



BOLSTERING GOOD GOVERNANCE:

The imperative of inclusion and efficiency

Governance lags behind youth expectations and needs

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The 2018 Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) measures performance of the provision of political, social, and economic public goods and services that every citizen has the right to expect from their state, and that a state has the responsibility to deliver to its citizens. In the IIAG, country performance in delivering governance is measured across key dimensions that effectively assess a country's *Overall Governance* performance (see Figure 1.1).

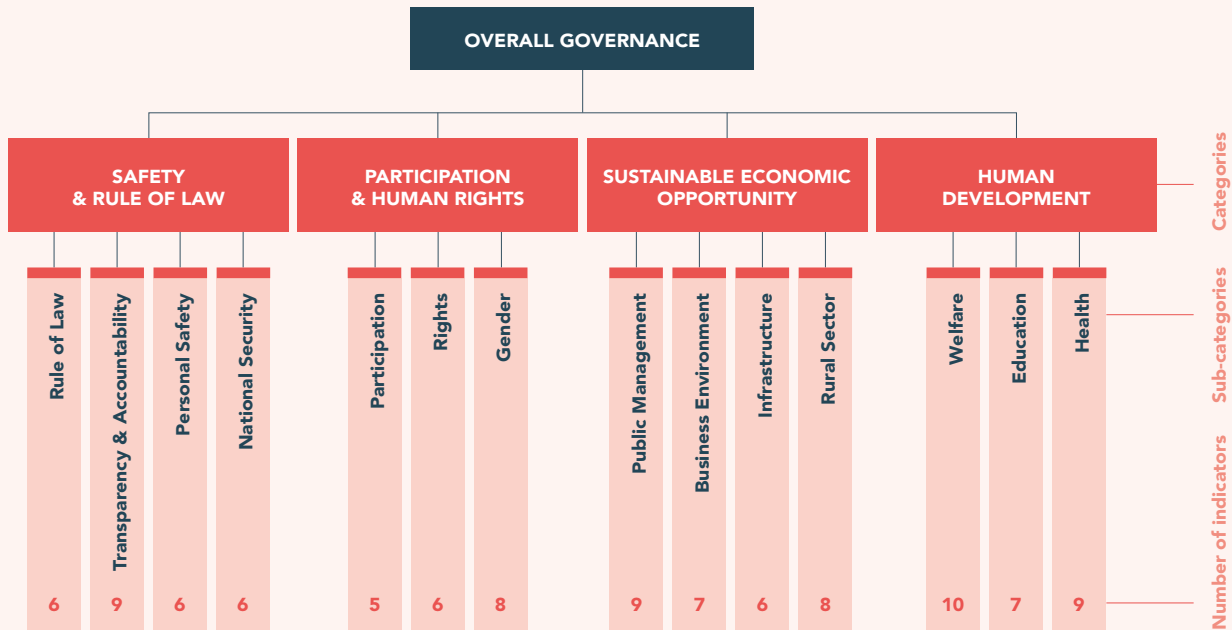
Over the past decade, public governance in Africa remains on average on a moderate upward trajectory, mainly driven by progress in *Gender, Health, and Infrastructure*. The 2018 IIAG shows that approximately 3 out of 4 African citizens live in a country where public governance has improved over the past 10 years. Many positive trends emerge from this year's index. Thirty-four out of 54 African countries have improved in *Overall Governance* over the past decade, with 15 of these having accelerated their pace of improvement in the past five years. Among those, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, and Kenya display the most impressive

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progression, stepping up from 41st, 25th, and 19th ranks out of 54 countries to 22nd, 15th, and 11th over the past decade, respectively. On the continent, improvements stand out in indicators related to *Health*, the most improved of the 14 sub-categories of the IIAG over the past decade, as well as in *Gender and Infrastructure*. There are also recent and welcome improvements in *Rule of Law* and *Transparency & Accountability*, even if scores in the latter are still low.

But despite these improvements, needs and expectations of the continent's youth are not met. Faced with unprecedented demographic growth, key governance areas are not progressing fast enough to keep up with rising demands, and more specifically to answer the growing expectations of

Figure 1.1 Ibrahim Index Of African Governance structure



Source: 2018 Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Mo Ibrahim Foundation. <https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/iiaag/>

Africa’s youth (under 25 years old), who now represent more than 60 percent of our continent’s population and are still expected to increase their number by almost 20 percent in the next decade.

