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Destination Africa: Is Africa Emerging As A Viable Outsourcing Destination?

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The unprecedented growth in the Global Sourcing of Technology, Business and Knowledge services has seen the emergence of multiple geographies and countries as provider of these services. As clients evaluate alternate service provider geographies, many African countries, with the advantage of a large young workforce and good linguistic capabilities are getting their act together to address this market shift.

Introduction

The unprecedented growth in the Global Sourcing of Technology-Business and Knowledge services has seen the emergence of multiple geographies and countries as provider of these services. While countries like India and China address more than 80% of the demand for global sourcing of services, regional clusters like those in Eastern Europe and Latin America have emerged. These locations provide certain advantages while servicing near-shore markets in Europe and US.

The ongoing economic downturn and rising cost of labor in countries like India, has prompted organizations in US and Europe, contemplating global outsourcing, to evaluate alternate service provider geographies. European companies, though relatively later to realize the benefits of outsourcing, have been pursuing an aggressive strategy over last few years. Many African countries, with the advantage of younger demographics and good English and French language skills, are realigning their focus to address this market shift. While South Africa has already established itself as a major outsourcing destination in the continent, many other African countries like Kenya, Ghana, Egypt, Mauritius, Tunisia and Morocco are also honing their respective Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) offerings to address the opportunity.

As per International Monetary Fund (IMF), the gross domestic product (GDP) of African region has been growing 5% to 6% annually, since 2001. In parallel, foreign direct investment into the region has shown significant growth since the turn of the century. Governments of number of countries with support by international organizations like the World Bank and The Commonwealth Business Council have been proactively working towards attracting investment into the IT & BPO sectors.

While development has been initiated to build supporting infrastructure, revamp government policies and to create an enabling ecosystem to ride the wave, negative perception of corrupt monarchies, civil wars and health hazards needs to be addressed through a concerted branding initiative.

While the softer side of selling the region is addressed by comprehensive branding, it is important to analyze the maturity of the countries within the region in order to make an objective assessment of the business risks in embarking upon the opportunity the region offers.

Regional Analysis

The global sourcing landscape in Africa can be broadly classified into two main regional hubs:

Northern Africa: The main countries involved in BPO services are - Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco; and

Sub-Saharan Africa: The leading countries for BPO services are South Africa, Ghana, Kenya and Mauritius

In general, The World Economic Forum’s Global Competitive Index ranks countries like Tunisia, South Africa and Mauritius favorably. In recent years, African countries are also ascending the list of competitive locations for global services.

In another example, AT Kearney in its 2007 Global Services Location Index ranks seven African nations in the top 50 destinations for outsourcing. These include Egypt, Mauritius, Tunisia, Ghana, South Africa, Morocco and Senegal.

Figure 1: Global Competitive Index Rankings for Select Economies

Source: Global Competitive Index 2008, World Economic Forum

Table 2: Global Services Location Index for select countries

Rank	Country	Financial Attractiveness	People and skills availability	Business Environment	Total Score
1	India	3.22	2.34	1.44	7.00
2	China	2.93	2.25	1.38	6.56
8	Philippines	3.26	1.23	1.26	5.75
13	Egypt	3.22	1.14	1.25	5.61
25	Mauritius	2.84	1.04	1.56	5.44
26	Tunisia	3.03	0.90	1.50	5.43
27	Ghana	3.27	0.90	1.25	5.42
31	South Africa	2.52	1.18	1.60	5.30
36	Morocco	2.92	0.90	1.33	5.14
39	Senegal	3.19	0.82	1.05	5.06

Source: AT Kearney 2007 Global Services Location Index

A deeper analysis of the IT & BPO landscape of selected countries throws light on their respective progress:

Egypt

Egypt leads the way in Northern Africa with many leading multinationals (MNCs) already selecting Egypt as one of the base locations in Africa. Among the primary benefits, Egypt boasts of a large multi-lingual workforce, good infrastructure, and competitive cost structure which, by some estimates, are 20 to 30 percent cheaper than India. Additionally, the country is ably supported by strong government will, policy initiatives and the presence of strong service provider incumbents. Of significant importance to MNCs, Egypt also presents a lucrative opportunity in terms of a sizeable domestic market local market for penetration opportunities. Lastly, Egypt's geographical proximity to Europe and Middle East markets are a definite logistical advantage.

