

BITCOIN: AFRICA'S GUIDE TO FREEDOM MONEY



AFRICAN BITCOINERS

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Chapter 1: What is money	3
Learning from History	3
Chapter 2: The Problem with Fiat & Why Bitcoin Matters for Africa	8
The History of Money in Africa	8
Influence of the World Bank and IMF	10
Inflation & Currency Depreciation (Case Studies: Nigeria, Zimbabwe, etc.)	10
Financial Exclusion in Africa	12
1. Limited Access to Traditional Banking	12
2. Remittances and Cross-Border Trade Challenges	13
3. Limitations of Mobile Money Services	13
The Bottom Line	13
Chapter 3: What is Bitcoin & How It Solves Africa's Problem	14
What Is Bitcoin Really?	14
How Does Bitcoin Solve Africa's Financial Challenges?	15
Bitcoin As Money	17
Bitcoin's Deflationary Nature vs. African Currencies	19

Chapter 4: How Bitcoin Works	20
Bitcoin Transactions: How Money Moves Without Banks	20
Key Concepts Behind Bitcoin Transactions	22
Why is Bitcoin So Secure	23
The Lightning Network: Making Bitcoin Faster & Cheaper	24
Why the Lightning Network is a Game-Changer for Africa	25
Final Thoughts: Why Understanding Bitcoin Matters	26
Chapter 5: Bitcoin Mining: How New Bitcoins Are Created	27
What is Bitcoin Mining	27
Proof of Work Explained	27
Mining Rewards and Halving Events	29
The Last Bitcoin What Happens Then	30
The Role of Miners in Securing The Network	31
Energy Use & The Debate Around Bitcoin Mining	31
Mining in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities	32
Bitcoin Mining Operations in Africa	33
Bottom Line	34

Chapter 6: How to Get Started With Bitcoin in Africa	35
Step 1 Choosing The Right Wallet	35
Top 5 Desktop Wallets	36
Top 5 Mobile Wallets	38
Step 2: How to Buy Bitcoin in Africa	40
Step 3: Storing Bitcoin Safely	40
Step 4: Spending & Using Bitcoin in Africa	41
Final Thoughts	42
Chapter 7: The Philosophy of Bitcoin Maximalism	44
Why Bitcoin & Not Altcoins ?	44
The Decentralization Argument	45
Bitcoin As Sound Money	45
Avoiding Scams & Ponzi Schemes in Crypto	46
The Bottom Line:Why Bitcoin Only	46
Chapter 8: Bitcoin For Financial Growth & Economic Freedom	48
Bitcoin For Savings & Wealth Creation	48
Bitcoin For Business: Accepting BTC Payments	49
Bitcoin & Human Rights (Censorship Resistant Money)	49

How Bitcoin Empowers Women & Small Businesses in Africa	50
Chapter 9: Bitcoin Community & Advocacy in Africa	51
The African Bitcoin Ecosystem	51
Key Drivers of Bitcoin Adoption In Africa	52
Key Players In the African Bitcoin Ecosystem	53
Key Challenges	57
Opportunities For Growth	57
Regional Analysis	58
Geographic Distribution of Activity	59
The Faces Behind Bitcoin Revolution in Africa	60
Future Outlook	60
Conclusion	61

CHAPTER 1 WHAT IS MONEY



What is Money?

Money isn't just paper, coins, or numbers in your phone app. It's a tool we all use to swap our time and talents for the things we need, food, shelter, school fees, and the things we love, like a nice outfit or a special treat for your family. When you know how money works, you can manage it better.

Learning from History

History is a powerful teacher. It shows us how money has evolved over time and how its purpose has shifted. Many believe money is simply whatever the government says it is, but history tells a different story. This chapter will explore how money emerged naturally from people's needs and how governments later took control. By the end of this chapter, you'll understand:

- What makes money valuable
- How societies naturally picked money
- How governments took over money and changed its purpose

Long before banks, mobile apps and Mobile money, people used the barter system. The barter system was indeed the first known mode of exchange, where people traded what they had for what they needed. For instance, a cow herder who needed maize might exchange a cow with a maize farmer who needed a cow. But this system was flawed, what if the maize farmer wasn't interested in a cow? Or how many bags of maize would be a fair trade for a single cow? Was maize even durable enough to store the cow herder's wealth? Barter quickly became messy and inconvenient. People started desiring items that could serve as a:

- Medium of exchange: something everyone accepts for trade,
- Unit of account: a standard way to measure value,
- Store of value: something that keeps its worth over time.



Over time, different communities discovered specific items that nearly everyone agreed were valuable. For instance, cowry shells were popular across Africa (and parts of Asia) because they were lightweight, hard to fake, and easy to carry. In West Africa, Manillas (metal bracelets) were common, while beads served as currency in Southern Africa. Salt served as currency in many regions, including Ancient Rome (where soldiers sometimes received salt as part of their wages, hence the word "salary"). Overtime, gold became a global favorite, prized for its rarity, beauty, and durability.

- Scarce (not easy to find or produce),
- Portable (simple to transport),
- Durable (hard to destroy),
- Divisible (could be portioned out into smaller amounts),
- Widely Accepted (people trusted and recognized their value).

	Bitcoin	Gold	Fiat	
Scarce	~	~	×	Both gold and Bitcoin are scarce. Fiat currencies can be printed at the whim of the issuing authority.
Divísible	~	×	~	Gold is divisible into small pieces, but there are physical limitations, Bitcoin can be divided into a hundred millionth of a Bitcoin (satoshis, or sats). Fiat currencies can also be divided, but not in the same way as Bitcoin.
Portable	~	×	~	Bitcoin is portable; private keys can be transported on a piece of paper or USB stick. Gold is not very portable because of its weight. Fiat currencies are portable, but capital controls and regulations can make sending large amounts difficult.
Censorship resistant	~	×	×	Bitcoin transactions are peer-to- peer and don't require third parties. Gold is hard to transport, making it easy to seize. Financial institutions can block fiat currency transfers.
Verifiable	~	×	×	Bitcoin is verified constantly with mathematical certainty. Both gold and fiat can be counterfieted.
Established History	×	~	×	Bitcoin has a short and volatile history. Gold has the longest and the best track record as money and as something that maintains purchasing power. Fiat currency has a poor track record.
Durable	~	~	×	Bitcoin has shown antifragility to its attacks. Gold is extremely durable: most gold mined remain in circulation. Fiat currencies come and go with governments.

These are what we call the qualities of money. No government forced people to use these things as money, ordinary folks chose them because they worked. In this way, money was born organically from people's everyday needs, not from government rules.

