

THE SETBACKS OF AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT

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August 13th 2018

Abstract

This study thoroughly digs down to highlight and eventually discusses the syndrome of socio-economic development of Africa as a continent. Special review will be exercised on the limiting factors that hinder various governments in their activities in executing their duties and their inability to anticipate and respond to developmental challenges of changes in the socio-economic environment. Also the syndrome of leadership, management of resources, corruption, fight for power, education, brain-drain and the practice of democracy will be reviewed, which somewhat have impact on the growth of the economy in Africa. This study empirically suggest some ways in which leaders in the continent might adhere-to to improve the economy in one way or the other without impairment to the readiness to respond promptly to the economic challenges to change the catastrophic nature of the continent in terms of development. Different types of economic governance learning and their relationship to strategy formulation and implementation are described in this study.

Keywords: *socio-economic development, leadership, management, economy and government*

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By Kingsley Bamfo Boamah

1. Introduction

Africa has been endowed with numerous natural resources and it's really a diverse continent consisting of 54 independent countries. Despite all these natural deposits, Africa is still experiencing developmental setbacks which have resulted the continent as poorest amongst other continent on this planet. Africa's problems are as a result of many factors which have contributed to its current situation as being researched by many academic philosophers. Africa's reputation as a place to visit, work, and live around the world seems to be very low. The continent lack infrastructure, political instability, poor leadership and governance, corruption, selfishness, etc. with the boast of independence and democracy, meanwhile democracy is not a testified prerequisite for development.

People that work in remote places have said they can handle working in many places, but they find Africa the worst: the worst in personal security, the worst in terms of diseases, and the worst in terms of basic comforts (such as hotels, restaurants, shopping). As long as Africa stays dead poor, it loses a lot of talented people that migrate to western countries, which cannot see a future in Africa.

This paper underpins the research carried out on what has heckled the development of Africa. The research is focused on leadership and management of resources bestowed in the continent over decades. Relevant factors are presented to explore the linkage between the different issues raised and brief overview of the research work is detailed. The research findings highlight some of the eminent outcomes of the study. Finally, a summary is given on the findings and relevant remedy to the issues raised.

2. Limiting factors and method

There are many limiting factors to this study, for the fact that the continent is huge comprising of 54 countries. On the basis of measuring governance using performance indicators, secondary data collection was appropriately deployed in relation to aggregation methodology to evaluate the activities of member countries in the continent. This paper might not have covered every component on the issues for which this work was necessarily put together but the most pertinent factors that the researcher deemed necessary to highlight and the respective remedy proposed to policy makers.

3. Leadership and Governance

Leadership and Governance are closely related but also different. Different definitions and concepts of governance and leadership exist. Here, I adopt a rather operational meaning of both. While governance may be broadly defined as “the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised”, leadership itself is the act of exercising that authority.

Good leadership matters; that is Africa’s main problem today. Take that ‘magic pill’ and you will fix the problems in no-time. African people are the most hardworking and resilient people for a fact. There is the need for better representatives at the top. They don’t have to be perfect, just leaders who care and have passion for their people. African people don’t ask too much, just hope for today and excitement for the future.

Today, Europeans have little to do with Africa’s mediocrity. This is why any country that gets a good visionary leader or a series of good leaders for a consecutive 10–15 years or more, they improve fast and quite well. Botswana, Seychelles, Mauritius are good examples. A country like Rwanda is even a better example in this case. If Rwanda can do it, no country should have any excuse not even Somalia.

“We must understand that the time for babysitting is over and that we will never develop as we feel we have a never-ending need for Europeans, Americans, Asians, or other babysitters.” *President of Rwanda, Paul Kagame.*

From the beginning, Europeans never wanted Africans to be “independent” anyway. They fought hard to keep their stronghold with colonization. When they were forced to give in, they were probably surprised by the free pass they were given.

