

# Serving Africa's Citizens: Governance and Urban Service Delivery



Camilla Rocca and Diego Fernández Fernández

**Abstract** Between 1950 and 2050, Africa's urban population is expected to multiply by nearly 46 times, from 32.7 million to 1.5 billion. In 2040 African cities will host around a billion people, equivalent to Africa's total population in 2009. This urban growth is characterized by a massive youth surge, while economic growth is often taking place without job creation; inequalities are widening; and per capita incomes are lower than in other world regions at similar urbanization levels. Moreover, the new century brings unprecedented pressures linked to climate change, global pandemics, worsening security threats and growing migration flows. Growing urban populations put cities at the heart of governance, with the future of the continent thus placed into the hands of its cities. This poses a huge and immediate challenge, putting to test the capacity of local governments to step up public service provision for a population increasingly critical about the access and quality of these services. However, all these intertwined challenges could also constitute a transformative opportunity for Africa. Besides presenting an overview of the present context of urban public service delivery in Africa and an assessment of public service delivery in key sectors—from health to education to housing to waste management—this chapter will focus on urban policies and planning to foster and trigger sustainable and equitable development, improved governance and public service delivery, as well as a renewed sense of participation and citizenship.

**Keywords** Africa · Governance · Urban population · Cities · Youth · Public service delivery · Decentralisation · Urban policies and planning

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## 1 Introduction

Between 1950 and 2050, Africa's urban population is expected to multiply by nearly 46 times, from 32.7 million to 1.5 billion. Between now and 2050, the number of people living in urban areas in Nigeria is projected to increase by 184.3 million. In 2040 African cities will host around a billion people, equivalent to Africa's total population in 2009 (UNDESA 2018c, d). The future of the continent is thus in the hands of its cities.

This urban growth is characterized by a massive youth surge. Meanwhile, economic growth is often taking place without job creation; inequalities are widening; and per capita incomes are lower than in other world regions at similar urbanization levels. Moreover, the new century brings unprecedented pressures linked to climate change, global pandemics, worsening security threats and growing migration flows.

This poses a huge and immediate challenge. The already strained capacities of local governments will be put to test, as Africa's urban revolution puts additional pressure to effectively provide traditional and new public services to a population that is increasingly dissatisfied with how African governments are providing education and health services (MIF 2018c). However, properly managed, with sound governance and focused leadership, all these intertwined challenges could also constitute a transformative opportunity for Africa. Focusing on urban policies and planning has the potential to foster and trigger sustainable and equitable development, improved governance and public service delivery, as well as a renewed sense of participation and citizenship.

This chapter examines governance and urban service delivery in Africa. It presents Africa's urban landscape (Sect. 2), decentralization and urban structures for service delivery (Sect. 3), access to, and deficits of, urban services in Africa (Sect. 4), challenges for urban authorities (Sect. 5), and factors and good practices that influence urban governance and access to services (Sect. 6). The final section presents our main conclusions.

## 2 Africa's Urban Landscape

### 2.1 Demographic Trends

Africa's demographic trends, including a growing youth bulge and urban population growth, are shaping the continent's urban landscape. African urban centers are critical hubs where fundamental public services are provided (e.g. energy, water and sanitation, housing, transport, health, education, waste management) to an ever-growing number of Africa's citizens, with some cities managing populations larger than those of countries.

**A growing African population**—From 1950 to 2015, the population in Africa, now the fastest growing in the world, expanded by more than +400%. Growing at an average rate of +1.6% per year, Africa's population is expected to continue rising until 2100. Between 2018 and 2050, Africa's population will more than double, from

1.2 billion to more than 2.5 billion. During that period, half of the world's population growth will be concentrated in nine countries, five of which are African: Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda.<sup>1</sup> By 2050, 26 African countries are expected to double their current population size. By 2100, six of them are projected to increase it by more than five times: Angola, Burundi, Niger, Somalia, Tanzania and Zambia (MIF 2018a).

**Urban population: exponential growth and specific demands**—In 2019, approximately 567.4 million people in Africa live in urban areas, equivalent to nearly 43.0% of Africa's population. Africa's urban population, as a share of the total population, is still considerably smaller than in Asia, Europe and Latin America & the Caribbean (43.0% compared to 50.5%, 74.7% and 80.9%, respectively) (UNDESA 2018c, f). In 2034, Africa will be the last continent to become on average 50% urban (UNDESA 2018f). This will be around 20 years later than Asia, and over 70 and 80 years later than Latin America & the Caribbean and Europe respectively. Despite this, Africa's share of the global urban population is growing faster than any other continent. In 2050, Africa is expected to host slightly more than ¼ of the global urban population (MIF 2015a).

By 2050, the continent's urban population will amount to nearly 1.5 billion, 58.9% of the total population (compared to nearly 43.0% today) (UNDESA 2018c, f). Africa's urban population growth rate in the period 2015–2020 is the fastest in the world (+3.58% compared to +2.16% in Asia, +1.30% in Latin America & the Caribbean and +0.35% in Europe). Of the ten countries with the fastest urban growth rates in the world for the period 2015–2020, eight are African: Burkina Faso, Burundi, DRC, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mali, Uganda and Tanzania (UNDESA 2018a).

These growing urban populations will predictably put significant strain on African cities. The delivery of services such as the traditional government functions (security, justice, rule of law), as well as basic welfare needs (education, health), will have to meet a demand in expansion due to a growing population, which is requesting specific public delivery in health, education, transport, housing, safety and security, water and sanitation, waste management, cultural life and entertainment.

Besides having the world's fastest urban population growth rate, Africa is also a steadily urbanizing continent. For urbanization to occur, it is not enough that the urban population is growing, but its growth rate should exceed that of the overall population (MIF 2015a). Even though Africa's urban population growth is the fastest in the world, the rate at which it has urbanized in recent years is slower than that of Asia (1.11% for Africa and 1.39% for Asia in the period 2010–2015). However, by 2025–2030, Africa's urbanization rate should exceed Asia's for the first time since 1985–1990 (1.06% and 0.98%, respectively) (UNDESA 2018b).

**The challenge of youth**—Africa is already the youngest continent in the world. In 2015, more than 60.0% of Africa's population were below age 25, with 41.0% being under 15. The percentage of Africans under 25 will fall only slightly, to 57.1% in 2030 and to 50.4% in 2050, remaining a higher percentage than in other world regions (MIF 2018a). In 2015, 42.7% of Africa's youth (ages 15–24) lived in urban

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<sup>1</sup>The nine countries in which half of the world's population growth will be concentrated between now and 2050 are DRC, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Tanzania, Uganda and the US.

areas. The number of youth living in urban areas has grown by +262% since 1980, from 26.7 million to 96.5 million in 2015. Between 2010 and 2015, Africa’s urban youth population grew by +15.5%. This contrasts with the negative rate of growth seen in Asia for the same period (−0.9%) (UNDESA 2014).

A key challenge within African urban agglomerations will be providing jobs for the growing youth population. There is the potential for African economies to reap the so-called “demographic dividend”, as this youth bulge joins the working-age population (ages 15–64). However, if Africa’s growth patterns remain unchanged and not enough jobs are created, this dividend could turn into a threat. Consequently, young people may be unable to find a job, increasing unemployment and employment informality. Furthermore, they may be discouraged from actively seeking employment, lowering the labor market participation rate. Apart from economic losses, this could also lead to a brain drain, political and social unrest, instability and armed conflict (MIF 2018c).

## 2.2 Urban Configurations

The continent’s fast urban growth can have positive or negative impacts: it can either lead to economic growth, structural transformation, and poverty reduction, or, alternatively, to increased inequality, urban poverty, and the proliferation of slums (MIF 2015a).

**City populations equivalent or larger than country populations**—The 20 biggest cities of the continent currently manage populations bigger than many countries. Cairo, Africa’s most populous city, has a population that is larger than that of each of the 36 least populous countries on the continent (MIF 2018a).



**The megacity**—A megacity is a metropolitan area with a total population of more than 10 million people. Only 3 of the world's 33 megacities are in Africa: Cairo, Lagos and Kinshasa. China and India each have more megacities than Africa. But, by 2030, it is expected that 5 of the world's 43 megacities will be in Africa: Cairo, Kinshasa, Lagos, Luanda and Dar es Salaam (UNDESA 2018e).