But then governments realized they could harness money as a powerful tool, often without asking for the public's approval. They began by minting coins with cheaper metals, letting them create more currency to fund wars, pay off debts, or finance large projects. People still believed each coin had the same value, even though it held less precious metal. Over time, this led to higher prices, a loss of trust, and the start of inflation.

Once paper money came into play, things got even trickier. Governments and banks printed notes that were supposed to be redeemable for gold or silver. As long as there was enough gold or silver in reserve, people were happy to trust these paper notes. But eventually, the gold backing was removed altogether, giving governments free rein to print as much money as they wanted. This system is called fiat currency, money backed only by faith in the government. A single signature or a quick decision by a small group in power can pump trillions of new units into the economy, potentially dooming a whole nation to suffer inflation and economic hardship. In extreme cases, entire currencies collapse, leaving ordinary people to bear the brunt of financial chaos.

In 2009, an anonymous individual (or group) called Satoshi Nakamoto launched Bitcoin with a bold idea: put the power of money back in the hands of everyday people. Since then, it has grown into a global movement driven by transparency, freedom, and innovation. As we move forward, we'll uncover how Bitcoin works, why it matters, and how it can empower you, no matter where you call home. So let's keep going, this is only the beginning of our journey!



THE PROBLEM WITH FIAT MONEY & WHY BITCOIN MATTERS FOR AFRICA



CHAPTER 2

The Problem with Fiat Money & Why Bitcoin Matters for Africa

Money is central to achieving our full potential. For a long time, money issues have stood in the way of Africa's growth. In the previous chapter, we learned how money started. Now, let's talk about government-controlled (or "fiat") money, why it can be a problem in Africa, and how Bitcoin might be a solution.

The History of Money in Africa

Africa's story with money goes back centuries. Long before colonial powers arrived, people traded goods like gold, salt, cowry shells, beads, and cloth. Famous empires such as Mali and Songhai grew wealthy from gold and built major trade hubs like Timbuktu.

When European colonial forces took control, they exploited Africa's resources, like gold, rubber, diamonds, and crops, and often exchanged them for paper money or cheap goods. A grim example is the use of copper manilla bracelets during the transatlantic slave trade. Enslavers sourced copper from Cornwall in England, mixing it with cheaper metals to maximize profits.

These manillas were then traded for enslaved Africans, who were forcibly transported to Europe and the Americas. While some African traders tried to test the manillas for quality by hammering them (a bent bracelet meant purer copper), many still ended up with inferior metal. This extraction of wealth and exploitation of African labor fueled European economic growth, leaving local communities with little in return.

After independence, many African nations introduced their currencies (like the Nigerian Naira or Ghanaian Cedi), yet some remained heavily influenced by former colonial powers. A prime example is Francophone Africa, where countries like Mali, Benin, Niger, Senegal, and Togo use the CFA franc. This currency is used across two regions in West and Central Africa and is loosely pegged to the euro, meaning its value is tied to the euro at a fixed rate, but the countries using it don't control the peg.

Even though these countries are in Africa, the CFA franc is printed in France, specifically at the Bank of France's facility in Chamalières, and has been since 1945.

While it's connected to the euro, it's not equal in value—currently, 655.957 CFA francs equal 1 euro. So if someone from Senegal or Benin travels to France, they must exchange their CFA francs and lose value in the process. Many critics see this arrangement as a form of neocolonialism because the countries using the CFA franc don't have full control over their monetary policies, including inflation, interest rates, or currency supply. In essence, their economies are still tethered to a European system—long after independence.

Influence of the World Bank and IMF

Beyond the CFA Franc zone, many African countries do have central banks—like the Bank of Ghana or the Central Bank of Nigeria, and they print their currency (though some still depend on foreign printers). However, these nations also turn to major lenders like the World Bank or the IMF for financial support. In return, they often have to follow strict rules about spending, interest rates, and economic reforms—rules that may not always serve local needs. Heavy debts and the conditions set by these global institutions can reduce a country's freedom to shape its own monetary policy.

On top of that, political uncertainty, fluctuating commodity prices, and external economic pressures can make currencies lose value quickly, pushing people toward so-called "black market" exchange rates or alternative ways to store value. Despite these obstacles, Africans keep showing resilience and creativity

Inflation & Currency Depreciation (Case Studies: Nigeria, Zimbabwe, etc.)

Have you ever noticed that prices keep climbing, even though you're still earning the same amount of money? That's inflation when your money buys less than before.



Note:Higher values indicate weaker Naira.



In Nigeria, for example, the naira's value has dropped sharply. In 2023, 1 US dollar traded at about 460 naira. Today, in 2025, that same dollar costs around 1,575 naira, a steep decline that makes everyday essentials much more expensive.

Zimbabwe also experienced severe inflation, once printing so much money that even simple items cost trillions of ZWL. Reliable current exchange data is difficult to find due to the unstable nature of the currency, but inflation continues to hurt the economy.

These real numbers highlight how uncontrolled money printing affects daily life, making saving, planning, and running businesses much harder.

It's not just Nigeria or Zimbabwe; many African nations face similar inflation challenges.

Financial Exclusion in Africa

1. Limited Access to Traditional Banking

In many parts of Africa, traditional banking isn't easy to access. Maybe there isn't a bank nearby, or the fees are too high. Without a bank, it's tough to save money, pay for things online, or receive help from outside your community.

2. Remittances and Cross-Border Trade Challenges

Africans working abroad send billions of dollars home each year, but fees for sending money can be very high. It can also take days for the money to arrive.

3. Limitations of Mobile Money Services

Mobile money, like M-Pesa in Kenya or MTN Mobile Money in Ghana, makes it easier to send and receive cash through your phone. But these services are still run by companies that follow government rules. Your account can be frozen, you might get extra fees, or you could be refused service.

Bottom Line

Bitcoin is not just another digital payment method; it's a tool for financial freedom in Africa. Many Africans struggle with inflation, weak banking systems, and high costs of sending and receiving money. Bitcoin offers a way around these challenges. With its limited supply, decentralized nature, and global accessibility, Bitcoin presents a promising alternative for saving, transacting, and preserving wealth in Africa.

In the next chapter, we'll dive deeper into what Bitcoin is, how it solves Africa's financial challenges, and how it compares to the qualities of money we discussed in Chapter 1. **CHAPTER 3**

WHAT IS BITCOIN AND HOW IT SOLVES AFRICA'S PRO'BLEMS



CHAPTER 3

What is Bitcoin and How It Solves Africa's Problems

Bitcoin is digital money that addresses many of the financial challenges Africans face daily, from inflation to expensive crossborder payments. In this chapter, we'll break down what Bitcoin is, why it matters, and how it's already changing lives across Africa.

