

# March Disappoints. Drags Down Q1 Perf.

Start-ups in Africa raise \$460m in Q1, despite a promising January.



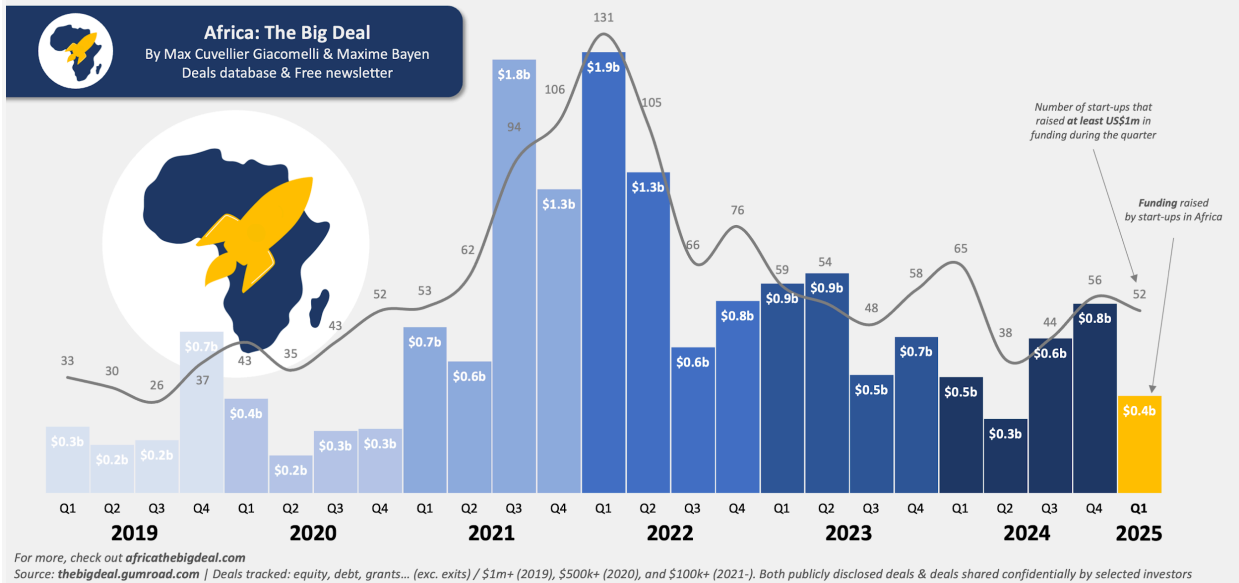
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As you may remember, the ecosystem started the year on a high, with [close to \\$300m raised by start-ups in January](#). February wasn't as good (\$119m), yet we still found [reasons to be optimistic](#). The performance in March was poor in comparison though, as only \$50m in funding were announced, one of the lowest monthly tallies since late 2020. That said, the number of start-ups announcing funding was on par with previous months; the issue is that there was no deals over \$10m announced....

In any case, what does it mean for Q1 2025?

## Funding raised by start-ups in Africa | 2019 – Q1 2025

Total raised (exc. exits) & Number of start-ups raising at least \$1m



As you can imagine, the March counter performance dragged the numbers down quite a bit. All in all, **start-ups raised \$460m in Q1** through \$100k+ deals (exc. exits), which is actually not much below the Q1 2024 number (\$486m, -5% YoY). The issue is that Q1 2024 already wasn't a particularly good quarter. In fact, Q1 2025 is the second-lowest quarter in terms of start-up funding since late 2020. Things are looking more positive if we focus on the number of start-ups who announced at least \$1m of funding in Q1: with 52, this is aligned with the 2023-2024 average.

Unsurprisingly, **83% of the funding went to the Big Four** with Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa attracting roughly \$100m in funding each (24%, 24% and 22% of the total respectively), followed by Egypt (\$61m, 14%).

Togo completed the top five, thanks to [Gozem's \\$30m Series B funding round](#). **Almost half of the funding (46%) was raised by fintech start-ups** ([\\$53m for LemFi](#), [\\$38m for Naked](#) etc.), followed as usual by energy (18%) and logistics & transportation (10%).

**Just over 2% of the funding was raised by female CEOs** (\$10m), with the largest such round being a [\\$6.2m grant to South African biotech African Biologics](#). If we were to remove grants from the total, the share of funding raised by female CEOs in Q1 2025 would fall to 0.7%. At the end of the day, 79% of the funding went to either solo male founders (11%) or male-only founding teams (67%). Diverse founding teams attracted 20% of the total - which isn't great, but is actually not a bad performance compared to previous quarters. A mere 1% was invested in solo female founders or female-only founding teams...

*OK, Q1 wasn't the best quarter overall, but it's not all doom and gloom if we zoom back and look at longer-term trends. Watch out for our next post to learn more... In the meanwhile, [our database](#) is the place to go if you need access to all the deal data we use for our analyses: we now have just under \$20 billions' worth of deals (inc. exits) since 2019 involving 2,250+ start-ups! And if you like [discounts](#), you'll want to [use this link instead](#) ;) A la semaine prochaine! Max*