**African cities are mainly middle-sized**—Africa counts 64 cities of 1 million inhabitants or more. Of Africa's 221 urban areas with over 300,000 people,<sup>2</sup> more than 1/3 of them have a population of less than 500,000 people (UNDESA 2018e). Almost 1/2 of Africa's urban dwellers live in settlements of fewer than 300,000 people (UNDESA 2018c, e).

Current trends show that in Africa the fastest urban growth will be in intermediate-sized cities (ETTg 2018), as between now and 2030, 6 of the 10 African cities expected to grow the most have a population between 300,000 and 500,000 (UNDESA 2018e). Africa's largest urban agglomerations are not absorbing the bulk of current urban population growth. Moreover, they are not predicted to do so in the future. Intermediate-sized cities may face constraints in dealing with continued rapid growth. These cities tend to lag behind their larger counterparts in institutional and capacity development. Without adequate urban planning, it is therefore possible that urban slum proliferation may become a feature of these middle-sized cities (MIF 2015a).

### 3 Decentralization and Urban Structures for Service Delivery

Decentralization processes imply various degrees of devolution of power to local authorities, including urban centers, to bring it closer to the citizens. Through decentralization, urban centers take on increased responsibility in managing the lives of people, on political, fiscal and decision-making matters, but also becoming the key providers of services, infrastructure, housing and urban planning.

**Decentralization in Africa**—Decentralization is the transfer of (or part of) the central government's functions to sub-national units or levels of government. There are several degrees of decentralization: (a) deconcentration: opening a branch office in a region; (b) delegation: tasking a sub-national government to carry out functions; (c) devolution: allowing a sub-national government to take over functions autonomously. Likewise, there are several types of decentralization: (a) political: involves the transfer of political power and authority to sub-national units, to give citizens and elected representatives more power in public decision-making; (b) administrative: involves

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<sup>2</sup>Unless stated otherwise, when talking about African cities, we are referring to those urban areas with more than 300,000 population (those included in the file "Annual Population of Urban Agglomerations with 300,000 Inhabitants or More" from World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision").

the transfer of the delivery of social services—namely education, health, social services—to sub-national units, to redistribute authority, responsibility and financial resources for providing public services among different levels of government; (c) fiscal: increases the revenues of sub-national governments through tax-raising powers and grants, and the expenditure autonomy of sub-national governments; (d) economic: through privatization and deregulation, governments shift responsibility from public functions to the private sector, or community groups, cooperatives, private voluntary associations, and other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), also in areas such as service provision and administration (MIF 2018a).

Every African country has at least one sub-national level of government. There is no direct relation between the size of a country's population and the number of its administrative units. For example, both Equatorial Guinea and Tanzania had 30 sub-national administrative units in 2010, with very different sizes of population: over 0.9 million in Equatorial Guinea and over 46 million people in Tanzania. Since 1990, sub-national administrative units in 25 African countries have increased by at least +20%. Eight have more than doubled them between 1990 and 2010, among which are Guinea (from 14 to 341), Niger (from 35 to 256) and South Africa (from 53 to 284) (MIF 2018a).

**Complex layers of government**—Actual powers and responsibilities wielded by the different levels of government differ widely. Despite the wave of decentralization policies during the 1990s, and of constitutional reforms in the 2000s, the actual implementation and devolution programs and plans has been incomplete, inconsistent and sporadic, albeit with some exceptions (e.g. Morocco, South Africa) (MIF 2018a).

Local and urban authorities can be organised in many different ways and given that Africa is a complex myriad of 54 separate countries, there are multiple urban governance models that have emerged within the continent.

In Mali, decentralization involved a redistribution of the national territory. Benin simply transformed existing administrative divisions into territorial units. Furthermore, many countries that undertook territorial reorganization opted for the creation of two or three levels of decentralization (typically: regions, departments/provinces or 'communes'), but states such as Nigeria created only one level of decentralization (Diep et al. 2016).

Kisumu Municipal Council in Kenya is an example of the complexity of urban governance in Africa. Initially a relatively autonomous local government body, located within Nyanza Province, its role and function changed after the restructuring of subnational government by the 2010 Constitution that made counties the main sub-national level of government. Kisumu still has a municipal administration (Kisumu City), but although it is meant to have a Municipal Board (according to the 2011 Urban Areas and Cities Act) the Governor of Kisumu County has not officially established this board (as is generally also the case in other counties in Kenya). Kisumu City essentially functions as an agency of Kisumu County, with all Kisumu City officials being employed by Kisumu County. In addition, many national ministries also play a direct role in Kisumu; for example, the National Ministry of Land and Housing allocates land within the city area (Smit 2018).

**The international and continental agenda**—The UN-Habitat's Governing Council adopted the International Guidelines on Decentralization and Strengthening of Local Authorities in 2017 and the International Guidelines on Decentralization and Access to Basic Services for All in 2009. The Habitat III Conference (Quito, Ecuador, 2016) signed the UN's New Urban Agenda setting a new global standard for sustainable urban development with three main operational enablers: local fiscal systems, urban planning, and basic services and infrastructure (MIF 2018a).

At the continental level, the African Union (AU) promotes comprehensive decentralization to achieve the goals from the global and continental development agendas (UN's Agenda 2030 and AU's Agenda 2063, respectively). The 2014 African Charter on Values and Principles of Decentralization, Local Governance and Local Development is the reference for decentralization policies. However, the Charter has to date been ratified by only three countries: Burundi, Madagascar and Namibia. Within the AU, the Technical Committee on Public Service, Local Government, Urban Development and Decentralization gathers Ministers of Housing and Urban Development; and the High Council of Local Authorities represents the voice of local governments in the deliberations of the AU (MIF 2018a).

**'Localizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)'**—For the SDGs to be relevant to the majority of African people they must be relevant to cities. Unlike the previous Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the SDGs contained in the UN's Agenda 2030 include a dedicated and standalone urban goal. Goal 11 is to accomplish the following: "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable". Furthermore, other goals, such as those on poverty, health, sustainable energy and inclusive economic growth, are intimately linked to urban areas. An integrated approach is crucial for progress across the multiple goals (MIF 2018a).

In 2016 and 2017, 12 African countries, accounting for 6483 Local and Regional Governments (LRGs), submitted national voluntary reviews on the 'localization of the SDGs'. The involvement of LRGs happened at different levels. Sierra Leone involved 19 local councils to integrate the SDGs into their district-level and municipal development plans. Egypt has adopted the City Prosperity Index to monitor the implementation of SDG 11 in 35 cities. In Nigeria the responsibility of data mapping and supply for SDGs indicators is shared with the regions. Nigeria's Kaduna State integrated the SDGs into its State Development Plan for 2016–2020 (MIF 2018a).

**The impact of decentralization: better public service delivery or increased inequality?**—In Ethiopia, decentralization has reportedly improved public service delivery. For example, net enrolments in education, access to basic health services such as antenatal care, contraception, vaccination rates and deliveries by skilled birth attendants have all improved. Child mortality rates have fallen from 123 per 1000 live births in 2005 to 88 in 2010, and primary net enrolment rates rose from 68% in 2004/2005 to 82% in 2009/2010 (MIF 2018a). In Sierra Leone, the creation in 2014 of decentralized District Ebola Response Centers (DERC) made it possible to contain the epidemic by relying on social structures and networks established in local communities. The provision of a focal point for partners to work through in the field was regarded as one of the DERC's most important contributions to the fight against Ebola (MIF 2018a).



Meanwhile, in Uganda, decentralization reforms implemented in the 1990s contributed to growing inequality and inefficiency in education provision. A study of two districts shows that, as the central government still controls more than 90% of their local budget, local governments are severely constrained by the lack of funds and have no say on development priorities. Moreover, higher levels of private and donor funding in certain districts led to variable education provision amongst districts, and thus higher inequality levels. In 2009, Botswana transferred the management of clinics and primary hospitals from local to central government (Ministry of Health). Centralization came with difficulties, such as delays in delivery of drugs and low maintenance of equipment and hospitals (MIF 2018a).

