

Title: Africa's Growing Tech Hubs and Smart Cities

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Africa's information technology industry has been flexing its muscles - with fiber optic technology, smart applications and innovation hubs steadily beginning to take centre stage, as the drivers of Africa's economy gradually shift from natural resources toward human capital and innovation.

The number of technology hubs in Africa has increased by more than 40% within a year as demand for technology infrastructure continues to outpace supply of high tech workspace, incubation services, etc. on the continent. In the first half of 2019, Africa had 442 technology hubs and incubation centres (in 100 cities in 45 countries), according to the GSMA's Ecosystem Accelerator, a programme that facilitates partnerships between mobile service operators and developers in Africa and Asia.

The relative success of Africa's tech hubs has made a strong case for scaling up these mini tech hubs, highlighting the need for technology parks and smart cities. Governments and private groups in every major African economy plan to build technology parks to address the expanding demand for high tech work space, startup incubation, data centre and other tech and business services.

There's going to be an explosive growth in co-working spaces and smart communities across Africa in the coming decades as the youth population increases (Africa's population of one billion will double by 2050 according to the United Nations), income levels continue to grow, more young Africans acquire higher education and become more tech-savvy and entrepreneurial-minded.

Biography

Yaw Owusu founded Gateway Innovations to develop high impact technology parks in top-performing African economies. Mr. Owusu has appeared on CGTN (China), BBC (UK) and eNCA (South Africa) on the role of smart city innovations in developing African economies. He has also been featured in Forbes Afrique and Great Insights, an ECDPM/European business magazine. Owusu worked for General Electric and IBM Global Services in Washington, DC before joining Goldman Sachs in New York. He studied in the EMBA program at Columbia Business School, 2001-2002 and majored in Mathematics and Economics at Albright College, Reading, Pennsylvania. He earned a certificate in Planning, Developing and Managing Technology Parks in 2007 from the Shanghai International Business Incubator.

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