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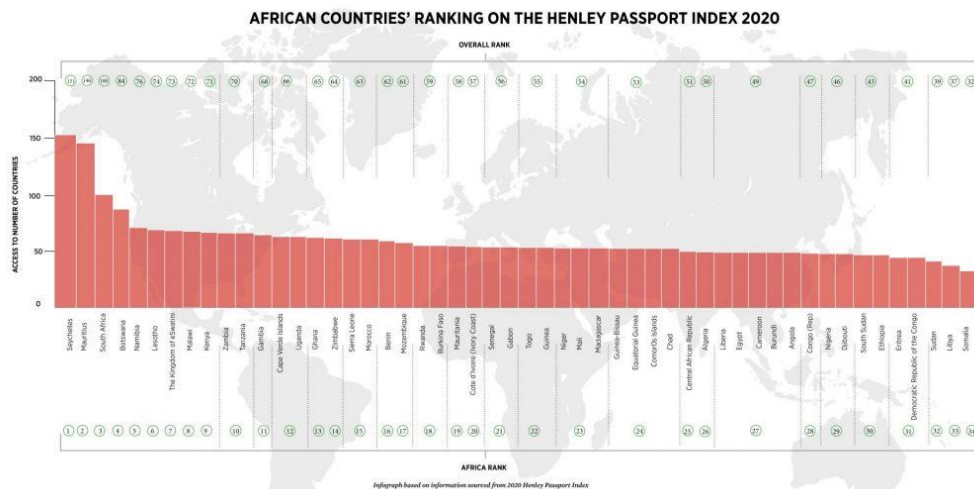
Emerging Economies, But Weaker Passports

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By Forbes Africa



Africa dominates the bottom of the rung in the 2020 Henley Passport Index. A majority of the continent's passport-holders don't have the luxury of visa-free travel around the world.



[To see the infographic on Africa's rankings, click on the image]

The African Union may be gearing for a common African passport, but for now, it seems like most African passports don't have what it takes to get to other parts of the world.

In the recently-released Henley Passport Index, which measures all the world's passports according to the number of destinations their holders can access without a prior visa, only two African countries – Seychelles and Mauritius — are in the top 50.

The rest of the continent dominates the bottom quarter of the rankings with weaker passports than most, pointing to difficult and intensive visa processes in most cases.

Africa's biggest economy and one of its most influential, Nigeria, is at the end of the travel freedom spectrum, at a pitiful number 95 with Djibouti. Nigeria's population of 200 million can only travel to 46 countries without obtaining a visa in advance.

Even passport-holders from Samoa and Serbia have a better chance of traveling to most places in the world, visa-free, than those in South Africa, the African continent's second biggest economy.

Ranked 56, the number of global destinations South African passport-holders can travel to is 100.

It is followed by its southern African neighbor, Botswana, ranking at 62 with a score of 84.

Seychelles, the archipelago country in the Indian Ocean, is Africa's top-ranking African passport in this regard, at 29 with access to 151 destinations worldwide.

It is quickly followed by Mauritius which is at 32 with a score of 146 destinations passport-holders of this country can visit.

The lowest-ranking African country is Somalia at 104. Passport-holders from this tiny nation in the Horn of Africa can only visit 32 countries without a pre-departure visa

Globally, Asia dominates the list. For the third consecutive year, Japan has secured the top spot on the index — which is based on exclusive data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA) — with a visa-free/visa-on-arrival score of 191. Singapore holds on to its second place position with a score of 190.