

Vaccine rollout critical in allowing African countries to fully reopen, restore confidence in travel

According to the *Africa Travel Recovery, Opportunity & Risks Research Brief*, by Tourism Economics, an Oxford Economics Company, Africa's travel recovery will be fueled by substantial pent-up demand.



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Lockdown restrictions have suppressed a significant amount of demand, especially for leisure travel, and the easing of restrictions and continued vaccine progress will be essential to realise this latent travel demand, the report states.

While a more youthful population has minimised the impact of the health crisis in Africa, there are concerns regarding the region's access to vaccines. However, the Covax initiative has helped alleviate these anxieties by providing and campaigning for a more equitable distribution of vaccines.

Domestic tourism to support industry survival in the short-term

While we wait for a return of international visitor arrivals, stymied by renewed coronavirus outbreaks and the emergence of 501Y.V2, first reported in South Africa, a strong domestic market and an uplift in short-haul travel will support the travel industry in the near term, adds the report.

According to the report, domestic travel is set to account for 73% of total arrivals in 2021 – up from 55% in 2019. Reduced

travel appetite for far-away travel will increase the short-haul share of international arrivals in 2021 to support markets that have been traditionally more dependent on longer-haul markets.

Lastly, continued infrastructure improvements targeted tourism support and concentrated digital marketing campaigns could help stimulate future tourism growth. Infrastructure improvements and better use of digital platforms could help increase destination competitiveness. This could add to lingering demand for less-crowded destinations with outdoor activities and attractions, which will also be fuelled by a rise in more sustainable travel.

"While we grapple with the ever-changing environment, this Tourism Economics Report, compiled exclusively for Africa Travel Week, shines a positive spotlight on the potential for tourism to Africa. Our role as Africa Travel Week is to keep the interest in travel to Africa burning by providing a dynamic platform for stakeholders to reconnect as we work together at Making Travel Happen Again," says Megan Oberholzer, portfolio director: Travel, tourism and creative industries at Reed Exhibitions Africa.

[Access the full Tourism Economics Report here.](#)

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