

Africa's governance performance declines for the first time in a decade, finds 2020 Ibrahim Index of African Governance

New data delivers a clear warning: governance progress in Africa has slowed since 2015, and declines for the first time in 2019. Deterioration in participation, rights, rule of law and security threaten improvements achieved in economic opportunities and human development. This is particularly concerning with the COVID-19 pandemic set to increase existing challenges and reduce hard-won gains

Dakar and London, Monday 16 November 2020 – The 2020 Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG), launched today by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, highlights a decline in African governance performance for the first time since 2010.

The first decline in governance performance since 2010

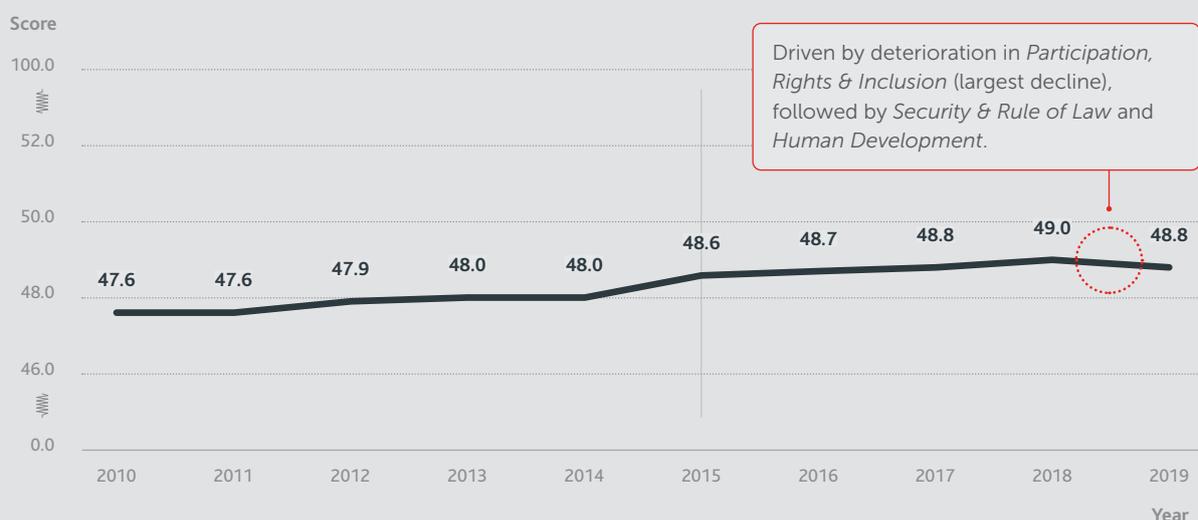
The 2019 African average score for *Overall Governance* falls by -0.2 points below that of 2018, registering the first year-on-year score deterioration since 2010. This recent decline is triggered by worsening performance in three of the four IIAG categories: *Participation, Rights & Inclusion, Security & Rule of Law* and *Human Development*.

In fact, progress had already been slowing down since 2015. Over 2015-2019, performance slackened in both *Human Development* and *Foundations for Economic Opportunity*, while deterioration continued in both *Security & Rule of Law* and *Participation, Rights & Inclusion*, even worsening for the latter.

However, over the decade, overall governance performance has slightly progressed, and in 2019, 61.2% of Africa's population lives in a country where *Overall Governance* is better than in 2010.

The 2020 IIAG is the most comprehensive assessment of governance performance in 54 African countries. It tracks Africa's trajectory across four main categories: *Security & Rule of Law; Participation, Rights & Inclusion; Foundations for Economic Opportunity; and Human Development*. The new IIAG incorporates three significant upgrades: an expanded governance scope, including new areas such as environment and equality; strengthened indicators, thanks to better data availability; and a new section fully dedicated to Africa's *Citizens' Voices*.

Africa: Overall Governance average score (2010-2019)



Over the last decade, governance dimensions have followed diverging paths

Progress achieved over the last decade has mainly been driven by improvements in economic opportunities and human development. *Foundations for Economic Opportunity* (+4.1) and *Human Development* (+3.0) have made good progress, primarily led by improvements in the sub-categories *Infrastructure* and *Health*, complemented by advances in *Sustainable Environment*.

This is threatened, however, by an increasingly precarious security situation and concerning erosion in rights as well as civic and democratic space. Over the last decade, both *Participation, Rights & Inclusion* (-1.4) and *Security & Rule of Law* (-0.7) have registered worrying declines.

