



Centro de Pesquisas sobre
Governança e Desenvolvimento

**Tracking Sustainable Development Goal 16:
Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions in Africa**

SDG16 in Africa: 2020 Report

December 2020

PREFACE

Following the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, many practitioners and scholars started making attempts to track the SDGs cross nationally and longitudinally to find the extent to which developing countries will achieve them by 2030. But this exercise has not been so easy for the SDG16 which focuses on peace, justice and strong institutions.

Whereas most SDGs can be evaluated through data collected by national institutes of statistics, tracking SDG16 requires data gathered by institutions that focus on democracy. There are number of research efforts on democracy around the world, however V-Dem (Varieties of Democracy, www.v-dem.net) which is the largest dataset in the world on democracy appears to be the best resource for tracking the SDG16. Through reliable robust data collected every year in every polity in the world, V-Dem has developed indicators that can respond to most of the SDG16 targets.

In its first effort, the Centre for Research on Governance and Development (CPGD) employs V-Dem data to assess how African polities are performing to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. In this '*SDG16 in Africa: 2020 Report*', the Centre tracks SDG16 across the continent by polity, geopolitical region and community for the year of 2019. When the indicators of SDG16 targets are a composite index in the V-Dem data, the report analyses the indicators responsible for high or low levels of that index or its longitudinal change.

With a decade of action remaining to deliver the SDGs, CPGD aims to track progress of SDG16 across the African continent every year until 2030 using V-Dem data. Although African polities still face many governance issues today and thus may continue to score low in many governance indicators in the forthcoming years, reporting how these levels are changing over time will provide an evidence base which may motivate policymakers and decision makers to focus, commit and work hard to achieve the goals.

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INTRODUCTION

After implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), 2000-2015, the United Nations (UN) adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a new universal policy framework with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the period between 2016 and 2030.¹ The overall aim is to guide UN member states to transform their approach to achieve inclusive, people-centred and sustainable development with no one left behind.

This report focuses on one of the seventeen goals, SGD16, which is dedicated to “***promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels***”. SDG16 includes twelve targets (Figure 1) and 23 indicators².

Figure 1 – SDG16 Targets

- 16.1** ***Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere;***
- 16.2** *End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children;*
- 16.3** ***Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all;***
- 16.4** *By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organised crime;*
- 16.5** ***Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms;***
- 16.6** ***Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels;***
- 16.7** ***Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels;***
- 16.8** *Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance;*
- 16.9** *By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration;*
- 16.10** ***Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements;***
- 16. a** *Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime; and*
- 16. b** ***Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.***

¹<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/Official%20Revised%20List%20of%20global%20SDG%20indicators.pdf>

² For more information on SDG16: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg16>

Data methodology

To study how polities will promote peace, justice and build strong and effective institutions until 2030, requires tracking changes in SDG16 targets and indicators over time. In order to do this, this report employs Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) data which has the capability to allow us to explore and assess seven out of the twelve SDG16 targets highlighted in bold in Figure 1.

Data source and aggregated variables in indices. The V-Dem data comes from A) extant sources (i.e. other datasets and secondary data), B) factual sources; and C) expert judgments (see Annex: V-Dem Data Methodology).

The variables used in V-Dem datasets are already aggregated from A, B and C coding. This includes “cumulative” indicators such as “number of elections since 1900” of a particular country and aggregated variables such as components and principles. For the purpose of this report, the V-Dem time series data is restricted from 1990s onwards. This covers the period where most African countries liberated themselves from authoritarian and minority rule as the ‘Third Wave of Democratisation’ swept the continent in the 1990s. It is also the period that the last African countries (Eritrea, Namibia and South Sudan) became independent.

Global standards and local knowledge. V-Dem is a new approach to conceptualising and measuring democracy (Coppedge *et al.*, 2011).

It “provides a multidimensional and disaggregated dataset that reflects the complexity of the concept of democracy as a system of rule that goes beyond the simple presence of elections. The V-Dem project distinguishes between five high-level principles of democracy: electoral, liberal, participatory, deliberative, and egalitarian, and collects data to measure these principles. It comprises a team of over 50 social scientists on six continents. With six Principal Investigators (PIs), seventeen Project Managers (PMs) with special responsibility for issue areas, more than thirty Regional Managers (RMs), 170 Country Coordinators (CCs), Research Assistants, and 3,000 Country Experts (CEs), the V-Dem project is one of the largest social science data collection projects focusing on research” (Mechkova and Sigman 2016).

About 60 percent of its Country Experts are nationals and/or permanent residents of the country they code (and sometimes both). This helps to avoid Western biases in coding, which can also come from self-selection biases in who makes the migration to Western universities (see Annex A).

Which V-Dem Data? This report employs V-Dem Dataset Version 10³ gathered in January 2020 for the year of 2019. The data includes 202 countries, covering years from

³ Publicly available at <https://www.v-dem.net/en/data/data-version-10/>

1789 to 2019, with more than 470 indicators, 82 indices and 5 high level indices. As the focus of this report is on Africa, this report takes the Africa subset of the V-Dem Dataset Version 10 composed of 55 polities including Zanzibar⁴ and Somaliland⁵. In this report, the terms countries and polities will be used interchangeably.

Why assess SDG16 in Africa?

The study of SDG16 - *peace, justice and strong institutions* - is crucial for Africa. One of the reasons of importance is that the continent still appears to be a ground for conflict and or political instabilities which pose a threat for any sustainable development effort.

For instance Francophone African countries have been characterised by *coups*. A list of *coups d'état* and *coup* attempts since 2010 shows that of the 33 African *coups*, about two-thirds were in Francophone Africa. Similarly, of the five Lusophone African countries, after the end of civil war in Angola in 1991/2002 and Mozambique in 1992, Guinea Bissau has remained an unstable country with countless *coups d'état*. Mozambique has also seen a return of conflict with insurgency violence in the northern province of Cabo Delgado since October 2017 (Morier-Genoud 2020) and from political violence in the central provinces of Manica and Sofala since mid-2019.⁶

Of the ten countries in conflict in Africa in 2020, half (Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, and Mali) are Francophone (ISS 2020). An illustration of Africa by geopolitical regions reveals that West Africa (mainly composed of Francophone countries) appears to be characterised by *coups* and with less elections; North Africa by instability and almost with no elections at all; the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa by civil wars and with less elections (Shenga 2020a:202).

Of those few African countries that have been performing relatively well promoting peace, many are still struggling to provide access to justice to their citizens; and to build strong institutions that are effective in providing goods and services to their citizens, that are accountable to them and are inclusive of all. Although many African countries have been conducting multiparty elections in the past three decades, V-Dem data shows that many have been failing to carry out free and fair elections, remaining only *electoral autocracies*. Of those that have been conducting free and fair elections - that is, *electoral democracies*, many fail to satisfy liberal principles of respecting for personal liberties, rule of law, and

⁴ A semi-autonomous region within the United Republic of Tanzania, with its own government, see <https://makasatanzania.com/tanzania-knowledge-base/zanzibar/is-zanzibar-a-country/#:~:text=It's%20a%20partly%20self%2Dgoverning,union%2C%20with%20its%20own%20government.>

⁵ Self-declared sovereign state but is only recognized as an autonomous region of Somalia by the international community, see <https://www.pacificcouncil.org/newsroom/somaliland-prospects-international-recognition>

⁶ Crisis Group Database. Tracking Conflict Worldwide, https://www.crisisgroup.org/index.php?q=crisiswatch/database&location%5B0%5D=125&crisis_

accountability. Only very few African countries are *liberal democracies* capable of promoting peace, justice and strong institutions to their citizens (Shenga 2020b).

Due to these governance fragilities, achieving SDG16 on the continent is a key concern. Without democracy and good governance, all efforts to meet other SDGs will be in vain. Without a peaceful and inclusive society there is no sustainable development; and with no access to justice for all; and no effective, accountable and inclusive institutions actors may rely on the use of violence for a political cause.

The structure of this report

This report assesses SDG16 as specified by its respective targets. For each target, it firstly outlines the indicators that are being used to measure progress. Secondly it examines the target indicator in Africa by polity. Thirdly it analyses the target indicator in the continent by geopolitical region and then community. Fourthly, in certain cases where the target is indicated by an aggregated composite index, this report compares the indicators of the index longitudinally to find which aspect is responsible for undermining the level of the index and or has been changing over time. At the end, it summarises the conclusions of all targets and raises policy implications in order to meet SDG16 by 2030.

SDG16.1 - REDUCE VIOLENCE EVERYWHERE

One way of assessing the target **SDG16.1: “Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere”** is by analysing the extent to which African countries enjoy *freedom from political killings*, specified by the V-Dem question: “Is there freedom from political killings?”⁷

The respect of freedom from political killings by public authorities is low in Africa (Figure 2). The cumulative V-Dem data from 1990 to 2019 shows that the African average of ‘respect mostly/fully’ of freedom of political killings by public authorities is only about 36 percent. By ‘mostly/fully respected’ we mean that political killings are practiced in a few isolated cases but they are not incited or approved by top leaders of government or they are non-existent. Only 22 out of the 56 African polities assessed are above this African average.

