



West and Central Africa

Progress at a snail's pace

Despite appalling poverty, more countries in West and Central Africa are under democratic rule than ever before. It is also encouraging to see many governments striving for good governance despite having to face enormous hurdles. In economic development, however, progress is evident only in the long term.

Anyone inclined to regard West and Central Africa as a cluster of trouble spots, war zones and other catastrophes will find confirmation of their views in the period between early 2015 and early 2017. Once again, not one of the countries in the region can be considered a democracy in consolidation. The Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are failing states; but even in other countries, Islamist terror and military conflicts represent a threat to peace and stability. It is no coincidence that these countries are located in the subregion of Central Africa, which generally fares worse than West Africa.

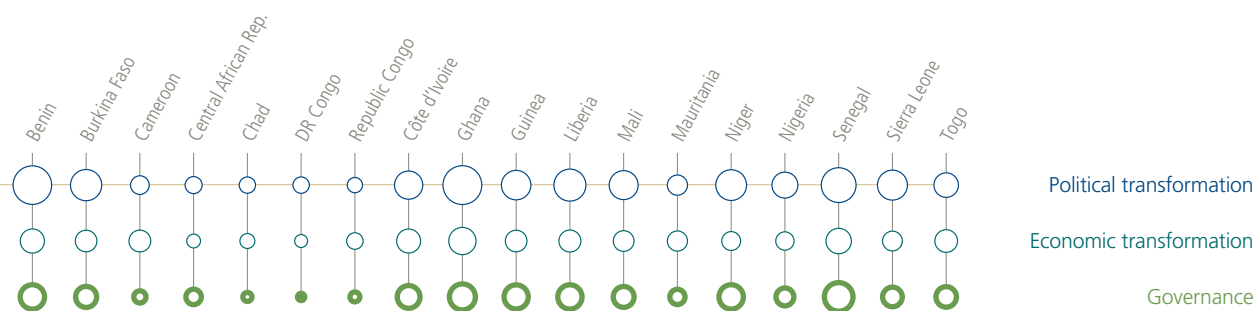
Economic conditions, already distinguished by dramatic levels of poverty, have deteriorated even further. Currencies and prices are less stable than they were two years ago.

Dependence on raw materials and low global market prices – particularly for oil – have also dampened the performance of several economies. The aftereffects of the Ebola epidemic are still felt, particularly in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Many countries offer little evidence of equality of opportunity for men and women and different ethnic groupings. Education and the R&D sector are woefully neglected. All of this would suggest a discouraging outlook for this BTI region, where the state of economic transformation is already the poorest in the world.

Nor should the highest level of difficulty among all the BTI regions serve as an excuse for the unsatisfactory transformation management of some governments. It often seems that officials have no appetite for either liberal democracy or inclusive market

economies. Efforts to shore up power bases are reflected in rampant corruption and sluggish efforts to combat it. In many areas, reconciliation of interests and consensus-building are almost nonexistent, while a number of autocrats appear to view development cooperation with donor countries as nothing more than an additional means of retaining power, as a necessary evil at best.

So far, so grim. But a second, more long-term-oriented look at the situation offers a corrective to these pessimistic prospects. Admittedly, the examples of progress are rarely spectacular and are unfolding at a snail's pace, but they are substantial and demonstrable. The clearest progress is seen in political transformation. Average scores have risen considerably since 2006, and the BTI 2018 shows more countries under



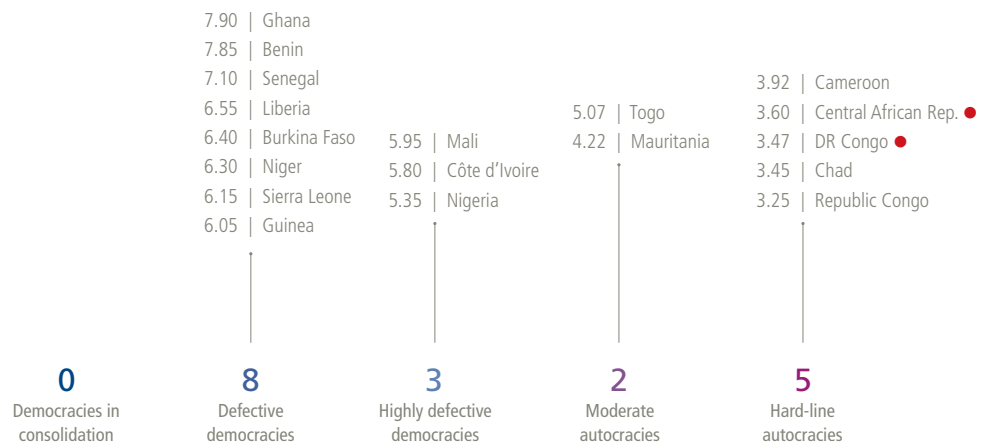
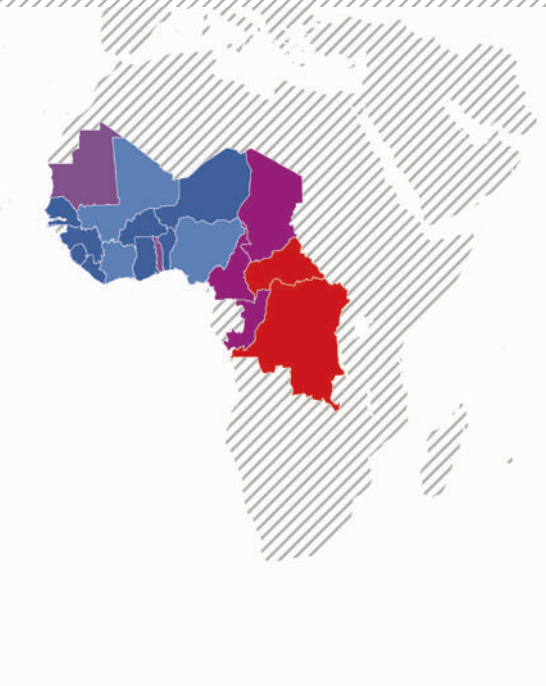
democratic rule in West and Central Africa than ever before. With Burkina Faso making great democratic progress by bringing the autocratic era of Blaise Compaoré to a remarkable end, 11 of the region's 18 countries now fulfill minimum standards of democracy. Ghana is once again in the lead, having managed its third change of government via the ballot box since democratization in the early 1990s.

