STYLIZED FACTS ON POVERTY PROFILE AND QUALITY OF LIFE IN AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

Poverty reduction has attracted growing concern in the international development community. The World Bank (1990) and the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals declarations are demonstrations of this. A key goal in each of the declarations is to eliminate world poverty. All member countries signed on to the declarations.

Over the decades, policies have been implemented by governments in Africa, like those of Asia and Latin America, within the context of the declarations. A review of performance on relevant indicators shows that poverty and quality of life profiles are poorer in Africa than in Asia and Latin America.

There is therefore the need for African countries to demonstrate greater commitment to judicious provision of public resources to enhance attainment of the stated goals. As Africa's population is the youngest among all the continents, unless determined efforts are made by African governments to create opportunities for youth employment and improve access to quality education and health care as well as credit to small and medium size enterprises, the limited success recorded on poverty reduction and improvement in quality of life may be short-lived.

JEL classification: I31, I32, O55

1. Introduction

Poverty reduction has attracted growing concern from the international development community in the past four decades. The World Bank (1990)

launched its concern in its World Development Report 1990, which was dedicated to poverty. This was to be followed by series of studies on poverty in various nations. A decade later, the United Nations launched its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2000 – 2015 in which Goal 1 sought to halve world poverty and hunger by year 2015. At the end of the timeline, it launched the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2016 – 2030. Goal 1 seeks to eliminate world poverty and Goal 2 to eliminate world hunger by 2030.

Considering that improving the welfare of citizens is the raison d'être of governance, it is not surprising that countries, particularly developing ones, all signed on to the declarations. Over the decades, policies have been implemented by governments of Africa within the context of these declarations aimed at reducing or eliminating poverty and improving the welfare of their citizens. What has been the outcome of these policies? This paper presents some evidence on these.

This paper is structured into six sections. Following this introduction, section 2 discusses defining and measuring poverty. Section 3 discusses defining and measuring quality of life. Section 4 presents stylized facts on poverty in Africa and section 5 presents stylized facts on quality of life in Africa. Section 6 concludes the paper.

2.   Defining and Measuring Poverty

Poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon and there are, therefore, a wide variety of approaches to its definition and measurement, and its nexus with quality of life.

For some time, poverty was defined, in its absolute sense, as the inability of individuals to earn income sufficient to meet their basic needs of food, clothing and housing. This is the money-metric approach to conceptualizing poverty (Foster, Greer & Thorbeck 1984, Ravallion and Huppi 1991, Aigbokhan 2000).

Money-metric measures of poverty have some limitations. For example, they fail to capture other important aspects of individuals' wellbeing such as social relations, security, culture, community resources and natural resources. A recognition of this influenced the search for alternative measures which capture, for example, human capabilities, freedom and dignity (Sen, 1985, 1992). Capability poverty captures an individual's ability to live a healthy life, being

informed and knowledgeable, enjoy personal security and being able to participate freely in society. Capability poverty can be measured directly in terms of the capabilities themselves, for example, the percentage of children who are underweight, or indirectly in terms of access to opportunities or means of capabilities such as access to education and other services. Capability poverty measures, thus, incorporate access to public services, assets, and employment as well as money-metric measures which reflect the ability to purchase needs.

Baulch (1996, in Falkingham and Namazie 2002, p.15) described the progressive broadening of what is considered to constitute poverty and derived a "pyramid of poverty concepts".
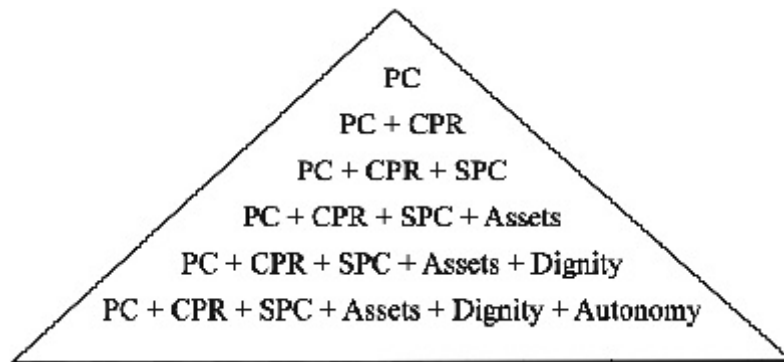

Figure 1. Pyramid of poverty concepts.

Source: Baulch (1996), quoted in Falkingham and Namazie, 2002, p.15.

Notes: PC – private consumption, CPR – common property resources,

SPC – state-provided commodities

Though the broadening of the definition of poverty gives a more insightful understanding of the nature of poverty, it is more difficult to operationalize. It is difficult to quantify a number of concepts that have been introduced by the capabilities approach to defining poverty. As a result, economists have tended to focus on the narrower conception of poverty, i.e. material poverty.