Today, they control Africa through the aid industry and unfair trade practices. By African working together, they would have developed themselves before waiting for what the Europeans have to say about them. For Sub-Saharan Africa, Ndulu and O’Connell (1999) (“Governance and Growth in Sub-Saharan Africa”: Journal of Economic Perspectives) suggest that a major explanation for Africa’s growth shortfall lies in the political economy literature. Governance models practiced in much of African nations are seen as the key explanatory variable for Africa’s underdevelopment.

Do you ever wonder why Africa has absolutely little say about their state of nations? Popular statements such as “**Africa, the dark continent in the 80’s**” or “**Africa is rising in early 2000’s**” are the West view of Africa and how things were going. What is the African’s view of their continent? We never hear those because they either don’t matter or they don’t exist. Middle income countries such as South Africa, Egypt, Kenya, Cote d’Ivoire, and many other countries have developed systems

of governments but fail to integrate the modern day managerial qualities to set the pace.

An empirical framework underpinned by Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi (2004: 2-4) construct six aggregate governance indicators motivated by its definition. Governance as traditions and institutions by which authority is exercised include: the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced; the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies; and the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them. Operationally, the six aggregate indicators of good governance are shown below;

SIX AGGREGATE INDICATORS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

(i) Voice and Accountability:

This includes a number of indicators measuring various aspects of the political process, civil liberties and political rights. They measure the extent to which citizens of a country are able to participate in the selection of governments, and also measure the independence of the media.

(ii) Political Stability and Absence of Violence

This combines many indicators measuring perceptions of the likelihood that the government in power will be destabilized or overthrown by possibly unconstitutional and/or violent means--- including domestic violence and terrorism. The higher the uncertainties faced by the political process the more likely the quality of governance is compromised.

(iii) Government Effectiveness

This measures the quality of public service provision, the quality of the bureaucracy, the competence of civil servants, the independence of the civil service from political pressures, and the credibility of the government's commitment to policies. Emphasis here is on 'inputs' required for the government to be able to produce and implement good policies and deliver public goods.

(iv) Regulatory Quality or Soundness of Policies

This focuses on the soundness of policies pursued by government. It measures the extent of market unfriendly policies such as price controls, inadequate bank supervision, regulatory burdens imposed on foreign trade (customs and ports regimes) and business development (cost of doing business), soundness of the macroeconomic policies (fiscal and monetary policies); etc.

(v) Rule of Law

Measures the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society.

The indicators here measure the success of a nation in developing an environment in which fair and predictable rules form the basis for economic and social interactions, and crucially, the extent to which property rights are protected. Indicators here include perceptions of the incidence of crime, the effectiveness and predictability of the judiciary, and the enforceability of contracts.

(vi) Control of Corruption

Indicators here measure perceptions of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as "capture" of the state by elites and private interests.

4. Education, tribalism, and corruption

Colonization left Africans feeling inferior to Europeans. After 70–100 years of domination, torture and brutal inhumane acts of violence and genocides, Africans thought that they were not as competitive as the Europeans. They have used it to their advantage for many years. They fragmented societies and made ethnic groups hate one

another till today. Is this their problems? Yes, during colonization but afterwards, it should have been Africans job to unite and notice that whatever differences we had, we were one people. Chair of the Ad Hoc (2011). Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa.

We should have set our differences aside and unite as a continent. The tribalism we have today, the identity politics, corruption and many other issues, Europeans have nothing or little to do with that. These are African issues and can only be solved when we own them, accept them, and be accountable. We might have started during colonization but it is our fault that we still have them today. Amir and Garti (1977). Situational and personal influence on attitude change following ethnic contact.

We have enough evidence in the world to prove that natural resources alone aren't a ticket to prosperity. In 1962 South Korea had the same GDP as Uganda and Ghana. The difference is South Korea as a result of Japanese occupations had a larger pool of skilled Human Resources from doctors, lawyers to human resource administrators unlike the African counterparts. So having a large number of illiterates in a society doesn't work in our favour even if they are to be used as slaves.