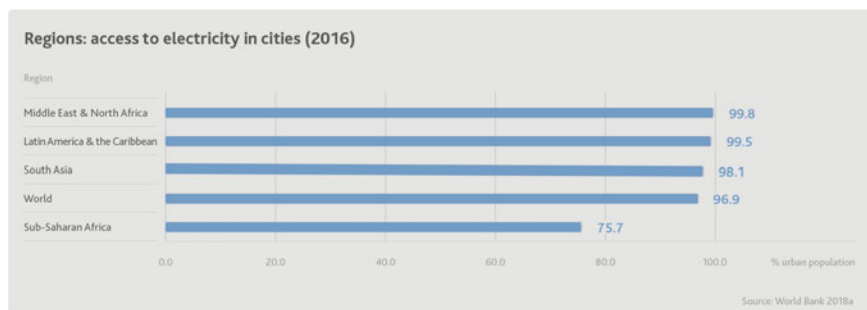
#### 4 Access to Urban Services: The Main Mission

The already strained capacities of African local governments, which have resulted in unequal access to services in many areas, are being put to the test by Africa's rapid urban expansion. For instance, poor capacities in waste management as well as in the provision of affordable urban land and housing have been made even more noticeable by the sustained and fast urban growth seen on the African continent. Extending access to urban services should constitute the main mission for local authorities, in a context where African citizens are voicing their dissatisfaction with how governments are handling the provision of basic services such as health and education.

**Citizen perceptions**—The 2018 Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) shows a growing citizen dissatisfaction with how African national governments are performing in terms of provision of some of the most essential public services. In this sense, both *Satisfaction with Education Provision* and *Satisfaction with Basic Health Services*, two Afrobarometer-sourced perception-based indicators, have followed a negative trajectory over the past decade (−9.0 and −6.7, respectively). Of the 34 African countries with data, while only 11 have improved their score in *Satisfaction with Education Provision* during the years 2008–2017, 14 have experienced an improvement in *Satisfaction with Basic Health Services* in the same time period. Contrary to this, citizen satisfaction with how African governments are doing when it comes to providing electricity supply appears to be on the rise. This is shown by the trajectory of the Afrobarometer-sourced IIAG indicator *Satisfaction with Electricity Supply*, which has improved by +7.6 over the past decade (MIF 2018c).

**Access to electricity**—In 2016, 75.7% of sub-Saharan Africa's urban population had access to electricity. This is lower than the averages for the Middle East & North Africa (99.8%), Latin America & the Caribbean (99.5%), South Asia (98.1%) and the World (96.9%) (World Bank 2018a).



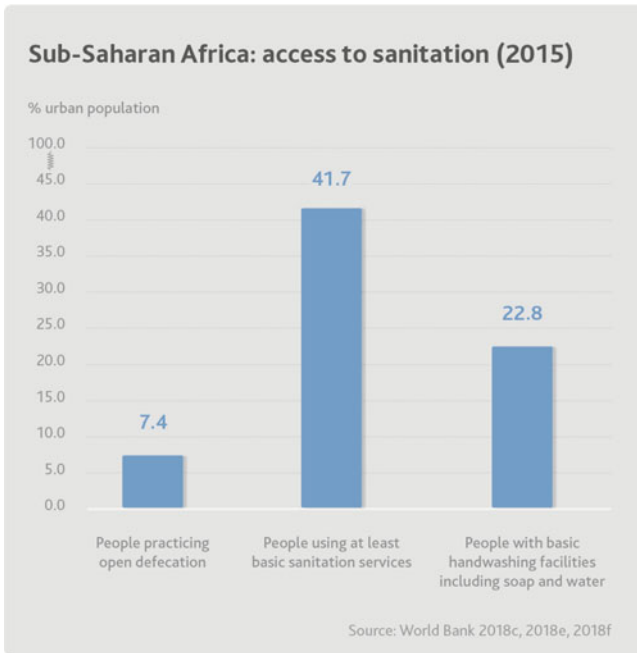


The ten African countries with the lowest urban access to electricity in 2016 were Somalia (57.2%), Burundi (49.7%), DRC (47.2%), Sierra Leone (46.9%), Malawi (42.0%), Central African Republic (34.1%), Liberia (34.0%), Chad (31.4%), Guinea-Bissau (29.8%) and South Sudan (22.0%). The case of DRC, which had the eight lowest rate of urban access to electricity on the continent in 2016, is particularly dramatic (World Bank 2018a). In that same year, DRC's urban population was the fourth largest in Africa (34.1 million) (UNDESA 2018c).

The ten African countries with the highest urban access to electricity in 2016 were Egypt (100.0%), Morocco (100.0%), Tunisia (100.0%), Algeria (99.6%), Seychelles (99.4%), Libya (99.1%), Gabon (96.7%), Cabo Verde (93.0%), South Africa (92.9%) and Comoros (92.1%) (World Bank 2018a).

In 2016, only Mauritius and Seychelles, had a higher percentage of population with access to electricity in rural areas than in urban areas (100% and 100% in rural areas, compared to 91.9% and 99.4% in urban areas, respectively). Only three North African countries reached a 100% access to electricity both among their urban and rural populations (Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia) (World Bank 2018a, b).

**Sanitation and water services**—In 2015, 7.4% of sub-Saharan Africa's urban population practiced open defecation (compared to 0.2% in the Middle East & North Africa region and 2.2% globally) (World Bank 2018c). In that same year, 41.7% of sub-Saharan Africa's urban dwellers used at least basic sanitation services (compared to 92.7% in the Middle East & North Africa region and 82.0% at the global level) (World Bank, 2018e). Moreover, in 2015, only 22.8% of the inhabitants of sub-Saharan African cities had handwashing facilities including soap and water (World Bank 2018f).



In 2015, the five African countries with the highest percentages of their urban population having at least basic sanitation services were either located in the North African region or islands: Tunisia (98.1%), Egypt (97.3%), Mauritius (93.9%), Algeria (89.7%) and Morocco (89.3%). Conversely, DRC (22.6%), Congo (20.0%), Ghana (18.8%), Ethiopia (18.5%) and Madagascar (16.2%) had the lowest urban populations with access to at least basic sanitation services (World Bank 2018e). This means that in the DRC and Ethiopia, whose capitals, Kinshasa and Addis Ababa, were the third and twelfth largest cities on the continent in 2015, only 7.4 million and 3.6 million urban dwellers had access to at least basic sanitation services in that same year (compared to total urban populations of 32.6 million and 19.4 million, respectively) (UNDESA 2018c, e; World Bank 2018e).

Only 81.4% of sub-Saharan Africa's urban population had access to at least basic drinking services in 2015. This is lower than the figures for the Middle East & North Africa and the World (95.9% and 95.2%, respectively) (World Bank 2018e). Accessing water through unsafe and untreated water sources poses a significant health risk. For instance, in Dar es Salaam, over 75% of the urban dwellers living in informal settlements only have access to informal and unsafe pit emptying services, where the risks of exposure to faecal sludge and contamination of drinking water sources are further exacerbated by flooding or heavy rains. However, faecal contamination can also affect the "served" urban population. In many African cities, formal water supplies to low-income areas are characterized by high degrees of discontinuity, which forces urban dwellers to resort to unsafe water sources, increasing the risk of diarrheal diseases (Dodman et al. 2017). In 2015, the five African countries with the

highest urban access to at least basic drinking water services were Mauritius (99.9%), Tunisia (99.7%), Egypt (99.3%), South Africa (96.7%) and Namibia (96.7%). All five countries having the smallest urban populations with access to at least basic drinking water services managed to guarantee the basic water needs of more than half of their urban dwellers: Somalia (70.0%), DRC (69.7%), Eritrea (66.3%), Angola (63.3%) and South Sudan (59.6%) (World Bank 2018d).

In 2016, there was little urban-rural convergence in access to improved drinking water sources even in highly urbanized African countries. Ethiopia, one of the least urbanized countries, constitutes an outlier with a 57 percentage point difference. While in some of the more urbanized countries, such as Algeria, Cabo Verde, South Africa and Tunisia, the disparity in access was 5–20 percentage points, in Congo and Gabon, also highly urbanized, the percentage point difference was 50–60. This goes against the global trends where countries with high urbanization show almost no difference between urban and rural areas when it comes to access to basic services (UNECA 2017).