In measuring poverty, two main approaches are used, relative poverty measure and absolute poverty measure. The former defines the poverty line in relation to a generally accepted standard of living, typically one-third of the national per capita or average income. The latter, as already alluded to above, involves estimating the cost of a basket of goods that contains the quantities of

commodities sufficient to ensure that basic consumption is met. Allowance is made for non-food basic needs.

For the purpose of international comparisons, the international poverty line has been defined. Starting with $1 per day, it was raised to $1.25 per day, and it is currently $1.90 per day. International poverty lines have their limitations that need to be borne in mind when interpreting or making cross-country comparisons. First, there are differences in determining nutritional requirements across countries that may mean that the cost of a basket may not be comparable. Second, international poverty lines reflect purchasing power parity (PPP) dollars rather than actual dollars. Given the difficulties in estimating comparable prices when markets are not fully developed, absolute poverty rates based on PPP dollar lines would need to be seen as useful only for broad comparative analysis but not for in-depth within-country analysis. National poverty lines are more useful in this case. In section 4, available data is used to profile poverty in Africa.

3. Defining and Measuring Quality of Life

Quality of Life (QoL) is defined as a concept of economic, social and physical well-being. The concept broadly encompasses how an individual measures the "goodness" of or satisfaction with multiple aspects of their life.

Factors that improve quality of life, from the economist's perspective, are education, health, access to water, and access to labour market opportunities. However, as interest in research on quality of life has blossomed in the past three decades, more factors have been identified. Ruzevicius (2014) identified six domains of quality of life, viz:

    i.   Material state – welfare, living conditions, economic quality, average income, purchasing power, work and recreation conditions.

    ii.   Physical state – health, nourishment, stamina, workload

    iii.   Psychological state – values, emotions, attitudes, self-esteem, job satisfaction, moral and psychological climate within the family/organization/community and nation.

    iv.   Education and self-development – education quality, skills, learning, application of knowledge

    v.   Social relations – relationship with family, people, society, support.

vi.   Self-expression possibilities – physical personal security (body, legal, social), work environment, economic, political, judicial environment

Figure 2 shows the domains and their components, and how they relate to each other.

Figure 2. Quality of Life Model.

Source: Ruzevicus, 2014, p. 322

QoL can be measured directly by counting the physical variables and indirectly by the use of questionnaires to obtain answers on individuals' perception of the state of their well-being. With the many domains of QoL, there are variants to the approaches to measuring it, depending on the perspective of

the proponent (economics, sociology, psychology, political science, philosophy, medical professional). However, there are broadly two approaches to measuring QoL: the objective or social indicators approach and the subjective well-being approach (Diener and Eunkook, 1997).

Social indicators are societal measures that reflect people's objective circumstances in a given cultural or geographical unit. They are based on objective, quantitative statistics rather than on individuals' subjective perception of their social environment. The variables used under this approach include infant mortality, doctors per capita, police per capita, homicide rates, indices on education, human rights, political freedom, welfare, and ecology. Indices on these variables are computed into a composite measure of QoL index, using appropriate weighting. Diener & Eunkook (1997) proposed both composite Basic QoL Index and Advanced QoL Index.

The subjective well-being (SWB) approach is based on the view that in order to understand the well-being of an individual, it is important to directly measure the individual's cognitive and affective reactions to his or her whole life, as well as to specific domains of life. This, for instance, would explain measuring the "poverty perception" index.

These various approaches and measures derived from them have their limitations in the context of cross-country comparison. This is due principally to differences in culture and ecological conditions, and level of development as well as data quality. Economists have, therefore, tended to focus on three domains, viz: material state, physical state and education and self-development state.

A popular measure derived from these domains used in cross-country comparison of QoL is the human development index (HDI). It is the most concise measure of QoL in nations. The index was developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1990). It has three components – income, health (life expectancy at birth), education (literacy and schooling rates), gender equality (gender empowerment index, that is, male versus female, ratio in literacy, school enrolment, income, and poverty (measured by prevalence of premature death, functional literacy).

Studies have computed indices of QoL worldwide (The Economist Intelligence Unit 2005, UNDP 1990-2016). These and additional ratios of

selected variables in the six domains above are used to profile stylized facts on QoL in Africa.

4. Stylized Facts on Poverty in Africa

From four decades of research on poverty in developing countries, a number of facts have emerged on Africa. Ten such stylized facts are presented in this section (see Emily Degn 2016).

1. World poverty profile of Africa, Asia, and Latin America shows that Africa is the poorest continent. Twenty-eight of the world's poorest countries are in Africa. As can be observed in table 1, in Asian countries, poverty rate was as low as 0.4% in Malaysia, 10.6% in Indonesia, with the highest being 24% in Bangladesh and Pakistan. In Latin America, the rate ranged between 8.6% and 44%. In African countries, it ranged between 24% and 72%, with most countries, including Nigeria, recording rates above 46%.