Among service provider rationale for selecting Egypt as a global destination, IBM leverages the strong language skills by using its Egypt delivery center to service not only local but also French, German, Spanish and American clients, leveraging the strong linguistic capabilities present within the country. Egypt also ranks favorably in the WEF Global Competitiveness Index in areas such as low taxation, little time to start a business, wage flexibility and local market size. In consideration of some less endearing traits, Egypt has had some challenges in terms of maintaining its macro-economic environment with high fiscal deficits and inflation.

The government has invested in a Smart Village, a 600-acre ICT Business Park located 20 minutes from Cairo. The selection of Cairo as a strategic location is a prudent one, as Cairo has long been the hub of education not only for Egypt but also for the Arab world. Al-Azhar University, Cairo University and Ain Shams University are the three major universities. The government is also taking initiatives to build IT workforce capacity. One of those initiatives is a pact inked between the IT Institute of Cairo and NIIT of India in November 2006. Under the deal, NIIT will provide IT education programs to Cairo. Last year, Cairo University also signed a letter of intent with a Chinese educational delegation to set up a Confucius Institute to promote Chinese language and culture.

In spite of certain challenges, Egypt is making rapid strides as an outsourcing destination of choice. This has largely been possible due to strong government push with a target to reach over USD 1 billion in revenue from outsourcing services by 2010. Many multinationals including IBM, Wipro, Satyam, Vodafone, Teleperformance, Microsoft, SQS, Google and Orange Business Services have set up presence in Egypt to date.

Tunisia

Tunisia, with a size equivalent to the state of Georgia in the US, is one of the northernmost countries on the African continent. Its unique geographical location places it as a gateway to Europe, Africa and Middle East. This is likely one of the contributing reasons why Tunisia is one of the most competitive economies in the region as it compares favorably with developed economies in Europe and elsewhere. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Competitive Index, Tunisia is the top-most ranked country in the region. Ranked 36th, it is ahead of countries such as Italy, Portugal, India and South Africa to name a few.

In terms of the business climate, Tunisia offers a favorable and stable business environment, with transparent governmental policies. The country notes both a strong healthcare and educational infrastructure. To illustrate, public education is free and compulsory from six to sixteen years, with students learning three primary languages – Arabic, French and English. This contributes to the creation of a highly educated, multi-skilled, and multi-disciplinary workforce.

Tunisia's thriving economy has created an attractive atmosphere for global investors from European countries, Japan and the U.S. alike. Around 2,600 foreign firms have invested in the country and several note a choice of Tunisia for its close proximity and preferential trading relations with both the European Community and the Arab Maghreb Union. In addition, Tunisia is well regarded for its Investment Code which offers foreign investors considerable incentives and exemptions. Now home to companies such as Alcatel and Siemens, Tunisia has several example firms who leverage Tunisia's educated workforce to assist in competitive product development. In another example, Teleperformance, a leading call center, leverages Tunisia's linguistic expertise to serve French speaking customer markets. To company leadership the decision became increasingly clear; Tunisia offered 80% cost advantage over comparable European operations. Impressed with Tunisia's value proposition, Teleperformance has now grown its local operations to over 3,500 people.

Morocco

The Kingdom of Morocco in North Africa bordering the North Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea enjoys close proximity to Southern Europe, especially Spain and Portugal. It has had long history of Spanish and French rule and hence has strong cultural similarities in addition to the language capabilities. Its location coupled with strong government focus has led many firms to set up operations in the country.

Morocco's Information, Communications and Technology (ICT) industry was estimated to be around $ 700 million in annual revenues in 2007 employing around 41,000 personnel. Of those 41,000 personnel, roughly 185 call centers supporting both French and Spanish language employ approximately 17,000 personnel. The Moroccan government is taking active steps to support a disciplined financial regime with efforts to control inflation and fiscal spending. As a direct correlation of the ICT industry's sizing and supporting government policy, Morocco also provides a business friendly environment with relatively lower procedures and hence shorter time to start a business. In a traditional context, Morocco is aggressively removing barriers-to-entry that may preclude much needed investment for industry growth.