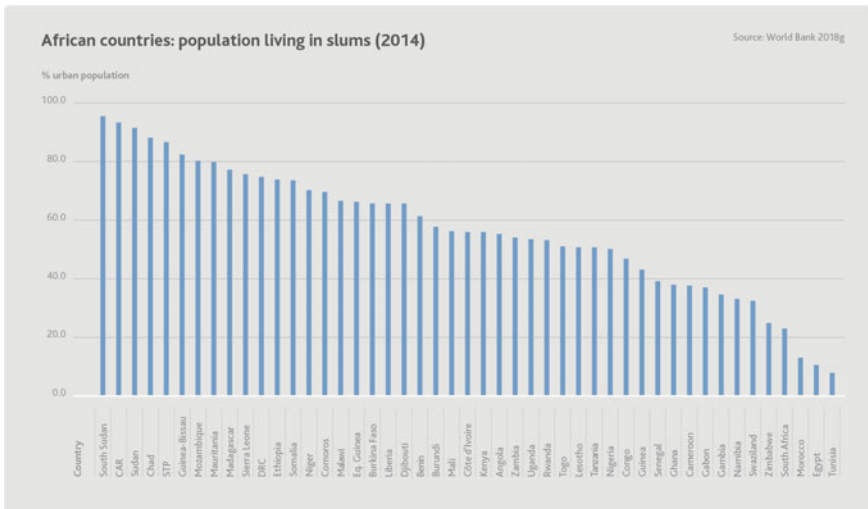
**Waste management**—Solid wastes constitute non-liquid or non-gaseous products (e.g. trash, junk, refuse) of human activities that are unwanted. Generation of municipal solid waste increases in line with the development rate of any country (Bello et al. 2016). An estimated 11.2 billion tons of solid waste is collected worldwide every year. In Africa, the main drivers of solid waste generation are urbanization and urban population growth (APHRC 2017). African cities generate between 0.3 kg and 0.8 kg of solid waste per capita per day compared to the global average of 1.4 kg per capita per day. By the time 50% of the population of sub-Saharan Africa lives in cities, the daily rate of production of waste is expected to rise to as much as 1 kg per capita. Waste generated in most urban areas in Africa could quadruple by 2025, fueling a potential waste management emergency (MIF 2015a). Poor waste management is linked to public health hazards and environmental damage, but also hinders broader economic growth (Adegoke 2018).

The solid waste management chain—which encompasses generation, collection, treatment, recycling and disposal—is complex and challenging for municipalities, whose financial capabilities are limited, paving the way for a variety of risks including the stagnation of economic development, proliferation of diseases, and degradation of the environment. In developing countries, existing empirical evidence points to disproportionate generation of waste compared to collection and disposal, possibly due to limited administrative capability and lack of public funding for municipalities. Less than 70% of generated waste is collected and more than 50% of the collected waste is disposed of through uncontrolled landfills, while 15% is processed through unsafe and informal recycling (APHRC 2017). In African cities, 57% of municipal solid waste is biodegradable organic waste, the majority of which is dumped. With an average waste collection rate of merely 55%, municipal solid waste collection services in most African countries have proved inadequate. 90% of the waste generated in Africa is disposed of to land, mostly to uncontrolled and controlled dumpsites. Only 4% of the waste generated in Africa is recycled, and mostly only by informal actors (Godfrey 2018).

The dimension of the problem is exemplified by the city of Dakar, the capital of Senegal. A survey conducted in 2016 in three sites in Dakar showed that only 27% of households were using safe means of waste storage and 11% had knowledge on composting. Moreover, only 3.3% of the surveyed households perceived themselves to be at high risk or very high risk of health and environmental-related hazards due to poor solid waste management (APHRC 2017).

**Housing**—Sustained and rapid urban growth on the African continent is placing enormous strain on the provision and affordability of urban land and housing. Across Africa, housing affordability in cities is very low due to the confluence of low urban household incomes, high mortgage interest rates, and short tenors. There are very few countries where the majority of the urban population can afford the cheapest and newest houses built by a formal developer (CAHF 2018). In 2018, for example, only in nine African countries were more than half of the urban population able to afford the cheapest (in \$) newly built houses: Morocco (95%), Tunisia (95%), Egypt (89%), Algeria (79%), Gabon (70%), Sudan (68%), Equatorial Guinea (64%), Senegal (64%) and Kenya (51%) (CAHF 2018).

Population growth in African cities is occurring in an expansive rather than compact form, resulting in decreasing urban population densities. This is happening due to inadequate urban planning, rapid population growth and lack of financial or technical capacity to deliver large-scale infrastructure projects that are needed to support livable density. It is predicted that between 2000 and 2050 the area in urban use in sub-Saharan Africa will increase 12-fold. Urban sprawl comes with significant environmental and health costs. It is normally those who cannot afford cars or even formal public transport who are forced to find or build homes in hazardous areas (e.g. floodplains, swamps, coastal zones...) within cycling or walking distance of employment hubs. For instance, in Lagos 70% of the population lives in slums vulnerable to environmental hazards, such as regular flood events (Dodman et al. 2017).



In 2014, more than half (55.3%) of sub-Saharan Africa's urban population lived in slums (compared to 20.3% in Latin America & the Caribbean and 30.4% in South Asia). In that same year, three African countries had more than 90% of their urban dwellers living in slums: Sudan (91.6%), Central African Republic (CAR) (93.3%) and South Sudan (95.6%). In opposition to this, only five countries had less than 30% of their urban population living in slums: Tunisia (8%), Egypt (10.6%), Morocco (13.1%), South Africa (23%) and Zimbabwe (25.1%) (World Bank 2018g).

**Transport**—Efficient and inclusive urban mobility is fundamental for economic and social development as it acts as an enabler of citizens' access to goods, services, jobs, markets, education opportunities and social contacts. Sustainable planning in the urban transport sector requires addressing mobility and climate issues altogether: the sector plays a critical role in reducing or stabilizing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions globally. As a consequence of sustained urbanization and motorization, urban areas are expected to account for 76% of global greenhouse gases by 2030 (UN-HABITAT 2011).

Moreover, it also requires integrating transport and land use planning, which are frequently considered separately in African cities. Due to lack of coordination, construction of new transport infrastructure often forces urban residents, especially those from low-income neighborhoods, to relocate to the periphery, increasing their travel distances and expenditure on transport. The main constraints that African city managers face when attempting to design and implement effective sustainable transportation planning and policy include lack of reliable data on levels and trends in motorization and GHG emissions; limited financial resources and planning expertise; as well as inadequate institutional frameworks and limited experience at local government level. Other constraints are lack of political engagement in favor of sustainable urban transport; lack of coordination in policy development; inadequate learning and scaling up from existing projects; and weak capacity for monitoring and evaluating existing practices (UN-HABITAT 2011).

However, large infrastructure projects such as Addis Ababa's light rail transit system (LRT), the first of its kind in sub-Saharan Africa, are leading the way in tackling mobility challenges in African cities. At full capacity, Addis Ababa's light rail, which currently has two lines that run for around 11 miles each, should be able to carry 60,000 passengers an hour. Fares are about \$0.30 per ride. The \$475 million light rail project, 85% of which was financed by a loan from the Export-Import Bank of China, did not start to run until September 2015, six years after the contracts for its construction were signed (CPI 2016a). While there is empirical evidence showing that the Addis Ababa tram has improved residents' mobility, the lack of frequency, trains and integration into the existing transport network constitute obstacles preventing it from becoming a mass transit solution (Ifri 2018).

In Uganda, the Ministry of Works & Transport has initiated the process to build a light rail network in its capital Kampala. The light rail network will serve the Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area, which hosts approximately 3.5 million people. The population is growing at around 5% per annum and is expected to reach 15 million by 2040. Kampala accounts for more than 70% of Uganda's industrial production and more than 65% of its gross domestic product. The light rail will help to reduce

pollution and crippling road traffic congestion. Commuters are estimated to lose about 24,000 man-hours each day due to congestion (Oirere 2018). Similar large public transportation projects that are currently being planned in other sub-Saharan African cities include a metro system in Abidjan and the Dakar TER (Train Express Regional) (Ifri 2018).