2. Worldwide poverty is declining. It has been halved in the last 30 years. In Africa, however, progress has been slow, due largely to rising population. The African Development Bank (AfDB, 2016) reported that overall poverty was still around 43%. As seen in table 2, as poverty rate seemed to be declining in Asian countries, it was rising, or at least stabilized at high levels in Africa.

3. About half of the African population lives in poverty. It is estimated that 47% of the population live on $1.90 or less per day. For example, as observed in table 2, the population in extreme poverty, based on $1.90 per day, steadily declined from 984million in 1990 to 47million in 2015 in East Asia, from 66 million in 1990 to 24.3% in 2015 in Latin America, from 536 million in 1990 to 274 million in 2013 in South Asia, and from 14 million in 1990 to 9.4 million in 2013 in the Middle East. In sub-Saharan Africa, however, it steadily rose from 280 million in 1990 to 413 million in 2015.

4. It is projected that the global poor will become more concentrated in Africa. This is borne out from the increasing population growth rate which fuels the growing size of the population in extreme poverty. Population growth rate in Africa changed marginally from 2.76% to 2.70% between 2010 and 2017, compared to 0.68% and 0.98% in Asia and Latin America respectively, (table 1).

Table 1: Social Indicators of Quality of Life in Selected Countries 2010 and 2017

Continent/ Country	HDI		Growth		Poverty rate	Life expectancy		School Enrolment		Birth rate		Mortality rate		Youth Unemploy-ment		Access to water		% using sanitation		Pop. Growth rate	
	2010	2017	2010	2017		2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017
AFRICA	0.51	0.54						39.5	42.8	38.8	35.9	67.5	51.5	12.7	13.4	53.2	59.0	27.1	28.3	2.76	2.70
Egypt	0.66	0.70	3.5	2.4	27.8 (2015)	70.4	71.7	69.2	86.5	27.1	25.7	24.3	18.8	24.4	33.0	98.3	98.3	92.9	93.2	1.99	2.09
Ethiopia	0.41	0.46	12.6	9.50	23.5 (2015)	61.6	65.9	34.8	NA	34.8	31.3	55.3	41.0	3.6	2.8	31.5	40.0	5.7	7.1	2.78	2.66
Congo Democratic	0.41	0.46	7.1	3.7	63.9 (2012)	56.9	60.0	41.2	NA	44.9	41.7	84.8	70.0	7.1	7.7	39.4	42.6	20.6	19.7	3.33	3.26
Ghana	0.55	0.59	7.9	8.1	23.4 (2016)	60.9	63.0	52.5	69.9	33.3	30.5	48.9	35.7	11.2	13.7	73.5	78.0	13.3	14.3	2.42	2.22
Tunisia	0.72	0.74	3.5	1.83	15.2 (2015)	74.8	75.9	90.4	92.8	18.24	17.87	14.9	11.2	29.5	34.7	92.3	94.6	89.3	93.4	1.04	1.14
South Africa	0.65	0.70	3.0	1.30	55.5 (2014)	55.9	63.4	91.9	100.4	22.5	20.7	40.4	28.8	47.9	53.6	82.3	85.2	68.9	72.2	1.46	1.41
Senegal	0.46	0.51	3.6	7.1	46.7 (2011)	64.2	67.5	35.7	45.4	38.2	35.0	42.7	32.7	13.4	7.6	70.7	76.0	44.9	48.4		
Tanzania	0.49	0.52	6.3	6.8	28.2 (2011)	60.9	66.3	30.6	25.8	41.5	37.8	50.3	38.3	4.9	3.4	43.9	52.0	17.5	23.5	2.91	2.99
Zimbabwe	0.47	0.54	19.7	4.7	72.3 (2011)	51.1	61.7	NA	NA	36.2	32.3	55.1	36.5	8.2	8.2	68.1	67.0	39.8	38.6		
Nigeria	0.48	0.53	8.0	0.81	46.0 (2009)	50.9	53.9	44.2	42.1	41.3	38.4	81.0	64.6	9.7	19.7	60.7	69.0	33.7	32.6	2.67	2.61