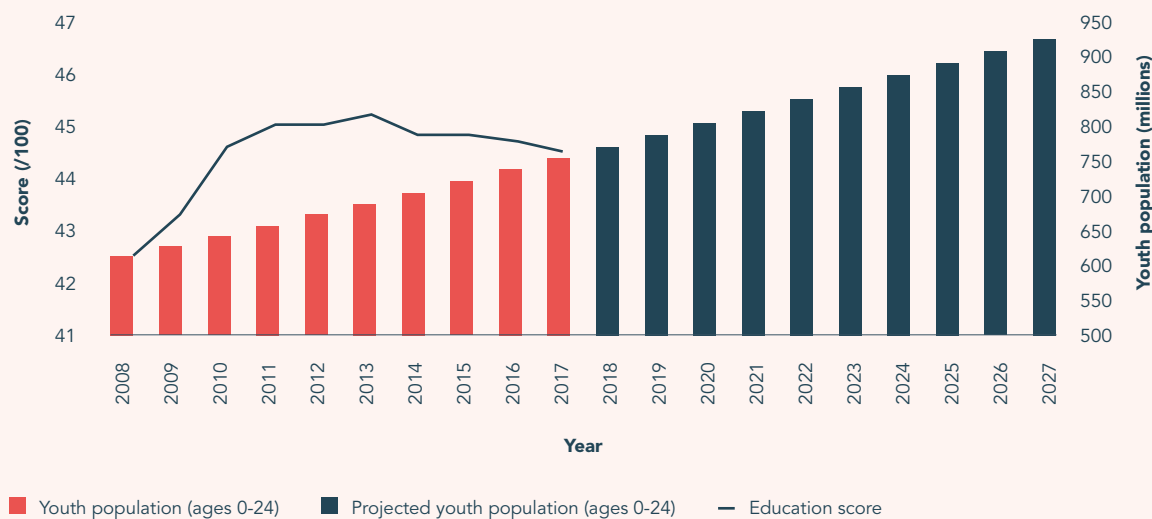
Considering Africa’s youth population growth, it is concerning to see the recent downturn of the African average score for *Education*. For 27 countries—half of African countries—*Education* scores registered deterioration in the past five years, meaning that education outcomes are worsening for more than half (52.8 percent) of Africa’s youth.

Though enrollment levels are higher, this concerning drop is driven by a fall in the indicators measuring whether education is meeting the needs of the economy, as well as education quality and citizens’ expectations of education provision.

For 27 African countries Education scores registered deterioration in the past five years.

Figure 1.2 Education score and youth population (2008-2027)

Average education scores have been declining since 2013 and have not kept up with youth population growth.



Source: 2018 Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Mo Ibrahim Foundation. <https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/iag/>

In a world of globalized information and multiplying social networks, Africa's growing number of young citizens also ask for better rights and participation.

Progress in *Participation & Human Rights* has been registered, and almost 4 out of 5 of Africa's citizens (79.6 percent) live in countries that have progressed in this dimension over the past decade.

However, the increased number of free and fair executive elections does not necessarily translate into a better participatory environment. Alarming, citizens' political and civic space in Africa is shrinking, with worsening trends in indicators measuring civil society participation, civil rights and liberties, freedom of expression, and freedom of association and assembly.

Also, strong macroeconomic growth over the past decade has failed to translate

into progress in *Sustainable Economic Opportunity* for citizens, namely the extent to which governments enable their citizens to pursue economic goals and provide the opportunity to prosper. While Africa's combined GDP has increased by almost 40 percent over the past decade, average progress has been almost null for citizens in *Sustainable Economic Opportunity*. Even if some countries do manage to register progress, almost half (43.2 percent) of Africa's citizens live in one of the 25 countries where *Sustainable Economic Opportunity* has declined over the past 10 years.

The almost stagnant trend then strikes a concerning contrast with demographic growth and youth expectations. Africa's population has increased by 26 percent over the past 10 years and 60 percent of the continent's 1.25 billion people are now under the age of 25 years old. A deteriorating business environment and

high unemployment, among others, are a huge missed opportunity that could become a recipe for disaster even for the largest African economies. Large unemployed populations are bound to fuel further migration flows or political unrest and shake the stability of countries for years to come.

The IAG results confirm that governance must be citizen-centered. Common factors among the best-performing countries in *Overall Governance* are relatively higher scores in the provision of property rights, civil rights and liberties, government accountability, and social welfare policies to their citizens.