Over the past decade, 20 countries, home to 41.9% of Africa's population, while achieving progress in *Human Development* and *Foundations for Economic Opportunity*, have at the same time declined in both *Security & Rule of Law* and *Participation, Rights & Inclusion*.

Only eight countries manage to improve in all four categories over the decade: Angola, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Seychelles, Sudan and Togo.

Africa: IIAG categories, average trends & trend classifications (2010-2019 & 2015-2019)



COVID-19 heightens existing challenges and threatens economic progress

The 2020 IIAG provides a picture of the continent before it was hit by COVID-19. In terms of *Participation, Rights & Inclusion*, progress was slowing long before the pandemic, which only worsens the existing negative trajectory. Conversely, economic opportunity was set on a positive course of sustained progress, and the impact of COVID-19 is now threatening this hard-won achievement.

Africa's citizens are increasingly dissatisfied with governance delivery in their countries

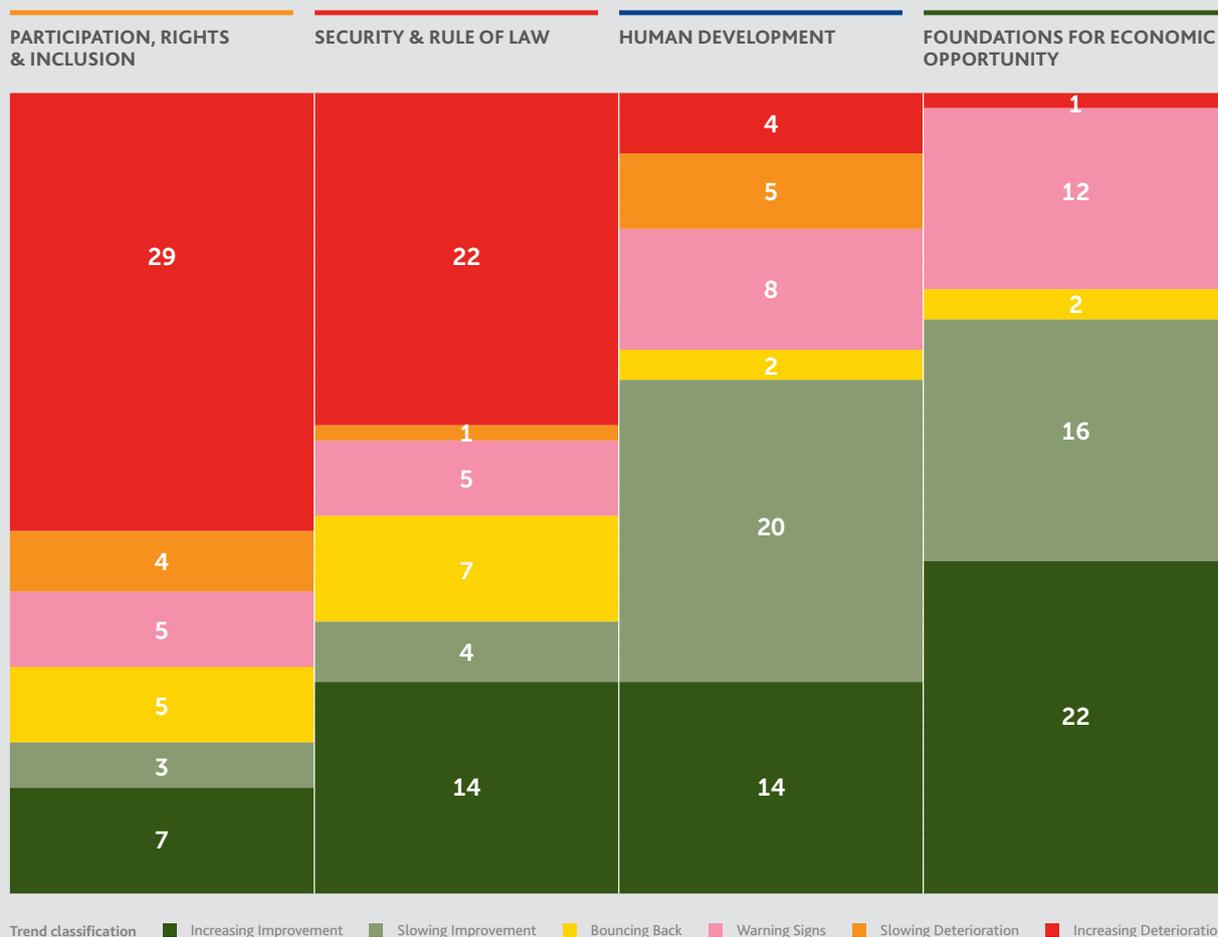
In 2019, new analysis of the *Citizens' Voices* section in the IIAG reveals that *Public Perception of Overall Governance* registers the lowest score over the decade, with the pace of deterioration nearly doubling within the last five years.

