

Strengthening Africa's fragmented data landscape is key to meeting development targets, says new African Governance Report by Mo Ibrahim Foundation

African governments and partners need to step up efforts to close 'data gaps' in SDG tracking and ensure Agenda 2063 can be monitored and measured

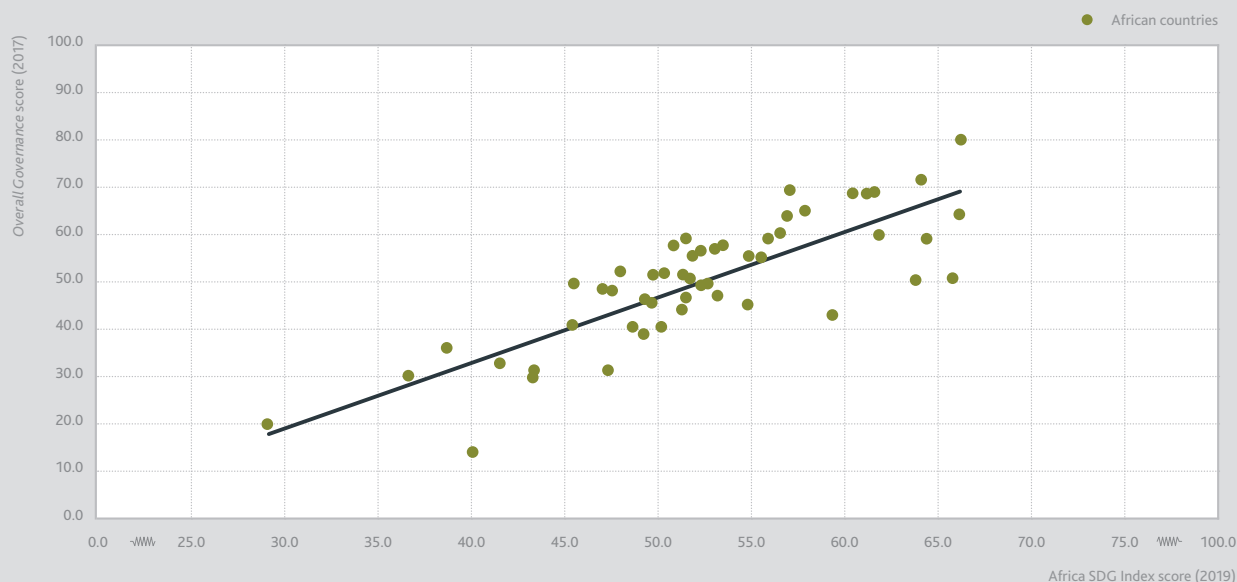
Dakar and London, 15 October 2019 – The African Governance Report, published today by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, draws on data from the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) and shares new insights on progress towards the African Union's (AU) Agenda 2063 and the United Nations' (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It points to where policy efforts can be focussed to tackle current governance challenges, and highlights the urgency of addressing the 'data gap' in Africa to ensure progress can be assessed and shortfalls addressed.

This is a critical time as Africa prepares to enter the last decade of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and is halfway through the First Ten-year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063.

Overall Governance scores in the IIAG, the most comprehensive dataset on African governance, point to a strong correlation with performance in the Africa SDG Index, underscoring the importance of good governance to sustainable development in Africa.

Reviewing the themes with the highest overlaps between both Agendas and the IIAG – Access to and Quality of Education, Health and Nutrition, Women and Youth Inclusion, Prosperity and Economic Opportunity, and Security, Justice and Strong Institutions – the report highlights priority areas to address.

African countries: IIAG Overall Governance scores & Africa SDG Index overall scores (2017 & 2019)



Quality of education needs to be addressed. Aligning education with market needs can also be advanced if governments and partners take a closer look at prioritising active engagement with the private sector, to assess the requirements of the job market.

In health, special attention should be paid to the availability, quality, affordability and capacity of health services, while also tackling food security.



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For prosperity and economic opportunity, the report notes that governments and partners should look at diversifying economies, accelerating progress in infrastructure – specifically physical transport, electricity and ICT – increasing investment in the rural sector, and strengthening regional integration to make efficient progress.

Important correlations between IIAG measures are outlined to help create a more conducive environment for achieving development targets. For example, access to electricity shows a strong correlation to performance in both health and education.