Continent/ Country	HDI		Growth		Poverty rate	Life expectancy		School Enrolment		Birth rate		Mortality rate		Youth Unemploy-ment		Access to water		% using sanitation		Pop. Growth rate	
	2010	2017	2010	2017		2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017
ASIA	0.7	0.73				74.4	75.6	83.3	87.7	13.9	13.7	18.1	13.1	9.9	10.0	90.0	96.0	72.8	77.1	0.68	0.68
Malaysia	0.77	0.80	7.4	5.9	0.4 (2015)	74.2	75.5	77.6	86.2	17.3	17.0	6.6	6.7	10.8	10.8	96.9	96.4	98.9	99.6	1.69	1.36
Thailand	0.72	0.76	7.5	4.0	8.6 (2016)	73.9	75.5	82.4	116.8	11.8	10.1	12.0	8.2	4.18	3.5	97.6	98.2	95.0	95.1	0.49	0.35
Indonesia	0.66	0.69	6.2	5.1	10.6 (2017)	68.2	69.4	74.6	87.8	20.9	18.6	27.5	21.4	17.1	15.3	84.8	89.5	60.5	67.9	1.34	1.18
Philippines	0.67	0.70	7.6	6.7	21.6 (2015)	68.3	69.2	84.2	89.1	24.9	22.9	24.9	22.2	10.3	7.4	88.9	90.5	72.2	75.0	1.67	1.45
India	0.58	0.64	8.5	7.2	21.9 (2011)	66.6	68.8	63.3	75.2	21.4	18.8	45.3	32.0	8.9	10.3	85.3	87.6	36.7	44.2	1.35	1.06
Bangladesh	0.55	0.61	5.6	7.3	24.3 (2016)	70.2	72.8	50.0	67.3	21.2	18.6	38.9	26.9	6.4	12.3	96.5	97.3	39.9	46.9	1.13	1.07
Pakistan	0.53	0.56	1.6	5.9	24.3 (2015)	65.1	66.6	35.8	45.5	30.2	27.7	72.8	61.2	1.3	6.2	88.8	88.6	49.6	58.3	2.20	2.08
South Korea	0.88	0.90	6.5	3.1	NA	80.1	82.6	96.3	99.8	14.3	13.8	3.5	2.8	9.7	10.2	99.0	99.6	100.0	99.9	0.50	0.43
LATIN AMERICA	0.71	0.74	5.9	1.7	NA	74.2	75.7	89.2	95.1	18.4	16.6	18.4	14.9	14.6	17.6	94.4	97.0	82.4	85.7	1.12	0.98
Chile	0.81	0.84	5.8	1.3	8.6 (2017)	78.5	79.7	92.8	99.7	14.5	13.2	7.5	6.3	19.1	17.2	94.4	97.0	82.4	85.7	1.12	0.98
Mexico	0.74	0.77	5.1	2.1	43.6 (2016)	76.1	77.3	84.3	99.9	20.0	17.8	14.9	11.5	9.7	6.8	95.5	98.3	85.2	89.2	1.44	1.16
Brazil	0.73	0.76	7.5	1.1	26.5 (2017)	73.8	75.7	96.7	101.5	15.5	13.9	16.7	13.2	16.4	29.0	96.3	97.5	82.0	86.2	0.94	0.81

Continent/Country	HDI		Growth		Poverty rate	Life expectancy		School Enrolment		Birth rate		Mortality rate		Youth Unemploy-ment		Access to water		% using sanitation		Pop. Growth rate	
	2010	2017	2010	2017		2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017
El Salvador	0.67	0.68	3.5	1.8	29.2 (2017)	71.6	73.8	69.4	71.8	19.6	18.4	16.6	12.5	10.3	9.9	89.1	93.0	87.9	91.1	1.04	1.14
Argentina	0.81	0.83	10.1	2.7	25.7 (2017)	75.6	76.7	100.8	108.5	18.2	16.9	13.0	9.2	19.5	23.2	99.4	99.6	94.9	94.8	0.75	1.04
Peru	0.72	0.75	8.3	2.5	21.7 (2017)	73.7	75.2	94.7	98.5	20.9	18.9	15.8	11.6	7.4	8.5	87.0	89.9	72.5	76.8	0.81	1.66
Colombia	0.72	0.75	4.4	1.4	27.0 (2018)	73.3	74.6	102.0	98.6	17.1	14.9	15.9	12.7	22.0	18.1	94.6	96.5	81.6	84.3	1.05	1.50
Venezuela	0.76	0.76	-1.5	NA	33.1 (2015)	73.6	74.7	80.9	84.0	20.8	18.7	14.3	25.7	17.2	15.8	97.1	97.4	93.2	94.9	1.45	-1.54

Source: All data from World Development Indicators, 2019 update online download, except Human Development Index from United Development, Human Development reports: 1990 0 2017, http://hdr.undp.org/en/data

5. Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is home to the largest population in hunger after Asia. This is also premised on population growth and policy weaknesses. Birth rate in Africa moved from 39% to 36% in Africa, compared to 14% in Asia and 18% to 17% in Latin America (table 1).