The index also confirms that *Rule of Law* and *Transparency & Accountability* are key pillars of good governance. These two sub-categories show the strongest

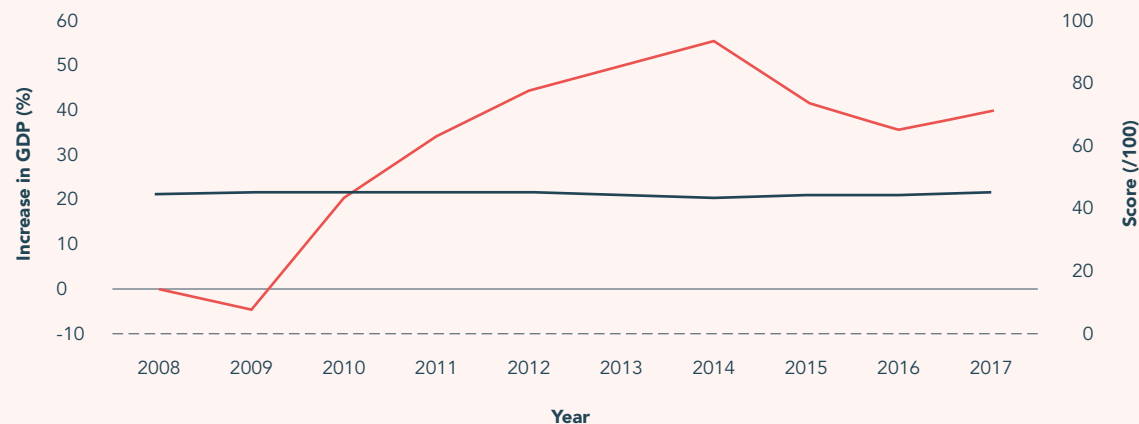
relationships with *Overall Governance* scores. *Transparency & Accountability* is also key for progress in economic opportunity, being strongly correlated to the *Sustainable Economic Opportunity* category and the *Business Environment* sub-category. However, even if recent improvements here are encouraging, *Transparency & Accountability* performance is still low and needs to be further strengthened.

Africa is at a tipping point. We welcome progress in *Overall Governance*, but the lost opportunity of the past decade is deeply concerning. Africa has a huge

Young citizens of Africa currently lack hope, prospects, and opportunities.

Figure 1.3 Sustainable Economic Opportunity and GDP growth

While Africa's combined GDP has increased by almost 40 percent over the past decade, average progress has been almost null for Africa's citizens in Sustainable Economic Opportunity.



— Increase in GDP (%) — Sustainable Economic Opportunity African Average Score
 Source: 2018 Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Mo Ibrahim Foundation. <https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/iag/>

challenge ahead: Its large and youthful potential workforce could transform the continent for the better, but this opportunity is now close to being squandered. Young citizens of Africa currently lack hope, prospects, and opportunities. Their leaders

need to invest in education and speed up job creation to sustain progress and stave off potential deterioration, as well as to make sure the voice and expectations of the youth are included in policymaking. The time to act is now.

VIEWPOINT

Raising the voice of young people in governance

Thione Niang

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01.

Youth in Africa are isolated and underrepresented in governance across the continent. This is often the case in most parts of the world, but the ratio of under-representation of youth in Africa is alarmingly high. They are left out from key decisionmaking processes. In many cases, the younger generation is more knowledgeable, equipped, and prepared to address the fast moving issues of today than the establishment leadership.

With 60 percent of its 1.25 billion people under the age of 25 years old, Africa has the youngest population in the world. But this young majority is not being represented in government. This fundamental disconnect between policymakers and youth amplifies problems and causes African society in general to digress and feel dated.

