

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Trustees and University Leadership
FROM: Office of Strategic Expansion
DATE: February 17, 2026
SUBJECT: Recommended African Countries for First Branch Business School Campus

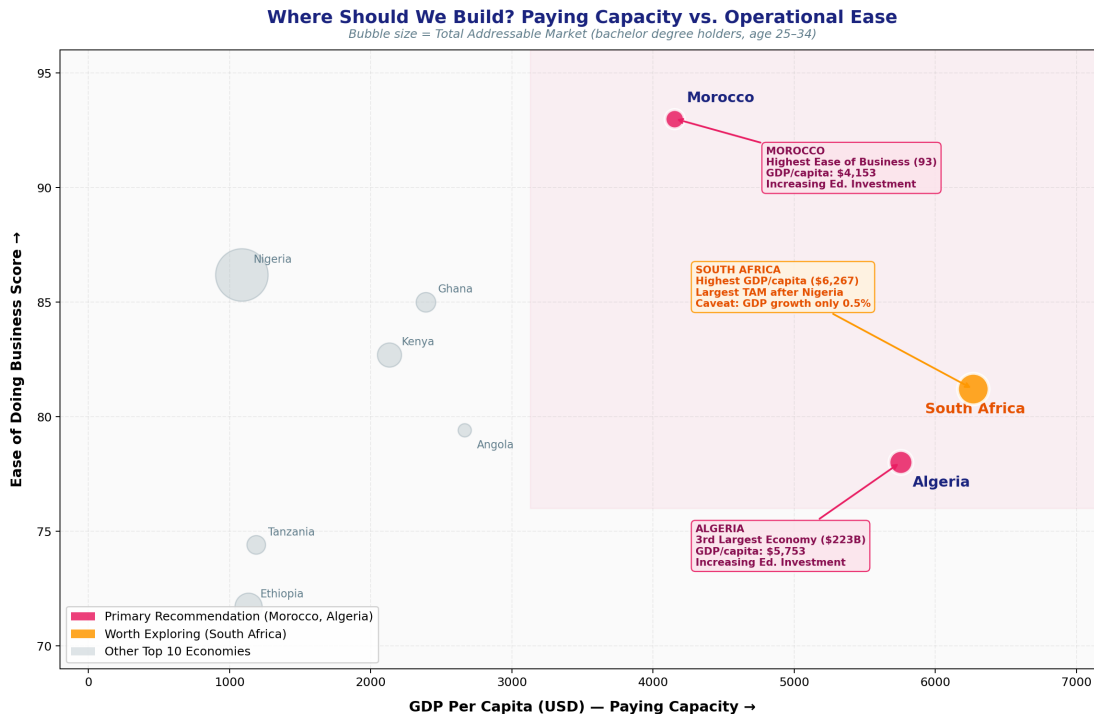
Recommendation

This memo recommends **Morocco and Algeria** as the primary locations for our first African branch business school campus. **South Africa** is also worth exploring, though with a caveat. This recommendation is based on an analysis of the **top 10 African economies** across three areas: **GDP and economic strength, demographics and target market size**, and **ease of starting a business**. Following the NYU model of global expansion, we looked for countries where the economy is strong, the government actively supports education, students can afford premium tuition, and it is simple to set up operations.

Morocco is our strongest choice. It has the **highest ease of doing business score (93.0)** among all 10 countries, higher than many European nations. Its GDP per capita of **\$4,153** shows a middle class that can pay for quality education. Over the past decade, the Moroccan government has been **steadily increasing its spending on education (23.3% of budget)**, which signals a welcoming environment for a foreign university.

Algeria is the ideal second campus. It is the **3rd largest economy in Africa (\$223 billion)** and has the **second-highest GDP per capita (\$5,753)**, nearly three times higher than Kenya and five times higher than Nigeria. This means Algerian families are far more likely to afford MBA tuition. Like Morocco, Algeria’s government has been **increasing its education spending (23.6%)** over the past decade. Its ease of doing business score (78.0) is lower than Morocco’s but still reasonable, and its economic strength more than makes up for this gap.

