

AFROBAROMETER DATA IN THE 2020 IBRAHIM INDEX OF AFRICAN GOVERNANCE (IIAG)

The 2020 Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) includes for the first time a 'Citizens' Voices' section dedicated to measuring public perceptions of governance. The new section mirrors the IIAG categories and provides public perception data for each of these using the closest proxies to the IIAG measures. Calculated as a separate section, Citizens' Voices scores are not used for the calculation of IIAG scores.

All the raw data in the Citizens' Voices section is sourced from Afrobarometer. Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan research network that conducts public opinion surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions and related issues in nearly 40 countries in Africa.

Due to the nature and format of the Afrobarometer data, the Mo Ibrahim Foundation (MIF) has made coding decisions in order to incorporate the data into the Citizens' Voices section which are highlighted below.

Comparability of Afrobarometer data across survey rounds

The content and coding of questions included in the Afrobarometer survey have varied across the eight rounds, as a result of the surveys being refined and developed over time. However, in order to be considered for inclusion in the IIAG's Citizens' Voices section, data must be comparable across the time series (2010-2019).

MIF conducted a comparability assessment of questions included in each Afrobarometer survey round, using question names as a basis for comparison. The assessment highlighted a number of differences in question wording between survey rounds. As a result, some questions were deemed non-comparable.

Example: "Difficulty to obtain medical treatment"

Round 5 question: Based on your experience, how easy or difficult is it to obtain the following services from government? Or do you never try and get these services from government: Medical treatment at a public clinic or hospital?

Response coding: 1=Very difficult, 2=Difficult, 3=Easy, 4=Very easy, 5=Never try, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 998=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Round 6 question: In the past 12 months have you had contact with a public clinic or hospital? *[If yes]* How easy or difficult was it to obtain the medical care you needed?

Response coding: 1=Very easy, 2=Easy, 3=Difficult, 4=Very difficult, 7= No contact (DNR), 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Questions that were essentially similar across rounds, but in which the wording differed only very slightly, were deemed to be comparable for the purposes of the IIAG.

Example: "How often gone without water?"

Round 5 question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family gone without: Enough clean water for home use?

Round 6 question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough clean water for home use?

For questions that were not consistently comparable across all survey rounds but had the same question wording in the most recent rounds, data for the comparable survey rounds were taken. Drawing again on the example above on medical care, although not

comparable between Round 5 and Round 6, the question has remained the same for Round 7 and 8 and data were thus collected for Round 6, 7 and 8, but not Round 5.

Furthermore, only questions that had the same response coding (e.g., never, just once or twice, several times, many times, always) across all rounds were considered to be comparable.

Assigning Afrobarometer survey rounds to IAG data years

Afrobarometer surveys are conducted in rounds, which typically span more than one 12-month period. Country surveys within one round may take place at different points of the survey period. In order to assign country data to a specific year, MIF used the Afrobarometer survey schedule, which defines fieldwork dates for each country surveyed. Data years were assigned according to the year in which Afrobarometer concluded its fieldwork in the country for the specific round.

For the purposes of the 2020 IAG, Round 5, which was conducted in 35 countries between 2011 and 2013, is taken as the earliest data year. Round 5 (2013 data year) was, however, dropped for Ethiopia as the source confirmed its lack of comparability with succeeding rounds.

Coding survey responses for the purposes of the IAG

Each question in the Afrobarometer survey has, on average, four or five responses.

For the purposes of the survey data used in the IAG, data were coded as the count of the number of positive responses as a percentage of all responses. The two most positive responses, as defined in the survey codebook, were taken. While answers classified as "don't know" or "refused to answer" are included in the total of all responses, responses classified as "missing" or "not applicable"/ "no contact" are excluded.

Example: "Handling reducing crime"

For the Round 6 question "How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Reducing crime?", the count of the two most positive responses "very well" and "fairly well" were selected and calculated as a percentage of all responses. In this example, responses classified as "missing" were excluded from the total of all responses. However, responses classified as either "don't know", "haven't heard enough" or "refused to answer" were taken into account in the total.

For some questions, the two most positive answers can be negative answers like "never" or "rarely".

Example: "How often felt unsafe walking in neighbourhood"

Round 5 question: "Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Felt unsafe walking in your neighbourhood?"

Response coding: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 998=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Exceptions to coding rules

There are three survey questions where coding does not follow the rules outlined above. Those are only available from round 6 onwards and are: "Neighbours: people of different religion", "Neighbours: people of different ethnicity" and "Neighbours: homosexuals". In these three cases, we took the two most negative responses ("strongly dislike" and "somewhat dislike"), instead of the two most positive ones, and calculated them as a percentage of all responses.

As a result, for the three variables mentioned above the polarity of the raw data is 'higher value is worse'. In the process of calculating the Citizens' Voices scores, after the normalisation of the raw data, a higher score for these three variables will also mean better performance (as it is the case with the rest of Afrobarometer data even prior to normalisation).