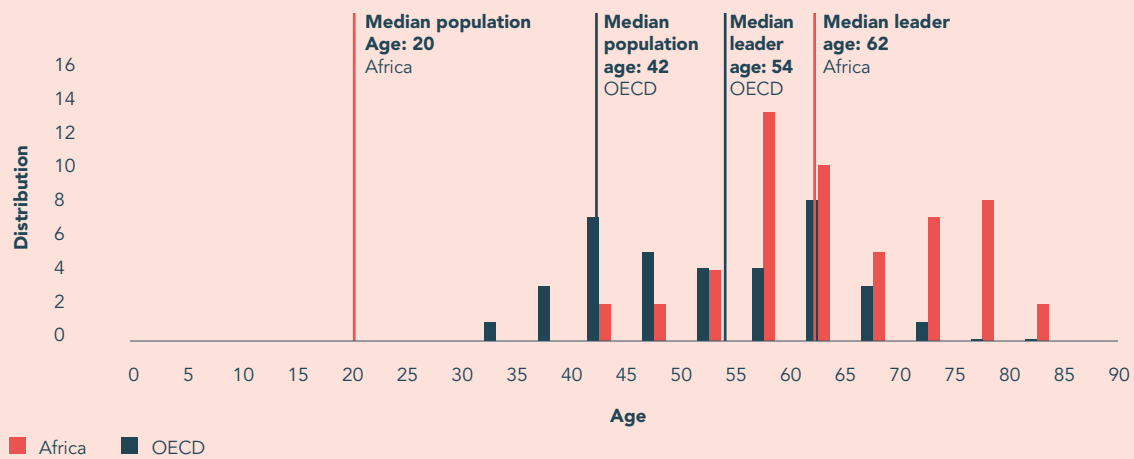
The cries for change from Africa's youth have mostly been ignored. Policymakers pay lip service to the issue, but rarely do anything to correct it. There is no awareness of youth inclusion in the electoral or administrative process. Sadly, this leaves us with old leadership and institutions that are unable to take any meaningful action to address the issues most relevant to young people. If instead governments focused on inclusion, the youth could have tremendous potential to positively affect change and economic growth.

Youth are the most important human capital of any economy. Not only are they agile, adaptable, and receptive, but the modern youth also understand employment in the millennial age. They are tuned in to opportunities of the gig economy, constantly aware of and ready to seize upon the newest and latest trends.

Unfortunately, senior leadership often views the aspirations of the youth as cultural invasion and imperialist influence, nothing to be taken seriously.

Figure 1.4 Old leaders, young population

Africa has the youngest population globally but some of the world's oldest leaders. The median African leader at 62 years old is 8 years older than the median OECD leader. Furthermore, the age gap between the region's population and leaders is 42 years compared to only 12 for the OECD.



Source: Brookings calculations.

Members of Parliament under 40 years of age

The younger population is also not as well represented in African parliaments. On average, only 14 percent of the region's parliamentarians are younger than 40, which is below the world average. It should be expected to be much higher given that 70 percent of the region's population is under 30 years old.



Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union. data.ipu.org

However, there are promising pathways to boost youth empowerment and employment. As I have traveled the continent and worked among young people in over 34 countries, I have seen ways to enhance their social position for better economic and personal well-being.

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Above all else, we need to rethink our educational systems in Africa. The majority of our universities teach from curriculums dated to colonization, especially the Francophone countries. We graduate too many students with education in only the classic studies, like history, philosophy, and sociology. While these are no doubt important subjects, our new educational system needs to train young people for the jobs of the 21st century. We need better training in the sciences as well as soft skills that will help students prepare to be lifelong learners.

What is more, the governments of Africa must wake up and address the brain drain issue. We need to not only create highly skilled youth, but also create the economic environment in Africa for them to want to stay and prosper.

Africa's youth need to be able to take hold of their own destinies in order to provide the continent with a better tomorrow. For the sake of the continent, let us hope that 2019 will be the year to elevate the voice and representation of young people in governance.

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Strategies for winning the fight against corruption

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Former Minister of Finance, Federal Republic of Nigeria

02.

That corruption and poor governance are key factors holding back Africa's development are notions deeply embedded in the literature and thought on Africa's socioeconomic development. What is not so common is discourse and success stories about how to systematically fight this corruption. Though this may sound discouraging, I can tell you, from my experience, that it is indeed possible to fight corruption successfully with the right knowledge, patience, and commitment to transparency.

To fight corruption, we must first understand it. Underlying the various forms of corruption—grand, political, and administrative, which include public resource transfers to private entities, allocation of public resources to political allies, and misuse of public funds—are three important factors. The first is a lack of transparency of critical financial and other information central to economic development, in particular revenues and budgets. Second is the weakness or total absence of institutions, systems, and processes that block leakages. Third is the pervasiveness of impunity—limited political will to hold accountable and punish those found guilty of such corruption.

Between the three, the tougher problem is how to build strong and enduring institutions. Building institutions takes time and does not deliver the quick results that typically attract politicians or donors. But it is essential if Africa is to fight corruption systematically and ensure long-term stability. We are fortunate to now have technology that enables us to build electronic platforms to manage government finances, biometric systems to bring integrity to our personnel and government payment systems, and web-based platforms to provide transparency of government finances. We need to go even further to see how we can deploy blockchain and other emerging technologies to underpin our contract negotiations and procurement systems, a huge source of corruption and leakage in many countries.