Peaceful transfers of power are becoming more common in other countries, too. April 2017 saw a historic turning point in Nigeria, when incumbent Goodluck Jonathan accepted his surprise defeat in the presidential elections at the hands of Muhammadu Buhari, resulting in a transition largely unmarred by violence. Military dictatorships and facade democracies ruled by

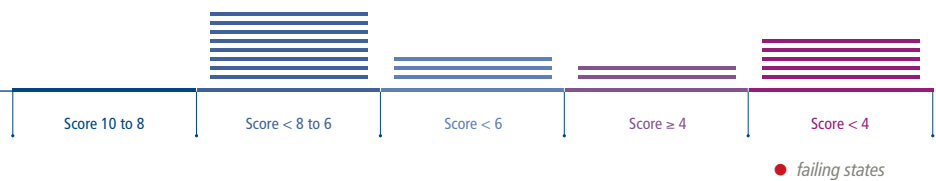
hegemonic parties and autocrats are increasingly a thing of the past, even if they linger on in countries such as Chad, the Republic of Congo and Mauritania. Even countries hampered by extremely weak stateness, such as the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo, have at least pursued electoral democracy.

And a view of the economic and social domain reveals quite positive trends in the *longue durée*. Aggregate scores have improved slightly since the BTI 2006. This applies to an even greater extent when evaluating performance in the area of governance, which is all the more remarkable when you look at other world regions where some aspects of the quality of governance have significantly deteriorated. Certainly, most of the region's governments still fea-

ture major deficits in governance capability and the efficient use of assets, and efforts to achieve societal consensus are unsatisfactory. The fight against rebels and terrorists sometimes leaves no other option than to apply counterviolence. But Mali, for one, proves that this doesn't have to mean abandoning negotiations and peace agreements altogether. It is in the fight against Islamism, in particular, that the region is reliant on international cooperation. But there is also progress to be found in regional cooperation. When the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) used its leverage to enforce the resignation of Gambian President Yahya Jammeh after he lost the presidential election, it demonstrated that cooperation is increasingly guided by shared democratic values.



Political transformation



Majority pass the litmus test

Of the 18 countries in the region, 11 are under democratic rule – the best result since the BTI began. Peaceful transfers of power are becoming more common, and military forces are less likely to step in as veto actors. Nonetheless, not one of the democracies in the region is free of defects.

Where are transfers of power decided – in back rooms, on the battlefield or at the ballot box? This question is the litmus test for democracies, and one that an increasing number of countries in West and Central Africa are passing. Certainly, first-time elections following periods of autocracy, such as Burkina Faso's democratic debut in late 2015, provide welcome news. But a distinct marker of maturity is that a government can be voted out of power. There were two examples of this in the review period. In Ghana, the opposition New Patriotic Party managed to beat the National Democratic Congress in both the presidential and parliamentary elections. This brought about Ghana's third peaceful change of government since the beginning of democratization in the early 1990s.

And the transfer of power in Nigeria truly merits the label "historic." Even mis-

use of oil revenues couldn't buy Jonathan victory over his opponent Buhari. Following his defeat, Jonathan earned the respect of his fellow citizens by accepting the result – by no means standard procedure in Africa's most populous country – and thus averting widespread bloodshed. The hope remains that Nigeria's elite will generally pay more attention to democratic rules in the future. That includes the new president, a one-time member of a military junta who has yet to prove his integrity and governance capability.

Keeping to the term for the highest office of the land is another hallmark of democracy. Most constitutions in West and Central Africa forbid re-election of the president after two terms, and adhering to this provision now appears to be the thing to do in the majority of countries. That includes Nigeria, which has the additional require-

ment of proportional north-south representation, and Senegal. Benin's president, Thomas Boni Yayi, and Liberia's Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the only female head of state on the continent, heeded their respective constitutions by refraining from seeking third terms.