About 43 percent respect ‘somewhat’ freedom from political killings; and 21 percent do ‘not/weakly respect’ it. This last finding suggests that political killings are practiced systematically and they are typically incited and approved by top leaders of government or are practiced frequently and top leaders of government are not actively working to prevent them.

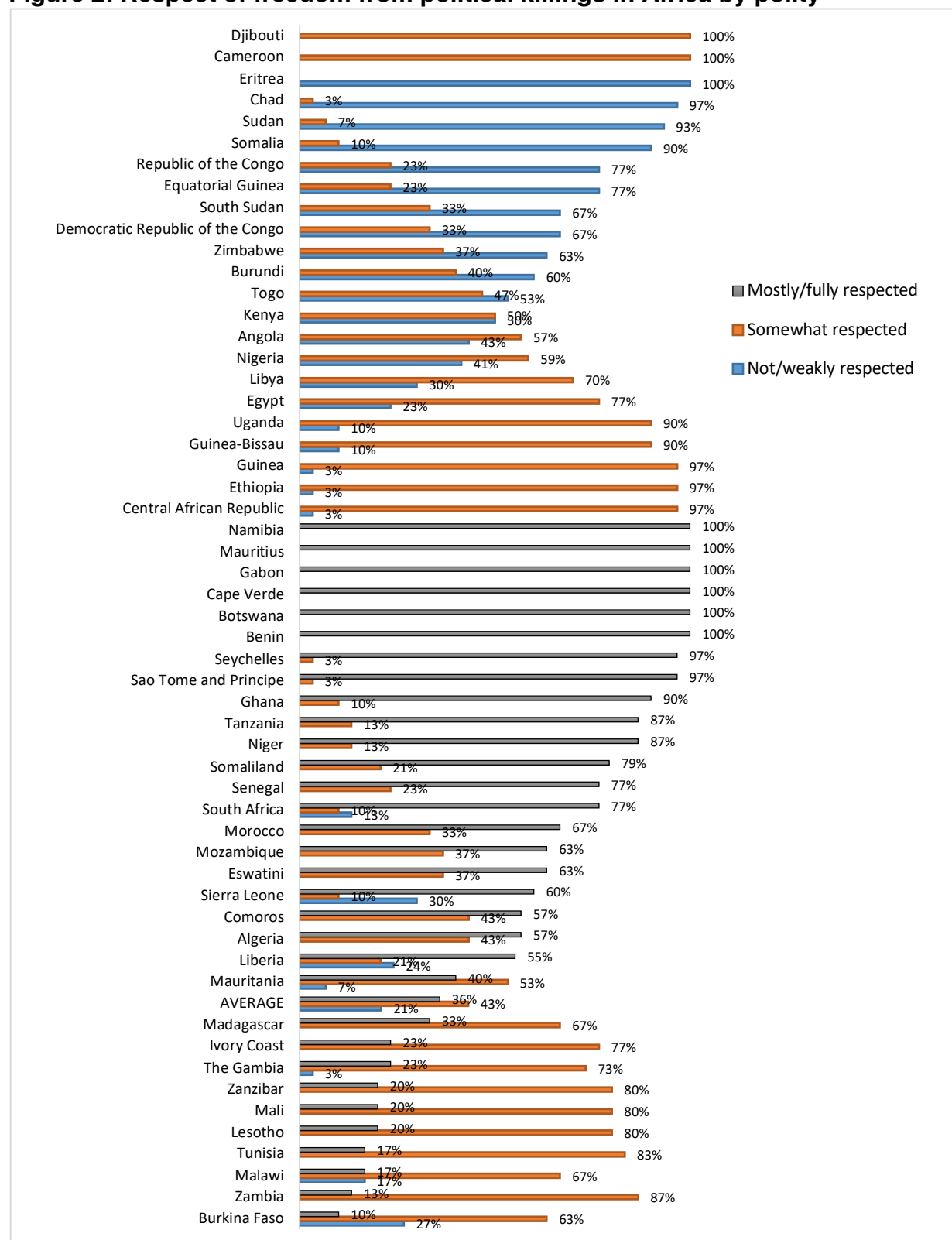
Among countries that respect mostly/fully; Namibia, Mauritius, Gabon, Cape Verde, Botswana, Benin, Seychelles and São Tomé and Príncipe are more likely to do so. On the other hand, among countries that do not/weakly respect freedom from political killings include Eritrea, Chad, Sudan, Somalia, Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, South Sudan and Democratic Republic of the Congo with levels ranging from 67-100 percent.

Geopolitical regional comparison in Figure 3 shows that countries from Southern Africa and West Africa regions are more likely to respect mostly/fully freedom from political killings than countries from other regions while countries from Central African region are more likely to not/weakly respect freedom from political killings.

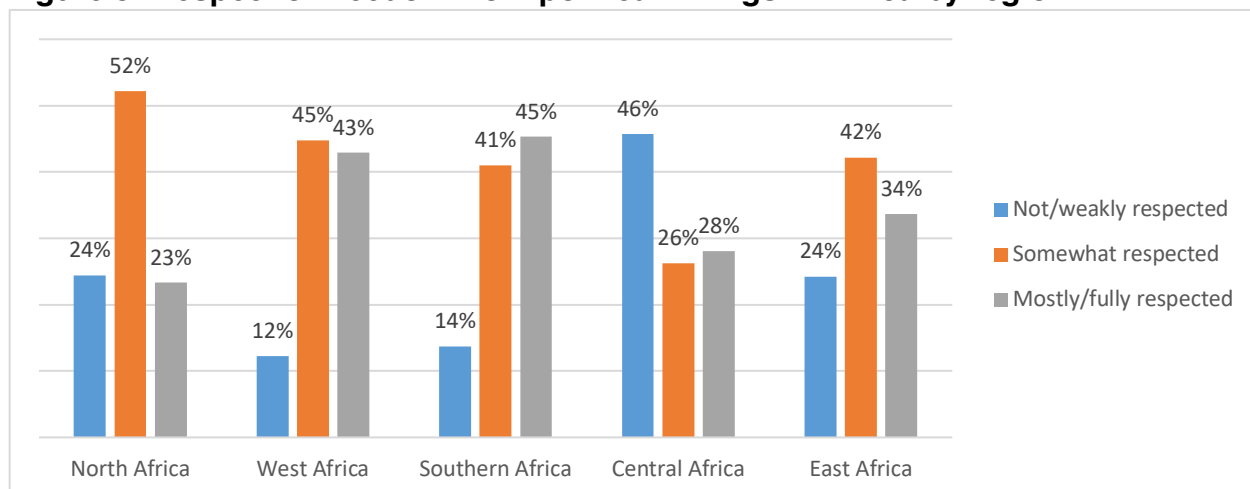
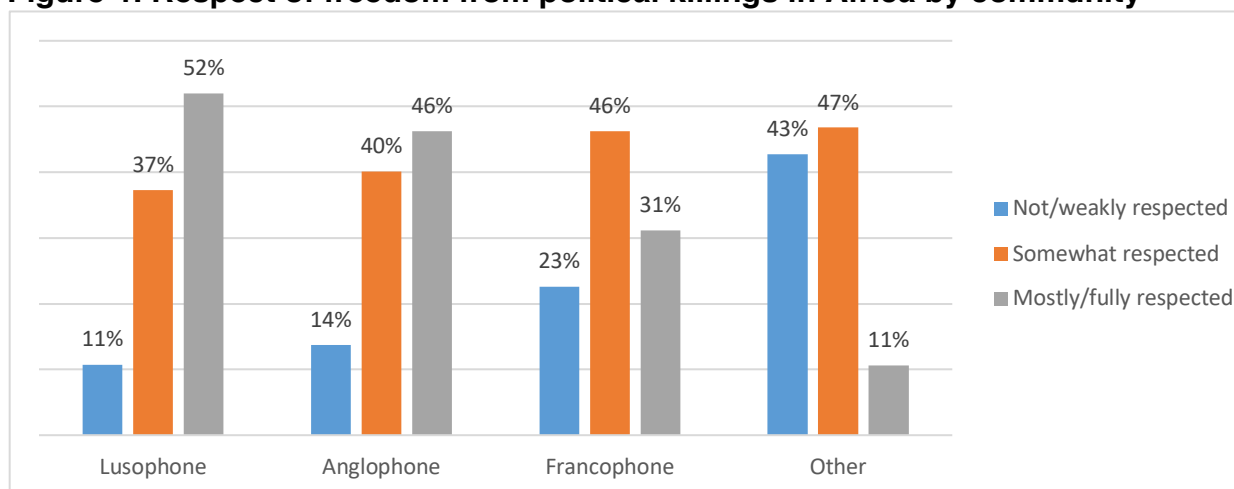
Community comparison shows that Lusophone followed by Anglophone Africa communities are more likely to respect mostly/fully freedom from political killings compared to Africans from other communities (Figure 4).