First forward to independence, we had no architects, no electrical or mechanical engineers to man the government establishments like the national power dams, and this absence of skilled people explains the collapse of public service in the years after independence. Even for countries that never had civil wars like Senegal or Tanzania saw a collapse of public service. The few elites they had were mostly lawyers of which most were into leadership positions. It's even interesting that the first medical doctor, in Uganda, was a trained medical assistant that had to be promoted to the rank of doctor simply because the national hospital had to be left under the leadership of an African. So around this time many Africans were taken to Europe on scholarship to study, the USSR even set up a university for this purpose and the later years it was people from these universities that returned and are currently heading universities and other institutions. This story is repeated for most African nations as revealed by African Centre for Economic Transformation (2016). Unemployment in Africa

So then what is the situation today? Aside from Zimbabwe, literacy levels in most African countries remain low at around 70% and as low as 40% in some areas. There is little innovation you can do with such a population. The ratio of skilled professionals like Doctors, engineers, teachers and even

lawyers, to the general population remains low.

So a poor quality Human Resource isn't worth much even in the presence of natural resources and this is why African countries are still underdeveloped. Higher education is presumed to equip African graduates with the required skills, but does not. The single cause of underdevelopment is the failure of university education to make African graduates perform managerial and entrepreneurial duties as well as expatriates, i.e. people from the West and the developed countries of Asia who make things work in these countries. The symptoms of this single cause include poverty, dependency, corruption, political instability, the violence of terrorism, and so on. Except for violence, the symptoms do not affect expatriates. Galtung (1969). *Violence, Peace, and Peace Research*.

Until the failure of university education is addressed in Africa, the symptoms are incurable. Uprisings, revolution or democratic elections in these countries do not address the failure of university education; neither have revenues from the export of raw materials, such as oil and gold. Billions of dollars from overseas spent on assistance programs, policy manoeuvres, and wars do not address the failure of university education neither does globalization.

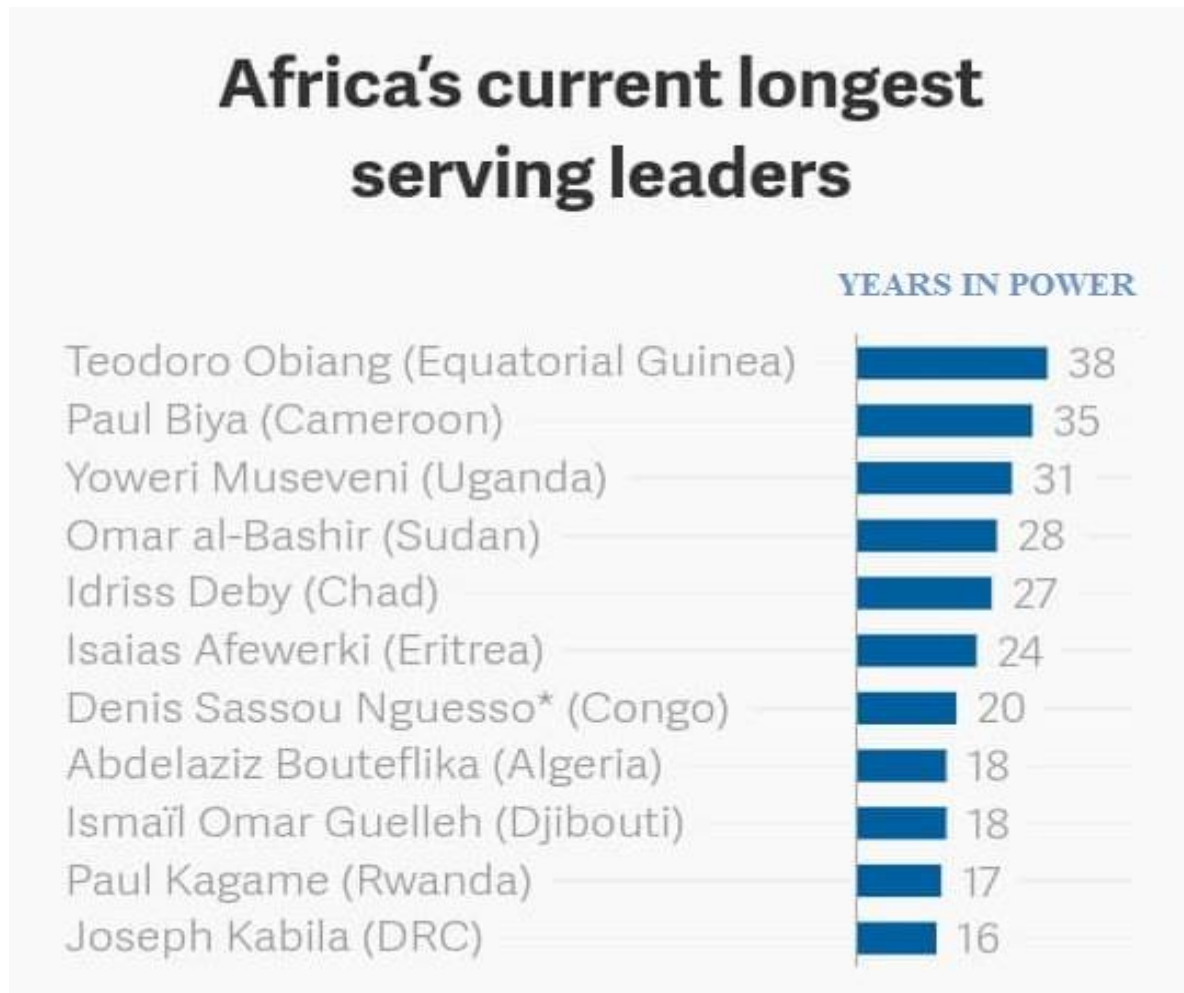
Without addressing the failure of university education in Africa, forums for expatriate management, development planning and efforts to diversify the economy are just recipes for disappointment. University education appears to work for the developed countries. So, if it does not work for the underdeveloped countries, then it is automatically assumed that something is wrong with the people of these countries or their culture. But education that does not work because of culture is still useless education. Education that has consistently failed to make development happen in Africa must be replaced or remade to adapt to Africans instead of demanding that Africans adapt to it.