Crucially, a concerning picture of data challenges emerges across the continent. Almost half of the targets for Agenda 2063 are not directly quantifiable and so far, fewer than 20% have an indicator to measure progress. On average fewer than 40% of the indicators for the SDGs have sufficient data to track progress accurately on the continent. The report highlights that over half of the data source types on SDG indicators on Africa are estimation, modelling or global monitoring. In particular, only one third of data sources on SDG indicators on Africa are from direct country sources. The ability to monitor progress towards development targets in Africa is compromised.

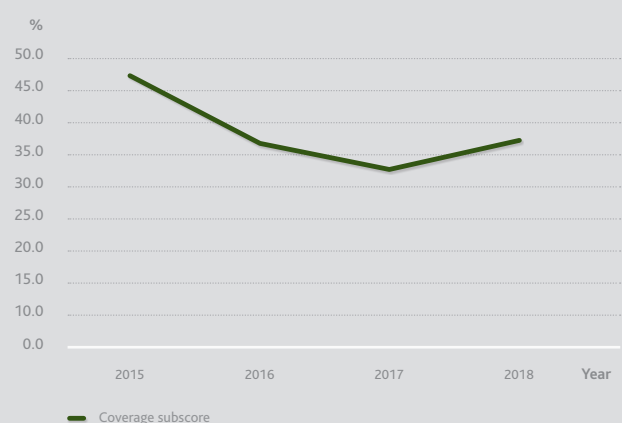
Since the adoption of both Agendas, coverage and frequency of publicly available data for key data categories in Africa have declined. Critically, one of the areas that has seen, on average, large deterioration is population and vital statistics. Further, only eight African countries have a birth registration system that covers 90% or more of the population over the last ten years (2009-2018), and only three have a death registration system that covers 90% or more of the population. The paucity of such vital data is in striking contrast with population growth – Africa is expected to be home to 1.68 billion people by 2030.

Without accurate and complete vital statistics, it is impossible to implement effective solutions to any development challenge and to deliver for citizens. Since 2008, little average improvement in statistical capacity has been made, according to IIAG data. This issue is compounded by low levels of independence of national statistics offices.

The report calls for Sound Data for Governance in order to ensure inclusive development: the 'missing SDG'.

Mo Ibrahim, Chair of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, said: "We welcome continued efforts to improve governance, which is crucial to achieving the SDGs and Agenda 2063 goals. However, we are deeply worried by the inability to accurately monitor progress against these targets on the continent. Data is an essential foundation for effective policymaking and resource mobilisation. Without data, we drive blind – policies are misdirected and progress on the road to development is stunted. We must all act urgently to close the 'data gap', if indeed we aim to leave no one behind."

Africa: Coverage subscore of Population & vital statistics data category, average percentage scores (2015-2018)



Source: Open Data Watch (2019)



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NOTES TO EDITORS

- Access the report at <http://mif.media/gr-2019>.
- The Mo Ibrahim Foundation was established in 2006 with a focus on the critical importance of leadership and governance in Africa, by providing tools to assess and support progress in leadership and governance.
- The Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) provides an annual assessment of the quality of governance in African countries and is the most comprehensive collection of data on African governance.
- With ten years of data to draw from, the IIAG is uniquely positioned to measure trends in governance, providing in-depth analysis on how the quality of governance has changed over the past five years (2013-2017) within the context of the last decade (2008-2017), and what has or could be key to Africa's transformation.
- The Mo Ibrahim Foundation releases a new Index dataset with updated scores, ranks and trends every two years, while publishing an annual IIAG *African Governance Report*, focussed on African governance trends and challenges.
- The next dataset update will be released in October 2020.
- In every iteration, MIF – assisted by the IIAG's Advisory Council – looks at improving the structure, components and methodology of the IIAG. Due to this revision, MIF recalculates all scores in the Index for each iteration.
- The IIAG contains analysis across 102 indicators from 35 independent African and global data institutions to cover all 54 African counties in the areas of *Safety & Rule of Law*, *Participation & Human Rights*, *Sustainable Economic Opportunity* and *Human Development*.
- The Africa SDG Index is produced by the SDG Center for Africa and Sustainable Development Solutions Network. The Index ranks countries on a scale from 0 (the worst score) to 100 (the best score). Tunisia's score of 66.01, the highest score in Africa, suggesting that the country is 66% of the way towards achieving the SDG. The Index provides an overall performance score and a score for each of the 17 SDGs.
- The Data Portal is a user-friendly interface that offers a bespoke analysis of governance ranks, scores and trends for each country. Users can create shareable charts and graphics from the data.
- Access the IIAG Data Portal directly: <http://iiag.online/>

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