⁷ “Political killings are killings by the state or its agents without due process of law for the purpose of eliminating political opponents. These killings are the result of deliberate use of lethal force by the police, security forces, prison officials, or other agents of the state (including paramilitary groups)” (Coppedge et al. 2020:162).

Figure 2: Respect of freedom from political killings in Africa by polity



Data sorted by 'mostly/fully' respected response category of freedom from political killings.

Figure 3: Respect of freedom from political killings in Africa by region**Figure 4: Respect of freedom from political killings in Africa by community**

SDG16.3 - PROMOTE THE RULE OF LAW AND ENSURE EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE

The rule of law index

The first measure this report employs for the **SDG16.3** target: “**Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all**” is the rule of law. The rule of law is indicated by the V-Dem question: “To what extent are laws transparently, independently, predictably, impartially, and equally enforced, and to what extent do the actions of government officials comply with the law?”⁸

The respect to the rule of law in Africa is low. The African average of ‘high respect’ of the rule of law is only about 17 percent. In other words, only about 17 percent of African polities have transparent laws that are enforced independently, predictably, impartially and equally as well as have government officials who comply with the law. Only 10 out of the 56 polities are above the ‘high respect’ of rule of law average. Countries like Senegal, São Tomé and Príncipe, Namibia, Mauritius, Cape Verde, Botswana and to some extent South Africa and Seychelles are more likely to highly respect the rule of law than others.

Most African countries tend to not respect the rule of law. The African average of ‘low respect’ of the rule of law is very high (51 percent), with 15 polities tending to not respect at all the rule of law: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Togo and Zanzibar.

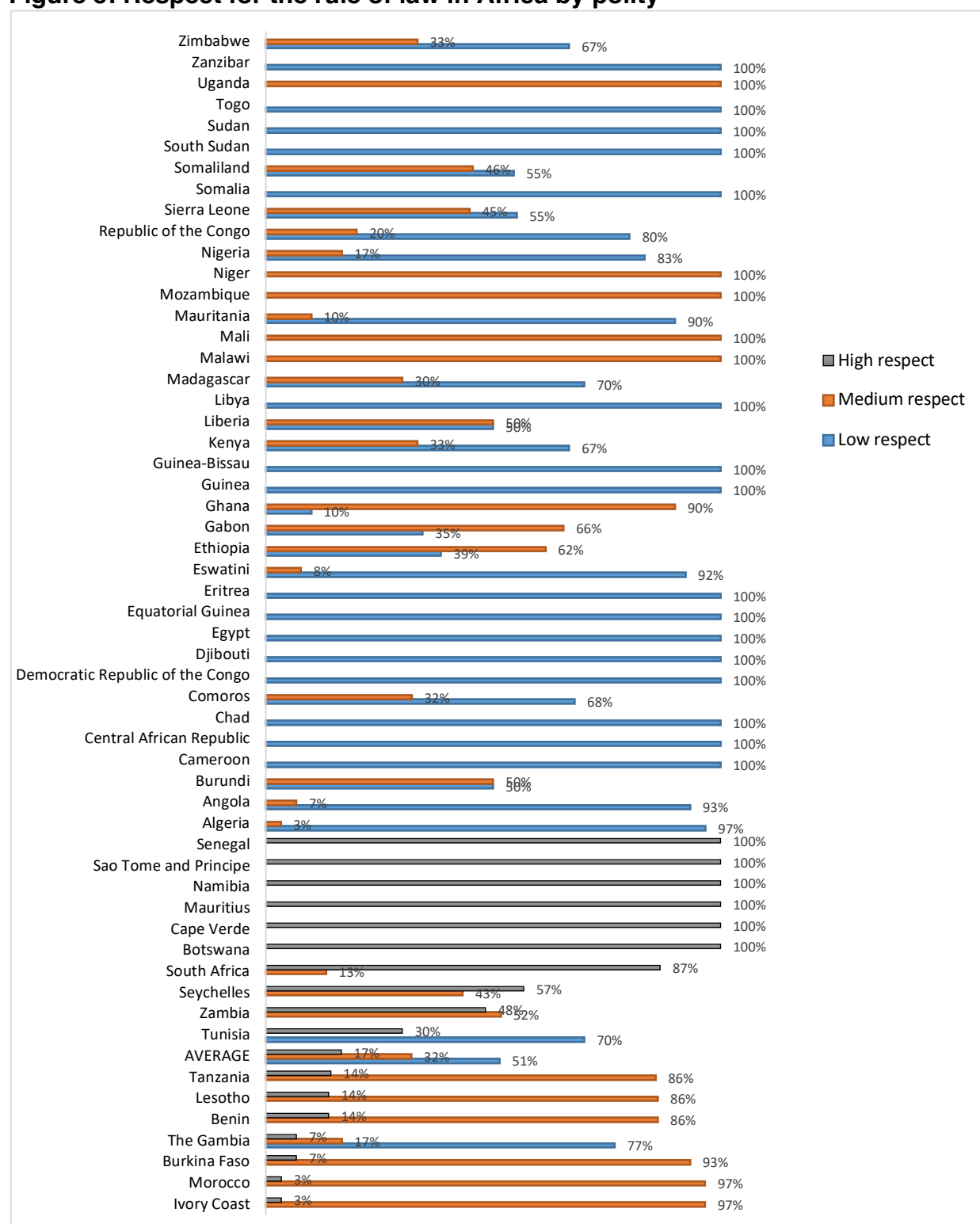
Although lack of respect of the rule of law is higher in Africa, the average of medium respect of the rule of law is about 33 percent, with contributions mainly from countries like Niger, Mozambique, Malawi, Mali and Uganda (Figure 5).

Breaking down by region, the rule of law tends to be highly respected in the Southern Africa region and it tends to be less respected in the regions of North Africa and Central Africa (Figure 6).

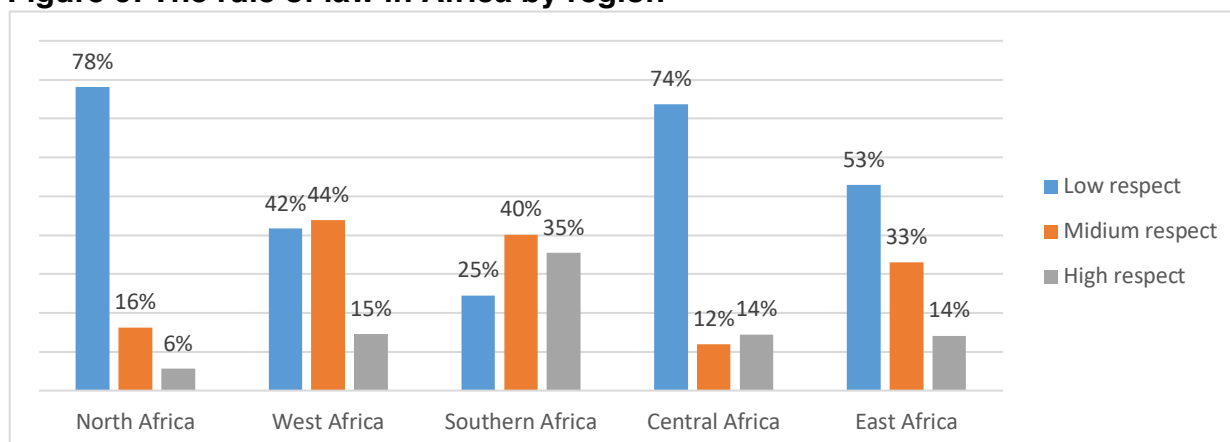
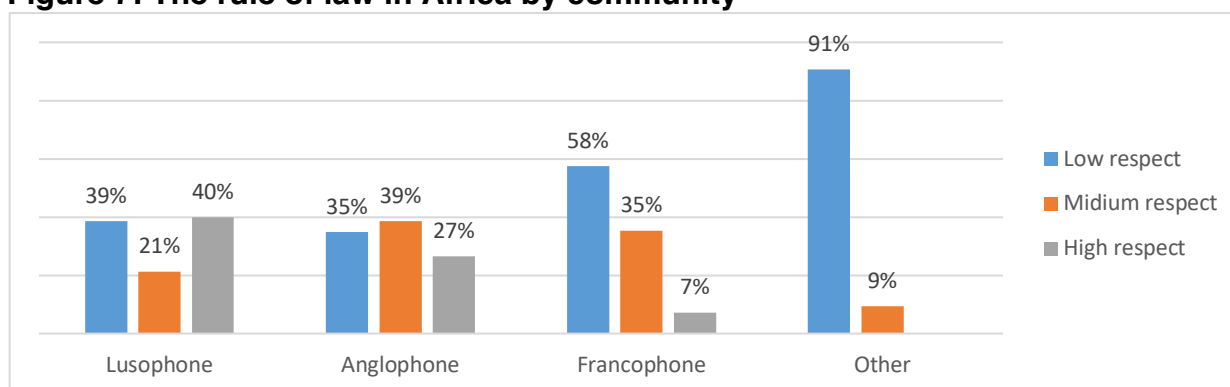
On community, the results in Figure 7 show that countries that belong to Lusophone and to some extent Anglophone communities are more likely to respect the rule of law; and those that belong to the Francophone community are less likely to do so.