Many incompetent and short-sighted African leaders fuel ethnic and tribal divides for personal gain. Such people in fear of losing elections, sight ethnicities and claim, ethnic A or tribe B is under represented so we should rise up against that. Africa has many ethnics, if we can't look beyond ethnicity and unite under a common cause; economic development will be a dream. Good enough though, such ideologies are less heard of in the younger generations. De Kadt (1979), stated that there's strong possibility that will wear off as everyone is affected by the economy of his/ her country so we'll eventually work together to changing values and attitudes.

Most African leaders hesitate to leave power because of corruption; leaders continue to disregard their countries' own constitutions and laws governing presidential tenure. Their refusal to step down at the appointed time flies in the face of several governance blueprints adopted as African countries shifted away from liberation politics to the new post-independence struggle for democracy in the early 2000s. The saddest part of the issue is that most of them are incompetent with dictatorship kind of

governance allowing them to raid the resources of their respective countries to invest in Europe and America to satisfy their selfish interest and personal gains.

The figure below shows long serving leaders in the continent;



Data: *CIA World Factbook, South Africa History Online*

5. Africa Intra trade

When Africa was liberating herself after the Second World War, many particularly in the west thought that Africa due to its huge amount of resource wealth would come out of poverty and industrialize in no time. Particularly, Ghana was thought to be in the lead because of its large deposit of aluminium which had favourable international prices in the years of its independence. Independent African countries were also pushed by Bretton Woods institutions to liberalize their economies which was really a battle of ideas between the Americans most of us know them as the school of Chicago, the new American power house for ideas and the British. Brenton et al (2012). De-fragmenting

Africa: Deepening Regional Trade Integration in Goods and Services lamented that, in the school of liberalization one of the core ideas is competitive advantage and comparative advantage in short, which states that trade only in the things that you are good at producing.

The problem that this brings about is the balance of payment which inevitably means that in most cases developing countries have to borrow, this keeps most African states in a rat race. Most of the commodities that they sell ie the minerals are always fluctuating in prices because of new discoveries or over production. Value addition locally is not profitable because of infrastructure problems, high electricity cost, unstable water supply and poor road networks that increase the cost of labour and cost of transporting the raw materials.