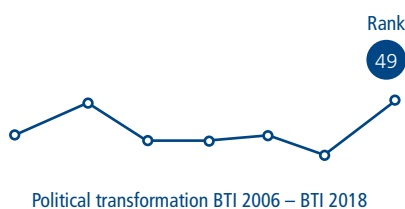
In hard autocracies such as Chad, Cameroon and the Republic of Congo, on the other hand, these rules have been abolished or artificially circumvented by changing the constitution and then declaring the present term to be the first following this new constitution. The postponement of elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo also points to a deficit of democratic sentiment. The mandate of Joseph Kabila, in power since the death of his father in 2001, has expired. But the indications are that he has no intention of actually resigning.



Population: 18.6 mn

Life expectancy: 58.9 years

GDP p.c. PPP: \$1,720



Burkina Faso: Long-tailed legacies

It was clearly a historic moment when, after 54 years of coups and military rule since the end of colonialism – and half of this period under Blaise Compaoré – a popular uprising in 2014 forced the ruler into exile. Almost more remarkable are the events that followed in 2015. Just before scheduled elections, a presidential guard-orchestrated coup against the transitional government failed despite the putschists' massive use of force. "Virtually all civil society groups mobilized in mass resistance against the putsch," explains the country report. In the democratic elections held in November 2015, Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, a former minister under Compaoré, was elected as the country's first civilian to the office of the presidency.

As a result, Burkina Faso registered a major improvement in its political transformation score, particularly in terms of political participation. However, the report warns of the wobbly foundations of democracy in the West African country. Burkina Faso remains a more or less neo-patrimonial state, and the new government struggles to build on the advances made by the transitional government led by former diplomat Michel Kafando. The government faces enormous challenges not only in battling poverty and investigating the crimes and human rights abuses of the Compaoré regime, but also in establishing its authority over the country's most powerful and longstanding veto actor: the military. The BTI country report therefore cites the urgent need to neutralize the military as a political actor and subject it to parliamentary authority as a top item on the reform agenda.

Electoral irregularities cannot be ruled out, even in democracies. Niger opposition leader Hama Amadou, who stands accused of criminal activity, launched his campaign for the general election in spring 2016 from a prison cell. When the first round of voting was called in favor of incumbent Mahamadou Issoufou, Amadou chose not to run in the decisive second round.

These examples caution us against casting political transformation in West and Central Africa in too rosy a light. The absolute level of democracy is not particularly high, and even front-runner Ghana still numbers among the defective democracies, which in West Africa are particularly characterized by deficits in the rule of law and weak stateness.

The fact that the Sahel countries encompass a number of areas barely controlled by the state is a consequence of Islamist fundamentalism, which represents the greatest political danger for the region. Constitutions of countries in West and Central Africa are traditionally liberal and secular; sub-Saharan Islam is generally considered relatively liberal. And yet a violent, fundamentalist interpretation of Islam has proliferated even here. Radicalization is partly imported, from Saudi Arabia and North Africa in particular. The rise of the terror group Boko Haram sometimes appears unstoppable. Once neighboring Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria joined the struggle against Boko Haram, they too experienced clashes with security forces and terrorist attacks.

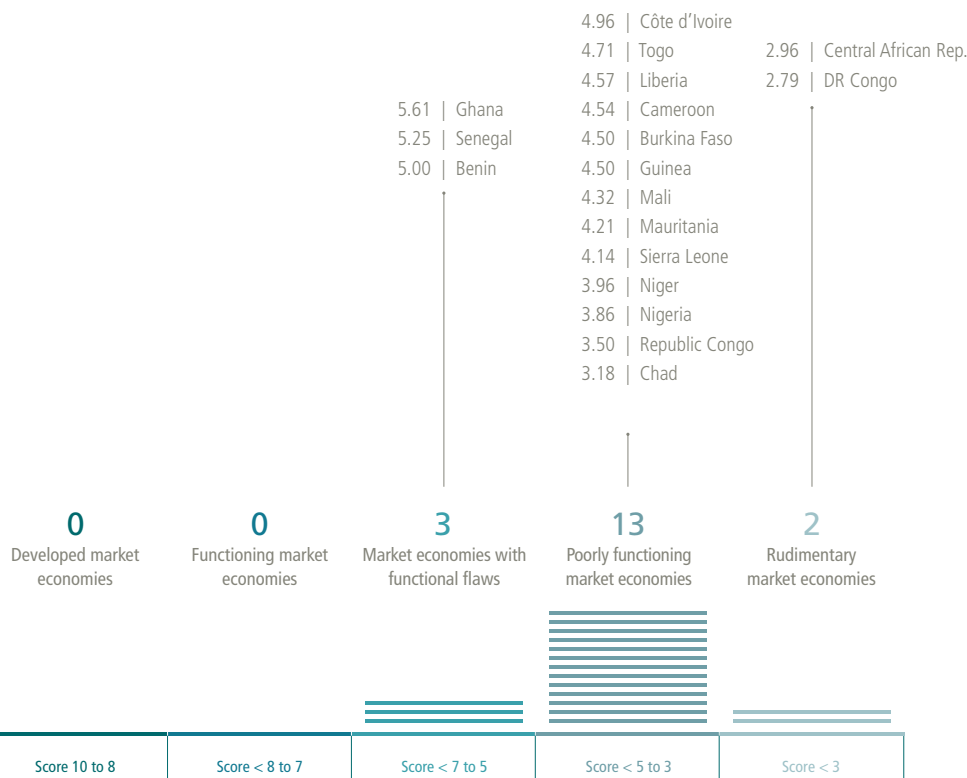
But violence is by no means the sole prerogative of Islamists. The Central African Republic saw confrontation between Christian militias and Muslim Séléka rebels, which monopolized government business for a time in 2013. Christian militias were initially fighting against the Muslim government; but following the fall of the rebel government, they extended their attacks to

