

Explore

Africa represents a market of nearly one billion people. Eighty per cent of Africans live in rural areas, many without access to what most of us consider basic amenities. Significant opportunities exist to improve African living standards and to boost economic growth:

- An estimated 497 million people in Africa need access to electricity. In a continent blessed with sunshine but plagued by vast distances, off-grid renewable energy technology could provide sustainable solutions for many communities
- 47% of Africa's energy use is sourced from biomass, much of which is inefficient and environmentally destructive. Simple yet ingenious products designed to improve efficiency are already being deployed on a small scale – but investment is needed for these to become more widely produced and sold
- 600 million potential customers are waiting for access to improved sanitation
- 36,920,000 hectares in Africa are suitable for irrigation but are not actually irrigated. With Africa dominated by rainfed agriculture, think how much additional food farmers could grow to feed their families, and still have enough left over to sell?
- The use of mobile telephones has grown exponentially. Yet 628 million Africans do not have a mobile telephone subscription. Does this mean that there is room for growth?
- Only 6% of Africans use the Internet, and just one in fifty owned a computer in 2005. That's a total of less than 19 million computers for an entire continent. In the same year, more than 21 million computers were owned by just one country in Europe : Italy, where 37 out of every 100 Italians owned a computer.

But how does the investor or entrepreneur know where to begin? With 53 countries to choose from, it is important to identify those countries that represent the best chance of success. Which countries appear to promise significant opportunity, but are compromised by an unstable political outlook or a dearth of social capital? The Star of Africa™ has been designed to shed light on these complex questions.