Now some of the successful economies back then, in Latin America, Southeast Asia and some parts of Africa implemented policies of Import Substitution Industrialization aimed at increasing the pace of industrialization. This meant protecting and promoting industries that were viewed as key to long term growth despite the fact that in the short run they weren't efficient and was costly to establish. The customers would pay more for mostly lower quality goods and services. Most countries in the beginning of ISI did very well in terms of growth but after some time due to access to smaller markets that they had and goods and services that weren't able to compete based on price in bigger markets meant that these policies ran out of steam.

The Southeast Asian dragons had unique positioning due to cold war circumstances and were able to access technology at reduced cost which helped them boost productivity and produce competitive goods and services. The politics of the time also allowed their products to enter the most developed markets which meant higher profits during a time of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) which had more favourable policies to developing countries when it came to trade and access to markets compared to the system that now operate under the World Trade Organisation.

Development needs huge investments, mineral deposits alone are not enough to fund development. American and Australian industrialization are among the few cases where industrialization was resource based. Some of the reasons it was successful was that it had access to a huge market, cheap labour and in some cases the labour was part of the capital and a well-developed idea of the kind of institutions they needed in order to develop mainly from their experiences some of them brought from Europe. However, for long term sustained development access, huge markets are required to fund for the development process. Tourism alone or with a combination of infant industries will never be able to fund economic development. The cost of building infrastructure, ensuring organization of the human capital and institutions to ensure that human labour is where it needs to be in terms of the right attitude, motivation and lovely things like innovation, these are far too costly to be funded just by tourism, cheap labour or mineral resources. Intervistas Consulting (2014). Transforming Intra-African

Air Connectivity.

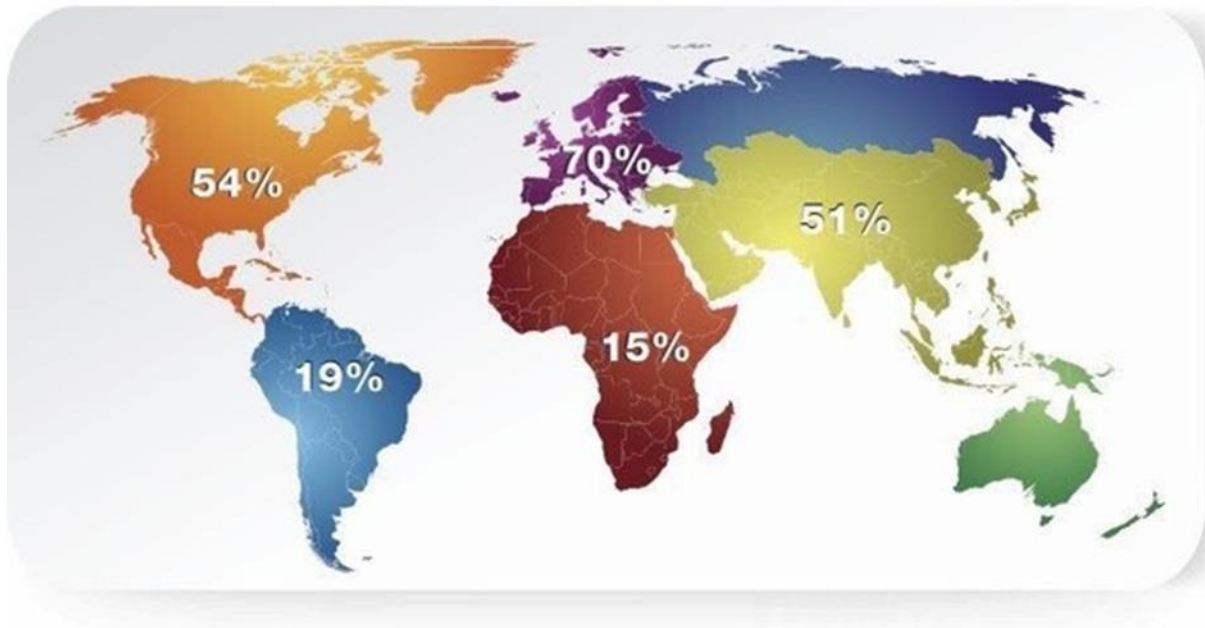
Currently most African economies are mineral resourced and agriculture based. South Africa whose performance is second to Nigeria on the continent (an oil resource based economy) is well known for producing diamond which is a 80 billion industry compared to that of Apple which is a 216 billion company. How many of us consume Apple goods and services and how many of us consume or wish to consume diamonds? On agriculture if incomes grow, we will definitely not see people consuming more food rather we will increase our utility more on industrial services and goods. So there is an eminent need to change our views and develop scholars of our own who will tailor-made our industrialization path and development.