the Muslim minority population. The Central African Republic's transitional government and the U.N. peacekeepers had great difficulty in preventing these assaults. A regular government was elected, but the conflict continues to smolder.

Still, there is also some good news concerning the level of violence in the region. While the military continues to exert significant influence in Chad, Mauritania and Togo, armed forces in many other countries are returning to their barracks. Even the early 2017 mutinies in Côte d'Ivoire were driven by demands for better pay and treatment rather than by political ambitions. Blatant military dictatorships are less prevalent, particularly in West Africa.



The full country report is available at
www.bti-project.org/bfa



Economic transformation

No simple path out of poverty

The drop in oil prices is being felt in West and Central Africa. Currency and price stability also deteriorated, but remain at a comparatively high level. This, once again, cannot be said for the state of socioeconomic development.

In general, the BTI 2018 confirmed the dispiriting findings of previous years – the region of West and Central Africa remains the poorhouse of the world. The state of economic transformation is lower than in any other BTI region. While poverty and social exclusion are widespread, social security systems and the kind of educational facilities that might provide a brighter future are generally at a rudimentary level. Health care for the population is insufficient, and the danger of epidemics (e.g., Ebola) or the eternal problem of malaria represent constant threats. There is not one country in West and Central Africa that can boast of having a developed or functioning market economy. There is an enormous discrepancy between the rudimentary market economies of the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo on the one hand, and countries like

Ghana, Senegal and Benin on the other, but even the latter are only mediocre by global standards.

With the national economies of the region still insufficiently diversified and highly dependent on exports of raw materials, they are susceptible to fluctuations in global market prices and other effects of the so-called resource curse. So, in light of the global drop in oil prices, it is hardly surprising that economic performance has deteriorated in seven countries, falling to an all-time low in the BTI – resulting in a range of issues, including higher inflation, lower growth and increased debt.

Nor is it surprising to find oil exporters such as Chad, the Republic of Congo, Nigeria and – to a lesser extent – Mauritania among the losers. In Nigeria, for instance, over 90% of exports are based on oil. In conjunction with the fight against Boko Har-

am, this represents a significant brake on economic development. A similar situation prevails in Sierra Leone, where the export economy is suffering significantly from a sharp drop in global market prices for iron ore and diamonds.

The problem of resource dependency – exacerbated in many places by catastrophic governance – is by no means exclusive to the region. But when compared to other regions, it is all the more remarkable that this dependence does not automatically result in weak performance. Even countries that are greatly dependent on (diverse) raw material exports, such as Cameroon, Guinea and Liberia, have not suffered deterioration. Another resource-dependent country, the Central African Republic, even achieved the region's greatest improvement in economic transformation. This recovery can be largely chalked up to peace dividends fol-

lowing years of devastating violent conflict, during which the already weak economy forfeited more than a third of its output after starting from an already very low level.

On the other hand, there was also a noticeable deterioration in economic transformation in Ghana, which had above-average scores for most other BTI criteria. This can be blamed on the malign influence of the NDC government over economic policy. It was also this homemade economic crisis that proved pivotal in the decisive victory of the opposition NPP party.

However, declining economic strength should not blind us to positive aspects such as price and currency stability, and long-term progress. Currencies and prices have remained stable in most of the former French colonies, thanks in large part to the currency union. Within the CFA franc currency union, which is pegged to the euro, two independent central banks set monetary and exchange-rate policies, respectively. The Central Bank of the West African States has performed significantly

better than the Bank of the Central African States. True, currency areas restrict national governance capability in monetary policy, and fixed linkage with the euro exposes member states to the danger of contagion from eurozone crises. But these disadvantages are more than offset by the generally low inflation rates among members of the currency union (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo). Non-members the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria and Sierra Leone all had to contend with higher price increases. Price and currency stability has deteriorated slightly since 2016, but its absolute level is still considerably high.

