



The Open Web and Africa

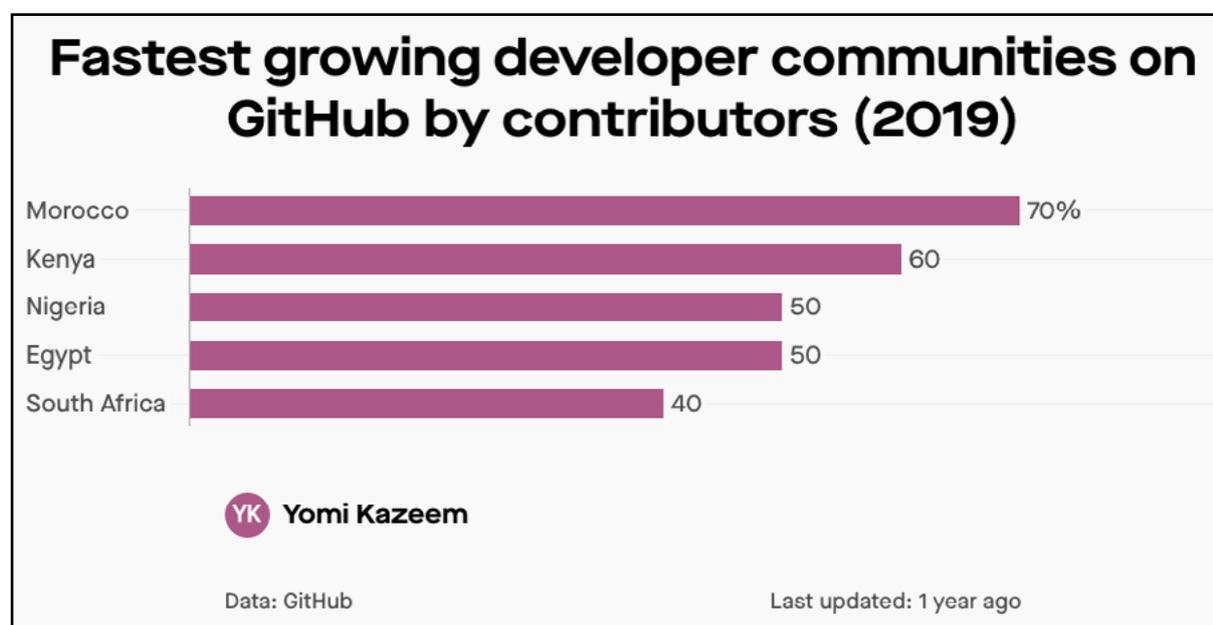
A Brief Overview

Regional studies, as a discipline, analyze the importance and opportunities of a certain area of the world in the context of its history, cultures, and identity. Africa as a continent, is quickly advancing as one of the most interesting and sought after regions of the world to study and learn about - especially when looking towards the future.

The Open Web as a concept, is a paradigm shift in the history of the internet and computing. It provides ample opportunities for companies, governments, entrepreneurs, and individuals to create more efficient, profitable, and inclusive digital systems across industries and use-cases. Generally speaking, the Open Web is characterized in vast contrast to our current digital infrastructure: It puts transparency first, embeds trust in code, and provides an environment for anyone and everyone to participate in.

Why Africa?

Africa has wholeheartedly embraced digitization as a means of creating more efficient, innovative and effective systems of governance and business. Concretely, this is evident from the data: Github recorded 40% more open-source repositories in Africa than any other continent globally (Kazeem 2019). Google Trend data in 2019, recorded the highest volume of Bitcoin searches in Africa, particularly Nigeria (Levine 2020). As Quartz reports, [“Africa is the World’s Fastest Growing Continent for Developers.”](#)



Source: [Quartz](#)

In parallel to its rapid digitization, Africa is also a home for changing regulatory structures that hope to embrace digital currencies, and innovative opportunities. Hotspots such as Kenya, South Africa and Nigeria are today’s frontrunners of cryptocurrency adoption, the most friendly and progressive regulators to the industry (Mule 2020). With Nigeria’s regulatory guidelines for crypto-based companies/start-ups, South Africa’s published policy paper on crypto regulation and Kenya’s newly digital tax, this suggest that African countries are setting themselves up to prepare and best possibly accommodate a future where cryptocurrencies are the norm (Mule 2020).

Even beyond regulation, the opportunity present in Africa at this time is arguable unsurpassed anywhere else in the world. As Tayo Akinemi writes in [Kinyungu Ventures excellent report on Startups in Africa](#):

“Many investors see massive, profitable opportunities in creating the backbones of African economies, which means investing in building blocks such as human capital, financial services, infrastructure, and real assets. Technology can be used to reach customers more cheaply and easily by defragmenting and organizing markets, reducing customer acquisition and distribution costs, and increasing efficiency. In other words, delivering products and services that fix market failures in largely uncontested markets can be a lucrative and effective opportunity.” (6)

How Can The Open Web Help African Digitization Initiatives?

Creating open-source software products that emphasize transparency, user-first benefits, and decentralization has a huge capacity to expedite African Digitization initiatives. Not only can the Open Web help create more efficient and equitable digital infrastructure - From sending and receiving money, to paying for solar energy, to tracking products from their point of origin - but it also has the potential to create new revenue streams for African companies keen on embracing a digital future.

As [Charles Hoskinson, CEO of the Cardano Foundation has stated](#), Africa and other developing economies are the primary users and beneficiaries of much of the Decentralized Financial infrastructure being built today. Not only is the user base expanding and eager for products that can provide new financial and social opportunities,

but the governments and leadership on the continent has also signalled an eagerness to embrace a digitized future with blockchain at its core.

Looking ahead, there are certain key themes relating to the Open Web and Digitization Initiatives that deserve their own conversations:

Topics to Discuss

The Open Web and the African Startup Scene: Opportunities for new financing strategies.

Infrastructure Focus: How Blockchain Can Help Africa Pioneer World-Class Infrastructure As The Region Innovates.

Banking the Unbanked: Crypto and the Future of African Finance

Development in Perspective: How Will Blockchain Change African Governance Over The Next 30 Years.

A Digital Culture: Mapping Open-Web Development Across Africa

What Are The Most Needed Open Web Solutions for Africa's Current State of Development?

NEAR

NEAR Protocol is a 3rd Generation Blockchain Platform built with scalability and usability in mind. The NEAR Ecosystem is home to a number of cutting edge projects in the crypto space that hold the promise of building the Open Web. Geographically diversified, NEAR features headquarters across 3 continents (USA, San Francisco; China, Shanghai; Switzerland, Zug). The NEAR Community, NEAR Guilds, and the NEAR Team are growing the NEAR Ecosystem to be a home for native crypto, enterprise blockchain, and emerging technology solutions around the world. Learn more about NEAR at [NEAR.org](https://near.org) or join the discussion on [Telegram](#).