The real reason why Africa still lags behind economically as a continent is because:

- We don't trade with one another.
- We don't think long term.
- We like to import things from Europe and China for no reasons. Importation of simple things such as vegetables, meat, etc. Africa is big. We have huge arable lands, good weather for harvesting twice every year, and others. It is a shame that hotels in Africa have no choice but to import chicken from America, butter from France, and fresh produce such as tomatoes and other vegetables. Nkuepo (2012). Reducing non-tariff barriers to trade in Africa.

The figure below shows intra trade relationship in all the continents in the world

Limited intra-African trade



If Africa had gotten rid of Europeans from the 1970's, countries would have no choice but to trade with one another developing their economies. Instead of exporting raw materials, we would have developed our industries to export finished products to favour balance of payment.

Today, it is a shame that Africans have to buy chocolates imported from Belgium, France, and Switzerland when 95% of all Cocoa production comes from Ivory Coast and Ghana.

It is a shame that Nigerians have shortage of fuel sometimes when they have one of the largest oil reserves in the world. This list can go on and on. One can talk about DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, and quite frankly majority of the countries. Again, if Africans had stopped bilateral relations with the West, we would have worked together to develop ourselves and our economies through trade, business, innovation and entrepreneurship. The same way those Asian countries such South Korea, China, and others did it.

There is absolutely no reason why we should have oil refineries in the Middle East when we can produce ours right here at home. Is it impossible that all these 10 or so countries cannot get together to create their own industries to make final products? Again, this is Africa's biggest problem. Not working together and thinking long term.

6. Brain drain

They are not desirable, neither from the perspective of Europe (this issue caused a political crisis in Europe), nor from the perspective of Africa. The migration is not voluntary, but is forced due to bad circumstances in Africa, where people have no economic prospect.

Africa's population is young and grows significantly. Even when the African economy is growing, it cannot keep up with the needs of the growing population, so people go somewhere else for economic opportunities.

According to International Organization for Migration (2015), formerly a lot of these people (most of them from south Sahel Africa) could migrate to Libya and find a job under reasonable favourable circumstances. Due to the political turbulence and the NATO intervention in Libya, Libya is since 2011 no longer a place where African migrants can find a job and stay, so a lot of these people move on to Europe. Parts of these 'rebels' which NATO supported were xenophobic and racists and indiscriminately targeted black Libyans and African migrants on the basis of the false accusation that Gadhafi had hired African mercenaries. They emptied a complete town inhabited by black Libyans (Tawergha) and a lot of black people were killed during this so-called 'revolution'. NATO has backed these genocides and racists militants and caused the political instability in Libya. African Development Bank (2011b). Impact of Libya's conflict on African economy.

So the migrant crisis is far the largest part of the problems created by Europe itself. Not only that, but African economy is plundered for more as 41 billion euros per year (the amount of capital that is earned in Africa by foreign companies, but exported out of Africa minus the amount Africa receives in the form of development aid). In the case of Libya - a country with no foreign debt but some 50 billion foreign assets and a large gold deposit in 2011) - a large part of those assets got plundered. The gold deposit which Libya acquired in order to start up an African golden dinar, was turned over to a British bank by the new Transitional Government that came in power by fiat of the imperialist nations (it was never 'elected by the Libyan people') during the turbulence in 2011. The whole Libyan uprising was thus a set-up in order to prevent Libya from carrying out their plan of introducing an African golden dinar under the pretext of 'protecting Libyan lives'. Libyan lives have not been protected by the NATO intervention, on the contrary, the intervention itself and the chaos that was created because of that had cost an enormous amount of human lives.