In addition to global firms such as Accenture, EDS (HP), Atos Origin and Tata Consultancy Services, Morocco also has a vibrant local collection of industry firms such as Atento, b2s and Atlas Online. Morocco is fast becoming a destination of choice for contact centers supporting European countries, and most specifically the French and Spanish speaking markets.

South Africa

South Africa is clearly the economic powerhouse of the African continent. An emerging domestic market, evolved business environment and good-quality infrastructure positions South Africa well in the global market place. A review of the South African value proposition notes relatively high R&D spending, infrastructure investment, strong industry-academia collaboration and an ecosystem which supports and protects intellectual property rights.

Several multinationals such as IBM, Accenture, Atos Origin and TCS have already set-up a sizeable presence in South Africa. These firms are servicing local and regional clients in addition to global clients in UK, Germany, Netherlands, Canada and US. Of similar note, Barclays, JP Morgan, Lufthansa, the Budget Group and STA Travel are a few of the multinational firms which have setup captive centers in the country. South Africa has a vibrant local supplier base with few players such as Dimension Data having gained considerable size. Among the local players, there is a growing trend towards regional expansion into other African nations.

Kenya

Kenya acts as a regional hub for trade and finance in East Africa. The World Bank' Global Competitive Index ranks it high on innovative capacity with high spending on research and development, and good scientific research institutions collaborating well with the business sector in research activities. It also scores well on the quality of education system ahead of countries such as India and Philippines. The economy is ably supported by evolved financial markets which provide easy access to capital for investment. Kenyan government has realized the potential of ICT within the context of national development and as a result, has set up the Kenya ICT Board supported by World Bank to help create and promote an enabling environment for technology businesses.

In other joint initiatives between the Government of Kenya and the World Bank, there are plans to launch the Kenya Transparency and Communication Infrastructure Project (KTCIP) through the efforts of the Kenya ICT Board. The overall objective of the KTCIP is to create an enabling legal, regulatory, connectivity and transparency environment which will lead to broader access to ICT's and better service delivery in the country.

It seems the strategy is bearing fruit, as entrepreneurs are coming forward and setting up local businesses. One such example is Kencall, now the largest call center in Kenya. It was set up in late 2004 and provides call center and data entry services to clients in US, UK and the local market as well.

Ghana

Ghana is one of the major economies in the Western Africa region. Known as the Gold Coast because of the abundance of natural resources, particularly gold; the Ghanaian economy has historically relied largely on industries central to natural resources and agriculture. The Government of Ghana has realized the potential of technology and has identified IT enabled services as one of the key areas to enhance economic growth and welfare of the county. As a result, the Government of Ghana has undertaken an ambitious initiative – eGhana. The eGhana initiative is ably supported by the World Bank Group and is currently implementing several programs to improve labor force skills as well as enabling infrastructure to support the ICT industry.

With its British past, Ghana provides a large workforce proficient in English making it suitable for providing call center and data entry services. To date, Affiliated Computer Services (ACS) operates a large delivery center with over 1,800 employees in the capital city of Accra. Other firms such as Rising Data Solutions and Global Response Ghana MG, Ltd have also been a fixture in the local ICT industry.

Table 3: Comparative Snapshot of African Outsourcing Destinations

	Egypt	Tunisia	Morocco	South Africa	Kenya	Mauritius	Ghana
Key Cities	Cairo	Tunis	Rabat, Casablanca	Johannesburg, Cape Town	Nairobi	Port Louis, Ebene Cyber City	Accra
Key companies present	Cisco, Google, IBM, Microsoft, Orange Business Services , Convergys, EDS, Xceed, Unisys	Teleperformance, IBM, Stream	Accenture, TCS, Atos Origin, EDS	IBM, Accenture, TCS, Atos Origin	Kencall	Accenture, Infosys, Ceridian, AXA, TNT, Orange	ACS
Processes currently offshored / potential	IT, Contact Center	R&D, Contact Center	IT, Contact Center	Contact Center, IT	Contact Center	Contact Center, IT, BPO	Contact Center, BPO
Languages	Arabic, English, French, German, Spanish	French, Arabic	French, Arabic	English	English	English, French	English