What is Bitcoin, Really?

Bitcoin is a digital currency launched in 2009 by an anonymous creator, Satoshi Nakamoto. Unlike traditional money printed by governments, Bitcoin is decentralized, no one controls it. Imagine a public spreadsheet everyone can check, but no one can alter without everyone's consensus—that's the blockchain, where all Bitcoin transactions are recorded.

Bitcoin is divided into smaller units called satoshis, with one Bitcoin equaling 100 million satoshis. This makes it possible for anyone to own and use even a fraction of a Bitcoin, making it highly inclusive. For example one Nigerian Naira is currently worth 1 satoshis, one South African Rand is worth 63 satoshis and one Kenyan Shilling is worth 9 satoshis.

Satoshi Nakamoto, the mysterious creator of Bitcoin, disappeared after launching the network, leaving behind a significant stash of Bitcoin that has remained untouched. Many believe Nakamoto vanished to ensure Bitcoin remained a decentralized system free from any individual's control. Today, Bitcoin is maintained by a global community of users, miners, and developers who collectively decide on any changes to the network. This opensource model ensures no government or single entity can manipulate its rules, reinforcing Bitcoin's reliability as an independent financial system for all.

How Does Bitcoin Solve Africa's Financial Challenges?

Bitcoin helps Africans bypass unreliable financial systems, avoid expensive fees, and secure our money. It serves as a store of value, a reliable means for cross-border exchange, and a hedge against inflation for Africans seeking financial stability.

• **No More Inflation from Overprinting:** Only 21 million bitcoins will ever exist.

Unlike local currencies that lose value when governments print more money, Bitcoin's limited supply protects your savings. For example, in Zimbabwe, hyperinflation once caused prices to double every day. Many citizens turned to Bitcoin to protect their savings from losing value overnight.

- Your Savings Can Grow: Bitcoin's scarcity often increases its value. In Nigeria, during the Naira's rapid devaluation in 2021, Bitcoin trading surged as people sought refuge in a currency that wouldn't lose value overnight.
- Accessible to Everyone: Bitcoin doesn't require a bank account. Services like Machankura let users send Bitcoin with basic mobile phones. In rural Kenya, where banking infrastructure is sparse, Bitcoin offers financial access to farmers and small business owners.
- *Affordable, Fast Payments Across Borders:* Sending money from the UK to Ghana through traditional services can cost up to 8% in fees, and from the US to Nigeria up to 9.98%. Bitcoin's Lightning Network allows near-instant global transfers with fees often under one cent, saving families and businesses millions annually.

• *Secure Transactions:* Bitcoin's blockchain records every transaction publicly. This security has helped small businesses in Africa accept payments without fear of fraud because the money clears instantly.

Bitcoin as Money

Remember the Qualities of Money from Chapter 1? Let's see how Bitcoin compares to those qualities of money. Bitcoin functions as money by possessing key characteristics that make it an ideal medium of exchange, store of value, and unit of account.

- Scarcity: With only 21 million bitcoins ever to exist, it is one of the most scarce assets in history. Unlike fiat currencies, which can be printed endlessly, Bitcoin's fixed supply prevents devaluation meaning things get cheaper over time when priced in Bitcoin.
- **Portability:** Bitcoin is digital, meaning you can carry your entire wealth on a phone, a USB drive, or even in your memory (via a seed phrase).
- Durability: Unlike cash that deteriorates or gold that can be stolen or eroded, Bitcoin is digital and cannot wear out.
 It remains functional as long as the network exists.

- *Divisibility:* A single Bitcoin can be divided into 100 million satoshis, allowing microtransactions and enabling people of all financial backgrounds to participate.
- **Portability:** Bitcoin is digital, meaning you can carry your entire wealth on a phone, a USB drive, or even in your memory (via a seed phrase).
- *Acceptance:* The number of businesses, individuals, and even governments adopting Bitcoin is growing steadily every day, especially in Africa, where financial independence is a major concern.

While some people argue that gold is still a superior store of value, Bitcoin brings a new level of accessibility and efficiency. Here's a comparison:

QUALITY	BITCOIN	GOLD
Scarcity	21 Million coins (fixed Supply)	Limited but new
		gohtiisurainstyl
Portability	Digital accessible on phones	Heavy, physical
	Digital, accessible on phones	asset
Durability	Digital powear or tear	Physical, can
	Digital, no wear of tear	degrade over time
Divisibility	Exactional transactions possible	Hard to divide
	Fractional transactions possible	without loss
Acceptance	Growing globally, especially in	Accepted worldwide
	Africa	historically

While gold has long been a trusted store of value, Bitcoin's digital nature makes it more versatile, especially for Africans needing fast, cheap, and reliable financial tools. Bitcoin empowers Africans with financial freedom, protecting savings from inflation and enabling secure trade.

Bitcoin's Deflationary Nature vs. African Currencies

African currencies often lose value over time due to inflation, as governments print more money to cover expenses (and line their own pockets!). Bitcoin, however, is designed to be deflationary because its supply is capped at 21 million coins. This limited supply helps Bitcoin increase in value over time, unlike many African currencies that suffer from inflation. With fewer bitcoins available as time goes on, its value grows over the long run, offering a more stable store of value for Africans looking to protect their wealth.

Have you struggled with the rising cost of living due to inflation? Imagine if your money gained value instead.

Next, we'll dive into how Bitcoin works, and why its design stands apart.

CHAPTER 4

HOW BITCOIN WORKS



CHAPTER 4

How Bitcoin Works

Bitcoin might seem complicated at first, but don't worry, we'll break it down in the simplest way possible. By the end of this chapter, you'll understand how Bitcoin transactions work, what happens behind the scenes, and why the *Lightning Network* (to be discussed in chapter 5) makes Bitcoin faster and more practical for everyday use.

Bitcoin Transactions: How Money Moves Without Banks

Imagine you want to send Bitcoin to a friend, buy something online, or pay for a service. How does that work? Let's say **Amina in Nigeria** wants to send **0.01 Bitcoin** to her friend **Kofi in Ghana**. Here's what happens step by step:

- **1.** *Amina opens her Bitcoin Wallet* and enters Kofi's Bitcoin address (like a bank account number). She types in the amount and presses 'send.'
- *2. The transaction is broadcast to the Bitcoin network,* where thousands of computers (nodes) check if Amina really has that Bitcoin to send.

- **3.** *Miners bundle Amina's transaction into a "block" with others,* then compete to solve a math puzzle to add the block to the blockchain.
- 4. The first miner to solve the puzzle gets rewarded with new Bitcoin (this is called a *block subsidy*), and Amina's transaction is confirmed and added to the blockchain permanently.
- **5.** *Kofi receives the Bitcoin,* and it now belongs to him. The transaction cannot be changed or reversed.

