

## **Africa: How 17 Countries are Leading the Way by Steven Radelet**



Review by: Joy Stoddard

Emerging Africa is a data-filled overview of 17 African nations finding success in combating poverty, increasing prosperity, securing peace and widening the global circle of development. For the 300 million people who live in these countries, “challenges are great, success is far from assured, but hopes are growing and enterprise is expanding”. The 17 include Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Ghana, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. Radelet separates out the oil producing and other countries to focus on these 17 that happen to comprise nearly half of Africa’s population.

After an interesting introduction by Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia, we are presented with Radelet’s summary of the five fundamental challenges he believes to have ignited the turnaround for these countries: the rise of more democratic and accountable governments, the implementation of more sensible economic policies, the end of the decades-long debt crisis, the spread of new technologies, and the emergence of policy makers, activists and business leaders (he calls these “cheetahs”). To me, some of the most interesting accounts present how these countries are breaking out of the poverty trap, including the end of “the Big Man” and the emergence of democracy and governance and the brief profiles of several Africans belonging to the cheetah generation whose ideas, technology, entrepreneurship, market power and push for good governance and accountability are providing hope...

Radelet concludes by detailing the challenges ahead: deepening democracy and strengthening governance, creating new economic opportunities for a growing workforce, managing the rise of China, adapting to climate change, and building strong education and health systems. Personally, I appreciated the data and charts used to illuminate recent progress and inspire the road ahead.