Comparative Analysis

A comparative analysis of the selected countries in Africa as compared to emerging outsourcing destinations in Eastern Europe, Latin America and Asia provides several interesting indicators. Primary analysis examined the locations based on certain high level criteria such as talent pool size and quality, government support, availability of basic public and technology infrastructure, cost advantages, language skills and presence of service provider incumbents. Observations indicate that African countries such as South Africa and Egypt compare very favorably on all parameters with their peers such as Poland, Vietnam, Costa Rica and Argentina. The initial African nations considered provide a large, qualified pool with strong infrastructure and government support. Other African nations such as Kenya and Ghana also provide access to a large talent pool; however, work needs to be done on improving the infrastructure to create parity with the more mature regional African players. Finally, remaining locations such as Tunisia, Mauritius and Morocco may exploit their significant multi-linguistic capabilities and other near-shore niche advantages to offset potential scale differentials relative to the competitive base in Africa.

Table 4: Comparative Analysis of Select Countries

	South Africa	Egypt	Poland	Vietnam	Costa Rica	Argentina
Talent Pool Availability	◑	◕	◑	◕	◔	◑
Skill Quality	◕	◕	◑	◑	●	◑
Governmental Support	◕	●	◔	◕	◑	◑
Infrastructure	●	◕	◑	◑	◑	◑
Cost Competitiveness	◑	◕	◔	◕	◑	◑
English Capability	●	◕	◑	◑	◑	◑
Incumbents Present	●	◕	◑	◕	◑	◑

Source: Avasant Research

SWOT Analysis for the African Region and Opportunities Offered

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
- Large talent pool - Multi-lingual workforce – English, French, German, Arabic etc - Near-shore location to Europe - Cost Competitive - Strong government support – Financial incentives, Positioning IT/ITES as focus areas - Emerging local market opportunities in e-governance, telecom and financial services	- Skill development and assessment - Challenges in business environment - Telecom Connectivity - Physical Infrastructure - Perception
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**
- Positioning as a suitable near-shore destination for Europe and Middle East - IT / ITES services focus would propel economies into a higher growth path and raise standard of living	- Eastern Europe and Latin American destinations are emerging as strong threats - Slow development of educational and training infrastructure would mean limited scalability

Vast Talent Availability

Second only to Asia, Africa provides access to a large pool of youthful workers. The continent in its entirety has a majority of its people in the less than 25 years age demographic. To illustrate, South Africa and Egypt are the leading nations, each contributing a labor force of over 20 million. Comprising a second tranche of sizing are Ghana, Kenya and Morocco, each with an available workforce at or around 11 million workers. These countries have traditionally been agrarian and natural resource-based economies and have since begun the evolution and transition to a global services-centric model. In this evolution, these countries are investing in skills development and enhancement to enable their vast young population to take up jobs in the growing services sector.

Table 5: Population and Labor Force

	Total Population	<14 years	15 – 64 years	Labor Force
Morocco	34,343,220	31%	64%	11.39 million (2007 est.)
South Africa	48,782,756	29%	66%	20.49 million (2007 est.)
Mauritius	1,274,189	23%	70%	574,000 (2007 est.)
Kenya	37,953,840	42%	55%	11.85 million (2005)
Ghana	23,382,848	38%	59%	11.29 million (2007 est.)
Egypt, Arab Rep.	81,713,520	32%	64%	22.1 million (2007 est.)
Tunisia	10,383,577	23%	70%	3.593 million (2007 est.)

Source: CIA Factbook 2008, July 2008 estimates

Language Capability

Due to Africa's history and strong linkages with a number of European nations, the African population is conversant in a number of European languages. Some of the languages utilized are English, French, German, Dutch, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese. Many nations such as Tunisia have French and English as compulsory languages in school in addition to the Arabic language. Other North African countries such as Morocco and Egypt also have a significant native Arabic-speaking population base and hence may be leveraged to support Middle Eastern countries.

For non-English speaking nations, a significant opportunity arises to tap into the linguistic expertise of the African workforce. As more European and Middle Eastern countries embrace the benefits of global sourcing, Africa may provide a significant and strategic value proposition.