This process usually takes around **10 minutes** for full confirmation. Now, let's break down the key parts involved.



Key Concepts Behind Bitcoin Transactions

Instead of listing technical terms upfront, let's introduce them naturally as they appear in the process:

Bitcoin Address → Like a bank account number, it's where you receive Bitcoin.

Private Key → Your secret password that controls your Bitcoin.
Whoever has it owns the Bitcoin.

Bitcoin Wallet \rightarrow A digital app or hardware device that stores your Bitcoin private key and allows sending/receiving.

Blockchain \rightarrow A public ledger that records every Bitcoin transaction permanently.

Miners \rightarrow Computers that verify transactions and add them to the blockchain in exchange for Bitcoin rewards.

Nodes → Computers that store the blockchain and help verify transactions, making sure nobody cheats.

Transaction Fee → A small fee paid to miners to process transactions. Each of these pieces works together to keep Bitcoin secure, decentralized, and borderless.

Why is Bitcoin So Secure?

One big question people ask is: **"Can Bitcoin be hacked?"** Despite 16 years and the biggest bounty in history (2 trillion dollars), no one has managed so far – and here's why:

- Bitcoin is decentralized → Unlike banks, no single company or government controls Bitcoin. Instead, thousands of computers worldwide maintain and verify the blockchain, making hacking nearly impossible.
- Every transaction is public → All transactions are stored on the blockchain. If someone tried to cheat the system, everyone else in the network would notice and reject the fraud.
- Altering Bitcoin's history is impossible → Because each new block connects to the one before it, changing one transaction would require redoing the entire blockchain, an impossible task requiring more computing power than the entire world combined.

Bitcoin's security is why **people in unstable economies trust it more than their own local currency,** no single leader or politician can decide to print more Bitcoin and reduce its value.

The Lightning Network: Making Bitcoin Faster & Cheaper

The Bitcoin Network is great for security, but waiting **10** *minutes for every payment* is too slow for everyday use. Imagine trying to buy coffee and having to wait that long at the counter! That's why developers from our global Bitcoin community built the *Lightning Network*, a second layer on top of Bitcoin that allows for instant, nearly free transactions.

Let's say Amina wants to pay for lunch using Bitcoin, but she doesn't want to wait 10 minutes. Here's how the Lightning Network helps:

- **1.** *Amina loads Bitcoin into her Lightning wallet*, like putting money into a prepaid card.
- 2. She scans a QR code from the restaurant and pays instantly no waiting, and no expensive fees.
- **3.** The restaurant gets the Bitcoin immediately, and the transaction doesn't clog the main Bitcoin blockchain.

4. Later, if needed, Amina and the restaurant can settle their balances on the main Bitcoin network.



Why the Lightning Network is a Game-Changer for Africa

- Microtransactions become possible → Imagine paying for a bus ride, buying street food, or sending 50 cents to a friend, something impossible with traditional banks.
- International remittances cost almost nothing → Sending money from the US or Europe to Africa using Bitcoin's Lightning Network costs less than a cent and happens in seconds.
- People without bank accounts can still use it → As long as you have a phone, you can use Bitcoin—even without the internet (thanks to services like Machankura). You don't need permission from anyone and there are no forms to fill out.

Final Thoughts: Why Understanding Bitcoin Matters

Bitcoin is a **completely new way of thinking about money**. Unlike government currencies, which can be inflated, restricted, or controlled, Bitcoin gives power back to the people.

It allows **Africans to save, send, and spend money freely**, without relying on banks or remittance services that take large cuts. By understanding how Bitcoin works, you're not just learning about digital money—you're learning about financial independence.

In the next chapter, we'll explore **how Bitcoin is mined**, how new bitcoins are created, and why this process is crucial to the security and decentralization of Bitcoin.



BITCOIN MINING



CHAPTER 5

Bitcoin Mining: How New Bitcoin is Created

Bitcoin mining is the backbone of the Bitcoin network. It secures transactions, issues new bitcoins, and ensures that Bitcoin remains a decentralized and trustless system. In this chapter, we'll break down how mining works, why it matters, and how it impacts Africa.

What is Bitcoin Mining?

Bitcoin mining is the process by which transactions are confirmed to the blockchain and new bitcoins are created. Unlike traditional money, which is printed by central banks, Bitcoin is **earned** through mining. Think of it like digital gold mining, but instead of digging into the earth, miners solve complex mathematical puzzles to earn a reward.

Proof of Work Explained

Mining uses a system called **Proof of Work (PoW)** to validate transactions and add them to the blockchain. Here's how it works:
- 1. When someone sends Bitcoin, their transaction joins a pool of unconfirmed transactions known as "the mempool".
- 2. Miners compete to solve a cryptographic puzzle that requires massive computational power.
- 3. The first miner to solve the puzzle gets to add a new "block" of transactions to the blockchain.
- 4. This new block is verified by other nodes in the network to ensure accuracy.
- 5. The miner is rewarded with transaction fees and new bitcoin from the included transactions.



Mining Rewards and Halving Events

Miners are incentivized with rewards. Initially, Bitcoin miners earned **50 BTC per block**, but every *four years*, this amount is cut in half—a process called *Bitcoin halving*. This controlled supply ensures that Bitcoin remains scarce and valuable.

YEAR	BTC PER BLOCK
2009	50 BTC
2012	25 BTC
2016	12.5 BTC
2020	6.25 BTC
2024	3.125 BTC
2028	1.5625 BTC
2032	0.78125 BTC
2040	0.1953125 BTC
2136	0.0000001 BTC
2140	Last Bitcoin projected to be mined



MINING REWARDS 2009-2024

This gradual reduction in new supply makes Bitcoin more valuable over time. It also means that fewer bitcoins are issued as time goes on. Eventually, the block reward will become so small that no new bitcoins will be created.

The Last Bitcoin: What Happens Then?

You might be wondering, **"What happens when all 21 million** *bitcoins are mined*?"

The last Bitcoin is projected to be mined around the year **2140**. After that, no more bitcoins will ever be created. But don't worry, miners will still have a reason to keep the network running. Once all bitcoins are mined, *transaction fees* will be the only rewards miners receive. Every time you send Bitcoin, you include a small fee as an incentive for miners to process and confirm your transaction. These fees will continue to support miners and secure the network, even without block rewards. This makes Bitcoin a truly *deflationary currency*, as no more can be created, and its value is likely to increase over time due to limited supply.

The Role of Miners in Securing the Network

Miners do more than just earn rewards; they help protect the Bitcoin network. By channeling massive amounts of energy they solve Proof-of-work puzzles, that prevent fraud, double-spending, and attacks from malicious actors. The more miners there are, the more secure Bitcoin becomes.

