank.org/wdr>
World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples – <http://www.minorityrights.org/directory>