A balanced approach to governance is key to progress, as well as improvements in rule of law, justice, inclusion and equality

The strongest correlations of *Overall Governance* performances are found with the sub-categories *Rule of Law & Justice* and *Inclusion & Equality*. The indicators showing the strongest relationships with high overall governance scores span all four IAG categories, underlining the importance of a balanced approach to governance.

The growing imbalance between the various governance dimensions outlined above is likely to threaten overall governance performance.

African countries: IAG categories trend classifications (2010-2019)



Mo Ibrahim, Chair of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, says:

"This is a testing time for Africa. Pre-existing weaknesses and challenges in African governance, as uncovered by the 2020 IAG, are exacerbated by COVID-19, which also threatens economic progress. Citizens' dissatisfaction and mistrust with governance delivery are growing. African states have an opportunity to demonstrate both their resolve to safeguard democracy and their ability to drive a new growth model that is more resilient, more equitable, more sustainable, and more self-reliant."

Notes to editors

About the 2020 IIAG and its new framework

- The Mo Ibrahim Foundation defines governance as the provision of political, social, economic and environmental public goods and services that every citizen has the right to expect from their government, and that a government has the responsibility to deliver to its citizens.
- Since 2007, the IIAG constitutes the most comprehensive data set measuring African governance.
- Every two years the IIAG provides comparable data on the whole spectrum of African governance in 54 African countries over a period of ten years – the 2020 IIAG covers 2010-2019.
- The IIAG dataset and online and Excel data portals provide scores and trends at country and continental level as well as for African geographical regions, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) or specific groups.
- Over the ten years since the IIAG inception in 2007, the data and governance landscapes have both evolved immensely. To incorporate those changes, a thorough review of the IIAG has been conducted between 2018 and 2020, providing a completely re-worked framework for the 2020 IIAG, with three main changes.
 - **An expanded governance scope:** The new IIAG takes into account the new governance landscape, linked to expanded 21st century citizens' expectations. The 2020 IIAG now encompasses areas such as environment, digital rights, healthcare affordability or inequality measures in social protection.
 - **A strengthened and more balanced framework:** While the IIAG has increased its coverage of topics and the number of variables composing the Index, the number of indicators has been reduced. The new IIAG is built on a more balanced structure, and 90% of its underlying indicators are clustered. This has led to a strengthening of the IIAG, providing a clearer, more complete, and more stable framework.
 - The methodology used to calculate IIAG scores, initially built with the Kennedy School of Governance at Harvard University, is unchanged. Fully reviewed in search of better ways to calculate the IIAG, it has been confirmed as the best way to calculate a composite index like the IIAG.
 - **A new section dedicated to Africa's Citizens' Voices:** This new section provides a comprehensive 'reality check' to complement the IIAG results with citizens' perceptions and satisfaction with public services.
- The new IIAG dataset, the online and Excel data portals are freely available for access on our website. For the next two years, the Foundation will continue working on unpacking the findings of the IIAG across the full set of categories and sub-categories, as well as at country, regional and group levels.

Contact MIF

For more information, or to request an interview with a MIF spokesperson please contact:

- Zainab Umar, umar.z@moibrahimfoundation.org, +44 207 535 5068, +44 7817723720
- MIF media team, mifmedia@portland-communications.com, +44 7922 877 489

Join the discussion on social media via #IIAG.

Access the IIAG Data Portal directly: <http://iiag.online/>

View the key findings and download the Index Report from 16 November: mo.ibrahim.foundation

You can follow the Mo Ibrahim Foundation on:

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About the Mo Ibrahim Foundation

The Mo Ibrahim Foundation was established in 2006 with a focus on the critical importance of political leadership and public governance in Africa. By providing tools to support progress in leadership and governance, the Foundation aims to promote meaningful change on the continent.

The Foundation, which is a non-grant making organisation, focusses on defining, assessing and enhancing governance and leadership in Africa through five main initiatives:

- Ibrahim Index of African Governance
- Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership
- Ibrahim Governance Weekend
- Ibrahim Fellowships and Scholarships
- Now Generation Network