Near-Shore Capability for Europe

Africa's geographical location positions it as a gateway to Europe and Middle East. It has a time-zone which mirrors most European countries and hence can provide support services without any night shift work, thus reducing cost and attrition issues which face other global sourcing destinations. In some cases, even US-based customers may benefit as service providers may tap into an African resource base as the work can be done in an evening shift as opposed to using a late-night shift in India.

Logistically, North African countries are a few hours away to major European business destination thus providing easy access.

Cost

As costs escalate in Asia, Africa provides a low cost alternative. It is estimated that the employee cost of a call centre operation within the African region may be at least 10 to 20 percent lower than a comparable offering in India. Though higher cost of telecommunication will likely offset some of this pricing advantage, lower attrition and demand pressures play favorably for African countries when compared to sourcing destinations such as India. In one nominal example, African nations due to their nascent stage in the global services industry have much lower attrition (estimated to be 5 to 10%) as compared to more mature peers. A lower attrition rate translates to lower cost of operating an African service delivery centre, as companies are able to effectively manage higher training costs associated with higher attrition rates.

Table 6: Entry level manpower costs

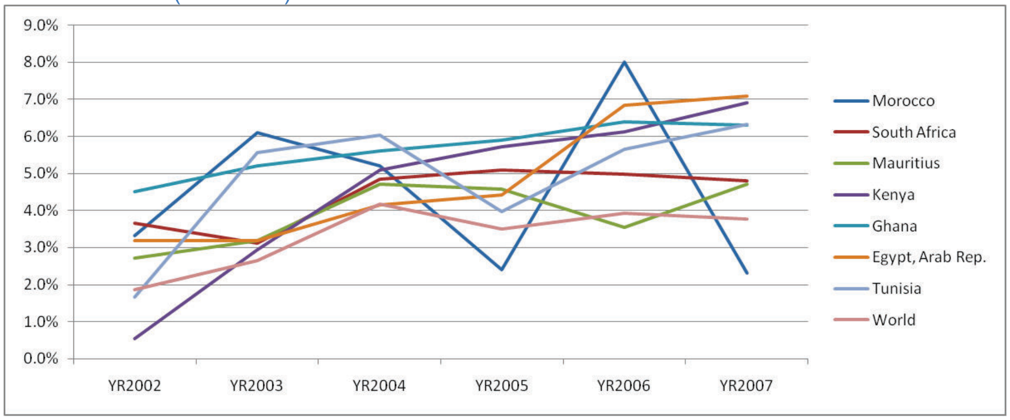
Country	Entry level manpower costs (USD per annum)
Tunisia	5400 to 6200
South Africa	15000 to 18000
Mauritius	4400 to 5200
Morocco	5500 to 6500
Egypt	4000 to 4800
Kenya	3900 to 4800
Ghana	4100 to 5000
India	4200 to 5000
China	4500 to 5500

Source: Industry Sources, Avasant Research

Local Market Access

African local markets have been growing in excess of 5 to 6% year on year, in some cases outperforming most global economies. The vast consumer populace of Africa is still largely untapped by many global firms. This provides a significant opportunity and market potential to penetrate a new global market to sell products and services. MNCs entering Africa can leverage the strong domestic demand as an engine for growth.

Table 7: GDP Growth Rate (Annual %)



Source: World Development Indicators 2008, World Bank Group

For IT and ITES companies specifically, many opportunities will arise as governments and institutions across Africa adopt technology in a greater way and look for modernizing their legacy systems. As an example, consider TCS. The firm recently set-up a service delivery center within Morocco and in addition, will work with the Central Depository of Morocco to build and deploy a modernized depository solution.

Risks and Challenges of Doing Business in the African Region

In spite of the unique value proposition offered by Africa, much needs to be done by national governments, to make their respective countries competitive within the global IT / BPO landscape. Quick and decisive action needs to be taken to position countries as strong alternatives to other global sourcing locations in Asia, Eastern Europe or Latin America. Some of the specific areas that need be given priority are:

Skill Development and Enhancement

Despite a large young population, there are significant challenges as the employable population is low. This is largely due to lower levels of education and relevant IT and business skills. Most countries have limited IT awareness and computer literacy among the population.