⁸ It is an index “formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators for compliance with high court, compliance with judiciary, high court independence, lower court independence, executive respects constitution, rigorous and impartial public administration, transparent laws with predictable enforcement, access to justice for men, access to justice for women, judicial accountability, judicial corruption decision, public sector corrupt exchanges, public sector theft, executive bribery and corrupt exchanges, executive embezzlement and theft” (Coppedge et al. 2020:281-82).

Figure 5: Respect for the rule of law in Africa by polity



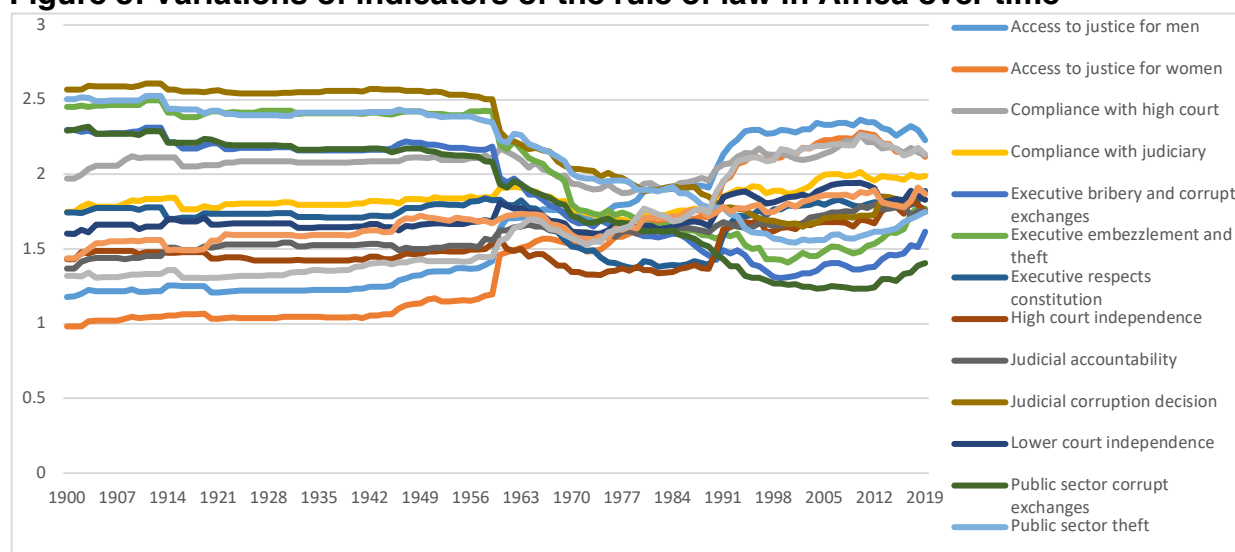
'Low respect' from 0 to .33; 'medium respect'.34 to .67; and 'high respect' .68 to 1. Data sorted by 'high respect' category of the rule of law index.

Figure 6: The rule of law in Africa by region**Figure 7: The rule of law in Africa by community**

Which aspect of the rule of law is low and/or changing?

Using the full time series of V-Dem data we can observe variations of each indicator of the rule of law index over time. Of the rule of law indicators, access to justice for men and women, transparent laws with predictable enforcement, and compliance with the high court contribute the most to the rule of law composite index. But corruption and bribery in the executive and public sector undermines it, although some improvements occurred in the last few years. Public sector corrupt exchanges, executive bribery and corrupt exchanges, executive embezzlement and theft, and public sector theft contribute less (Figure 8). This longitudinal analysis unpacking the rule of law data allows practitioners to know where to prioritise their efforts to increase the levels of the rule of law in the continent, in general and in African polities in particular.⁹

⁹ These longitudinal variations can be provided also by country.

Figure 8: Variations of indicators of the rule of law in Africa over time

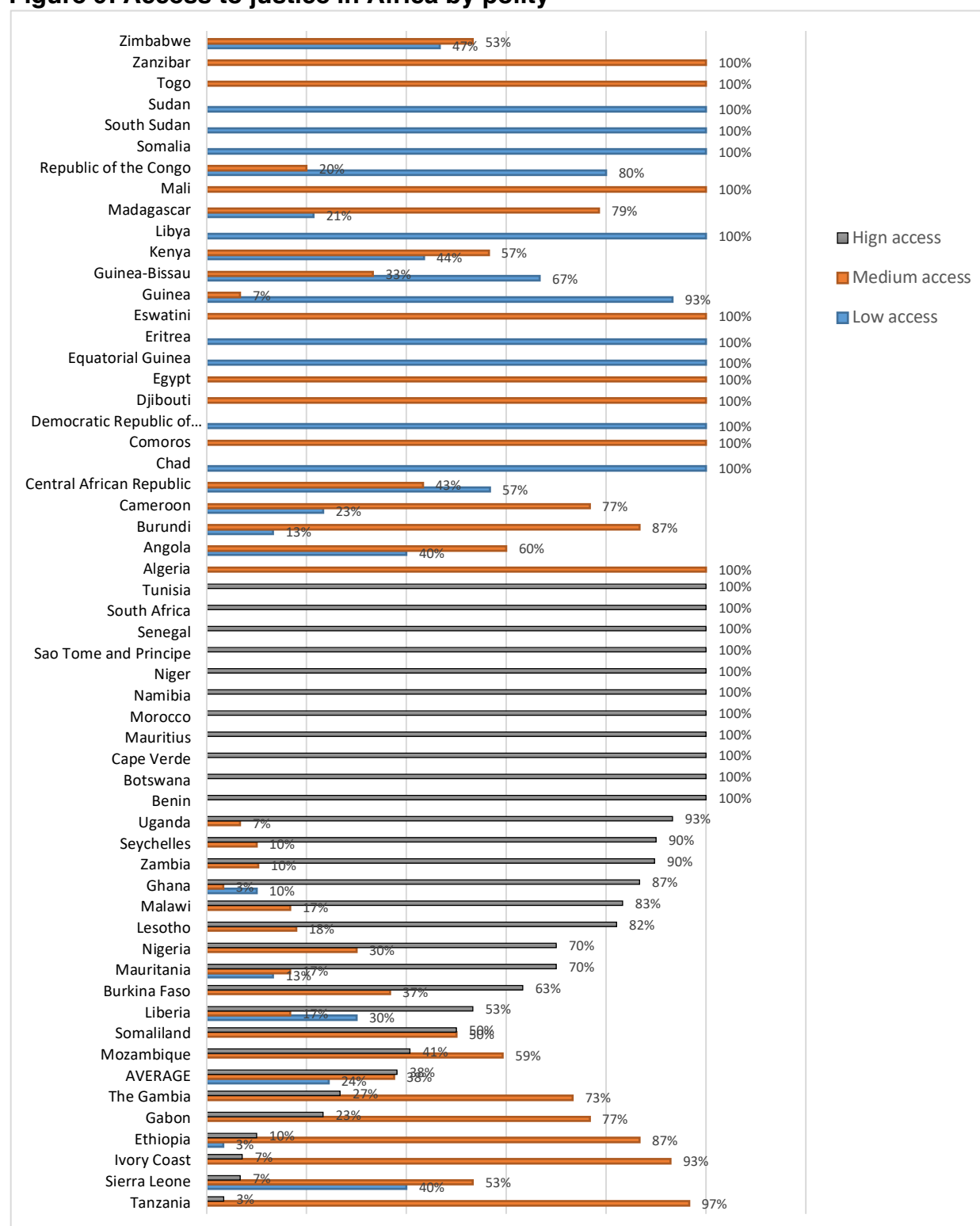
Access to justice index

The second indicator of the SDG16.3 target this report uses is access to justice, measured by the question: “Do citizens enjoy secure and effective access to justice?”¹⁰

Access to justice in Africa is low. The African average of ‘high access’ to justice – that is citizens who enjoy secure and effective access to justice - is only 38 percent. While 23 countries are above this average, only 11 countries tend to secure justice to their citizens and access to justice more effectively: Benin, Botswana, Cape Verde, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, South Africa and Tunisia. The African average of ‘medium’ and ‘low’ access to justice is 38 and 24 percent respectively, with the following countries performing badly: Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea, Equatorial Guinea, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Chad (Figure 9).

¹⁰ Access to justice is an index estimated “by averaging two indicators: access to justice for men and women” (Coppedge et al. 2020:282).

Figure 9: Access to justice in Africa by polity



'Low access' range from 0 to .33; medium access'.34 to .67; and 'high access' from .68 to 1. Data sorted by 'high access' category of access to justice index.

Considering region, the Southern Africa region followed by West Africa lead in high access to justice while Central Africa leads in low access. East Africa tends to experience medium access to justice (Figure 10).