We should combine these efforts with building strong and independent audit and justice systems, including a well-resourced judiciary and an oversight office to field complaints. We also need to create an environment that enables strong and accountable civil society organizations that provide oversight of government. Such strong and independent institutions have a salutary effect on political will as they exert the necessary pressure on politicians, even at the highest levels, to act. Such initiatives take patience and determination though, since building these institutions, systems, and processes may take a decade or more.

My experience in Nigeria showed that a decade spanning three administrations was necessary to build well-functioning technology platforms for managing the country's finances. The savings in terms of blocked leakages, amounting to over a billion dollars, made it worthwhile.

Africa needs to focus its anti-corruption fight on long-term, high-return institution building activities, coupled with the justice infrastructure and political will to hold those who transgress accountable.

We found that supporting institution building with openness and transparency of revenue and budgetary data provides a win that can be implemented quickly. The increasing accessibility of the internet via mobile phones and various analytic apps makes it easier now more than ever to share with citizens information on revenues and expenditures. Publishing monthly data in national newspapers on local, state, and federal government revenues was unprecedented in Nigeria when we started in 2004, but it helped us gain public support for our initiatives going forward. It laid the basis for much more sophisticated analytics on the budget shared widely via the internet today.

Africa needs to focus its anti-corruption fight on long-term, high-return institution building activities, coupled with the justice infrastructure and political will to hold those who transgress accountable. This process should start by making key government statistics open and transparent, enabling citizens to keep on top of important information and build trust in their governments. Only with these pragmatic approaches can the continent record wins against corruption.

From the electoral processes to democracy in Africa: Avenues to bridge the gap

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Brookings Institution

Brady Presidential Distinguished Professor of Economics, Weber State University

03.

In 2019, general elections will be held in many African countries, offering them an opportunity to deepen, consolidate, and institutionalize democracy and strengthen their governance systems. Nevertheless, as the 2018 presidential elections in several African countries have shown, without a governing process supported by true separation of powers, effective checks and balances, an independent judiciary, a free press, and a robust and politically active civil society, the 2019 elections will most likely have limited impact on freedom and equality across the continent.

Priorities for the declared winners of the 2018 elections

In **Cameroon**, President Paul Biya emerged victorious, unsurprisingly, having supposedly captured 71.28 percent of the vote.¹ Several opposition candidates and ordinary Cameroonians pointed to massive fraud. In addition, the election was marred by high levels of insecurity and violent extremism in at least three of the country's 10 regions—the Far North, Northwest, and Southwest regions. The violent response by the security forces to peaceful protests by teachers and

1 Maclean, Ruth. 2018. "Biya Wins Again in Cameroon as Crackdown Disrupts Anglophone Vote." The Guardian. Guardian News and Media. October 22, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/22/paul-biya-cameroon-85-year-old-president-wins-re-election-landslide>.

lawyers against the political and economic marginalization of the Anglophones by the Francophone-dominated central government has morphed into what is being described by the international community as genocide.² The “re-election” of Biya for another seven-year term has all but killed any prospects that the 2018 election would lead to the deepening and institutionalization of democracy in the country, as well as significantly improve the security situation in the country, one of Cameroon’s top priorities.

In **Mali**, incumbent President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta was reelected for a second term with 67 percent of the votes cast.³ Although there were allegations of irregularities,⁴ the African Union adjudged the elections credible and transparent. Other observers argued that the elections were credible but raised concerns. This election was supposed to dispel Malians’ chronic mistrust of their political institutions, which emanates from the government’s failure to deal with human rights violations, corruption, and nepotism. President Keïta’s regime must now deal fully with corruption and impunity, as well as address pervasive poverty, high levels of material deprivation, and political and economic marginalization. It must also be understood that the foundation of an effective way to fight terrorism and other security threats in Mali and the broader Sahel region is to promote political and economic inclusiveness, as well as the protection of human rights.

An effective way to fight terrorism and other security threats in Mali and the broader Sahel region is to promote political and economic inclusiveness.

