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Blessings in Africa: The Rise of Technology

When you think of Africa, you might be tempted to think of a country who is still living primarily in the age absent of the blessings that technology brings to the modern day – but this is not quite the reality of today. Now I know what you are thinking: “*Africa is not a country*” – and that would be a correct observation. However, for this brief informative read, I would like to treat Africa as a country because of all of the common infrastructural difficulties it faces, and then narrow in on a few of the actual countries in Africa as examples.

Firstly, if you have studied or heard about anything regarding Africa’s woes, you likely have heard about disease outbreaks, poor healthcare infrastructure, unsubstantial road and building development, unclean water supplies, shorter life expectancy and high child mortality rates due to malnutrition and disease, and the list goes on. Many of those claims are still true, but not nearly to the same extent as it was even one or two decades ago. In fact, since 1995, there has been a ten percent decrease in malnutrition in children, resulting in less sickness and death (Signé, Gurib-Fakim, 2019). It is important to note that many cases of such improvements come from technology.

For example, many countries in Africa do not have a strong and easily accessible banking system – in great part due to corrupt governments and lack of trust (Tachev, 2020). As a result, many people do not have banking accounts. Banking systems are what make commerce significantly easier because today’s online connectivity banking system is what drives down

transactional costs from time and other resources – thus, making it easier to buy and sell goods and services. A good example for such development in Africa is Kenya. Kenya has development a better internet connectivity status in more areas throughout the country, and also has taken advantage of developing online, mobile banking systems. They are the first country in Africa to develop such banking and boost their status to modern times with their mobile application called M-PESA, obtaining more than 8 million users who now have bank accounts and processing over \$2 billion in transactions (Tachev, 2020). Such a development through taking advantage of technology through banking is projected to add \$300 billion to the entire continent of Africa by 2025 (Tachev 2020).

Nonetheless, statistics such that only 65% of people in urban areas have access to electricity are not ideal, but with such a boom in technology in Africa assisting in developing its infrastructures, statistics as mentioned are projected to be turned around and hit 70% (800 million additional people with electricity access) in less than 20 years (African Development Bank Group, 2019). However, such lack of infrastructure can be explained a lot by the culture, and the climate. Africa is a very warm, abundant land, which influences the cultural and environmental norms in the area; perhaps if it were a lot colder, there would be more incentive to build such infrastructure more rapidly such as electricity. We do see, for instance, that air transport in Africa is a lot more developed and accounts for more than \$67.8 billion in GDP, while also supplying 6.7 million jobs (African Development Bank Group, 2019).

Overall, it appears that the technological growth and development in Africa will continue to help many countries improve their backbone. We already see many examples of such advancement, and with Africa being so rich in resources, one might expect the present day and future Africa to access high potential that has been awaiting access for a long time.

Works Cited

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