

Beyond War & Hunger: Teaching what else is happening in Africa

Focus on what Africans (not foreign advisors, foreign NGOs are doing):

1. Students could choose peaceful, forward thinking countries from within the continent and investigate the question of what makes them successful in these areas. Countries that would fit in this category are Botswana, Ghana and Tanzania (which is poor but has a high level of peacefulness).
2. Students could learn the music as well as the movie industry and Nigeria. Nigeria is known as "Nollywood".
3. Students could learn about inter-religious peaceful relations in Tanzania: Tanzania has large Muslim and Christian populations who got along well.
4. Cell phones and how they are transforming communication across Africa, including commerce. Cell phones are used widely in somewhat differently in Africa than here. In Kenya and shortly in Tanzania as well you can bank by cell phone both with drawing and a positing money and send the money through your cell phone to, say, your wholesaler if you are a retailer.
5. Students could investigate Kenya's decision five years ago to make all primary education free. How much an enrollment change? What do parents still have to pay for? Are all kids now going to school? What percentage of the budget of the country is now spent on education and how much was spent before? How does this compare with how the United States spends its budget?
6. What are they coping strategies of families and governments, as they respond to a sudden enormous increase in the number and percentage of orphans? In Swaziland, there are some great Swazi-based programs for grandmothers who are raising their children's children. There is also a great film about it. In South Africa there has been an explosion of artists responding to the AIDS crisis and some stunning artwork has resulted. Along that line, students could also look at the variety of African educational outreach programs on AIDS.
7. Students could follow the various African countries that will be taking part in the World Cup in South Africa.