South Africa is also worth exploring, though with a caveat. It has the **highest GDP per capita (\$6,267)** and the **second-largest target market (2,832 thousand)** of educated young professionals. Government education spending (18.5%) has been **stable**, and English is the primary language. However, South Africa’s **GDP growth is only 0.5%**, essentially stagnant, which limits middle class expansion over time. **Algeria is preferred** as a second campus because it offers similar paying capacity with healthier growth (3.7%) and increasing education investment. That said, South Africa’s large market makes it worth exploring in parallel or as a future phase.



Bubble size = Total Addressable Market (bachelor’s degree holders, age 25–34).

Analytical Framework

We started with Africa's **top 10 economies by GDP** because a large economy signals stability and the infrastructure needed for a campus. From there, we applied four filters.

GDP growth rate tells us if the economy is expanding or standing still. A stagnant economy means a shrinking pool of students who can afford premium tuition over time. Morocco (3.8%) and Algeria (3.7%) show steady, reliable growth. South Africa (0.5%) is nearly flat.

GDP per capita is our proxy for paying capacity. South Africa (\$6,267), Algeria (\$5,753), and Morocco (\$4,153) are clearly the top three. The gap is large: a student in Algeria is roughly five times more able to pay for an MBA than a student in Nigeria (\$1,084).

Government education spending reveals political will. Setting up a foreign campus requires government cooperation for permits, land, and tax incentives. The NYU Abu Dhabi model worked because the host government treated education as a national priority. Only **three countries** show an increasing 10-year trend in education spending: Kenya (27.9%), Algeria (23.6%), and Morocco (23.3%). South Africa is stable at 18.5%. Nigeria is just 3.0% and decreasing.

Ease of doing business determines how fast we can open. Morocco's score of **93.0** is exceptional. South Africa (81.2) and Algeria (78.0) are both workable. Ethiopia (71.7) and Tanzania (74.4) are at the bottom, where bureaucratic barriers could slow a campus launch significantly.

Target Market: Who Will Be Our Students?

Our MBA program targets **people aged 25–34 with a bachelor's degree**. We calculated the Total Addressable Market (TAM) in two steps using UN population data and World Bank education statistics:

1. **Target Market** = Pop. with bachelor's degree (25+) = Pop. 25–34 × % with bachelor's (25+)
2. **TAM** = Target Market × % of pop 25–34 among all adults 25+

Country	Total Pop. (000s)	Pop. 25–34 (000s)	% Bach. (25+)	Target Mkt. (000s)	% 25–34 of 25+	TAM (000s)	GDP/Cap. (USD)
Nigeria	227,883	31,766	10.6%	24,080	36.5%	8,790	\$1,084
South Africa	63,212	11,345	14.4%	9,071	31.2%	2,832	\$6,267
Ethiopia	128,692	20,102	3.8%	4,878	39.6%	1,930	\$1,134
Kenya	55,339	8,562	6.8%	3,738	37.4%	1,399	\$2,132
Algeria	46,164	6,732	11.4%	5,279	26.2%	1,383	\$5,753
Ghana	33,788	5,107	6.3%	2,125	33.9%	720	\$2,391
Morocco	37,713	5,792	6.9%	2,621	26.5%	695	\$4,153
Tanzania	66,618	9,513	2.3%	1,545	38.6%	596	\$1,187
Angola	36,750	4,957	0.1%	32	37.0%	12	\$2,666

Population in thousands. TAM is a proxy, not all degree holders will pursue an MBA. Sources: UN World Population Prospects 2024; World Bank Education Statistics.

Nigeria has the largest TAM (8,790K) but its low GDP per capita means most students **cannot afford** premium tuition. South Africa has the second-largest TAM (2,832K) combined with the highest paying capacity. Algeria (1,383K) and Morocco (695K) have smaller markets, but their high purchasing power makes each student more valuable from a revenue perspective.

Why Not the Others?