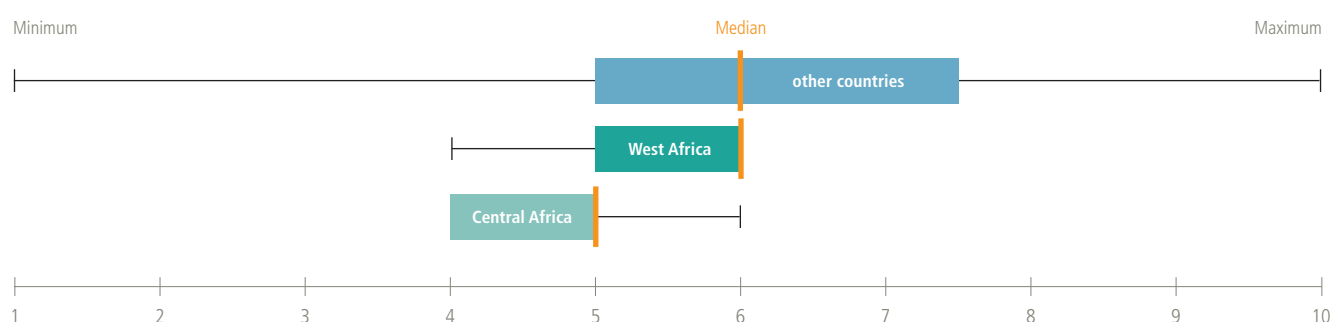
The poor socioeconomic standing of the population remains the greatest challenge to economic transformation in West and Central Africa. This insight of the BTI is echoed by other sources, such as the United Nations' Human Development Index (HDI).

A long-term view of developments between 1990 and 2015 reveals that every country in the region has improved – sometimes considerably – in key indicators of human development, such as income per capita, level of education and life expectancy.

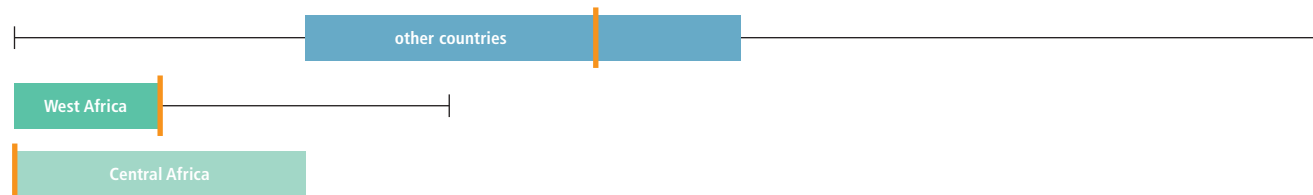
But it also holds true that this absolute progress cannot be confused with development to rival that of other regions. Most of the countries of West and Central Africa are still among the least developed in worldwide comparison. There is progress, but it is proceeding at a snail's pace. The level of socioeconomic development measured by the BTI has remained appallingly low; even Ghana falls below the BTI average. Things only get a little rosier when we turn to welfare regimes, which are now fulfilling at least very basic requirements in 11 countries. Extreme poverty and inequality remain the greatest challenges in the region.

Mind the gap: fair economic output, trailing social output

Economic performance

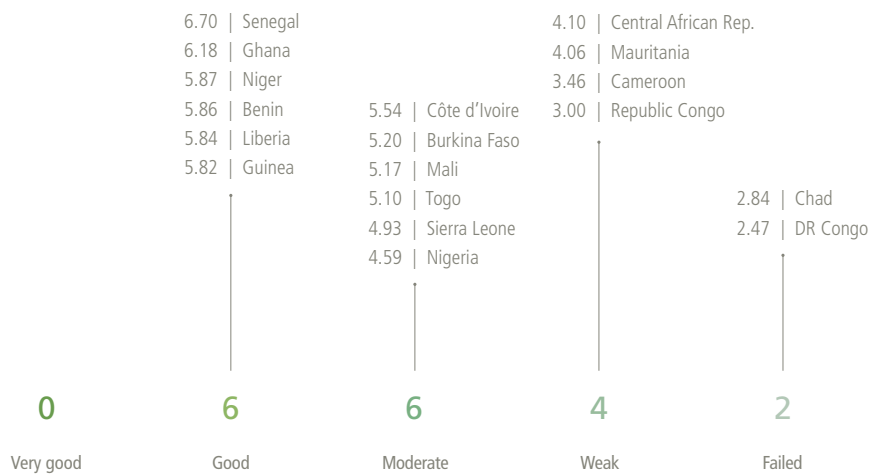


Level of socioeconomic development

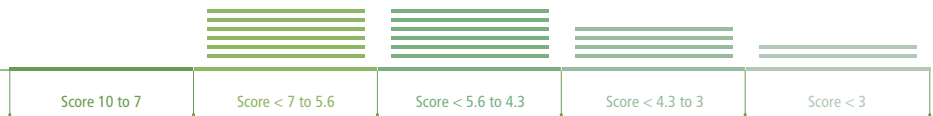


● West Africa (13 countries) ● Central Africa (5 countries) ● Outside the region (111 countries)

Distribution of BTI scores for 13 West African countries, 5 Central African countries and 111 countries outside the region. The middle 50% of countries are found inside the box.



