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AFRICA'S DATA CENTRE BUILDOUT HAS A MISSING PIECE

The *empty* control room

Africa will need 3.5 to 5.5 times more data centre capacity by 2030.

The buildings are coming. The capital is coming. The people to run them are not - *yet*.

This briefing maps the talent gap, and the pipeline the **IBTC Data Centre Academy** has built to close it.

1.5–2.2 GW
CAPACITY DEMAND BY 2030

$10–20bn
INVESTMENT REQUIRED

~40%
UTILISATION IN SOME FACILITIES

Market figures: McKinsey & Company, Nov 2025 · investment covers shell construction, excl. fit-out

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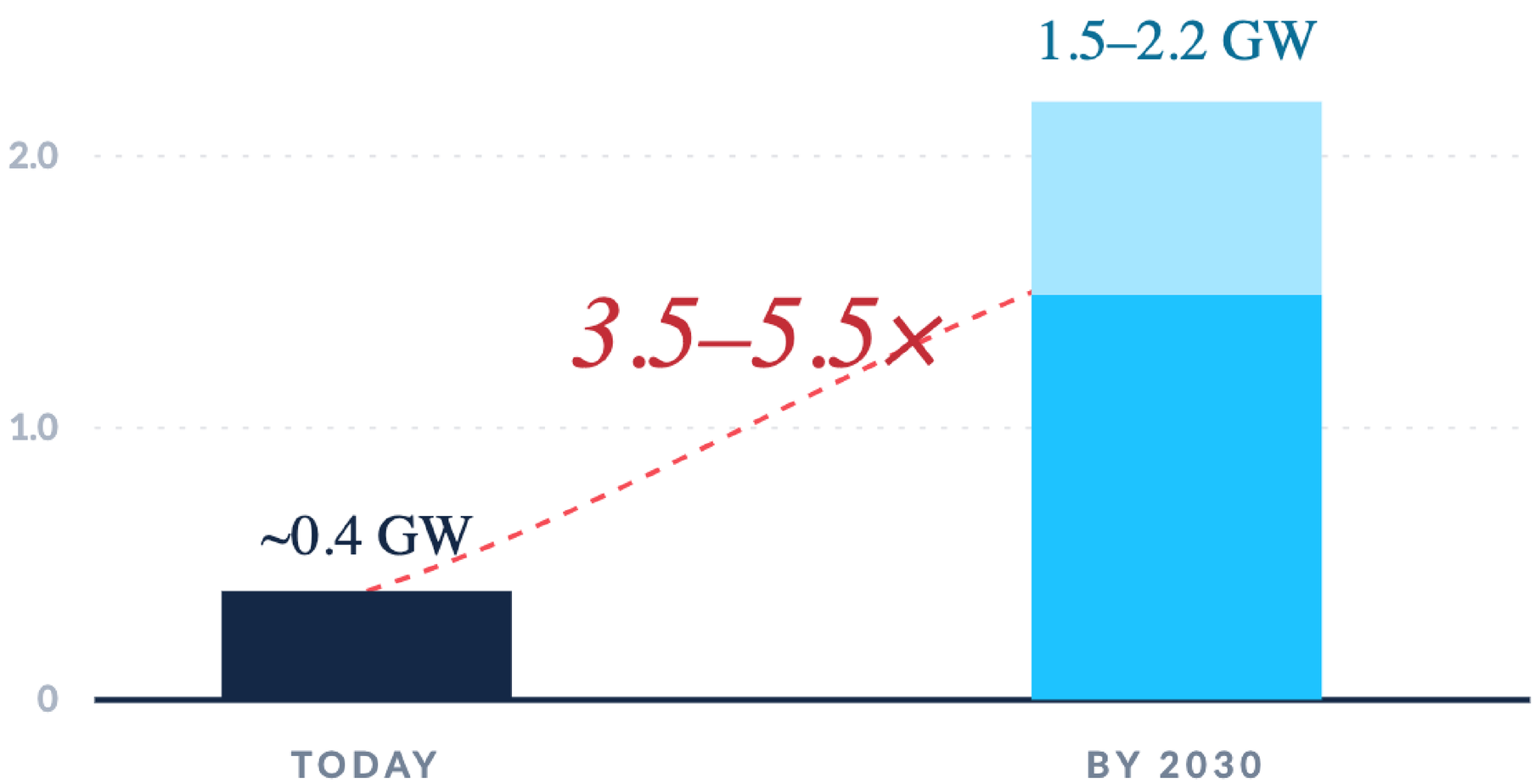
01 THE BOOM

Africa's compute decade is *already funded.*

Hyperscalers, colocation players and DFIs have committed to the continent. McKinsey projects demand rising from roughly 0.4 GW today to 1.5–2.2 GW by 2030, representing a $20–30 billion revenue pool. The constraint is no longer capital or land.