In terms of community, the Anglophone African community followed by Lusophone is likely to have 'high' access to justice while Francophone lags behind. The Francophone community tends more to have low access to justice (Figure 11).

Figure 10: Access to justice in Africa by region

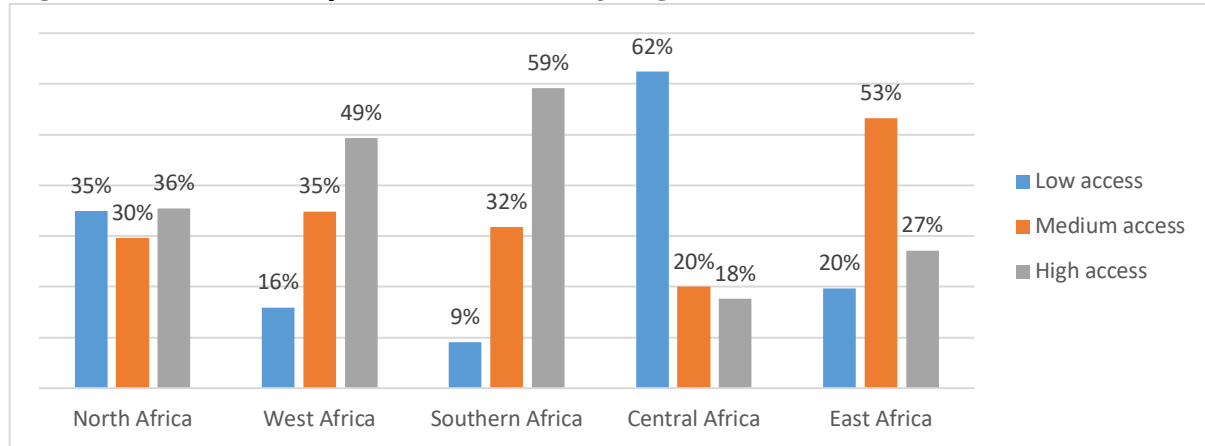
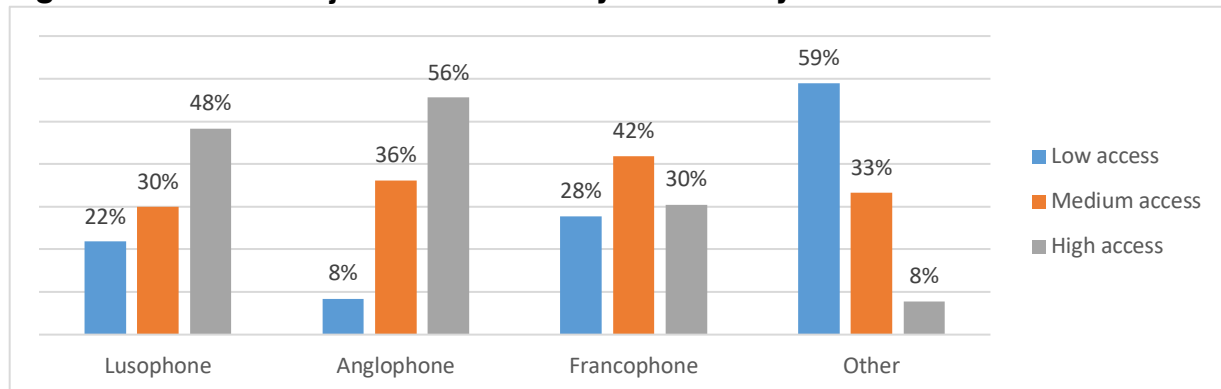


Figure 11: Access to justice in Africa by community



SDG 16.5 - SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE CORRUPTION AND BRIBERY

The third target this report tracks is **SDG16.5: “Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms”**. This report assesses the extent to which corruption and bribery exist when conducting elections, but also corruption in the executive, public sector, judicial and media.

Clean elections index

Corruption and bribery can occur and penetrate diverse democratic procedures including elections. Often parties and candidates invest in less convincing means to win elections by engineering electoral institutions in a corrupt way and bribing voters and/or buying votes. V-Dem have developed a number of indicators capturing corruption and bribery in elections through election irregularities, violence and intimidation, vote buying, and freeness and fairness of elections. It has aggregated these indicators into what is called the *clean elections* index, which is measured by the question: “To what extent are elections free and fair?”¹¹

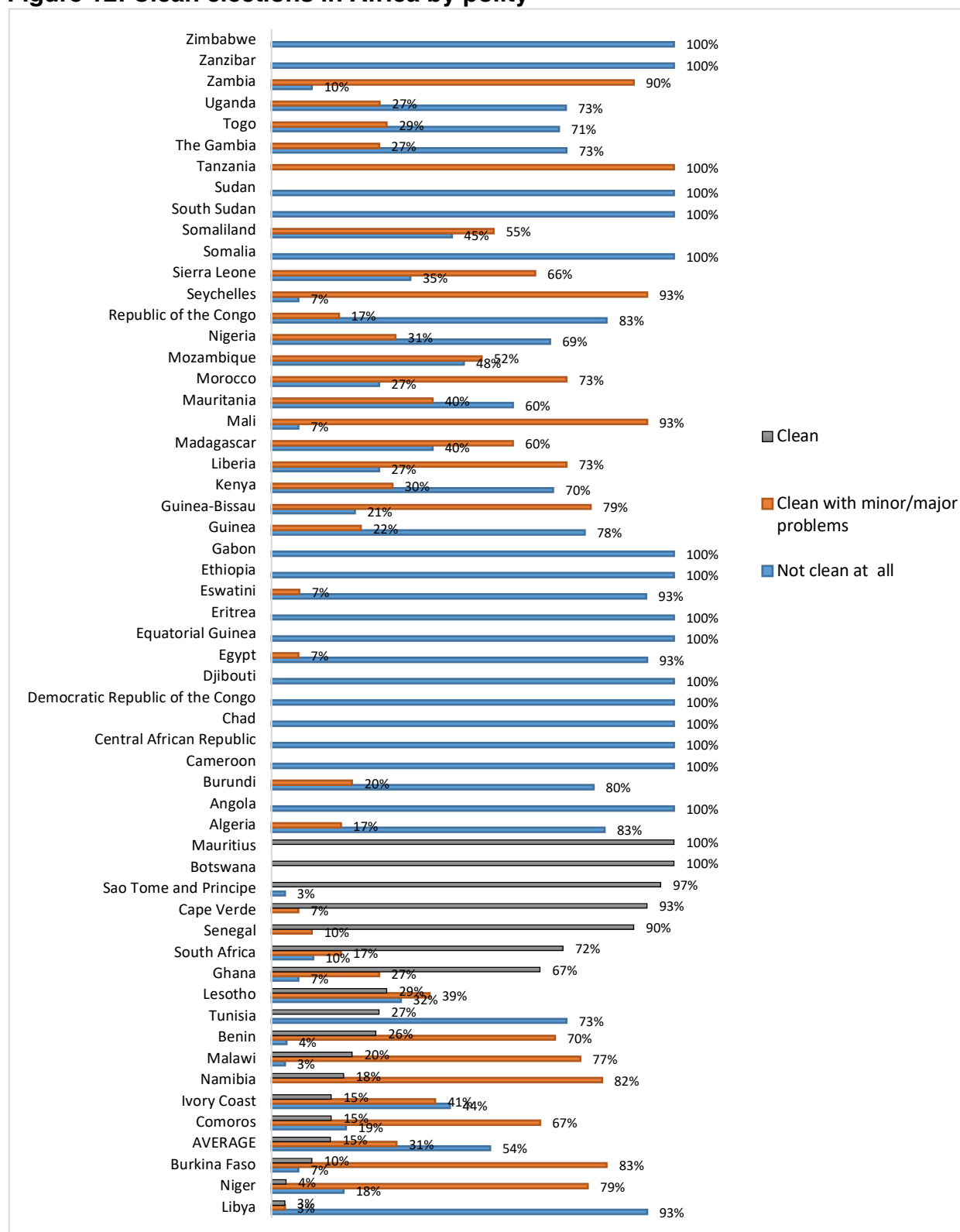
Clean and decent elections in Africa are rare. The African average of clean elections is only 15 percent (Figure 12) with only 14 out of 55 polities above this average. The level of election cleanness in Africa is accounted mainly by the following countries: Mauritius, Botswana, São Tomé and Príncipe, Cape Verde, Senegal, South Africa and Ghana.

The majority of African countries tend to conduct elections that are not clean at all, with the African average at 54 percent, and with 29 out of 56 polities above this average. Polities where elections are not clean at all include: Zimbabwe, Zanzibar, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Equatorial Guinea, Djibouti, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad, Central African Republic, Cameroon, and Angola.

Comparing regions, Southern Africa and West Africa regions tend more to conduct clean elections while Central Africa, North Africa and East Africa regions tend more to conduct elections that are not clean at all (Figure 13).