Energy Use & The Debate Around Bitcoin Mining

Why does Bitcoin mining need to use a lot of electricity? Think of it like a wall of energy around your money. If someone wants to try and steal your savings they have to bring even more energy and that has become an impossible task. This energy usage ties Bitcoin to the real world. Bitcoin is not merely some computer code, it is secured by real-world energy that cannot be replicated. That is why Bitcoin can never be replicated.

This energy usage has led to debates about its environmental impact. However, many miners are turning to renewable energy sources like hydro, solar, and wind power. Countries with surplus energy, like Ethiopia and Kenya, have the potential to benefit from **sustainable Bitcoin mining.**

Mining in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities

Africa faces unique challenges in Bitcoin mining:

- *High electricity costs:* Many countries struggle with expensive or unreliable power.
- *Limited access to mining hardware:* Importing specialized mining machines (ASICs) is difficult due to trade restrictions.
- *Regulatory uncertainty:* Governments are still figuring out how to approach Bitcoin mining.

Despite these challenges, Africa has mining opportunities

- *Renewable energy potential:* Hydropower in Ethiopia, solar energy in North Africa, and geothermal energy in Kenya could make mining eco-friendly.
- *Job creation and economic growth:* Mining operations are providing jobs and stimulating local economies.

Bitcoin Mining Operations in Africa

Bitcoin mining is already happening in various parts of Africa, showing how the continent is leveraging its unique resources. Approximately **3%** *of Bitcoin's global hash rate* originates from Africa. Mining operations are present in countries like Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Zambia, and South Africa.



Mining operations heatmap in Africa

- **Trojan Mining and Suga Mining (Nigeria):** These operations are exploring ways to use Nigeria's abundant natural gas for Bitcoin mining, helping reduce gas flaring and generating local jobs.
- **Gridless (Kenya):** Gridless uses renewable energy sources like hydropower to mine Bitcoin while also providing affordable electricity to local communities, bridging the energy gap.
- Qrb Labs (Ethiopia): Ethiopia is quietly becoming a major Bitcoin mining hub, contributing nearly 80% of Africa's total hash power. Much of this activity is powered by the country's abundant hydropower resources, especially from the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)—Africa's largest hydroelectric dam.

Firms like QRB Labs are pioneering sustainable mining by tapping into cheap and renewable electricity. This approach not only makes mining cost-effective but also helps Ethiopia monetize its surplus energy, which was previously underutilized. With government openness to energy-based investments, Ethiopia is quickly positioning itself as Africa's Bitcoin mining frontier.

These initiatives demonstrate how Bitcoin mining can be environmentally friendly and economically beneficial, turning Africa's natural resources into financial empowerment tools.

Bottom Line

Bitcoin mining is the foundation of the Bitcoin network, ensuring security and decentralization. While Africa faces challenges, the continent's renewable energy potential and growing interest in Bitcoin present significant opportunities for future growth.

In the next chapter, we'll explore how to get started with Bitcoin in Africa—from choosing a wallet to making your first Bitcoin transaction.

BITCOIN VS ALTCOIN



How to Get Started with Bitcoin in Africa

Bitcoin might sound complex, but getting started is easier than you think! Whether you're looking to buy, store, or spend Bitcoin, this chapter will

Step 1: Choosing the Right Wallet

A Bitcoin wallet is like a digital version of your pocket wallet—it's where you store your Bitcoin. There are two main types:

- *Custodial Wallets:* These are managed by companies (like an exchange). They control your Bitcoin for you, which is easier but less secure. Examples include *Binance and Bitnob*.
- Self-Custodial Wallets: You control your own Bitcoin and no one else can access it. This is the safest option, but you must store your backup (seed phrase) securely. Examples include Muun, BlueWallet, and Phoenix Wallet.

Top 5 DESKTOP Wallets



Sparrow Wallet



WHY WE RECOMMEND:

The Bitcoiners wallet. Nothing comes close to this sophisticated desktop wallet when it comes to cold storing your precious Bitcoin. A great UX for users looking for complete control over their Bitcoin storage and transactions.



Wasabi Wallet

WHY WE RECOMMEND:

Relatively easy to use. Simple UI. Gives users the ability to control coin movements.

×	O	O	×	O
Lightning	Coin Control	Coin Join	Multi-Sig	KYC-FREE





Green Wallet

WHY WE RECOMMEND:

A very simple desktop wallet. Green wallet also supports the liquid network, a Bitcoin side chain that helps in scaling Bitcoin payments.

\bigcirc	×	×	\bigcirc	O
Lightning	Coin Control	Coin Join	Multi-Sig	KYC-FREE



WHY WE RECOMMEND:

An outstanding wallet, but it might be a little difficult for new Bitcoiners.

8	\bigcirc	×		
Lightning	Coin Control	Coin Join	Multi-Sig	KYC-FREE

electrux

Electrum Wallet

WHY WE RECOMMEND:

One of the oldest desktop Bitcoin wallets and has recently added Lightning support, although this can be tricky at times.

		×		
Lightning	Coin Control	Coin Join	Multi-Sig	KYC-FREE





Top 5 MOBILE Wallets

Phoenix

Phoenix Wallet

WHY WE RECOMMEND:

Phoenix offers a non-custodial Lightning experience with an excellent user interface. While the fees can be a bit high, its ease of use and straightforward setup make up for it.



QUV

AQUA Wallet

WHY WE RECOMMEND:

Aqua Wallet is easy to navigate for users of all experience levels, offering strong privacy features. It also supports Liquid Bitcoin.

O	O	O	Both	O
KYC Free	Coin Control	Non-Custodial	IOS/Android	Lightning

⊰reez

Breez Wallet

WHY WE RECOMMEND:

Breez features a straightforward and user-friendly interface that makes navigation effortless. It offers moderately affordable Lightning channel setups, supporting both on-chain and invoice payments.

\checkmark			Both	
KYC Free	Coin Control	Non-Custodial	IOS/Android	Lightning









WHY WE RECOMMEND:

Zeus is excellent for connecting to your own Bitcoin node. It supports multisig setups and is great for more advanced users.







Blue Wallet

WHY WE RECOMMEND:

Blue wallet is the best mobile wallet for on-chain storage and transactions. It also has multisig support and, while Lightning support is not native, you can connect to the LNDHub of your node or any external node

0	e	O	Both	O
KYC Free	Coin Control	Non-Custodial	IOS/Android	Lightning

Best Choice for Beginners? Start with a *self-custodial mobile wallet like Pheonix Wallet.* It's user-friendly and supports *Lightning Network* for fast, cheap transactions.