FIG. 01 — CAPACITY DEMAND · GW (IT LOAD) MCKINSEY, 2025



The five leading African markets combined hold under 500 MW today, that is less than France alone.

~22%
Annual demand growth, in line with global rates of 18–27%.

$20–30bn
Estimated revenue pool across the value chain by 2030.

40%
Of African corporations are already piloting generative AI systems.

5.2%
Of GDP comes from the internet economy, up from 1.1% in 2012.

Source: McKinsey & Company, "Building data centers for Africa's unique market dynamics," November 2025 — five leading markets: Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa.

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02 THE PARADOX

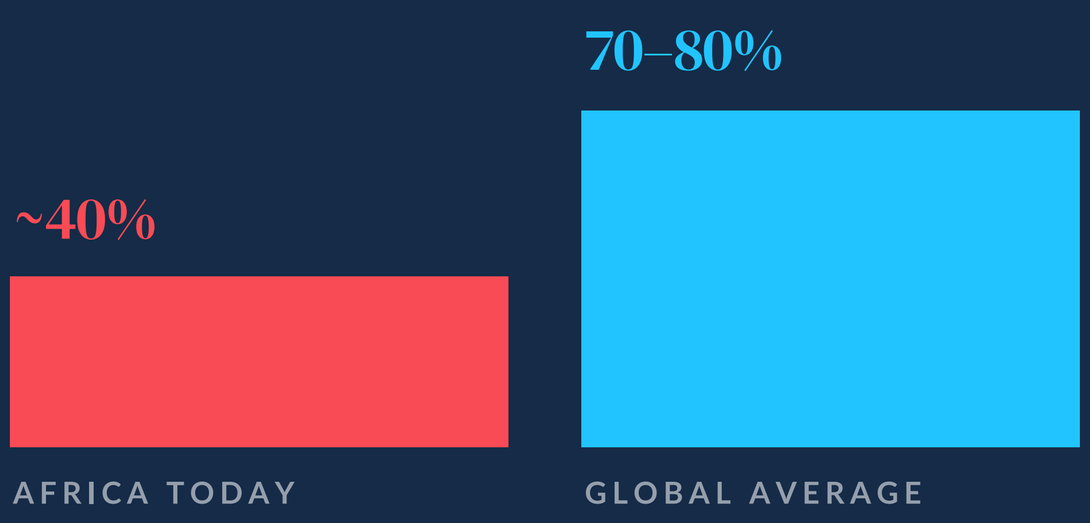
Everyone is building, *No one can staff.*

A data centre is a promise: 99.995% uptime, every hour of the year. Keeping that promise in markets where businesses can face up to 33 grid outages a month takes exceptional operators on the floor. People who can run power, cooling and incident response to global standards.

Yet McKinsey names securing “local knowledge and skills” a core operational challenge for African data centre players. Universities produce capable graduates every year. Almost none arrive work-ready for a live facility, and operators pay for that gap in utilisation, risk and time-to-hire.

FIG. 02 — CAPACITY UTILISATION

Utilisation is the share of built capacity actually in use and earning. African facilities run far below the global norm.



Up to 33 GRID OUTAGES A MONTH, SOME MARKETS

Every outage is a test of the team on the floor. Skilled operators are what make a 99.995% uptime promise credible on an unstable grid.

8–15% RETURNS, LEADING EAST AFRICAN PLAYERS VS 10–20% MIDDLE EAST

Margins here are thinner than in mature markets. With returns this tight, one mis-hire or one avoidable outage shows up directly in the P&L.

There is no shortage of talent. There is a shortage of *work-readiness,* and it is priced into every African facility.

Utilisation, outage, ROI and skills findings: McKinsey & Company, November 2025.

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03 WHY THE GAP PERSISTS

Four reasons graduates never reach *the data centre floor.*

Industry research conducted in partnership with the Digital Investment Facility (DIF) keeps surfacing the same four structural failures between the classroom and the control room.