¹¹ “The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators for EMB [electoral management body] autonomy, EMB capacity, election voter registry, election vote buying, election other voting irregularities, election government intimidation, non-state electoral violence, and election free and fair. Since the bulk of these indicators are only observed in election years, the index scores have then been repeated within election regime periods as defined by [electoral regime index]. (Coppedge et al. 2020:47).

Figure 12: Clean elections in Africa by polity



'Not clean at all' range from 0 to .33; 'clean with minor/major problems' .34 to .67; and 'clean' .68 to 1. Data sorted by 'clean' category of clean elections index.

With respect to community, the Lusophone Africa community is likely to have clean elections but this is mainly accounted for by Cape Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe. As we have already reported, Angola tends to have elections that are not clean at all. Mozambique and Guinea Bissau are placed among those in the middle category with minor/major problems in conducting elections. The Francophone community is more likely to have elections that are not clean at all. The Anglophone African community performs in the middle between Lusophone and Francophone communities conducting elections (Figure 14).

Figure 13: Clean elections in Africa by region

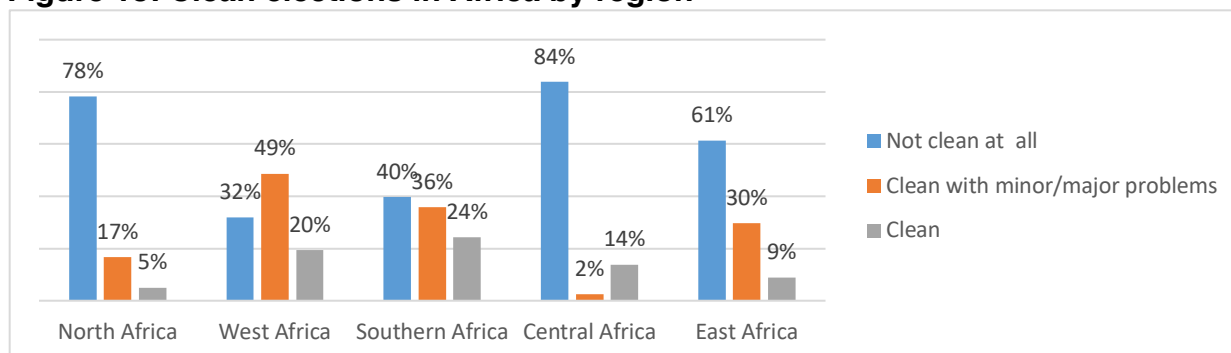
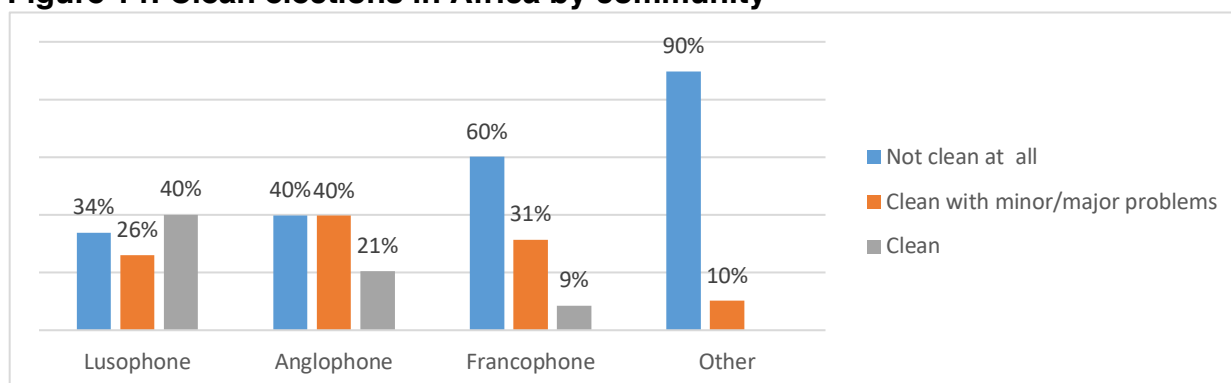
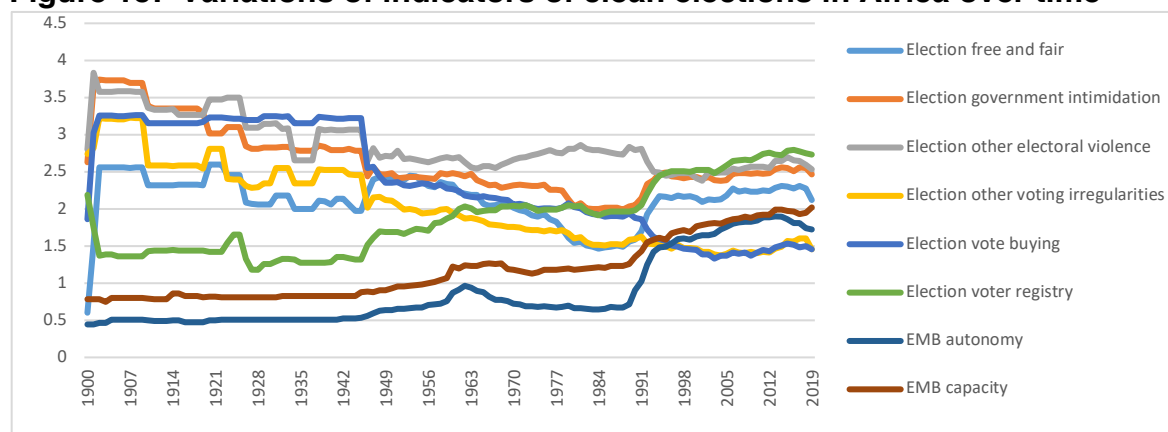


Figure 14: Clean elections in Africa by community



Which aspect of conducting clean elections is low and/or changing?

That only 15 percent of African polities conduct clean elections is due to low autonomy and capacity of electoral management bodies (EMB), voting irregularities and vote buying. Voter registry, election government intimidation and electoral violence seems to perform high in the clean election index but EMB autonomy and capacity, voting registration and vote buying do not. Yet freeness and fairness of elections, EMB autonomy and voting irregularities have declined in the most recent years in Africa (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Variations of indicators of clean elections in Africa over time

Executive corruption index

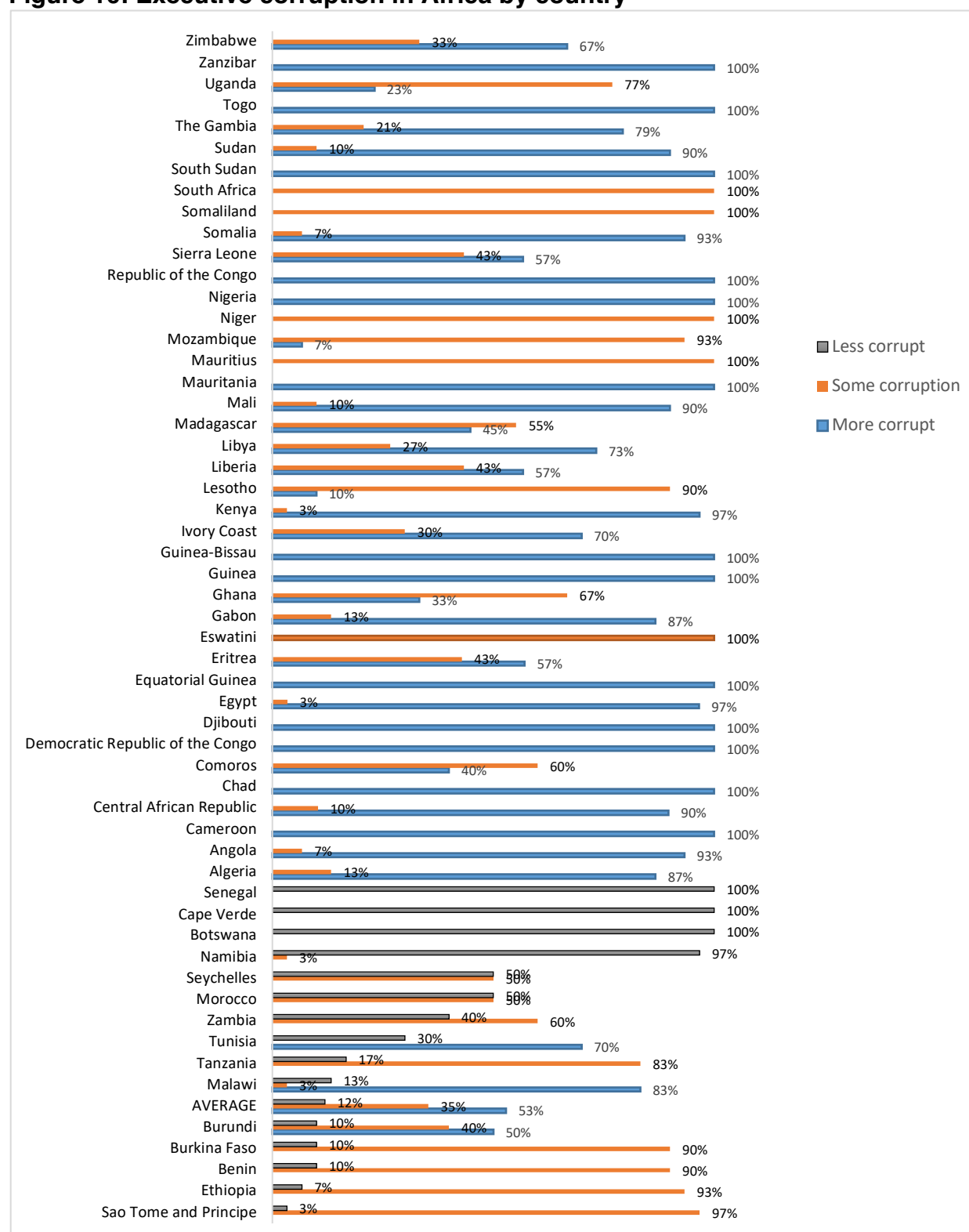
Executive corruption is measured by the question: “How routinely do members of the executive, or their agents grant favors in exchange for bribes, kickbacks, or other material inducements, and how often do they steal, embezzle, or misappropriate public funds or other state resources for personal or family use?”¹²