However, due to lack of affordable and accessible alternatives, most urban trips in Africa are still made by foot or bicycle (Bhattacharjee 2015). In the case of Kampala, Uganda's Ministry of Works & Transport estimates that 48% of people walk, 33% take taxis, 10% use minibuses, and only 9% have access to private cars (Oirere 2018). Recognizing the importance of non-motorized transport, the first pedestrian corridor was introduced in the busiest vehicular traffic road in the Central Business District of Kigali City in August 2015. The Corridor has 450 m of length and aims at becoming the main public hub in the city for people from different backgrounds to come together free from car traffic. In this sense, it places people at the center of the city's development model (Dalkmann 2018).

**Health and education**—Social indicators are a good measure of the extent of urban-rural inequalities. A well-functioning Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) system registers all births and deaths, issues birth and death certificates, and compiles and disseminates vital statistics. The registration of births and deaths is fundamental for the realization of human rights, as well as for providing citizens with a legal identity and access to public services (MIF 2015b). The 2018 IIAG shows that Africa's progress in the indicator *Civil Registration* over the past decade (2008–2017) has been very marginal (+0.3). While 14 African countries have experienced an improvement over the past ten years, the scores of 31 countries have remained static and 8 have experienced a deterioration. Since 2008, São Tomé & Príncipe has experienced the largest improvement (+50.0) and Malawi has shown the largest decline (−62.5) (MIF 2018c). When comparing levels of birth registration in urban and rural areas in Africa, urban-rural parity holds in countries that are more than 60% urbanized. However, the difference is two times in countries that are less than 30% urbanized (UNECA 2017).

Urbanization appears to make little difference in the urban-rural variation in stunting, and the ratio moves within a very small range around 1.5 in all countries. Indeed, the largest differences are seen in some of the most urbanized countries. A potential explanation for this could be that basic non-food living expenses are much higher in more urbanized countries, which leaves a smaller share of poor households' budgets for food needs. Another is that the more urbanized countries have greater problems with congestion and inadequacy of public health and sanitation in poor areas, contributing to urban undernutrition and morbidity (UNECA 2017).

Highly urbanized countries are close to urban-rural parity in primary school net attendance ratios. Varying by only 0.5 or less based on extent of urbanization, they reflect success in meeting the Millennium Development Goal target of universal primary education in most countries. However, it is important to note that averages mask differences among countries (UNECA 2017).

**Poverty and urbanization**—When discussing Africa's progress in reducing poverty since 1990, two distinct phases should be mentioned. While the poverty

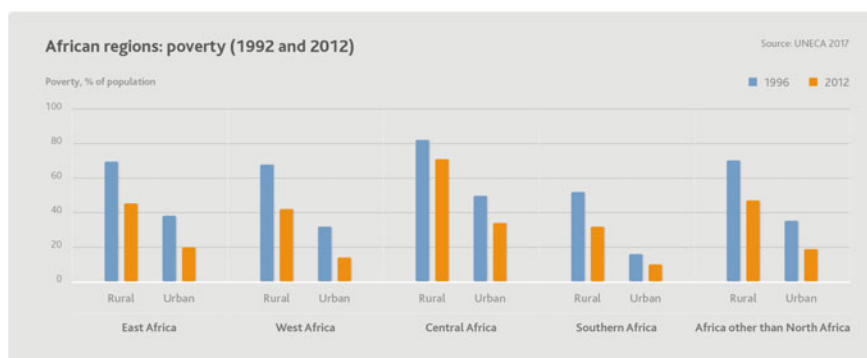
headcount ratio increased from 1990 to 2002, from 54.3 to 55.6% of the continent's population, it declined by more than a quarter to 41% in 2013. Despite this, poverty in Africa fell much more slowly in 1990–2013 than in other world regions (UNECA 2017).

In absolute terms, the number of people living in poverty in Africa other than North Africa increased by +42% from 276 million in 1990 to 391 million in 2002. After 2002, thanks to the positive, albeit slow, impact of economic growth, the number of people in poverty remained almost constant at around 390 million. As a consequence, more than 50% of the world's poor in 2013 were in Africa, compared to 15% in 1990. The main reasons explaining the small impact of economic growth on reducing poverty in Africa are: depth of poverty; high initial inequality; mismatch between sectors of growth and of employment; as well as rapid population growth and delayed demographic transition. In 2013, Africa's poverty gap, a measure of how far below the poverty line the poor on the continent are, was nearly twice the global gap (15.2% compared to 8.8%) (UNECA 2017).

In that same year, nine African countries had a depth of poverty that is more than twice the African average: Madagascar, DRC, Malawi, CAR, Burundi, Lesotho, Zambia, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau (UNECA 2017).

For the 22 African countries for which there is data in the period 2010–2015, the average (using latest data year) level of urban poor (at national poverty lines, as a % of their urban population) was 24.4%. The five countries with the highest levels of urban poor were Guinea-Bissau (51.0%), Lesotho (39.6%), Côte d'Ivoire (35.9%), Togo (35.9%) and Guinea (35.4%). Only three African countries had a level of urban poor lower than 10% of their urban populations: Uganda (9.6%), Cameroon (8.9%) and Algeria (5.8%) (World Bank 2018h).

Linked to the urban-rural inequalities in social indicators highlighted in the previous section, between 1996 and 2012 poverty declined in all subregions and faster in urban than rural areas; except in Southern Africa, where rural poverty declined marginally faster (UNECA 2017).



The multidimensional nature of urban poverty is exemplified by the role that access to food plays in it. Empirical evidence from three secondary African cities



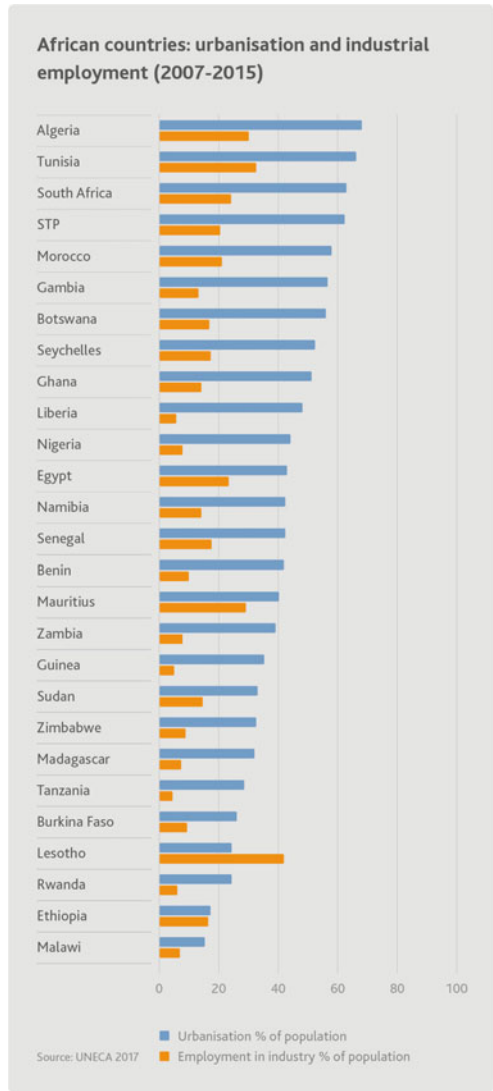
sheds light into the high levels of households experiencing either moderate or severe food insecurity in urban areas: 90% in Kitwe (Zambia), 88% in Epworth (Zimbabwe) and 71% in Kisumu (Kenya) (Battersby and Watson 2019).

Urban food insecurity heavily impacts low-income residents who often have to purchase food from informal street vendors at higher costs and more variable quality. Household surveys suggest that the average urban household in Africa spends 39–59% of its budget on food; however, for households in the poorest quintile, the share of food expenditure reaches 44–68%. Similarly, they frequently have to purchase water at high cost: studies in four cities show that buying sufficient municipal water can cost a five-person household without piped supplies more than 13% of their income if they are to meet even minimal water needs (20 l per person per day). While poverty raises the cost of meeting basic needs, the cost of living is also higher in real terms in urban Africa than in cities in other low- and middle-income countries. A conservative estimate suggests that, controlling for per capita GDP and other factors, residents in sub-Saharan African cities pay 11–18% more for goods and services than comparable cities worldwide (Dodman et al. 2017).