We recommend Morocco, Algeria, and South Africa for three reasons:

- **All three have strong government support for education.** Morocco and Algeria show increasing spending trends; South Africa is stable. This is the political environment that makes foreign campus partnerships possible.
- **All three have high paying capacity.** They are the top three by GDP per capita. A tuition-dependent school needs students who can pay.
- **Morocco's ease of doing business (93.0) is the best in Africa,** making it the fastest path from planning

to opening day.

Why not Nigeria? Low GDP per capita (\$1,084) means most students cannot afford premium tuition. Government education spending is just 3.0% and actively decreasing. Nigeria is better suited for student recruitment, not campus investment.

Why not Angola? The TAM is only 12 thousand, the smallest by far. With just 0.1% bachelor's degree attainment, there is not enough of an educated base to support a campus.

Why not Ethiopia? The lowest ease of doing business score (71.7) combined with low GDP per capita (\$1,134) makes it too risky despite its fast economic growth.

Why not Ghana? No reliable data on government education spending. GDP per capita (\$2,391) and TAM (720K) are mid-range, not strong enough to stand out.

Why not Kenya? Strong education spending (27.9%) and English language, but GDP per capita (\$2,132) is too low for a tuition-dependent model. A good candidate for future expansion.

Why not Tanzania? Second-lowest ease of business (74.4), low GDP per capita (\$1,187), and decreasing education spending trend. Not ready for a foreign campus.

Conclusion

The data points to **Morocco as the primary campus** and **Algeria as the preferred second campus**. Morocco provides the easiest operational environment on the continent with a growing middle class and increasing government education support. Algeria adds the weight of Africa's 3rd largest economy, strong paying capacity, and a government that is investing more in education each year. **South Africa should also be explored** for its high GDP per capita and large educated market, but its stagnant growth (0.5%) makes it less dynamic than Algeria. A phased approach of Morocco first, Algeria second, and South Africa as a potential third location would give the university a strong and diversified African presence.

Appendix: Data Tables

A1. GDP Overview

Rank	Country	GDP (Bn USD)	Growth (%)	GDP/Capita
1	Nigeria	\$541.0	4.1%	\$1,084
2	South Africa	\$365.8	0.5%	\$6,267
3	Algeria	\$223.1	3.7%	\$5,753
4	Morocco	\$136.0	3.8%	\$4,153
5	Ethiopia	\$116.7	7.6%	\$1,134
6	Angola	\$107.8	4.4%	\$2,666
7	Kenya	\$105.0	4.7%	\$2,132
8	Côte d'Ivoire	\$76.5	6.0%	\$2,728
9	Ghana	\$74.6	5.6%	\$2,391
10	Tanzania	\$74.5	5.5%	\$1,187

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators. GDP in constant 2015 USD. ■ Primary recommendation. ■ Worth exploring.

A2. Ease of Doing Business & Government Education Spending

Country	Ease of Business	Ed. Spending (%)	10-Year Trend
Morocco	93.0	23.3%	↑ Increasing
Nigeria	86.2	3.0%	↓ Decreasing
Ghana	85.0	N/A	N/A
Kenya	82.7	27.9%	↑ Increasing
South Africa	81.2	18.5%	→ Stable
Angola	79.4	6.4%	→ Stable
Algeria	78.0	23.6%	↑ Increasing
Tanzania	74.4	13.4%	↓ Decreasing
Ethiopia	71.7	16.7%	→ Stable
Côte d'Ivoire	N/A	17.6%	↓ Decreasing

Sources: World Bank, Ease of Doing Business; World Development Indicators. ■ Primary recommendation. ■ Worth exploring.

Sources

Source	URL
World Bank, World Development Indicators	https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators
World Bank, Ease of Doing Business	https://www.enterprisesurveys.org/en/enterprisesurveys
UN World Population Prospects 2024	https://population.un.org/wpp/downloads
World Bank, Education Statistics	https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.TER.CUAT.BA.ZS
Excel Analysis	https://1drv.ms/x/c/d6679b5b04ef5b41/IQCYLEa34tB8Qplpuww6j5pUAdK0ppWaXaf0WX4me=ZF1j3C