01

Training is too theoretical

Classrooms cannot replicate a the challenges of a live facility - load, heat, alarms, pressure. Graduates know the diagram, not the room.

02

Certificates don't equal readiness

A certificate proves knowledge, not on-the-floor capability. Hiring managers need both before they trust someone with uptime.

03

CVs carry no site exposure

Recruiters screen for real data centre experience and almost never find it in a graduate application.

04

No structured pathway exists

The route from learner to data centre professional is undefined. Talent leaks away to other industries before it ever reaches yours.

Each failure is fixable. Fixing all four takes *a pipeline, not a course.*

RESEARCH PARTNER

Developed with Digital Investment Facility - shaping the Academy's curriculum, benchmarks and standards.

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04 THE ANSWER

Introducing the *IBTC Data Centre Academy*

One vendor-neutral pipeline that finds high-potential people, trains them against international certification, and lands them on your floor through a live internship.

We are not an operator. We do not hire from this pool. We exist to staff your facility.

01

Identify

We can assist with upskilling your current DC staff members, or source new, high-potential candidates with the right aptitude.

02

Certify

Structured, industry-aligned training with international certification and real-world exposure at every stage.

03

Deploy

Certification is complemented by practical data centre experience, creating job-ready candidates or equipping your existing staff for career advancement.

OUR ECOSYSTEM

01 Candidates
Screened students entering the pipeline

02 Training providers
Structured tuition & live labs

03 Certification bodies
Schneider Electric · EPI (EXIN)

04 Operators — you
Internship hosts & employers

05 Professional bodies
Membership & standards · ADCA

06 Placement
The bridge between classroom & control room

> ***"We're giving operators a mechanism to grow the workforce their facilities will need as Africa's digital infrastructure continues to expand."***
>
> Nikki Maritz, IBTC CEO

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05 — THE CURRICULUM

Two certifications. One *work-ready* graduate.

The DCCA pathway runs from fundamentals to advanced operations — certified at each level, and finished on a live floor.

DCCA I · ±3 WEEKS → DCCA II · 3 MONTHS INCL. PRACTICAL TRAINING

DCCA I · FOUNDATION

Data Centre Fundamentals

± 3 WEEKS · BLENDED DELIVERY

- Data centre infrastructure & operations
- Technical foundations across subsystems
- Online tuition + live IBTC tutorials
- Guided data centre site exposure

CERTIFICATION

Certified Data Centre Associate (DCCA®)

Schneider Electric University

DCCA II · INTERMEDIATE

Advanced Data Centre Operations

3 MONTHS · BLENDED DELIVERY

- In-depth operational knowledge
- Resilience, redundancy & uptime tiers
- Structured learning + live classes
- Practical, on-site training at a data centre

CERTIFICATION

EPI Certified Data Centre Associate (CDCA®)

EXIN-examination

Double-certified
SE University + EPI (EXIN)

Site-experienced
Hands-on at a partner DC floor

Ready on day one
Placed into entry-level roles via DCE

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06 — THE PARTNERSHIP

Try *before* you hire.

Sponsor a cohort and you evaluate screened, certified, site-exposed candidates in your own facility — before you make a single hiring decision.

01

Evaluate candidates before hiring decisions

02

Access certified, work-ready talent

03

Cut time-to-hire and onboarding cost

04

Build a scalable, low-risk pipeline

IF YOU'RE AN OPERATOR

This is your pipeline.

Host interns, hire graduates, shape the curriculum.

IF YOU'RE A PARTNER

Join the ecosystem.

Training, certification and professional bodies.

IF YOU WANT TALENT

Sponsor a cohort.

First-look access, zero obligation to hire.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

How do we partner with the Academy?

Sponsor students, or upskill current staff in an upcoming cohort. We map your hiring needs to the programme and you get first-look at every graduate.

How long until candidates are work-ready?

DCCA I runs ±3 weeks; the full pathway takes roughly three months.

What's the commitment on us?

Minimal. The IBTC Data Centre Academy and partners handle tuition, certification and assessment.

Are we obligated to hire?

No. You evaluate candidates in real conditions and decide. IBTC is vendor-neutral and never hires from this pool.

Ready to train your first cohort?
Let's scope it out.

BOOK A CALL

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BOOK A CONSULTATION

Your next control room shouldn't be *empty.*

A 30-minute call: the roles you're hiring for, how partnering works, and the right pipeline for your facility.

BOOK A CALL →

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