This is a high priority item for regional governments as they seek to transform to knowledge based services economies. The governments would need to make significant investments in developing and maintaining the education system – both formal and ongoing business and technical topics. Governments may also consider the support and development of specific training institutions which deliver ongoing support and targeted skills to the young population transitioning to the workforce.

A recent Global Competitive Report 2008-09, published by World Economic Forum, ranked the various African countries on Higher Education & Training as under:

Table 8: Higher Education & Training Rankings

Country	Rank – Higher Education & Training
Tunisia	27
South Africa	57
Mauritius	67
Morocco	90
Egypt	91
Kenya	86
Ghana	111
India	63
China	64

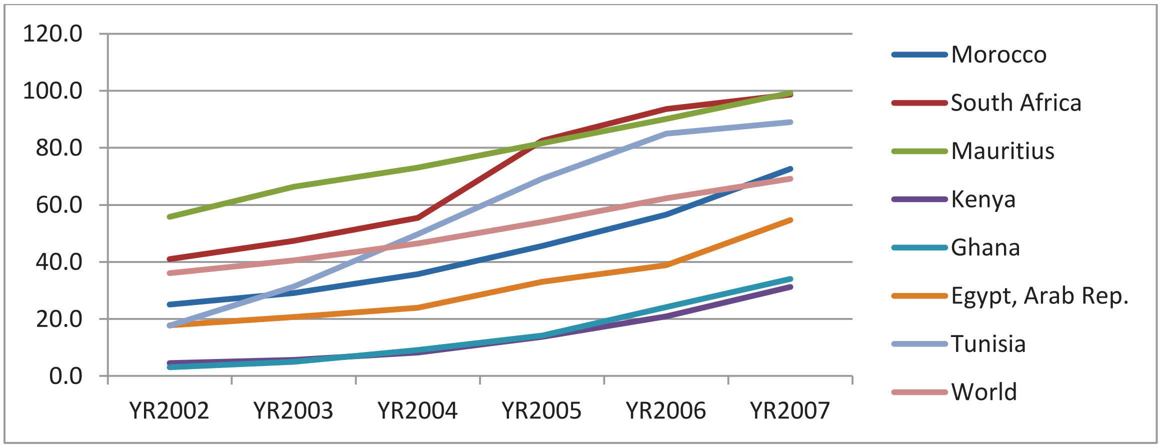
Source: Global Competitive Index 2008, World Economic Forum

It is interesting to note that both Tunisia and South Africa rank higher than India and China, the recognized leaders in outsourcing, on this criteria.

Telecom Infrastructure

A stable, reliable and redundant Internet broadband infrastructure is necessary for promoting ICT business in the region. Africa has witnessed rapid telecom development in the recent past and now is the first continent in the world where mobile telephony has outnumbered the fixed line network. This has been possible due to the significant reforms and initiatives that respective governments have and are currently undertaking. The regional governments have abolished several state-run monopolies and have allowed the entry of a number of private players. These catalysts have borne fruit as the number of phone subscribers have been increasingly steadily while the underlying costs of service provision have decreased. The number of Internet users has also been increasing within the region over recent years. However, the cost of telecom still remains very high and there is still scope for significant improvement in quality of service.

Table 9: Fixed line and mobile phone subscribers (per 100 people)



Source: World Development Indicators 2008, World Bank Group
Note: Yr 2007 growth for Mauritius has been assumed at 10%

Table 10: Internet users (per 100 people)

Country Name	YR2002	YR2003	YR2004	YR2005	YR2006	YR2007
Morocco	2.4	3.4	11.7	15.3	20.0	23.7
South Africa	6.9	7.2	7.6	7.7	7.8	8.3
Mauritius	10.3	12.3	19.5	24.1	25.5	26.9
Kenya	1.2	3.0	3.0	3.1	7.6	8.0
Ghana	0.8	1.2	1.7	1.8	2.7	2.8
Egypt, Arab Rep.	2.8	4.3	5.5	7.0	8.1	11.4
Tunisia	5.2	6.4	8.4	9.5	12.8	16.8
World	9.9	11.4	13.5	15.6	18.5	22.7

Source: World Development Indicators 2008, World Bank Group

Policy Frameworks and Regulatory Environment

Most African nations have traditionally relied on natural resources and agriculture as their main economic backbone. As the world has evolved, African nations have realized the importance and need of technology to boost their economic growth. Already, the services sector contributes to over 60% of GDP in countries like South Africa, Mauritius and Kenya. To foster continued development, African nations are now formulating policies that encourage development of local ICT industry. Such initiatives include setting up free trade zones, tax exemptions, and providing incentives for technology business operations, relocation or development.