Governance



Rules of the game increasingly respected

Over the past 12 years, transformation management in West and Central Africa has improved to a greater degree than in any other global region. A third of countries now boast good governance. A willingness to cooperate at a regional and global level remains one of the region's strengths.

In no area of the world is transformation management as difficult as it is in West and Central Africa. With the exception of Benin, Ghana, Senegal and Togo, the problems are massive everywhere; in the Central African Republic, they are overwhelming. The performance of some governments is all the more impressive considering the structural constraints, poverty, war and social conflicts they face. No region has improved as much in any BTI dimension over the last 12 years as West and Central Africa has in governance, and the BTI 2018 found good transformation management in six of 18 governments.

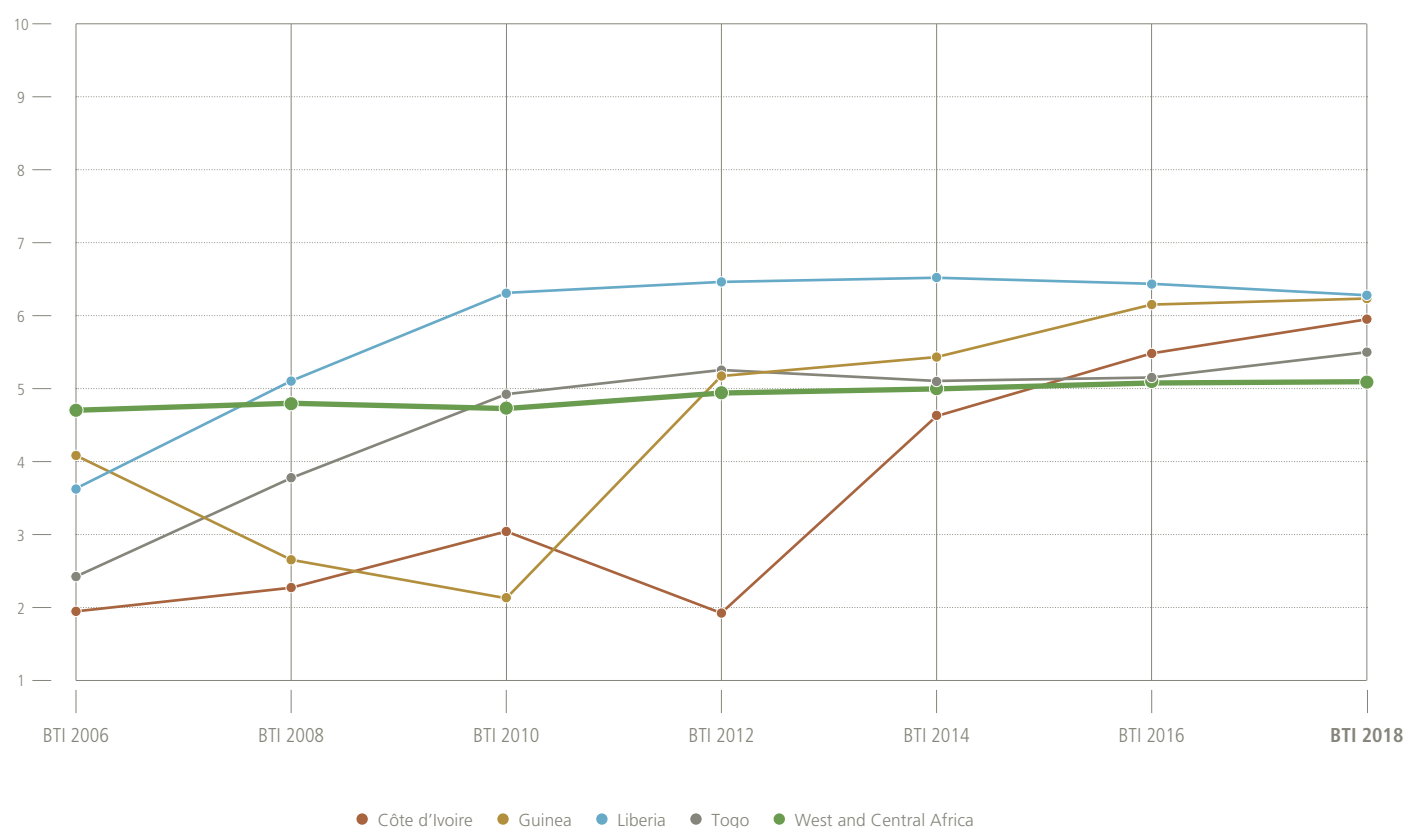
New to this group is Benin, where President Boni refrained from running again when his second term ended, leaving elected successor Patrice Talon to pursue an ambitious reform agenda beginning in March 2016. The biggest relative winner is Nigeria, where incoming President Buhari has been

far more successful in combating Boko Haram than his predecessor Jonathan. Weak political management distinguishes the Central African Republic, Mauritania, Cameroon and the Republic of Congo; the latter saw the biggest fall in governance.