6. One-quarter of people in SSA are malnourished.

7. Lack of shared prosperity underlies lack of progress on poverty reduction. This is reflected in rising inequalities which hinder poverty reduction. Inequality coefficient in Asia, Latin America and Africa in 2011-2017 averaged 36.1, 44.9 and 42.3 respectively (table 3).

8. Low access to public social services has contributed to high level of poverty. Education, health services, and access to improved sources of water and sanitation are components of multi-dimensional poverty index (Aigbokhan, 2016). As can be observed in table 1, school enrolment rate rose from 39.5% in 2010 to 43% in 2017 in Africa, compared to 83% to 88% in Asia and 89% to 95% in Latin America.

   The corresponding figure for health, using mortality rate as an indicator, remained high in Africa, although it declined from 68% in 2010 to 52% in 2017. The rate is much higher than the 18% to 13% for Asia and the 18% to 15% for Latin America for the same period.

   The percentage of the population with access to improved water source rose from 53% in 2010 to 59% in 2017 in Africa, compared to 90% to 96% in Asia, and 94% to 97% in Latin America.

   Similarly, the percentage of the population using water sanitation marginally rose from 27% to 28% in Africa in 2010-2017, whereas the rate was much higher in Asia, 73% to 77%, and in Latin America, 82% to 86%.

9. In addition to rising population, conflicts and drought have contributed to the high level of poverty in Africa. Much of Africa is war-torn; immediate examples are Sudan, Southern Sudan, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, and north-east Nigeria. Also poor governance, particularly corruption, has hindered progress on poverty reduction.

10. While the decline in the number of the poor in Africa is slower than the global rate, it has still declined; it fell from 56% in 1990 to 43% in 2012. So, all hope is not lost. Such optimism, however, would still depend on developments at individual country level. For example, with the projection

for Nigeria's population, lack of marked progress on poverty reduction in Nigeria may limit the progress. According to the World Poverty Clock Report (2018), it is projected that by 2030, the percentage of the Nigerian population living in extreme poverty will increase from 44.2% to 45.5%, representing about 120 million people living on less than $1.90 per day.

Also, among the fifteen countries where extreme poverty is projected to rise over the next decade, thirteen are in Africa. Of the five countries where the percentage of total population living on less than $1.90 per day (extreme poverty) is projected to increase over the next decade, four are in Africa. The five countries are South Sudan from 85% to 95%, Burundi from 74% to 85%, Congo from 45% to 54%, Nigeria from 44.2% to 45.5% and Venezuela from 15% to 23%.

Table 2. Number of Poor at $1.90 per day (2011 PPP) (million)

Year	East Asia	Europe	Latin America	Middle East	South Asia	Sub-Saharan Africa
1990	983.9 (61.3)	NA	65.5 (14.8)	14.2 (6.2)	535.9 (47.3)	280.2 (54.7)
1993	899.2 (53.7)	24.5 (5.2)	65.0 (14.0)	17.1 (7.0)	542.1 (44.9)	332.0 (59.6)
1996	710.8 (40.9)	34.2 (7.3)	67.1 (13.7)	16.2 (6.2)	517.9 (40.3)	355.5 (58.9)
2002	549.1 (29.7)	28.0 (6.0)	63.1 (11.8)	9.8 (3.4)	554.9 (38.6)	390.0 (55.3)
2005	358.6 (18.9)	22.8 (4.9)	55.0 (9.9)	9.4 (3.1)	510.4 (33.7)	389.1 (50.8)
2008	296.5 (15.3)	13.2 (2.8)	39.8 (16.9)	8.8 (2.7)	467.0 (29.5)	398.5 (48.0)
2010	220.5 (11.2)	11.4 (2.4)	36.6 (6.1)	7.9 (2.3)	400.8 (24.6)	408.5 (45.0)
2011	169.7 (8.6)	9.8 (2.1)	34.1 (5.7)	9.2 (2.7)	328.0 (19.8)	405.8 (45.0)
2012	144.4 (7.2)	8.9 (1.9)	28.6 (4.7)	9.4 (2.7)	304.7 (18.2)	405.6 (43.7)
2013	73.1 (3.6)	7.6 (1.6)	28.0 (4.6)	9.4 (2.6)	274.4 (16.1)	404.0 (42.4)
2015	47.0 (2.3)	7.1 (1.5)	24.3 (3.9)	NA	NA	413.0 (41.0)

Source: World development indicators 2019, World Bank, update from online download.

Note: Figures in brackets are percentage of population.