Urbanization is generally expected to take place alongside an “urban dividend” and structural transformation. “Urban dividend” refers to the acceleration of economic growth in cities due to the existence of scale and agglomeration economies. Structural transformation is the process characterized by the movement of labor and other productive resources from low-productivity (e.g. agricultural) to high-productivity economic activities (e.g. manufacturing). At the global level, the share of manufacturing activities in total output tends to rise with per capita income until countries reach upper-middle-income status, and then starts to decline as countries become service economies at higher incomes (UNECA 2017).

The relationship between urbanization and income appears generally weaker in Africa than in other parts of the world. However, due to commodity price increases, economic reforms and improved governance, growth and income have rebounded in many African countries since 2000, reviving the association between urbanization and income (UNECA 2017).

Despite Africa’s recent strong growth performance, between 2000 and 2015, most African countries experienced a decline in their share of manufacturing value added in GDP, averaging 2.3% points (UNECA 2017). In 2018, Africa’s share of employment in the industrial sector was very low (13.1% compared to 25.5% in Asia and the Pacific, 21.0% in Latin America & the Caribbean and 23.0% for the World) (ILO 2018). As shown by the accompanying bar graph, the share of people employed in the industrial sector in the five most urbanized African countries (Algeria, Tunisia, South Africa, São Tomé & Príncipe (STP) and Morocco) is less than half the size of their urban populations. Unlike in other parts of the world, urbanization in Africa appears to be taking place alongside limited structural transformation (UNECA 2017).



On top of this, informality is widespread: 76% of sub-Saharan Africa’s workforce is in informal employment, financially or politically excluded from formal property and labor markets. This generates a vicious cycle. The large share of informality makes it hard for governments to collect taxes, severely limiting their capacity to provide affordable public transport, water, sanitation or power. At the same time, without access to these services, people are trapped in poverty and informality (Lazer 2018). While the informal economy has the potential to exacerbate local environmental degradation, it can also allow it to respond flexibly and contribute solutions to a variety of challenges. On the one hand, informal providers lack formal state

oversight and it is therefore difficult to enforce regulation, such as water treatment standards or minimum wages, creating risks for urban dwellers as prospective consumers and workers. On the other hand, a vibrant informal sector also provides urban residents with alternative livelihoods in the absence or decline of formal employment opportunities (Dodman et al. 2017).

## 5 Challenges for Urban Authorities

Cities and towns in Africa are facing a number of challenges and obstacles impacting their mission to provide their constituencies with access to basic services. These challenges encompass the autonomy of local authorities, power sharing agreements with central governments, corruption and the emergence of non-public actors in service delivery. The main challenges can be summarized as follows:

**Varying financial autonomy**—Local governments differ in their ability to raise revenue, hence the greater reliance on local sources can raise disparities. In instances where local authorities have little to no tax base, small and/or weak institutional capacity and limited planning and regulatory capacity, it is arguably more efficient and effective for national and regional bodies to take an active role in their governance. Africa's sub-national government revenues, both as percentage of total public revenues and of GDP, are the second lowest after the Middle East & West Asia region. In 2017, Tanzania devolved 21.8% of public revenues to its subnational governments, followed closely by Uganda and Mali (18.2% and 14.0%, respectively). Meanwhile, Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, Malawi, Niger and Togo are all below 6% (MIF 2018a).

Overall in Africa, local financial independence is mostly limited. In Ghana, the District Assemblies are tasked with raising taxes, while the District Assemblies Common Fund ensures that funding from the central government reaches each district, based on a needs-based equalization formula. While providing only 37% of district income, this system ensures that the local government receives a guaranteed amount of income which can be used at its discretion, thus providing some amount of financial independence. Ethiopia's fiscal decentralization guarantees to each level of government the capacity to finance its own development. Fiscal decentralization remains limited however as the central government controls 80% of income resources, such as taxes on international trade, leaving only 20% for the regions (MIF 2018a).

**Politicization**—The method by which mayors come to power differs between urban areas. In Cape Town each party nominates a candidate for mayor. The winning party of the local government elections then positions its chosen candidate as mayor. In Dakar the process is by indirect election: the mayor is elected by the municipal council which is itself elected. The Mayor of Accra is appointed by the President and approved by the Accra Metropolitan Assembly. The Accra Metropolitan Assembly is made up of elected and appointed Assembly members. The Mayor can be dismissed by the President of Ghana, or by the Metropolitan Assembly with 2/3 of votes of the members (MIF 2015a).

*Vertically divided authority:* For large cities and city-regions especially, models with a directly elected mayor appear to have greater potential to provide a coherent city vision, mobilize coalitions of stakeholders and provide profile and accountability for citizens. Providing adequate services in urban areas, where the responsibility has been transferred to sub-national authorities, can be more complex when the local authorities are controlled by the opposition. Vertically divided authority can be a problem if the initiatives of a sub-national authority controlled by the opposition do not receive the adequate funding or political backing by a central government led by the main party in the country. Such vertically divided authority appears to be a growing trend in Africa, with a number of important cities in the region in the hands of the opposition, including Nairobi, Dakar, Cape Town and Kampala (MIF 2015a).

*Potential power struggles:* In some cases, both national and local governments are addressing shared issues such as security, health, transport and employment. Without a clear partition of both decision-making power and resources, overlapping agendas and priorities are bound to result in some form of power struggle.

**Corruption**—Decentralization has theoretical advantages and disadvantages related to governance and development, including when it comes to corruption. On the one hand, local elites may “capture” the benefits of decentralization and are not necessarily more pro-poor than national elites. More people have political influence, therefore the risk of corruption is higher. Decentralization can pose a threat to coordination, generating overlapping extractive incentives leading to “overgrazing”, and can overburden administrations with low capacity. Indeed, decentralization may be related to more, or at least more decentralized forms of corruption, due to the fact that institutional hybridity and weak accountability mechanisms tend to be prevalent at the local level. On the other hand, by bringing government “closer to the people” it serves, decentralization has the potential to reduce bureaucracy and increase competition, increase citizen voice and participation, as well as strengthen accountability. All of these positive effects, when in place, are poised to reduce corruption (ODI 2018).

The empirical evidence on the interlinkages between decentralization and corruption is very mixed. Case studies and comparative work have also pointed at the fact that this interaction varies in different conditions. For instance, a recent study of political decentralization and corruption in various countries, including Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana, has found that in the short run, decentralization makes a dent on grand theft but increases petty corruption, while in the long run, both may be reduced (ODI 2018).

**Crowding out**—Partly to answer an exponential demand, partly to substitute failing public supply, a growing range of non-state actors have become key providers of public goods and services. Foreign bilateral and multilateral donors have for a long time played a key role in delivering security, health and education, to an extent that may have sometimes prevented public actors from sufficiently owning these key policies. Private sector, as well as a complex galaxy of NGOs, are equally extending their involvement in these sectors, sometimes themselves also crowding out national public services (MIF 2018a).

*Case study: health provision in Africa:* In the case of health provision on the continent, multiple actors overcrowd the role of public services. Donors play a key role as one fifth of total ODA to Africa goes to health. According to the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), in 2016, 21.2% of the ODA to Africa was allocated to the health sector. The top ten donors were, in order, US (38.2%), Global Fund, the UK, GAVI (Vaccine Alliance), International Development Association (IDA), EU, Germany, Canada, France and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) (1.2%). In 2016, the share of total World Health Organization (WHO) disbursement allocated to Africa was the second largest (21.0%) after Asia’s (26.0%) (MIF 2018a). The private sector is also increasingly engaged in health provision in Africa, a sector offering growing business opportunities. The sub-Saharan African average for 2014 for total private health expenditure was 57.4%. As lifestyles progressively change on the continent, non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, cardio-vascular pathologies and cancer are spreading. Those who can afford it often travel to places such as India, Turkey, Gulf countries and Europe. The lack of health systems on the continent is seen as a growing opportunity for private healthcare investments. Lastly, civil society organizations (CSOs) also play a key role in health provision across the continent, from small scale NGOs to larger actors such as the Gates Foundation. In the health sector, which is a key focus of the Gates Foundation, the Foundation works in ten countries, Burkina Faso, DRC, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zambia, and mainly in the fight against infectious diseases, malaria, HIV and tuberculosis. The Gates Foundation has recently committed to invest \$5 billion between 2017 and 2022 in Africa in support of health and anti-poverty initiatives (MIF 2018a).