Step 2: How to Buy Bitcoin in Africa

Buying Bitcoin is different from using banks, it's a peer-to-peer system, meaning you can buy directly from others or through an exchange.

Here are some ways to buy Bitcoin in Africa:

Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Trading \rightarrow Platforms like **Paxful, Noones,** and **Binance P2P** allow you to buy Bitcoin from other people using mobile money, bank transfer, or cash.

Bitcoin ATMs → Available in some cities, these machines let you buy Bitcoin using cash.

Exchanges → Apps **Yellow Card, Bitnob, and Machankura** like allow you to buy Bitcoin directly with your local currency.

The advantage of P2P trading over exchanges is that you don't have to give up your privacy, but you do need to keep yourself safe. When using P2P platforms, always use the platform's escrow service to avoid scams.

Step 3: Storing Bitcoin Safely

Security is everything in Bitcoin! Unlike banks, there's no customer support if you lose your funds. Follow these best practices:

- Write down your seed phrase (backup words) and store it offline.
- ◊ Never share your private key or seed phrase with anyone.
- ♥ Use a hardware wallet like Trezor or Coldcard for large amounts.
- 🔅 Enable 2FA (Two-Factor Authentication) on exchanges.

Golden Rule: If you don't control the private keys, you don't truly own your Bitcoin. Not your keys, not your coins!

Step 4: Spending & Using Bitcoin in Africa

Bitcoin isn't just for hodling, it's real money you can spend! Many African businesses now accept Bitcoin. Here's how you can use it:

 Buy Airtime & Data → Services like Sats2Data and Bitrefill let you buy mobile top-ups using Bitcoin.

Shop Online \rightarrow Apps like **Bitnob** and **Bitrefill** allow you to buy gift cards with Bitcoin.

Send Money Across Borders \rightarrow Bitcoin's Lightning Network allows instant remittances for less than a cent in fees.

Join a Circular Economy → In places like Ekiti, Nigeria, and Bitcoin Ekasi and Bitcoin Witsand in South Africa, people trade goods using Bitcoin daily.

Spend Bitcoin Anywhere in Kenya \rightarrow With **Tando**, you can use Bitcoin to pay for almost anything in Kenya, making it easy to transact seamlessly.

Pay with Bitcoin at Pick n Pay Supermarkets in South Africa

Pro Tip: Use Lightning wallets like **Phoenix Wallet** for instant and cheap transactions.

Final Thoughts

Starting with Bitcoin in Africa is easier than ever. Whether you want to save, send, or spend Bitcoin, the tools are available. Just remember:

Choose a **non-custodial** wallet for security. ↓ Buy Bitcoin **safely** via P2P, exchanges, or Bitcoin ATMs. ↓ Store your Bitcoin **securely** by protecting your seed phrase. ↓ Use Bitcoin **for payments** and cross-border transfers to avoid high fees.

Now that you're set-up, let's explore the **philosophy behind Bitcoin and why Bitcoin is different from other cryptocurrencies** in the next chapter!

BITCOIN VS ALTCOIN



Why Bitcoin & Not Altcoins?

Bitcoin maximalism is the belief that Bitcoin is the only true cryptocurrency worth focusing on, while other cryptocurrencies (often called "altcoins") are either unnecessary or risky. In this chapter, we'll explore why Bitcoin maximalists hold this view and how it relates to financial freedom and security, especially in Africa.

Why Bitcoin & Not Altcoins?

We believe that Bitcoin is the most secure, decentralized, and reliable digital currency. Here's why:

- *First Mover Advantage:* Bitcoin was the first cryptocurrency and has the largest, most secure network. Its decentralized nature is unmatched by any altcoin.
- *No Central Authority:* Bitcoin's creator, Satoshi Nakamoto, disappeared after creating it, ensuring no single person or company controls Bitcoin.
- *Hard Money Principles:* Bitcoin's fixed supply of 21 million coins makes it scarce, deflationary, and immune to inflation, unlike fiat money and most altcoins.

The Decentralization Argument

One of the key reasons for Bitcoin maximalism is decentralization. Bitcoin's network is run by thousands of nodes worldwide, making it nearly impossible to shut down or censor.

- *Altcoins vs. Bitcoin:* Most altcoins are more centralized, controlled by a small group of developers or companies. This centralization makes them vulnerable to hacks, manipulation, or government intervention.
- *True Censorship Resistance:* Bitcoin transactions can't be censored or reversed. This is crucial for Africans facing financial restrictions or political instability.

Bitcoin as Sound Money

Bitcoin is considered "sound money" because it maintains its value over time due to its scarcity and decentralization.

- *Store of Value:* Bitcoin is often called digital gold because it is scarce, durable, portable, and easily divisible.
- *Unit of Account:* More people are starting to price goods and services in Bitcoin, especially in countries with unstable currencies.
- *Medium of Exchange:* With the Lightning Network, Bitcoin can be used for daily transactions, making it more practical as money.

Avoiding Scams & Ponzi Schemes in Crypto

The cryptocurrency space is full of scams and Ponzi schemes, often tied to altcoins or "get rich quick" tokens.

- *Pump and Dump Schemes:* Scammers promote a coin, inflate its price, and sell off their holdings, leaving newcomers with worthless tokens.
- *Ponzi Schemes:* Some projects promise high returns for recruiting more investors, without any real value behind them.
- *Security Risks:* Altcoins often have weaker security and can be hacked or manipulated more easily than Bitcoin.

We believe that Bitcoin is the most secure, reliable, and decentralized digital currency.

The Bottom Line: Why Bitcoin Only?

We believe that Bitcoin is the most secure, reliable, and decentralized digital currency. We see Bitcoin as a tool for financial freedom, especially in Africa, where inflation, economic instability, and limited banking access are common.

By focusing on Bitcoin, maximalists aim to promote sound money principles, protect people from scams, and empower Africans with financial sovereignty.

FEATURE	BITCOIN	ALTCOIN
Network Security	Secured by thousands of independent nodes and miners	Often rely on fewer nodes may have more centralization
Decentralizat- ion	Fully decentralized with no central authority	Frequently more centralized, with decisions made by small teams
Monetary Policy	Fixed supply of 21 million coins, algorithmically enforced	Variable supply; may allow for inflation or arbitrary issuance
Transparency	Public, immutable blockchain ledger	Varies; some offer less transparency
Censorship Resistance	High – no single point of control	Lower – susceptible to intervention by developers/ authorities

In the next chapter, we'll explore how Bitcoin supports financial freedom and economic growth in Africa, helping individuals, businesses, and communities thrive.