Table 3. Gini Index in Selected Countries

Africa			
Egypt	32.8 (1999)	31.8 (2004)	31.8 (2015)
Ethiopia	30.0 (1999)	29.8 (2004)	39.1 (2015)
Congo Dem.	NA	42.2 (2004)	42.1 (2012)
Ghana	40.1 (1998)	42.8 (2004)	43.5 (2016)
Tunisia	40.8 (2001)	37.7 (2005)	32.8 (2015)
South Africa	57.8 (2000)	64.8 (2005)	63.0 (2014)
Senegal	41.2 (2001)	39.2 (2005)	40.3 (2011)
Gini Index in Selected Countries contd.			
Tanzania	37.3 (2000)	40.3 (2007)	37.8 (2011)
Zimbabwe	NA	NA	43.2 (2011)
Nigeria	51.9 (1996)	40.1 (2003)	43.0 (2009)
Asia			
Malaysia	49.1 (1997)	46.1 (2007)	41.0 (2015)
Thailand	42.8 (2000)	39.8 (2007)	36.5 (2017)
Indonesia	29.0 (2001)	35.7 (2007)	38.1 (2017)
Philippines	42.8 (2000)	42.9 (2006)	40.1 (2015)
India	31.7 (1993)	34.4 (2004)	35.7 (2011)
Bangladesh	33.4 (2000)	33.2 (2005)	32.4 (2016)
Pakistan	30.4 (2001)	31.6 (2007)	33.5 (2015)
Korea, Rep.	NA	31.7 (2006)	31.6 (2012)
Latin America			
Chile	52.8 (2000)	48.2 (2006)	46.6 (2017)
Mexico	51.4 (2000)	47.7 (2006)	43.4 (2016)
Brazil	58.4 (2001)	54.9 (2007)	53.3 (2017)
El Salvador	51.4 (2001)	45.2 (2007)	38.0 (2017)
Argentina	53.3 (2001)	46.3 (2007)	40.6 (2017)
Peru	51.3 (2001)	50.0 (2007)	43.3 (2017)
Colombia	58.7 (2000)	53.7 (2005)	49.7 (2017)
Venezuela, RB	48.2 (2001)	46.9 (2006)	NA

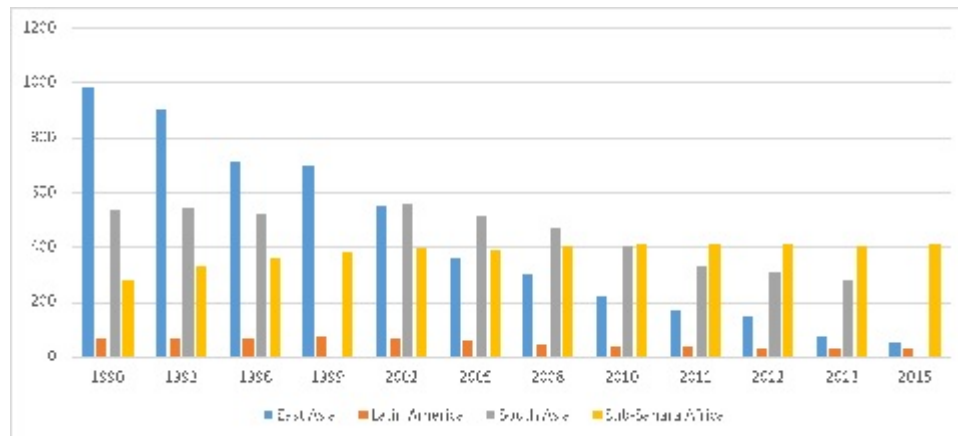*Source:* World Bank : World Development Indicators, 2019.

Figure 3: Number of Poor at 1.90 per day (2011 ppp) (million)

4. Stylized Facts on Quality of Life in Africa

As with poverty, some stylized facts have emerged on QoL in Africa.

One, QoL is lowest in Africa when compared to the other continents. In a survey of 111 countries, of the 10 countries with the lowest QoLs, 5 were African (see appendix). As table 4 shows, the highest ranked African country was Egypt at the 80th position, followed by Tunisia at 83rd, and South Africa at 92nd. Nigeria ranked 108th, Tanzania ranked 109th and Zimbabwe ranked last at 111th.

In contrast, in Latin America, the lowest ranked was Venezuela at 59th, and the highest ranked was Chile at 31st, followed by Mexico at 32nd, Brazil at 39th and Argentina at 40th. In Asia, the highest ranked was Malaysia at 36th, followed by Thailand at 42nd, Sri Lanka at 43rd and the Philippines at 44th. The least ranked was Pakistan at 91st, followed by Bangladesh, India and Indonesia at 77th, 73rd and 71st respectively.

