



A decade of progress is under threat as overall African governance flatlines, the 2022 Ibrahim Index of African Governance finds

Despite a marginal improvement over the past decade (2012-2021), the 2022 Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) shows that governance in Africa has flatlined in the three years since 2019. Improvements in human development and economic opportunities are being undermined by an increasingly perilous security situation and widespread democratic backsliding, as the continent struggles to manage the combined impacts of COVID-19, climate change, conflict and coups, as well as food and energy insecurity.

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Access Data Portal

Dakar and London, 25 January 2023 – The 2022 Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG), launched today by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, highlights that African governance has flatlined since 2019, reflecting a series of disruptions caused by a combination of the COVID-19 pandemic, increased insecurity, and widespread democratic backsliding, posing a serious threat to several years of progress on the continent.

Commenting on the data, **Mo Ibrahim, Founder and Chair of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation**, said: *“The 2022 Ibrahim Index of African Governance highlights that African governance has flatlined since 2019. Unless we quickly address this concerning trend, the years of progress we have witnessed could be lost, and Africa will be unable to reach in due time the SDGs or Agenda 2063.*

Our continent is uniquely exposed to the converging impacts of climate change, more recently Covid-19, and now the indirect impact of Russia-Ukraine war. Governments must address all at once ongoing lack of prospects for our growing youth, worsening food insecurity, lack of access to energy for almost half the continent’s population, heavier debt burden, growing domestic unrest. Coups are back, and democratic backsliding spreading.

These are challenging times. More than ever, commitment to strengthen governance must be renewed, unless we lose all progress achieved”

The 2022 IIAG results show that even though the average continental level of *Overall Governance* is better in 2021 than in 2012 (+1.1), progress has flatlined since 2019.

Driving this stagnation is the deterioration of both the *Security & Rule of Law* and *Participation, Rights & Inclusion* index categories, due to an increase in armed conflicts, violence against civilians, and democratic backsliding across growing parts of the continent.

Although the IIAG confirms that these concerning trends predate the pandemic, it highlights that the introduction of restrictive measures and emergency provisions to address COVID-19 and its fallout have exacerbated existing challenges by accelerating a decline in democratic practices, clamping down on dissent, shrinking the civic space, and avoiding democratic scrutiny.

The IIAG’s other two categories– *Human Development* and *Foundations for Economic Opportunity* – do offer cause for cautious optimism, as both have progressed over 2012-2021. This is particularly the case for *Human Development*, which has improved year-on-year across the decade, with more than 90% of Africa’s population living in a country where progress has been made since 2012. As to *Foundations for Economic Opportunity*, the level reached in 2021 is higher than in 2012, and this is the only category to have even continued to make

progress since 2019, despite the seismic shocks of the pandemic, mostly due to considerable improvements in the *Infrastructure* sub-category.

The 2022 IIAG Report also provides insights into key remaining data gaps on governance priorities in Africa, such as employment, health, rural areas, and climate challenges. For example, the *Health* sub-category is still unable to include data on health structures and capacities – a critical element of the continent’s response to any pandemic- due to a lack of data. Data is essential for effective policymaking and strengthening data production and uptake in Africa remains a priority of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation.

In sum, the 2022 IIAG shows that governance progress is being hindered by diverging trajectories, as progress in *Human Development* and *Foundations for Economic Opportunity* is offset by a deterioration in both *Security & Rule of Law* and *Participation, Rights & Inclusion*, holding back *Overall Governance*. Unless sustained good governance is prioritised, decades of progress, and Africa’s ability to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063, will be under threat.

Note to editors

About the 2022 IIAG and the Data Portal

- 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 – from security and safety, to rule of law, transparency, rights, participation, economic opportunities, education, health and environment – in 54 African countries over a period of ten years – the 2022 IIAG covers 2012-2021.
- The IIAG dataset and online Data Portal provide scores and trends at country and continental level as well as for African geographical regions, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) or specific groups.
- Country overviews for 54 African countries are available in the Data Portal in English, Arabic, French, and Portuguese.

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About the Mo Ibrahim Foundation

The Mo Ibrahim Foundation is an African organisation established in 2006 promoting sound leadership and governance to transform the lives of Africa’s citizens.

The Foundation provides data and analysis to assess governance performance and support evidence-based policy-making across the continent.

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- Ibrahim Index of African Governance
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