Finally, Chad and the Democratic Republic of Congo offer no evidence of transformation management whatsoever. At the same time, they are extreme examples of the shadow side of governance – in steering capability, for instance. Many governments are unable to think beyond short-term retention of power. Even front-runners Senegal and Ghana manage only moderate scores here. In Guinea, on the other hand, the government of Alpha Condé has managed to improve the investment climate in the mining sector and strengthen control over the military. In macroeconomic terms, too, the country appears stable.

A further weak spot in governance in West and Central Africa is resource efficiency. The obligation to include different ethnic groups makes cabinets in many countries large and unwieldy; examples include Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Nigeria. While anti-corruption efforts are being stepped up almost everywhere, and are increasingly institutionalized, in some cases it remains unclear whether this is anything more than lip service – or even an instrument with which to attack political opponents. The treatment of Niger's opposition leader provides one example. Amadou of the former government party MNSD had barely announced his candidacy in the presidential election when (uncorroborated) accusations of child trafficking emerged. Amadou was forced to campaign from his prison cell.

Drivers of improved governance in the region



Given the high incidence of violence in the region, the way governments deal with societal cleavages is enormously important. Benin, Liberia and Senegal managed this reasonably well; Ghana and Niger a little less successfully. The findings for the rest of the region are more sobering. Particularly problematic was the cleavage management of the Republic of Congo. As expected, long-serving President Denis Sassou Nguesso was returned to power in the facade elections of October 2016, and he subsequently launched a massive campaign against the opposition. Things were little better in Chad. Although the government has been increasingly effective in marginalizing the numerous “politico-military” movements, the dominance of President Idriss Déby’s ethnic group is undiminished. The rape of young women by members of the Zaghawa clan, including relatives of government officials, triggered outrage.

Elsewhere it is possible to discern good intentions, but the potential for violence remains high. In Nigeria, for instance, the fight against the brutal Islamists of Boko

Haram is not the only challenge. The traditional north-south conflict, which also comes with an ethno-religious dimension, is a further source of conflict, as are the Igbo region (formerly Biafra) and the Niger Delta. With measures such as proportional rules for filling government positions and the requirement that political parties be multiethnic and national in makeup, the government is at least trying to overcome old conflict lines.

The pronounced will to international cooperation in many places remains an encouraging sign. Of course, this is partly due to a dependence on development aid. However, for most governments, it would be wrong to dismiss the idea of intrinsic motivation out of hand. Senegal and Ghana stand out in this regard. Particularly impressive is the discernible improvement in regional cooperation between countries in the region, although here, too, the persistently wide gap between West and Central Africa is very much apparent.

The ability of West African countries to cooperate while observing the rules of dem-

ocratic governance was demonstrated by ECOWAS during the electoral crisis in Gambia, which was not covered by the BTI due to the small size of its population. Long-serving President Jammeh was the surprise loser in the December 2016 elections. Even more surprising was his initial acceptance of the election result, which he nonetheless rescinded after a few days. But under pressure from Nigeria, Senegal and other countries, Jammeh finally declared that he would make way for his successor, Adama Barrow, and leave the country.

Things are a little different in Central Africa. Congolese President Kabila, in power since 2001 and now at the end of his second and final term, may have proclaimed his willingness to eventually resign. But the elections which are now due have been postponed indefinitely.



Fragile roots

Even amid extreme poverty, democracy is possible – this is perhaps the most important message from the region of West and Central Africa. There is much to indicate that in West Africa, at least, democratic values are progressively taking root. The rising incidence of peaceful transfers of power is as much a testament to this as the fact that violent takeovers are no longer accepted. Long-term improvements in socio-economic development, while slow, also offer cause for hope.

We must be careful, however, not to overestimate these achievements or place too much faith in future progress. Political turbulence, especially, cannot be ruled out in the coming years. How President Kaboré and his government approach reform in Burkina Faso will be crucial. The Democratic Republic of Congo, the notorious “problem case,” could run into turbulence if the issue of President Kabila’s successor cannot be settled smoothly. The advanced age of Cameroon’s president, Paul Biya, one of the last “dinosaurs” in the region, also raises questions about succession. In Nigeria, it remains to be seen whether President Buhari can master the challenges of his country, particularly in light of rumors concerning his health. The struggle against Boko Haram Islamists, poverty and corruption, management of the oil sector – solving these problems will be far from easy. For post-conflict states, such as the Côte d’Ivoire and Mali, it is essential that they continue on their present path. The new government in the Central African

Republic faces even greater challenges. Violent Islamism remains a danger to the entire region.

Europe and the West need to devote greater attention to West and Central Africa than they have to date, and not just because of the threat of Islamism and migratory movements across the Mediterranean. Excessive optimism is unwarranted. The desire to identify a particular country as a beacon of hope often tempts us to overlook problems and risks. Mali was one such example in the past. Now Ghana and Senegal are being extolled as “model countries,” but too loudly, and too often.

In any case, concrete recommendations are always better than declarations. Political transformation must ultimately strive for stable framework conditions. This includes balance between ethnic and religious identity groups. Islamism is partly stoked from outside, but measures on the ground can help prevent radicalization, particularly among the youth. Averting danger also requires professional security forces. Security requires development – and, without development, there will be no security in the long term.