Two, factors that improve the quality of life are among the lowest in Africa. The AfDB (2016) identified as factors that improve the quality of life, education, health, access to water and labour market opportunities. It noted that health and education outcomes are among the lowest in the world. The Economist Intelligence Unit (2005) established that the nine factors in the six domains identified in section 3 are statistically significant determinants of QoL. These are

GDP per capita, life expectancy, political freedom, job security, family life, climate and geography, political stability, gender equality, and community life. Performance on these indicators are, therefore, used in this section to profile stylized facts on QoL in Africa. As data in table 1 shows the indices on social indicators in Africa all recorded poor performance compared to Asia and Latin America. Youth unemployment, another factor in quality of life, was 13.4% in Africa, compared to 10% in Asia. Also, for Nigeria, the rate increased from 10% in 2010 to 20% in 2017. Performance by Africa on the social indicators in 2010 – 2017 suggests that quality of life may not have noticeably changed from the ranking recorded in 2005 as shown in table 4.

Table 4. Quality of Life Index in Selected Countries, 2005

Continent/Countries	Quality of Life		GDP per person	
	Score	Rank	$ at PPP	Rank
Africa				
Egypt	5.605	80	3930	88
Tunisia	5.472	83	7914	64
South Africa	5.245	92	10810	50
Ghana	5.174	95	2560	100
Uganda	4.879	101	1450	108
Botswana	4.81	104	10400	52
Nigeria	4.505	108	960	110
Tanzania	4.945	109	672	111
Zimbabwe	3.892	111	1500	106
Asia				
Malaysia	6.608	36	10450	51
Thailand	6.436	42	8140	62
Sri Lanka	6.417	43	3810	91
Philippines	6.403	44	4580	82
Indonesia	5.814	71	3840	90
India	5.759	73	3290	96
Bangladesh	5.646	77	1660	105
Pakistan	5.229	91	2340	101
Latin America				
Chile	6.789	31	12120	44
Mexico	6.766	32	10000	54
Brazil	6.47	39	8760	58

Continent/Countries	Quality of Life		GDP per person	
	Score	Rank	$ at PPP	Rank
Argentina	6.469	40	11350	42
Peru	6.216	53	5730	77
Colombia	6.176	54	7330	67
El Salvador	6.64	56	3780	93
Venezuela	6.089	59	4771	79

Note: Score on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 is lowest and 10 is the highest QoL).

Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit, Quality of Life Index, The World in 2005, p.4.

4. Conclusion

This paper has shown that poverty and quality of life profiles are poorer in Africa than in Asia and Latin America. Life expectancy is much higher in the latter groups. Access to basic public social services that enhances quality of life is also higher. Access to education and qualitative education for that matter is higher also. This improves the capabilities of individuals to engage in life chances that enhance income and employment opportunities in the two continents.

Countries in Africa need to demonstrate more commitment to the provision of public resources. The AfDB has demonstrated through increased investment in education, water and sanitation, in its programme of intervention in Kenya, Cameroon and Rwanda, that the quality of life of citizens in these countries was enhanced in the 2013-2015 period. National governments in Africa need to demonstrate similar commitment.

Africa's population is the youngest among all the continents, according to the AfDB. It is estimated that 60% of the population is between 15 and 24 years of age. Youth unemployment is already high in Africa. Unless determined efforts are made by African governments to create opportunities for youth employment, the limited progress recorded on poverty reduction and improvement in quality of life may be short-lived.

Although not an issue examined in this paper, good governance is critical to any hope of realizing the goal of eradicating poverty and improving quality of life in Africa. Corruption seems endemic in most African societies. This has limited the reach of available resources for programmes aimed at reducing poverty and raising quality of life. Governments in Asia seem to demonstrate a

commitment to curbing corruption, particularly at higher public sector levels. Success in this respect would release more public resources for programmes aimed at reducing poverty and raising quality of life. Governments in Africa need to embrace this.

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Appendix: Quality of Life Index, 2005