## 6 Factors and Good Practices Affecting Urban Governance and Access to Services

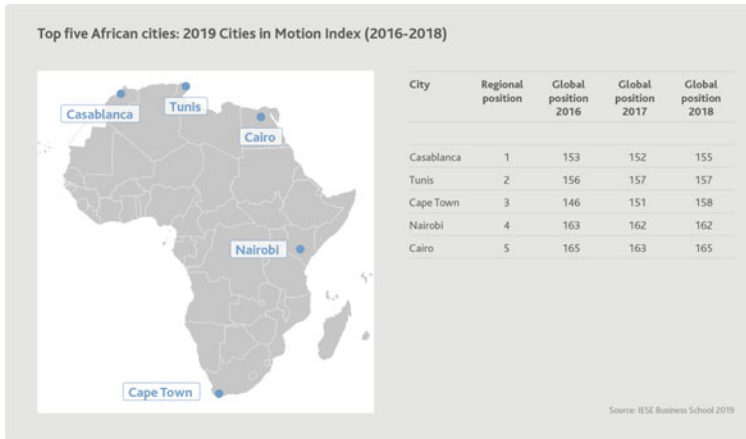
A number of factors and good practices at the country and city levels influence urban local governance and access to services in Africa. Starting from the availability of disaggregated data to recognizing the importance of a comprehensive approach to urbanization that includes all dimensions of governance, the main avenues to explore are the following:

**The tyranny of averages and the need for disaggregated data to “leave no one behind”**—The absence of sufficiently granular information makes it difficult for governments to address spatial inequality. The strong inclination towards national-level averages risks masking important sub-national variations, such as hotspots of deprivation in rich countries and pockets of affluence in poor countries. Similarly, disaggregated data (by area, gender, age, income, employment status, etc.) at the city level are fundamental to design and monitor the impact of authentically pro-poor interventions and policies that really reach those who are the most in need. If local governments are to succeed in “leaving no one behind”, they must avoid

the “tyranny of averages” (MIF 2018a). For instance, despite being among the top ten performers globally in average yearly GDP growth per capita between 2000 and 2015, in Ethiopia, nighttime lights data suggest that a small number of administrative regions that are centrally located and close to the capital appear to account for the vast majority of economic activity gains. Likewise, in Kenya, even though national-level averages show that under-5 mortality is following a downward trajectory, georeferenced data show that there are subnational hotspots where child mortality levels have actually gone up between the 1980s and the 2000s (AidData 2017). Another example is Data-Driven Lab’s Urban Environment and Social Inclusion Index (UESI), which uses neighbourhood-level income data to show that Johannesburg has poor environmental performance and the inequality burdens poorer parts of the city (Data-Driven Lab 2018).

**BOX: Data at the city-level**

*Data at the city-level:* IESE Business School’s Cities in Motion Index (CIMI) 2019 is composed of 96 indicators grouped into nine dimensions: human capital, social cohesion, economic indicators, governance indicators, environmental indicators, mobility and transportation indicators, urban planning indicators, international outreach indicators and technology indicators (IESE Business School 2019). Of the 174 cities covered in the CIMI 2019, only 5% (a total of 9 cities) are African: Douala (Cameroon), Cairo (Egypt), Nairobi (Kenya), Casablanca (Morocco), Rabat (Morocco), Lagos (Nigeria), Cape Town (South Africa), Johannesburg (South Africa) and Tunis (Tunisia) (IESE Business School 2019). Casablanca heads the African ranking, followed by Tunis. Cape Town, Nairobi and Cairo complete the list of the top five in the region in 2018. As shown in the table, all of the African cities included in the ranking are among the lowest positions in the overall ranking and they have been consistently so since the first iteration of the CIMI in 2016 (IESE Business School 2019). In terms of the overall score, African cities tend to perform best in the economy dimension and the social cohesion dimension. For all of the five best ranked African cities, the economy dimension is either the first or second highest scoring, while the social cohesion dimension is between first and third (IESE Business School 2019). Within a global context, some African cities stand out when it comes to the environment dimension, with Nairobi (40th), Douala (50th) and Tunis (76th) among the top 50% of performers globally. Additionally, Casablanca features in the top third of performers when it comes to the technology dimension, ranking 58th out of 174 (IESE Business School 2019).



**A balanced approach to all governance dimensions and a stronger focus on accountability, citizens' rights and welfare**—The IIAG measures governance performance both holistically and through specific indicators that span a variety of broad topics that measure outcomes of governance, with the same indicators applied to all countries. The indicators showing the strongest relationships with high governance scores span across all four categories of the IIAG, indicating that a comprehensive and balanced approach is needed in bringing about stronger governance. The factors most associated with high governance scores are citizen centered factors involving strong property rights, civil rights and liberties, an accountable government and effective public service, and policies focused on social safety nets and environment. High scores in indicators measuring these issues are the most common factors among the best scoring countries in the IIAG. For instance, Mauritius, which ranks 1st at the *Overall Governance* level in the 2017 data year in the 2018 IIAG, is one of the highest scoring countries in seven of the ten indicators that are the most correlated with high governance scores, spanning all four dimensions of the Index. The Southern African island receives the best score on the continent in *Sanctions for Abuse of Office* (85.7 out of 100.0), *Social Safety Nets* (96.2) and *Environmental Policies* (85.7). On top of this, while it ranks 2nd in *Property Rights* and *Civil Rights & Liberties* (with 2017 scores of 79.6 and 99.0, respectively), it obtains the third highest score in *Transport Infrastructure* and *Independence of the Judiciary* (with 2017 scores of 67.6 and 91.5, respectively). Similarly, Botswana, which ranks 5th at the *Overall Governance* level in the 2017 data year in the 2018 IIAG, is one of the best performing countries in five of the indicators showing the strongest correlations with high governance scores. While it obtains the best score on the continent in *Property Rights* (88.3), *Sanctions for Abuse of Office* (85.7) and *Environmental Policies* (85.7), it ranks 3rd in *Social Safety Nets* and 5th in *Civil Rights & Liberties* (with 2017 scores of 79.5 and 91.3, respectively) (MIF 2018c).

**Enhanced local capacity and autonomy**—The challenges of delivering public services at local level reveal that in order to meet demand, public services must be equipped properly, both in terms of resources and in terms of competence and



capacity. This is particularly important in the case of Africa's middle-sized cities, which are where the fastest urban growth is expected to happen and already lag behind their larger counterparts in institutional and capacity development. Urban political and financial autonomy are key for effective public service delivery at the local level and can only result from better power sharing agreements and collaboration with central governments. In South Africa, the Inter-Governmental Relations Framework Act (Act 13 of 2005) provides for collaboration among different levels of government and includes mechanisms for settling intergovernmental disputes (Cartwright et al. 2018).

In terms of strengthening capacity, programs in Liberia and Ghana for instance aim at attracting youth talent into public service. Rwanda has been at the forefront of ensuring performance in public service through the use of performance contracts (Imihigo) signed between the president of Rwanda and local government institutions and line ministries, rooted in the country's cultural practice and beneficial for results as well as for accountability practices (MIF 2018a). Inspired by Sir Michael Barber's Delivery Unit in Downing Street, Cape Town's Strategic Policy Unit (SPU) was set up shortly after Patricia de Lille was elected mayor in 2011. Aiming at refocusing the city's governance around strategic policy planning, performance monitoring and evaluation, its tasks are mainly to identify problems in policy implementation and drive strong delivery of the administration's objectives across the city (CPI 2016b).