Overcoming the temptations of extremism will also require a reduction in poverty, an increase in equality, and economic growth. The diversification of national economies is on the agenda of raw material exporters, along with a greater focus on education. Just as important – and too often ignored in development policy debates – is controlling population growth.

Excessive birth rates threaten to nullify any other development achievements.

Above all, transformation is and will remain a sovereign affair. Development aid and international cooperation may ease acute emergency situations and facilitate development – and, in the best cases, even initiate it – but transformation from outside is unrealistic. The expectations placed on development cooperation are often excessive. Moreover, a paternalistic attitude, particularly toward former European colonies, is neither appropriate nor effective. This doesn’t mean negating value-oriented Africa policies. A more sensible approach would be to support regional integration, which is already yielding discernible results in West Africa in cooperative efforts against terrorism and in support for democratic standards. Western countries in particular should be aware that conflicting objectives may arise from time to time. The primacy of security interests in the Sahel region and West Africa often results in support for incumbents – such as those in Cameroon and Chad – whose behavior is contrary to the long-term interests of both the international community and their countries’ populations.



This summary is based on the West and Central Africa regional report by Matthias Basedau, available at www.bti-project.org/wca



Full reports for each country in the region available at www.bti-project.org/countryreports/wca



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Interview

“Where there is corruption, there is a corrupter”

Jean-Luc Mathey on bad governance, the responsibility of foreign companies, and the Democratic Republic of Congo as an economic battlefield

The BTI country report characterizes the logic of governance in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as “one of corruption, embezzlement and opportunism.” Is there no major political player interested in advancing progress and well-being for all?

The DRC has political figures and people from civil society with the necessary skills to lead the country in bringing about genuine economic and social development for the well-being of the population. The problem is simply that democracy in the true sense of the word does not exist in the DRC. If the institutions and laws needed to establish a democratic system are present, they are neither applied nor workable. Once the officials responsible for compliance and enforcement are under the control of a minority in power, the system is blocked. The separation of powers cannot take place! And when public servants are not properly or regularly paid, informal relationships and corruption gain the upper hand.

It is difficult to gain clarity over the power structure in Congo, which involves a grab bag of political parties with narrow agendas, various militias and unofficial channels controlled by members of the Kabila family. Who’s really running the country?

To understand the structure of power in the Congo, you just need to follow the path of capital – as is the case in many countries. Money is first and foremost the master of the DRC, and it is in the hands of a minority. But where there is corruption, there is a corrupter. The DRC’s economy is said to be in crisis. I do not agree. Wealth is simply not properly distributed. Although President Kabila, the militia and other local power brokers bear responsibility for the catastrophic situation in which the public lives, they are not the ones destroying forests, exploiting the country’s riches, and extracting valuable metals and precious stones. Many foreign companies have the power to influence the state of affairs and are also responsible for the armed conflicts in the country. The DRC is an economic battlefield for resources.

The death of former Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, a national icon, in February 2017 weakened the splintered opposition even further. Is a democratic alternative to Kabila currently a realistic option?

Personally, I don’t think there has ever been a united opposition in this country. There were men like the illustrious Etienne Tshisekedi, who opposed the power in place his entire life. But a single man, as charismatic as he is, can do nothing to a strong power if he lacks the support of a critical mass affording

him the strength and legitimacy to act as a viable alternative. Too many members of the opposition are as economically vulnerable as the rest of the population. As a result, their priority will be to line first “their pockets” before others’!

A quality opposition must feature personalities with a certain financial independence who have proven themselves beyond the political sphere. The DRC does not need politicians; it needs good managers. The solution must come from the private or university sector. But, above all, the solution must come from the people.

The BTI country report challenges Western countries, holding that if they “continue to support the regime without repercussions for openly antidemocratic behavior, there will not be any incentive to respect constitutional and legal rules.” How do you see this? What would you recommend?

I agree in part with those statements. The pressures or sanctions, as they are currently implemented, are totally ineffective. We block the accounts of certain personalities, ban Schengen visas, seize “ill-gotten” properties, etc. But why do we refrain from holding accountable the international companies active in these countries that are guilty of dubious fiscal and social practices? Why do we not investigate the environmental damage done by these multinationals and industrial consortia, which change their name once they arrive in Africa?

As for technical assistance, it is necessary; but a revised assessment of priorities is also needed. Hundreds of millions of euros have been spent on building the institutional capacity of administrations without any concrete effect on good governance. Africa has the youngest population on the planet, but aid and investment in education are minimal. Central Africa has the world’s largest reserves of wood, but it imports Ikea furniture. In terms of hydroelectric potential, the Congo River is capable of supplying the continent with clean lighting, but the vast majority of households do not have access to a grid. There is plenty of copper, but no cable. Arable land is endless, but people do not have enough to eat.

The list is long, but the point is that financial aid must be made conditional on tangible outcomes for the public. Technical assistance must truly bring about a real transfer of expertise and, in particular, a technological transfer of resources to the continent. The development of public-private partnerships and education must be the driving force behind the emergence of the DRC and Central Africa.