Corruption among members of the executive in African countries is a concern for sustainable development. The African average of less corruption in the executive is only 12 percent with only 10 polities above it. African countries that are less corrupt in the executive tend to be Senegal, Cape Verde, Botswana and Namibia (Figure 16).

The continental average of high executive corruption is 53 percent with 31 out of 56 polities above it. The most corrupt African polities include: Zanzibar, Togo, South Sudan, Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Mauritania, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Equatorial Guinea, Djibouti, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad and Cameroon.

¹² It is an index aggregated by averaging two indicators: *executive bribery and corrupt exchanges*; and *executive embezzlement and theft* (McMann et al. 2016:23).

Figure 16: Executive corruption in Africa by country



'Less corrupt' range from 0 to .33; 'some corruption'.34 to .67; and 'more corrupt'.68 to 1. Data sorted by 'less corrupt' category of executive corruption index.

The Southern Africa region is more likely to have less executive corruption than other regions. Among those with high executive corruption include the Central Africa region followed by North Africa and West Africa (Figure 17).

Community analysis shows that Lusophone and Anglophone communities appear to have less corruption in the executive than the Francophone community. Francophone community is likely to have more corruption among the members of the executive than Lusophone and Anglophone communities (Figure 18).

Figure 17: Executive corruption in Africa by region

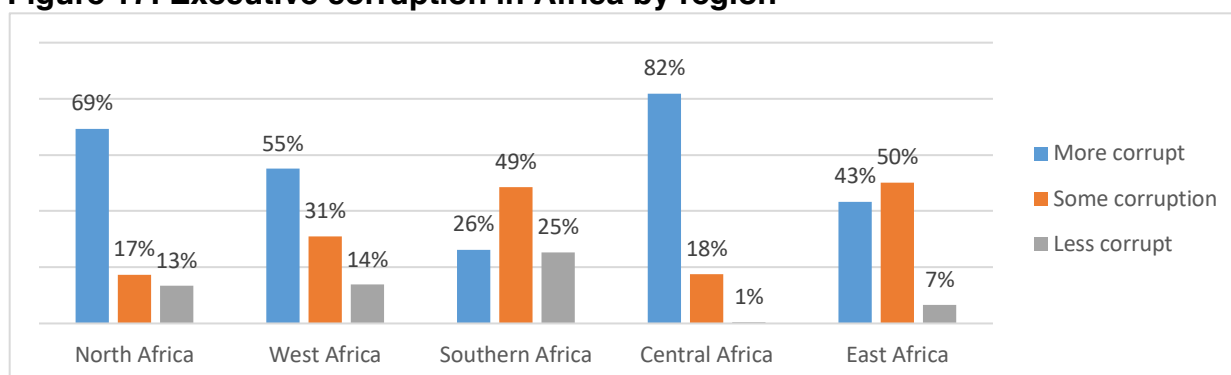
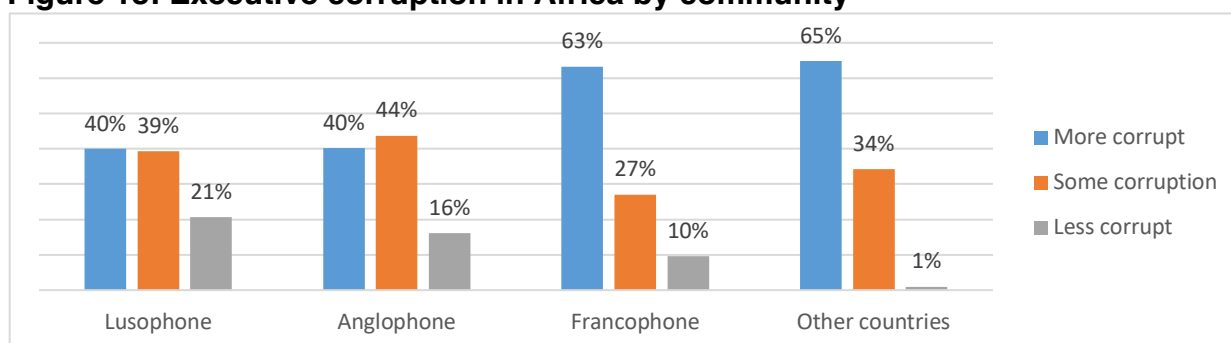


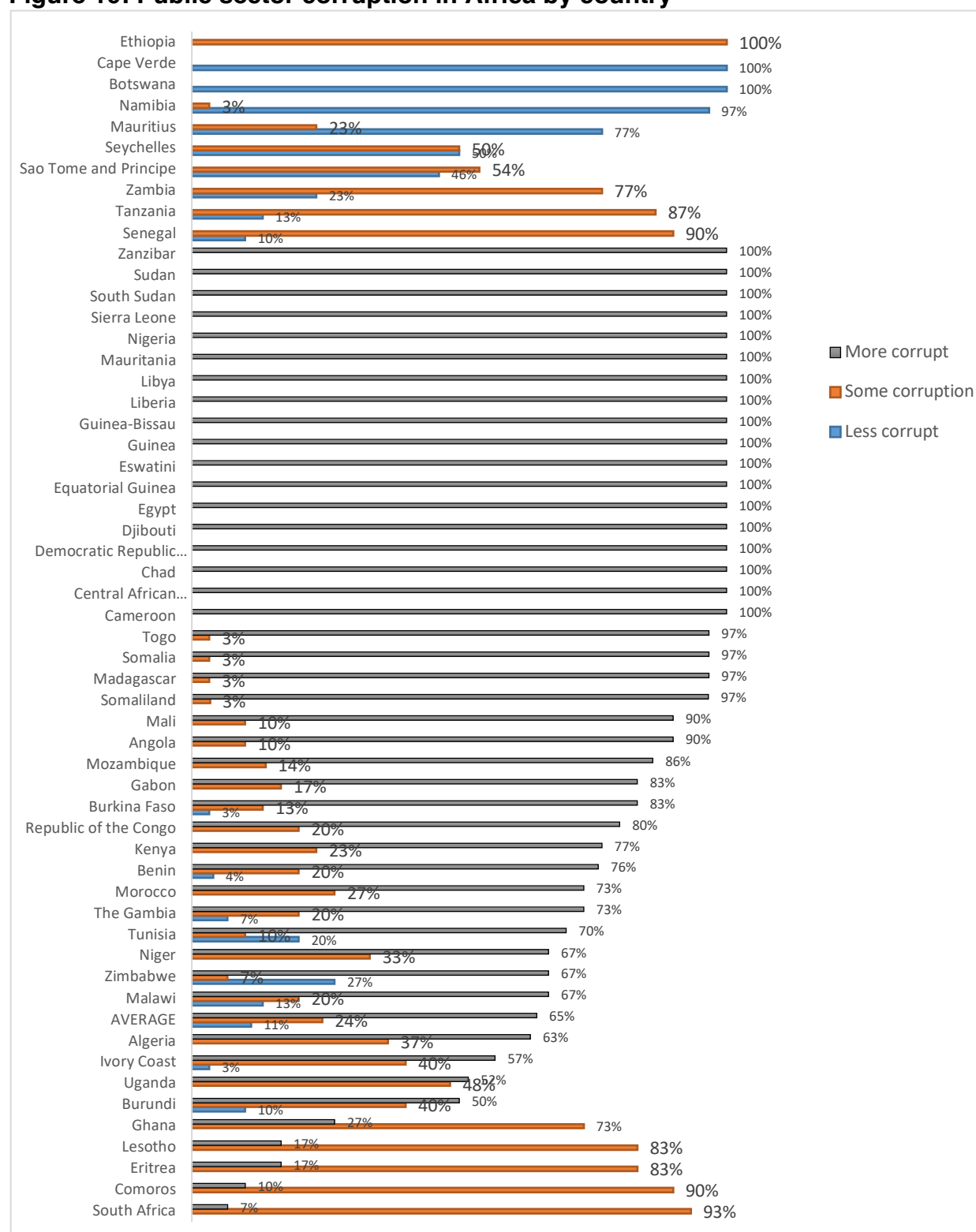
Figure 18: Executive corruption in Africa by community



Public sector corruption index

Public sector corruption is measured by the question: “To what extent do public sector employees grant favors in exchange for bribes, kickbacks, or other material inducements, and how often do they steal, embezzle, or misappropriate public funds or other state resources for personal or family use?”¹³

¹³ It is an index created by averaging two indicators: public sector bribery and embezzlement (Coppedge et al. 2020:279-80).