Fox and Simbanegavi (2016) in their research, Youth employment in sub-Saharan Africa stated that as long as Africa stays dead poor, Africa loses a lot of talented people that migrate to western countries, which cannot see a future in Africa.

Of course, the only way to resolve the migration issue is by economic development of Africa so that it can feed and house its growing population and provide them jobs, infrastructure and economic progress. African Development Bank (2011a). Enhancing capacity for youth employment in Africa. For that, large investments are necessary, but none of the imperialist nations invest in Africa. The only nation that invests in Africa is China that builds railroads, ports, roads, and other infrastructure in a lot of African nations.

7. Conclusion and recommendations

Development has long been recognised as a process of creative destruction, in which old ways of working are abandoned in favour of new and more productive activities, at the household, firm and societal levels. Africa today is in a very dynamic period in its history, driven by large-scale demographic shifts, rapid urbanisation, natural resource discoveries, changing global patterns of trade and investment and a changing climate. This dynamism creates both challenges and opportunities, making innovation imperative. Africa should blame themselves for the challenges the continent is facing which have high-jacked their development. I strongly believe in what the first president of Ghana Dr Kwame Nkrumah said in his days that “the black man is capable of managing his own affairs”. The time has come for African leaders, civil societies, organisations, businessmen and various unions in the continent to pull strings together to solve the poverty and other economic challenges.

I recommend through this article that African countries must reduce borrowing from the so-called development partners because excessive borrowing puts burden on the economy which impedes infrastructural development and human capital initiative. There should be improvement in fiscal and financial institutions, adequate attention on value for money and currency collapse which have increased the burden of repaying foreign currency debt.

Attracting foreign direct investment to sectors other than natural resources has been hard because of problems with the investment climate stemming from political and macroeconomic instability, electricity failures and weak infrastructure that also impede domestic private investment. In short, Africa must strengthen its foundations for long-run growth and development. At the same time, there is valid concern that African countries need to do much more to ensure that their abundant natural resource wealth is used to promote development.

The African Union must engage African leaders, with whom the ultimate responsibility for solving

the continent's problems resides. They must take the lead by improving governance, policy, and institutions, and fostering accountability to eradicate corrupt practices. A conscious effort should be made to strengthen state institutions that encourage the emergence of honest and exemplary leadership. The politics of the day needs major reforms. When politics is not driven by ideas, there is no incentive for men and women of vision and capacity to emerge. The political parties and the political process need fundamental reforms.

Sustained high and inclusive growth is essential for reducing poverty, infant mortality, disease, and malnutrition. If growth remains at the lower rates as recently experienced, the number of poor could reach 500 million. In either case, the international community's desire to "Eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere" by 2030, the first of the Sustainable Development Goals will not be met. There would be severe socioeconomic dislocation not only in Africa but globally, as the absence of employment opportunities at home for a young and poor population would have global spill overs. As Germany's Development Minister, Gerd Müller, noted in a November 2016 press conference, "If the youth of Africa can't find work or a future in their own countries, it won't be hundreds of thousands, but millions that will make their way to Europe." African leaders, businesses and organisations must do their optimum best to create jobs to retain young talents to foster development.

Africa should learn to trade among themselves. Ivory Coast and Ghana are the leading producers of cocoa in the world so there is no reason that these two countries cannot setup a factory to process their cocoa into finish products to dictate the pricing pace in the international market. It means developing products and business models that can succeed in the African context, and finding new ways to organise public institutions and deliver services at the regional, national and local levels.

There is a saying that religion is the opium of the masses. This couldn't be truer about Africa. Africans are so religious and they mostly practice their religion devoid of logic and intellectual reasoning. This explains why African religious leaders are the richest in the world. There must be systems to regulate and control religious leaders taking advantage of naïve African citizens to enrich themselves.

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