Table 11: GDP Contribution by Sector

	Agriculture	Industry	Services
Morocco	14%	38%	48%
South Africa	3%	31%	66%
Mauritius	5%	25%	70%
Kenya	24%	17%	60%
Ghana	37%	25%	38%
Egypt, Arab Rep.	14%	38%	48%
Tunisia	12%	26%	63%

Source: CIA Factbook 2008, 2007 estimates; Ghana (2006 estimates.)

Governments have also realized need to provide a business friendly environment and ecosystem, for promoting investments. One such area where the governments have steadily improved is by reducing the regulatory overhead and timeline required to start a new business. African countries now compare favorably with other leading economies on this parameter. Additionally, governments have begun the process of promoting entrepreneurship and attracting African nationals abroad to return to set up local businesses and spur local employment.

Table 12: Time required to start a business (days)

	YR2003	YR2004	YR2005	YR2006	YR2007
Morocco	36	12	12	12	12
South Africa	38	38	35	35	31
Mauritius	-	-	46	46	7
Kenya	60	47	54	54	44
Ghana	85	85	81	81	42
Egypt, Arab Rep.	37	37	22	19	9
Tunisia	11	11	11	11	11
World	53	49	46	47	44

Source: World Development Indicators 2008, World Bank Group

In the next 3 to 5 years significant work needs to be done by government agencies, in conjunction with industry participants, to further market and brand themselves as locations of choice in the global outsourcing industry.

Physical Infrastructure

As governments push for greater foreign investments, much needs to be done to improve the quality of the overall infrastructure. There is a need for comprehensive development in improving the state of roads, air connectivity and transportation, hotels, utility infrastructure including electricity and water supply. The governments need to engage private sector participation to accelerate the development of this critical infrastructure.

Perception

Significant investments in terms of effort and finances need to be undertaken by African countries to brand and position themselves as a suitable alternative to other destinations in Eastern Europe and Latin America. The world still views Africa as a region marred by conflicts, corruption and health issues. The governments need to project the 'Changing Africa' while highlighting the development work done and political stability achieved, to change the world's perception.

The governments need to brand their respective cities as destinations of choice for providing global services. The governments need to set-up specific bodies and task-forces to deal with IT/ITES development and provide one-window opportunity to potential investors. These independent agencies would need to work with other players in the ecosystem such as investors, government departments, and entrepreneurs to develop strategies and marketing plans to attract investments. Many nations have already taken steps in this direction such as the South African Vanguard of Technology (SAVANT) and the Ghana Association of Software and IT Services Companies (GASSCOM). The onus is now on these agencies to take their initiatives yet further.

The Way Ahead

With the phenomenal growth in the global outsourcing market, a number of countries around the world are developing comprehensive strategies to rapidly position themselves as an attractive destination for IT & BPO services opportunities and market share. The timing of such efforts are prudent given that African Nations (among others) are emerging as a favorable outsourcing destinations – with an accompanying paradigm shift in traditional perceptions of Africa. Many African countries are pursuing a strategy to become an attractive *Outsourcing Destination with the slogan of achieving 'Economic Progress and Employment with Dignity for the Educated Population'.*

African countries are providing greater opportunities for clients and investors alike, by investing in improving infrastructure and making the overall business environment conducive to investment and long-term economic stability. Investors are finding considerable benefits from leveraging the vast multi-lingual talent pool, competitive cost structures, proximity to European and Middle East markets and the growing domestic markets. However, there is a need for a concentrated effort by regional governments to develop and enhance available skills, brand and position their respective countries, and put in place necessary incentives to boost further investment in the region. Each country needs to analyze their respective strengths and weaknesses and position their specific niche capabilities to potential investors. Taking help of external advisors will help the economies to avoid mistakes that some of the other countries have done in past, and enable them to effectively leapfrog into global arena.

About the author

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About Avasant

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