**Urban policies and planning**—Urban planning is one of the most important tasks for African governments, faced with the multiple and intertwined challenges of urban expansion. If a city develops without planning, the introduction of planning processes afterwards will be much more difficult and will be likely to cause social conflicts. Without inclusive planning the numbers of inhabitants without access to shelter and basic services such as water and sanitation, energy or formal employment opportunities will explode. Informal housing and development of land, already a feature of urban Africa, will continue unrestrained. This will compound existing hazards such as waste, air pollution and the effects of climate change. Unequal planning exacerbates social disparities by marginalizing the urban poor from the inner most spaces of cities, where there are paved roads with street lamps, a regular power supply, an adequate water supply, infrastructure and amenities (MIF 2015a).

In Koudougou, Burkina Faso, as in many intermediate African cities, the urban planning process is exogenous, not really aligned with the requests of its inhabitants, nor with the human, material and financial capabilities available at the city level, and therefore rarely applied. Despite the many plans drawn up for this city, the fact that their design is the result from a collaborative framework between the central government and foreign donors has limited their execution significantly. In this case, the local plans have mostly only served to reassure external donors during financial negotiations (Bolay 2015).

As in Koudougou, the participation of civil society in planning decisions in most African cities is insufficient. However, there are also some examples of more inclusive planning processes. For instance, in Mali, "communes" have been established at a grassroots level and have been given the exclusive competency to implement local development authority. In this case, the community, to a certain extent, constitutes

both the user and the delegated contracting authority for infrastructure and equipment (UN-HABITAT 2013).

While in most cases planning policies and frameworks formulated are not relevant to the actual development problems of African cities, and the link between planning and monitoring of implementation of planning projects is not always existent, there are exceptions to this. For example, South Africa has achieved some success with its Integrated Development Plans for municipalities (UN-HABITAT 2013).

**Harnessing innovation**—Africa has demonstrated a unique capacity to leapfrog and applying innovation and technology to public service delivery. In Rwanda, drones are used to deliver blood and medical supplies and in Côte d’Ivoire they ensure the maintenance of the country’s electricity network. In Kenya, through Huduma, public services are available electronically and offline communities are reached by mobile offices (MIF 2018a). In Nigeria, user-friendly digital applications have been developed for smartphones to allow citizens to monitor the implementation of government’s projects (MIF 2018b). Innovative solutions are also applied to urban self-financing, for instance green bonds help fill gaps in development finance for climate-friendly projects: Johannesburg issued Africa’s first municipal green bond in 2014 to help finance emissions-reducing projects including biogas energy, solar power and sustainable transportation (MIF 2015a). Another example of Africa leapfrogging is smart cities, putting modern technology and infrastructure at the center of public service delivery. Cape Town gathers data from sensors around the city for a more effective policy response in areas from traffic monitoring to waste management, crime detection and fire response. Some countries such as Kenya, Rwanda and Nigeria have projects for satellite cities, built around existing cities, providing modern infrastructure and luxury amenities to attract tech-savvy entrepreneurs (The Borgen Project 2018).

**Committed leadership**—Cities such as Johannesburg and Kampala are emerging as new African models for urban service delivery, having modelled their institutions on corporate work, with structures and strategies for delivering results. In both cases, mayors built a team of young and bright people and pride themselves on being favorable to innovation. This shows that, if the right leadership is in place, public services can become attractive work places, where capable young Africans are motivated to serve their constituencies; as well as hubs for innovation, where new technologies are used to improve work processes and better reach citizens, including through the use of social media platforms. Commitment can also be shared, as shown by the initiative of the mayors of 9 African cities—Accra, Addis Ababa, Cape Town, Dakar, Dar es Salaam, Durban, Johannesburg, Lagos and Tshwane—towards climate action, with the pledge to deliver on their share of the Paris Agreement. Nairobi and Abidjan have also joined the common efforts and planned to submit their climate action commitments (C40 Cities 2018).

**Bottom up checks and balances**—Participatory budgeting allows the population to define the destination of public resources and help oversee the implementation of the agreed budget, to tackle corruption, boost citizen participation in the decision-making process, as well as help the municipal authorities to engage with the population. In 2006, Yaoundé VI was the first municipality in Yaoundé, Cameroon,

to implement participatory budgeting. In terms of impact, this process led to the construction of much needed infrastructure projects in poor neighborhoods, such as a water tap which serves a community of 50,000 people in Yaoundé IV. Apart from improving basic services, participatory budgeting in Yaoundé also had a positive impact on municipal-citizen relations, citizen participation, fiscal transparency and local tax revenues. The introduction of participatory budgeting in Cameroon, although in its infancy, paves the way for a new social contract between the municipality and the population, aiming to place the aspirations of citizens at the forefront of local development (MIF 2018a).

**Networks and south-south cooperation**—For African cities to better respond to their current and future challenges, including on the path towards achieving the SDGs and the AU's Agenda 2063, networks for sharing best practices and for cross-fertilization both within and outside the continent can prove fundamental. Among these, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) supports international cooperation between cities and their associations, and facilitates programs, networks and partnerships to build the capacities of local governments. UCLG Africa gathers 40 national associations of local governments as well as 2000 cities of more than 100,000 inhabitants. UCLG Africa represents nearly 350 million African citizens (MIF 2018a). Moreover, 12 African cities have joined C40, a network of the world's global cities committed to addressing climate change. C40 supports cities to collaborate effectively, share knowledge and drive meaningful, measurable and sustainable action on climate change (C40 Cities 2019).

## 7 Conclusion

Growing urban populations put cities at the heart of governance, with their main mission being service provision to their constituencies. Decentralization in some African countries such as Kenya and South Africa has provided local and urban authorities with increased power and responsibilities. However the picture across the continent remains fragmented, as different levels of transfer of power exist. It is thus difficult to formulate a one size fits all judgement on the impacts of decentralization for better serving Africa's citizens. That said, public satisfaction with basic services that are key for prosperous societies is a good indicator of success, and in Africa this is declining.

Local and urban authorities face several obstacles in their mission, related to their relations with central governments, their autonomy and capacity, as well as the wider challenge of ensuring that the best potential of decentralization is realized, which is bringing government closer to citizens for improved transparency and accountability, rather than government further away from central institutions, free to appropriate resources.

A number of avenues can be explored on the way forward, that range from clearer power sharing agreements to harnessing new technologies and innovation for better

public services. However, the core of strong and effective local and urban authorities relies on a committed leadership, and in the acknowledgement of the often underestimated role of these authorities, in many cases managing populations bigger than those of countries. Local and urban authorities cannot achieve their mission without enabling and strengthening processes for citizen participation and bottom up monitoring and oversight; nor without continental and international networks for exchanges of best practices among these key actors, whose role is not only increasingly essential in the daily life of African citizens but also in achieving goals such as the SDGs and Agenda 2030.

## 8 Notes

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors. They do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation or its members.

This chapter makes extensive use of research publications previously published by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation (MIF), especially the reports 2015 Facts & Figures: African Urban Dynamics and 2018 Ibrahim Forum Report: Public Service in Africa.

A reference list containing all the sources used is provided at the end of this chapter. Sources used are not always the primary data sources. For instance, the primary data source of variables from the World Development Indicators is not always the World Bank.

When necessary, figures from our reports have been updated. In those cases, the original data source has been referenced. Data were correct at the time of research (the last access date for each variable is provided in the references).

Some figures provided here are the result of our calculations using different variables available from source.

Comparisons of regional averages are provided. The composition of regions may vary according to source. When data in the report is presented disaggregated for North African and sub-Saharan African countries, this is done reflecting the choices made at source.

All population statistics are taken from the 2018 revision of the World Urbanization Prospects from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). There is one main exception to this: UNDESA's Urban and Rural Population by Age and Sex, 1980-2015 dataset.

The Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) is an annual statistical assessment of the quality of governance in every African country, produced by MIF. The IIAG focuses on outputs and outcomes of policy and is used throughout this chapter as a measure of public service delivery across the continent. All IIAG data included here come from the 2018 IIAG, our latest released dataset. To distinguish the IIAG, all measures taken from it are italicised, as opposed to measures obtained from other sources. You can explore the full Index dataset here: <http://mo.ibrahim.foundation/iiag/>

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