BITCOIN FOR FINANCIAL FREEDOM & ECONOMIC GROWTH IN AFRICA



Bitcoin for Financial Freedom & Economic Growth in Africa

Bitcoin is a tool for financial empowerment in Africa. With unreliable local currencies, inflation, and restricted access to banking, Bitcoin offers a decentralized and borderless alternative for saving, transacting, and growing businesses. This chapter explores how Bitcoin can foster financial independence and economic growth across the continent.

Bitcoin for Savings & Wealth Protection

Many African currencies lose value due to inflation. Holding wealth in Bitcoin allows people to protect their savings from depreciation. Unlike fiat, which governments can print at will, Bitcoin has a fixed supply of **21** *million coins*, making it a deflationary asset. Africans who save in Bitcoin rather than their national currencies have seen their purshasing power increase over time. Everyone who has ever held Bitcoin for 5 years has come out way ahead. It's not fancy, it does require patience, but it works very well.

For example, during the Naira and Zimbabwean dollar crises, individuals who held Bitcoin instead of local currency managed to preserve their wealth while others saw their savings evaporate. Bitcoin is a tool for financial empowerment in Africa. With unreliable local currencies, inflation, and restricted access to banking, Bitcoin offers a decentralized and borderless alternative for saving, transacting, and growing businesses. This chapter explores how Bitcoin can foster financial independence and economic growth across the continent.

Bitcoin for Business: Accepting BTC Payments

Merchants and businesses across Africa are beginning to accept Bitcoin as payment to avoid the volatility of local currencies and high transaction fees. Accepting Bitcoin provides benefits such as:

- Lower fees than traditional banking or mobile money.
- Instant settlement via the Lightning Network.
- Access to global customers without relying on banks or expensive payment processors.

Businesses in Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa are using Bitcoin to bypass financial restrictions and expand internationally.

Bitcoin & Human Rights (Censorship-Resistant Money)

In many African countries, financial censorship is a reality. Governments have frozen bank accounts of activists, restricted

financial transactions, and limited access to global markets. Bitcoin provides a censorship-resistant way for individuals and organizations to store and transfer wealth freely, without interference.

By removing the ability of governments to control money, Bitcoin ensures financial freedom for all.

How Bitcoin Empowers Women & Small Businesses in Africa

Women and small businesses in Africa often face financial exclusion, with limited access to loans and banking services. Bitcoin helps bridge this gap by enabling:

- *Access to financial tools* without requiring permission from banks.
- **Cross-border trade** for small businesses with no reliance on costly remittance services.
- Secure savings options that protect wealth from inflation.

In rural areas, women's cooperatives have started using Bitcoin to receive payments for goods and services, gaining financial independence and security.

BITCOIN COMMUNITY & ADVOCACY IN AFRICA



Bitcoin Community & Advocacy in Africa

Bitcoin is experiencing rapid growth in Africa, fuelled by a combination of unique challenges and a dynamic, innovative community. This report explores the key aspects of Bitcoin's presence in Africa, including its use cases, the growing ecosystem, and the individuals shaping its future on the continent.

The African Bitcoin Ecosystem

Africa's Bitcoin ecosystem is a rapidly evolving network of individuals, organizations, and infrastructure dedicated to leveraging Bitcoin to address the continent's unique socioeconomic challenges. With a young, tech-savvy population and growing smartphone penetration, Bitcoin adoption is accelerating across Africa, driven by its ability to provide financial inclusion, hedge against inflation, and reduce the cost of remittances.

The African Bitcoin ecosystem is experiencing remarkable growth, with a 77% increase in active projects in just one year, reaching a total of 144 active projects.



BITCOIN ADOPTION MAP

Key Drivers of Bitcoin Adoption in Africa

- *High Inflation Rates*: Many African countries experience high inflation rates and unstable local currencies, eroding purchasing power and savings. Bitcoin serves as a hedge against inflation, offering a deflationary asset with a fixed supply that provides a store of value immune to government monetary policies.
- Lack of Banking Infrastructure: Over 60% of the African population remains unbanked. Bitcoin enables financial inclusion by allowing anyone with a smartphone and internet connection to access a decentralized, borderless financial system.

- High Remittance Costs: Africans living abroad send over \$50 billion annually to their families, with fees often exceeding 8–10%.
 Bitcoin drastically reduces remittance costs, enabling nearinstant, low-cost international transfers without intermediaries.
- *Barriers to Cross–Border Trade*: Currency exchange fees and delays hinder trade within Africa and with global markets. Bitcoin acts as a universal currency, removing exchange fees and facilitating seamless cross–border transactions
- Corruption and Lack of Transparency: Mismanagement of funds and corruption are pervasive in many African institutions. Bitcoin's blockchain is immutable and transparent, allowing for traceable transactions and reducing opportunities for corruption.
- *Barriers to Wealth Preservation:* Limited access to stable, long-term investment options restricts wealth preservation. Bitcoin provides a decentralized and secure store of value, allowing Africans to protect their wealth over time.

Key Drivers of Bitcoin Adoption in Africa

Bitcoin Education

Education initiatives have been critical for increasing Bitcoin adoption. Kenyan projects like **Bitcoin Dada** and **The Core**, Nigerian

initiatives such as **Citrusrate**, **Ipay BTC**, and **Digioats**, Ghanaian efforts like **Bitcoin Dua**, and Africa–wide programs like **African Bitcoiners Bitcoin For Beginners Course**, **Exonumia**, **Trezor Academy**, and **Crack the Orange** are a few of African Bitcoin Education Organisations driving this change

Conferences

Events like the **Africa Bitcoin Conference**, **Adopting Bitcoin**, **Bitcoin Mastermind**, and **Africa Minning Summit**, **Btrust Developer Day**, bring stakeholders together to share knowledge and drive adoption.

Businesses

Companies like **Bitpension**, **Bitcoin Only**, and **Money Badger** provide platforms and services to facilitate Bitcoin use, including trading, remittances, and savings solutions..

Retail

Increasing numbers of merchants accept Bitcoin for goods and services, with initiatives like **Juicy B**, **Pick and Pay South Africa**, and **Meta Coffee** etc.

Non-Profits

This includes organizations that use Bitcoin to fund communitydriven charities, such as **Bitcoin Babies** and **Women Bitcoin Club**.

Non-Profit Organizations

like the **Human Rights Foundation (HRF)** and **Btrust**, as well as for-profit organizations like **Recursive Capital** and **Geyser**, support education and adoption through grants, crowdfunding, and donations.

Regular Meetups

Communities in major cities like **Lagos**, **Nairobi**, and **Cape Town** host regular Bitcoin meetups to engage and educate local participants.