Country	Quality of Life		GDP per person		Difference in ranks	Country	Quality of Life		GDP per person		Difference in ranks
	Score	Rank	$(at PPP)	Rank			Score	Rank	$(at PPP)	Rank	
Ireland	8.333	1	36790	4	3	Bulgaria	6.162	57	8664	59	2
Switzerland	8.068	2	33580	7	5	Romania	6.105	58	8252	60	2
Norway	8.051	3	39590	3	0	Venezuela	6.089	59	4771	79	20
Luxembourg	8.015	4	54690	1	-3	China	6.083	60	6270	74	14
Sweden	7.937	5	30590	19	14	Vietnam	6.08	61	2890	97	36
Australia	7.925	6	31010	14	8	Bahram	6.035	62	17670	34	-28
Iceland	7.911	7	33560	8	1	Lithuania	6.033	63	13758	41	-22
Italy	7.81	8	27960	23	15	Jamaica	6.022	64	4200	84	20
Denmark	7.796	9	32490	10	1	Morocco	6.018	65	4660	80	15
Spain	7.727	10	25370	24	14	Latvia	6.008	66	11862	47	-19
Singapore	7.719	11	32530	9	-2	Oman	5.916	67	12040	45	-22
Finland	7.618	12	29650	20	8	Estonia	5.905	68	14800	39	-29
United States	7.615	13	41529	2	-11	United Arab Emirate	5.899	69	18330	33	-36
Canada	7.599	14	34150	5	-9	Libya	5.849	70	10060	53	-17
New Zealand	7.436	15	25110	25	10	Indonesia	5.814	71	3840	90	19
Netherland	7.433	16	30920	15	-1	Saudi Arabia	5.767	72	11110	49	-23
Japan	7.392	17	30750	16	-1	India	5.759	73	3290	96	23
Hong Kong	7.347	18	31660	11	-7	Paraguay	5.756	74	3600	95	21
Portugal	7.307	19	19530	31	12	Jordan	5.675	75	4510	83	8
Austria	7.268	20	31420	12	-8	Nicaragua	5.663	76	2600	99	23
Taiwan	7.259	21	28070	22	1	Bangladesh	5.646	77	1660	105	28
Greece	7.163	22	22340	27	5	Albania	5.634	78	5260	78	0
Cyprus	7.097	23	20500	30	7	Dominican Republic	5.63	79	6610	72	-7
Belgium	7.095	24	30660	17	-7	Egypt	5.605	80	3930	88	8
France	7.084	25	30640	18	-7	Algeria	5.571	81	5770	76	-5
Germany	7.048	26	28250	21	-5	Bolivia	5.492	82	3680	94	12
Slovenia	6.986	27	21892	28	1	Tunisia	5.472	83	7910	64	-19
Malta	6.934	28	18710	32	4	Serbia & Montenegro	5.428	84	6079	75	-9

Country	Quality of Life		GDP per person		Difference in ranks	Country	Quality of Life		GDP per person		Difference in ranks
	Score	Rank	$(at PPP)	Rank			Score	Rank	$(at PPP)	Rank	
United Kingdom	6.917	29	31150	13	-16	Armenia	5.422	85	3993	87	2
Korea, South	6.877	30	23360	26	-4	Azerbaijan	5.377	86	4628	81	-5
Chile	6.789	31	12120	44	13	Georgia	5.365	87	3841	89	2
Mexico	6.766	32	10000	54	22	Iran	5.343	88	7630	65	-23
Barbados	6.702	33	16632	36	3	Macedonia	5.337	89	7499	66	-23
Czech Republic	6.629	34	17600	35	1	Guatemala	5321	90	4050	85	-5
Costa Rica	6.624	35	9000	56	21	Honduras	5250	91	2740	98	7
Malaysia	6.608	36	10450	51	15	South Africa	5.245	92	10810	50	-42
Hungary	6.534	37	16047	37	0	Pakistan	5.229	93	2340	101	8
Israel	6.488	38	21310	29	-9	Bosnia & Hercegovina	5.218	94	7020	70	-24
Brazil	6.47	39	8760	58	19	Ghana	5.174	95	2560	100	5
Argentina	6.469	40	13350	42	2	Kazakhstan	5.082	96	8090	63	-33
Qatar	6.462	41	33840	6	-35	Syria	5.052	97	3810	91	-6
Thailand	6.436	42	8140	62	20	Ukraine	5.032	98	6500	73	-25
Sri Lanka	6.417	43	3810	91	48	Moldova	5.009	99	2280	102	3
Philippines	6.404	44	4580	82	38	Belarus	4.978	100	7200	68	-32
Slovakia	6.381	45	15513	38	-7	Uganda	4.879	101	1450	108	7
Uruguay	6.368	46	8869	57	11	Turkmenistan	4.87	102	7142	69	-33
Panama	6.361	47	6760	71	24	Kyrgyz Republic	4.846	103	2044	103	0
Poland	6.309	48	12825	43	-5	Botswana	4.81	104	10400	52	-52
Croatia	6.301	49	11870	46	-3	Russia	4.796	105	9810	55	-50
Turkey	6.286	50	8209	61	11	Uzbekistan	4.767	106	9810	104	-2
Trinidad and Tobago	6.278	51	11720	48	-3	Tajikistan	4.754	107	1226	109	2
Ecuador	6.272	52	4030	86	34	Nigeria	4.505	108	960	110	2
Peru	6.216	53	5730	77	24	Tanzania	4.495	109	672	111	2
Colombia	6.176	54	7330	67	13	Haiti	4.09	110	1470	107	-3
Venezuela	6.171	55	14550	50	-15	Zimbabwe	3.892	111	1500	106	-5
El Salvador	6.164	56	3780	93	37						

Source: The Economist Quality of Life Index, The World in 2005. p.4.