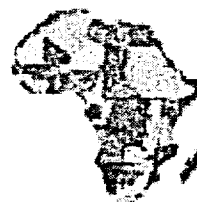


5. Africa 2015: Looking Ahead for Emerging Opportunities



Cutting Poverty in Half by 2015

The year 2015 has special meaning for many poorer countries. The United Nations has established 2015 as a target to accomplish some very challenging tasks: reducing by half the proportion of the global population living in dire poverty, halting and reversing the spread of AIDS, ensuring all children complete primary school, and eliminating the gender gap at all levels of education.

Many African countries have taken this project to heart, initiating plans like Ghana's "Vision 2020" that parallel these objectives at a national level. Within a decade or two, if current positive economic trends continue, parts of Africa will have experienced considerable growth and invested heavily in those sectors fundamental to sustainable development and poverty reduction. This means that certain exciting opportunities related to infrastructure, privatization, and utilities that are available today or in the next few years will no longer be open in a decade or so.

Looking ahead with an optimistic eye, sustainable peace in areas such as Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea-Ethiopia, and Sierra Leone will increase business opportunities tremendously. All three countries have the natural resources available to support economic development and diversification. With the end of conflict, refugees can be repatriated and emigrants may return, bringing with them skills and capital to help rebuild economies. Areas of instability across borders will disappear, and productive resources can be ploughed back into the economy instead of into military pursuits.

Consider this fact: Angola has maintained very strong economic growth even during the recent resumption of its civil war. If peace were to stick, this oil, diamond, and agriculturally rich country could become an economic powerhouse and breadbasket for the region. Canadian business has to remain alert to changes in the economic and political landscape of Africa over the next few years as conflicts decline and opportunities replace them.

Emerging Sectors for the Next Decade

1) Education - Social spending on education in Africa has been under fiscal pressure for many decades, but it is accepted that the development of human capital is crucial to ensure beneficial integration into the global economy. New initiatives related to increasing access to basic and technical education - especially via the application of new technologies - will provide opportunities for Canadian educational institutions, technology

The United Nations has set a goal of cutting poverty in half by 2015.