Tech Meetups

Developers and technologists gather at events such as **Bitdevs Accra**, **Bitdevs Nairobi**, **Bitdevs Lagos**, and **Bitdevs Abuja**. Organisations like **Btrust Builders** and **Africa Free Routing** host events like Lightning boot camps, Bitcoin Builders training, and hackathons to build Africa focused Bitcoin solutions.

Communities

Grassroots movements like **Bitcoin Nairobi**, **Bitsaver Eduhub**, **African Bitcoiners**, **Bitcoin Togo Community** localize education and advocacy.

55

Circular Economy Projects

Grassroots movements like **Bitcoin Nairobi**, **Bitsaver Eduhub**, **African Bitcoiners**, **Bitcoin Togo Community** localize education and advocacy.

Media

Platforms like **Satoshi Journal, Bitcoin in Nigeria Media, Bitcoin in Africa Show**, **Orange Sun Twitter Spac**e, and **BLOCC** raise awareness and share updates on Bitcoin adoption.

Mining

Some Bitcoin mining operations across Africa include **Gridless**, **QRB Labs, Trojan Mining, Suga Mines, GAMA**, and **West Data Group**, among others. These entities focus on Bitcoin mining activities, utilizing Africa's renewable energy resources to power their operations.

HODL Technology

Some in the growing list of wallets and services enables secure Bitcoin savings, including **Sparrow Wallet, IpayBTC**, **Bitnob**, and **Machankura**. These platforms emphasize long-term investment and wealth preservation in Bitcoin.

Key Challenges

Lack of Funding for Bitcoin Projects: Many Bitcoin projects across Africa struggle to secure funding and rely heavily on bootstapping.

This lack of financial support has led to numerous initiatives shutting down or becoming inactive.

- Lack of Training on Running Startups: A significant number of Bitcoin educators and builders lack the necessary training to run sustainable startups. This gap often results in the failure of promising initiatives despite their potential impact.
- **Regulatory Uncertainty**: Many African governments have unclear or hostile regulations toward Bitcoin, creating uncertainty for users and businesses.
- **Infrastructure Limitations**: Limited internet penetration and unreliable electricity in some regions hinder Bitcoin adoption.
- Low Financial Literacy: A lack of understanding of Bitcoin and financial technology limits adoption, especially in rural areas.

Opportunities for Growth

• **Bitcoin Education:** With 31 African countries lacking Bitcoin activity, there is a significant opportunity to expand grassroots education initiatives.

- **Lightning Network:** Scaling solutions like the Lightning Network enable low-cost, instant payments, making Bitcoin more accessible for daily transactions.
- **Renewable Energy Mining:** Africa's untapped renewable energy resources can power Bitcoin mining while creating jobs and strengthening grid stability.
- **Cross-Border Trade:** Bitcoin can facilitate seamless trade across Africa's fragmented currency landscape.

Regional Analysis

West Africa: Nigeria leads Bitcoin adoption in West Africa, driven by high inflation and a vibrant tech ecosystem. Ghana is also emerging as a hub for Bitcoin activities.

East Africa: Kenya's mobile money success story Tando makes it a promising market for Bitcoin integration. Ethiopia's renewable energy potential supports mining projects.

Southern Africa: South Africa has a well-developed Bitcoin ecosystem, with robust exchanges, developer communities, conferences and circular economy initiatives.

North Africa: Countries like Egypt and Morocco are seeing growing interest in Bitcoin despite regulatory barriers but no Bitcoin project has emerged from these countries yet.
Central Africa: Bitcoin adoption is slower due to infrastructure challenges but is gaining traction in countries like Cameroon.

Geographic Distribution Activity

COUNTRIES WITH HIGHEST, LOWEST, AND NO BITCOIN ACTIVITY

Highest Bitcoin Activity: Countries like Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa lead in Bitcoin adoption. Nigeria hosts robust ecosystems like **Bitnob**, **Bitcoin Yoruba**, and thriving trading volumes. Kenya excels with projects like **Bitcoin Dada** and **Bitdevs Nairobi**, leveraging its mobile money success. South Africa's **Bitcoin Ekasi** and vibrant tech hubs also stand out.

Lowest Bitcoin Activity: Countries such as Cameroun, Eritrea, Malawi, and Botswana show minimal Bitcoin activity, with emerging but sporadic grassroots projects.

Several African countries have no recorded Bitcoin projects or adoption initiatives. These include the Central African Republic, Chad, Gabon, Lesotho, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, (Comoros, and São Tomé and Príncipe. These regions represent untapped potential for Bitcoin education and ecosystem growth so **if you know anyone from those countries, please share our book!**

The Faces Behind Bitcoin Revolution in Africa

Bitcoin needs Africa, and Africa needs African Bitcoiners. The progress of the Bitcoin revolution in Africa is deeply tied to the men and women who dedicate their lives, time, and efforts to drive projects across the continent despite the challenging terrain. These individuals put everything on the line to ensure Bitcoin adoption grows steadily.

Organizations like the African Bitcoiners highlight the invaluable contributions of these pioneers. Every year, African Bitcoiners publishes a list of Bitcoiners who have pushed boundaries and achieved significant milestones in advancing Bitcoin in Africa.

Future Outlook

The African Bitcoin ecosystem is poised for exponential growth, driven by its unique challenges and opportunities. Education, infrastructure development, and favorable regulations will be critical to unlocking its full potential. Bitcoin can play a transformative role in providing financial freedom, empowering communities, and driving innovation across the continent.

CONCLUSION

Africa's Bitcoin ecosystem is thriving and the progress made so far is thanks to the relentless efforts of individuals and organizations dedicated to educating, building, and empowering communities. Their work underscores that the Bitcoin revolution is as much about people as it is about technology. With collaboration, education, and sustained innovation, Africa has the potential to lead the world in Bitcoin adoption, setting an example of how financial freedom can transform lives and nations. The journey is far from over, and the stakes have never been higher.

To support the growth of the African Bitcoin ecosystem, we encourage individuals and organizations to:

- Invest in education and infrastructure projects.
- Partner with grassroots initiatives to expand outreach.
- Advocate for clear and supportive Bitcoin regulations.

For more on Bitcoin adoption in Africa check out the Africa Bitcoin Ecosystem Infographic and "The Bitcoin Leap: How Bitcoin is transforming Africa" by **Charlene Fadirepo**.



ABOUT AFRICAN BITCOINERS

OUR MISSION

Build a trusted, sustainable community that makes Bitcoin more accessible to the people of Africa.

OUR VISION

Freedom in Africa. Every person has a fair opportunity to reach their full potential.

We believe in a future where Bitcoin unlocks Africa's potential by combating financial inequality and empowering communities with accessible, decentralized solutions.