In the **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**, the term of President Kabila expired in 2016. After postponing the elections for two years, they were finally held last December, but excluded Moïse Katumbi, the popular former governor of the Katanga Province. The focus for the new regime must be nation building and the effective elimination of threats to peace and security. To accomplish this goal, the new government must be inclusive and must pre-occupy itself primarily with state reconstruction to provide the country, through a participatory, inclusive, and people-driven process, with institutional arrangements that are capable of promoting peaceful coexistence and enhancing inclusive economic growth.

2 Zongo, Peter. 2018. “‘This Is a Genocide’: Villages Burn as War Rages in Blood-Soaked Cameroon | Peter Zongo.” The Guardian. Guardian News and Media. May 30, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/may/30/cameroon-killings-escalate-anglophone-crisis>.

3 Macdougall, Clair. 2018. “Keïta Gets 2nd Term as Mali President With Runoff Victory.” The New York Times. The New York Times. August 16, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/16/world/africa/keita-mali-election.html>.

4 Ibid.

Key elections to watch in 2019 are those in Nigeria and South Africa

Nigeria will hold general elections on February 16, 2019, to elect a president and members of the National Assembly. Muhammadu Buhari, who was elected president in 2015, is seeking re-election. The 2019 elections will be the sixth national electoral exercise since transition to democracy in 1999 and an opportunity for Nigerians to undertake peaceful change of government as they had done in 2015. As many as 16 other individuals have declared their intention to contest the presidential race. As candidates prepare to articulate and bring their platforms to the electorate, there is fear that the elections will be marred by violence.

While many observers see Boko Haram as the greatest threat to peace and security in Nigeria, and hence, to the 2019 general elections, it is important to also recognize the various structural and institutional problems that plague the country. These include, but are not limited to, severe inequalities in wealth and income distribution, religious and ethnocultural divisions, and weaknesses in the political, administrative, and judicial foundations of the state, which have produced high levels of bureaucratic and political corruption, including public financial malfeasance.

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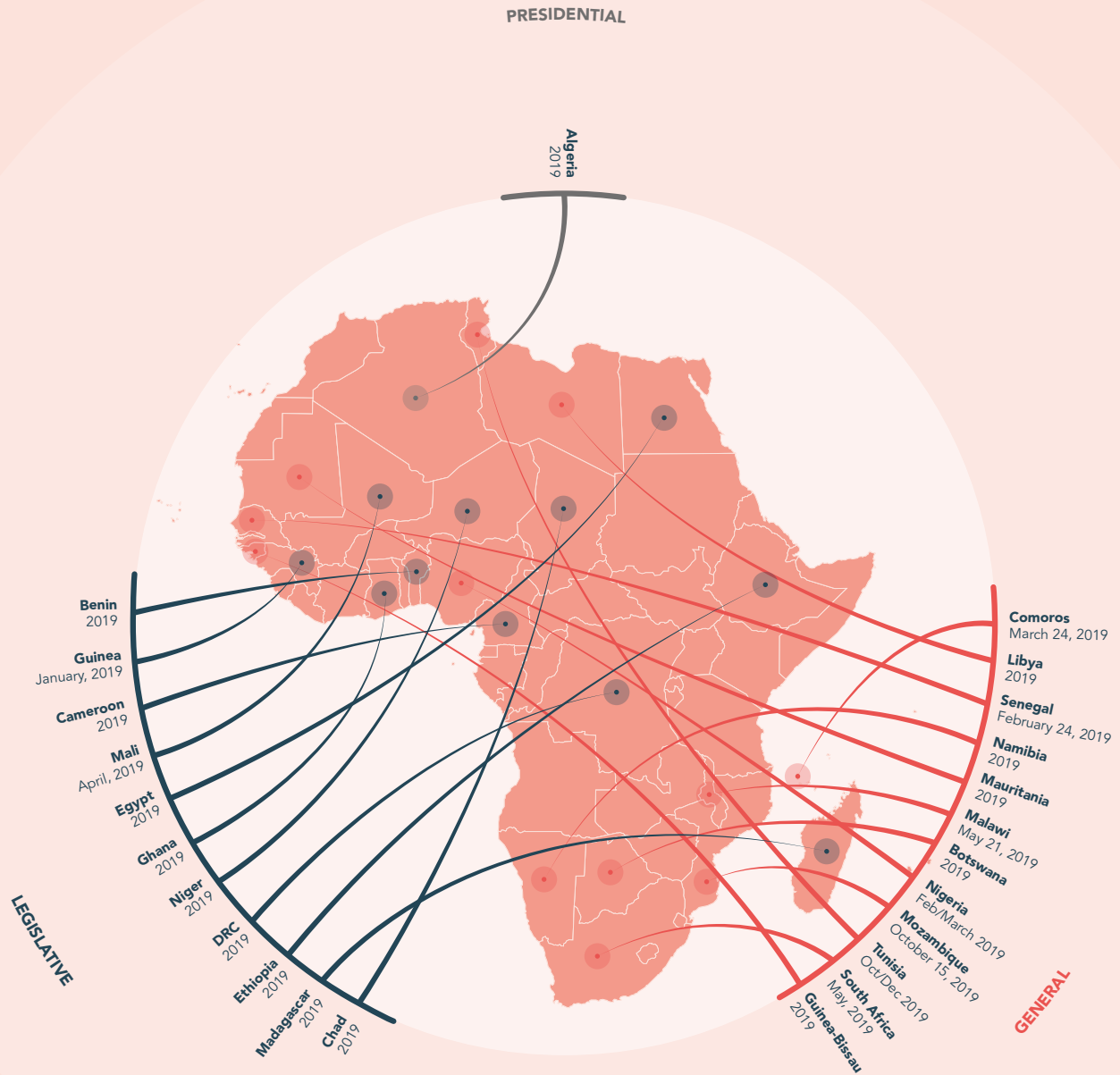
An emerging and important threat to peace and, in particular, the election, is the violent conflict between farmers and herders over land- and water-use rights (see Ahmadou Aly Mbaye's Viewpoint on Page 62). In fact, in some states in northern Nigeria, many of these clashes have become deadly. Government, at both national and local levels, remains incapable of dealing effectively with extreme poverty and providing all Nigerians with effective mechanisms for self-actualization.

Finally, Nigeria's political parties continue to suffer from in-fighting and are proving incapable of improving the state of democracy in the country. Despite the tremendous improvements that have been made since transition to democracy in 1999, Nigeria has not been able to provide itself with a governance system capable of adequately constraining the state and, hence, preventing civil servants and politicians from acting with impunity.

South Africa will also hold general elections in 2019 to choose members of the National Assembly and new provincial legislatures in each of the country's provinces. The 2019 elections will be South Africa's sixth since 1994 when apartheid was abolished. Since the National Assembly chooses the president after the election, the

Figure 1.5 Elections in 2019

In 2019, the continent will have a number of local and national elections. Both Nigeria and South Africa, the region's two largest economies, will host national elections. Nigeria's presidential elections are set for February 16 and elections for South Africa's National Assembly will occur in May.



Source: Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa. Data as of January 7, 2019.

next president is likely to be a member of the political party that captures most of the parliamentary seats. The incumbent president, Cyril Ramaphosa, who was elected to a five-year term as president of the African National Congress (ANC), will lead the party to this year's elections.

While corruption and state capture are likely to be key issues in the 2019 elections, inequality in the distribution of wealth and income, most of it made possible by apartheid-era policies, will definitely be an important issue for candidates to address. In addition to the continued lack of opportunities for the country's majority black population, political parties are likely to be asked to address the issue of inequality, including the redistribution of land, a problem that has made South Africa one of the most unequal countries in the world.

Despite South Africa having the continent's most progressive constitution and a governing process characterized by separation of powers, with an independent judiciary, many citizens remain trapped in poverty and suffer from high levels of material deprivation. Thus, for the country's main opposition political party, the Democratic Alliance, to be competitive against the ruling ANC, it must provide voters with a platform that adequately addresses issues such as wealth and income inequality, including land reform. Of course, the ANC remains burdened by its leadership problems, corruption, and the belief, by many of its supporters, that it has abandoned the ideals and values that gave impetus to the struggle against apartheid.

The importance of holding fair and freely contested democratic elections in Africa

Elections are a critical part of each country's democratic system. Elections can provide vulnerable and marginalized groups (such as, ethnic and religious minorities) with the opportunity to fully articulate their concerns or interests, make them part of the national discourse, and possibly have them included in the national agenda. But this is most likely to happen only when the elections are fair, free, regular, and credible and undertaken in countries with strong democratic institutions.

Hence, a critical lesson from African elections in 2018 is that, while they are an important part of the process of deepening and institutionalizing democracy, they can only play this role within countries whose institutional arrangements are undergirded by the rule of law. Only then can elections help consolidate democracy.

Is there a tension between democracy and economic development in Africa?

Ernest Aryeetey

Secretary-General, African Research Universities Alliance, United Nations University

04.

Over the past two decades, as African countries have transitioned from significantly autocratic regimes to increasingly open arrangements of governance, there have been questions about the effectiveness of democratic institutions and practices in supporting the necessary policy and organizational environment for meaningful economic development. Debates have emerged over whether true democracies can be found in the region or not.

The issue of whether Africa has true democracies or not is generally discussed in relation to what freedoms are associated with holding elections. Many countries are generally seen as not embedding political and civil rights in their new institutions even though they organize regular elections. The 2018 ranking of free countries by the watchdog organization Freedom House is quite revealing in this regard, having ranked Angola, Cameroon, and Chad as not free, even though they host regular elections. The degree of accountability in these oil-producing economies is considered to be limited.

Debates have emerged over whether true democracies can be found in the region or not.

A large and growing number of African countries have steadily improved the organization of elections over the years and introduced institutional reforms that provide more liberties for citizens. What remains doubtful is the extent to which the new institutions are used to pursue development and structural transformation. A number of studies make reference to the “conflict view” of democracy and development, suggesting that decisionmaking

in several new democracies is shortsighted. Elected officials approach policymaking with their eyes fixed on the ballot box. They are able to construct new roads, schools, and hospitals just before elections—with a lot of debt accumulated in the process—but they are unable to develop a link between new infrastructure and the modernization of agriculture or the growth of the manufacturing sector.

Many countries see unemployment as an organizational challenge. Ghana, since 1992, is a classic case in point. When the government of Ghana promised “one district, one factory” during the past election campaign, no one believed that they could build more than 200 factories in 4-8 years. Today the discussion has moved to how one defines a factory! No wonder, promises beyond these are not taken very seriously.

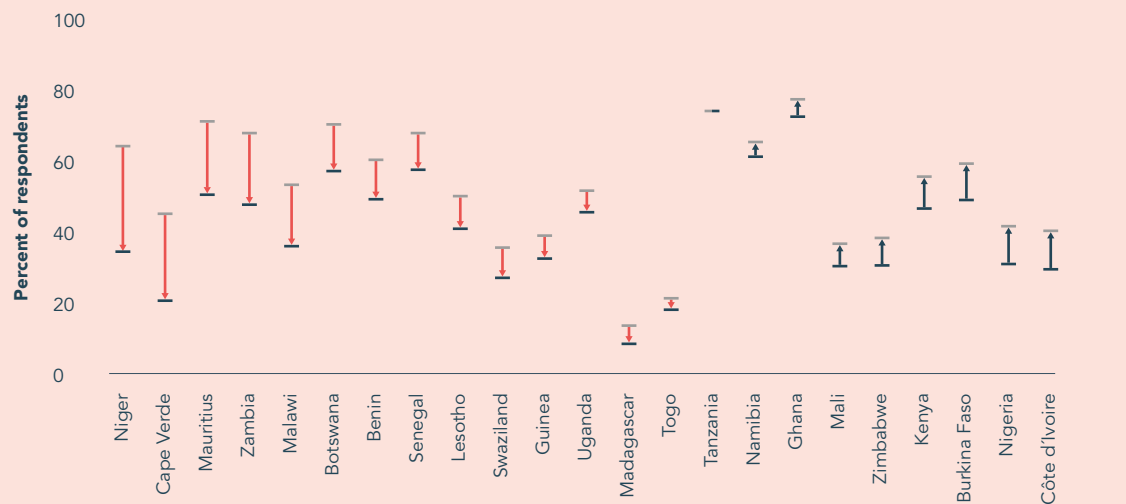
For the principles of democracy to be completely embraced in Africa, governments need a long-term perspective of effective institution building for structural transformation. Deferring some public consumption is necessary in long-term planning. But, with better government accountability and transparency, African democracies can replace the facade of freedom with real liberty and economic development.

Figure 1.6 Satisfaction with democracy in Africa

Satisfaction with democracy fell in almost two-thirds of countries between surveys in 2011-13 and 2016-18. On average only 45 percent of respondents were fairly or very satisfied with democracy in their countries in the 2016-18 round compared to 50 percent of respondents in 2011-13.

Survey question: Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [country]?

Note: Responses included below reflect those who say there are fairly or very happy with how democracy works in their country.



— 2011-13 — 2016-18

Source: Afrobarometer Data. Rounds 5 & 7. Available at <http://www.afrobarometer.org>.