Figure 19: Public sector corruption in Africa by country

'Less corrupt' range from 0 to .33; 'some corruption'.34 to .67; and 'more corrupt' .68 to 1. Data sorted by 'more corrupt' category of public sector corruption index.

Corruption in the public sector is about the same as in the executive. The continental average of less corruption in the public service is only 11 percent with only 11 countries above it. Countries featured by less corruption in the public service are Cape Verde, Botswana, Namibia and Mauritius.

The Africa average of being most corrupt in public service is 65 percent. Of this, the majority of 36 polities are located above this average. Among these, the most corrupt in public service are: Zanzibar, Sudan, South Sudan, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Mauritania, Liberia, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Eswatini, Equatorial Guinea, Egypt, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad, Central African Republic, and Cameroon (Figure 19).

Analysis of regions show that North Africa, Central Africa and West Africa have more corruption in the civil service whilst Southern Africa has less (Figure 20).

Moving to community, while Francophone is high in corruption in the civil service, The Anglophone community tends to be low with Lusophone located between the two communities (Figure 21).

Figure 20: Public sector corruption in Africa by region

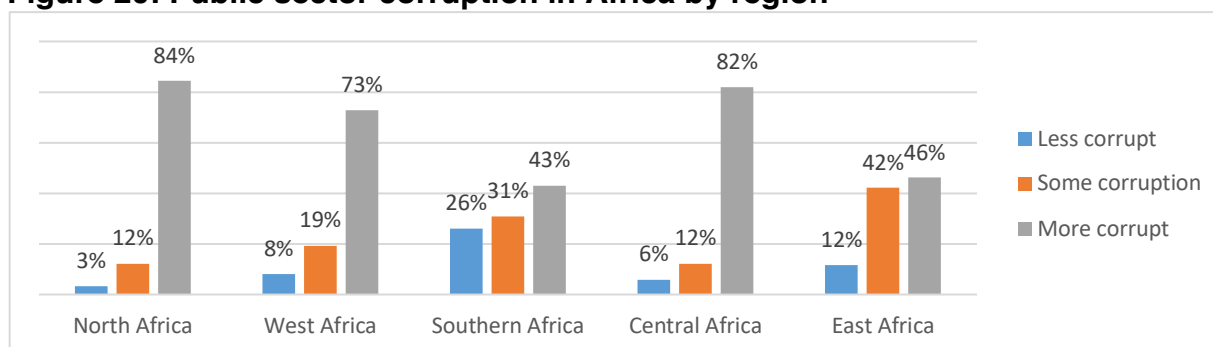
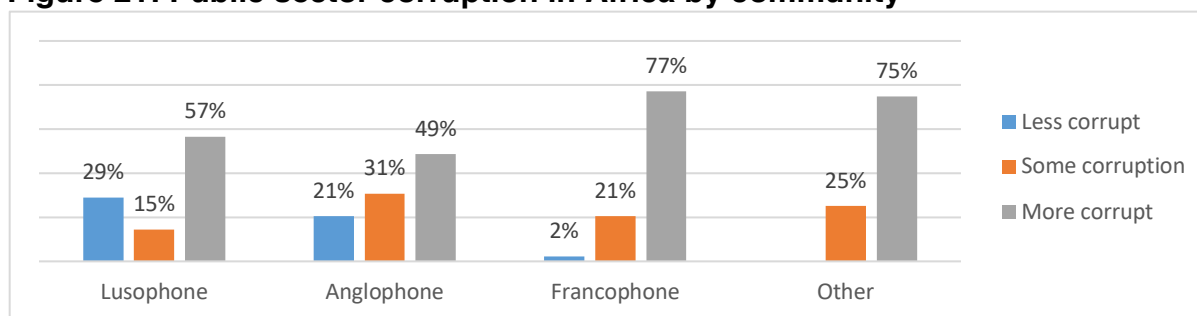


Figure 21: Public sector corruption in Africa by community



Judicial corruption decision

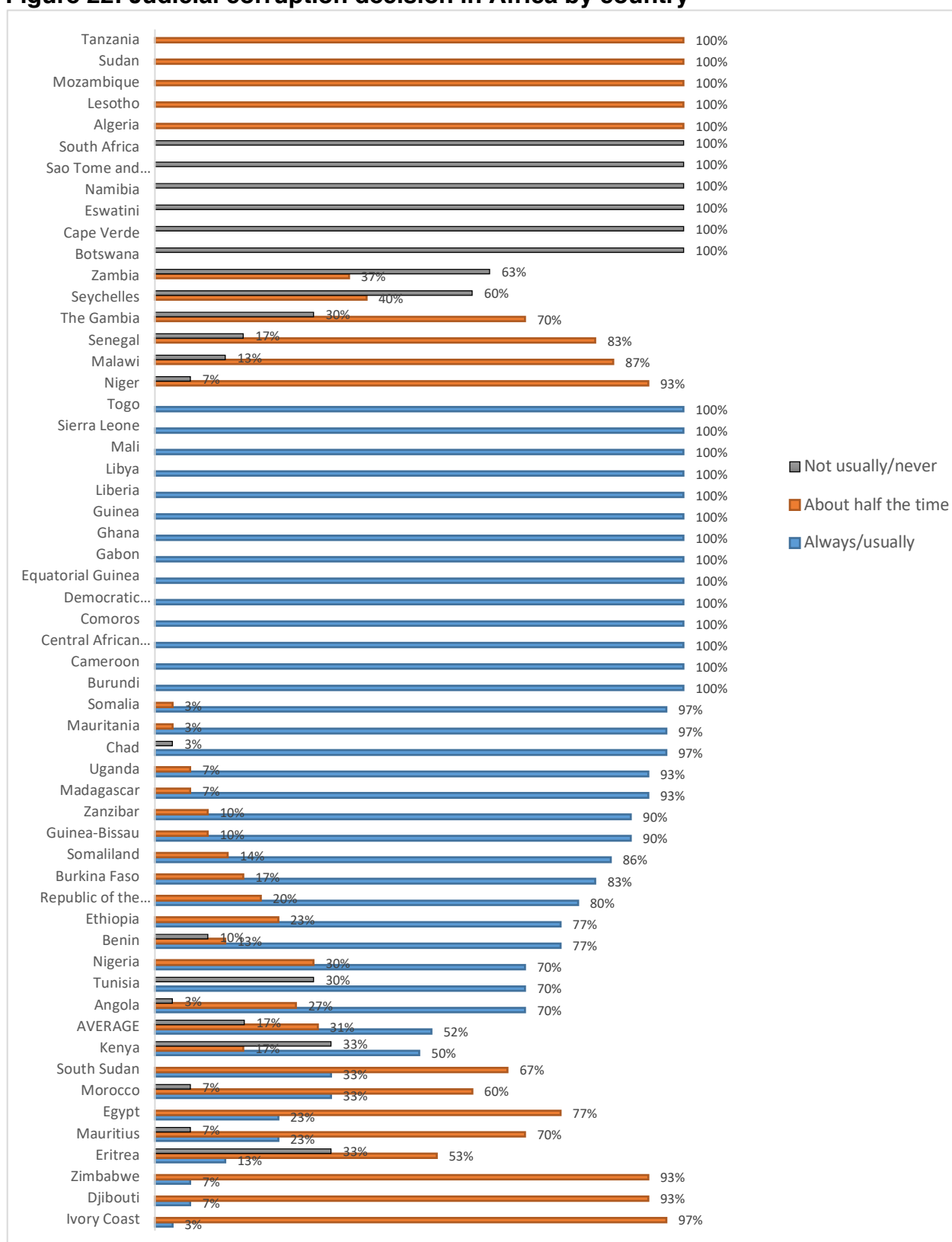
Judicial corruption decision is indicated by the question: “How often do individuals or businesses make undocumented extra payments or bribes in order to speed up or delay the process or to obtain a favorable judicial decision?”

Likewise, in the executive and public sector, judicial corruption causes concerns. The Africa average of ‘always/usually’ making undocumented extra payments or bribes in order to speed up or delay the process or to obtain a favorable judicial decision is above the mid-point (52 percent), with the majority of 29 polities being above that average. Countries that are highest in judicial corruption are: Togo, Sierra Leone, Mali, Libya, Liberia, Guinea, Ghana, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Comoros, Central African Republic, Cameroon, and Burundi.

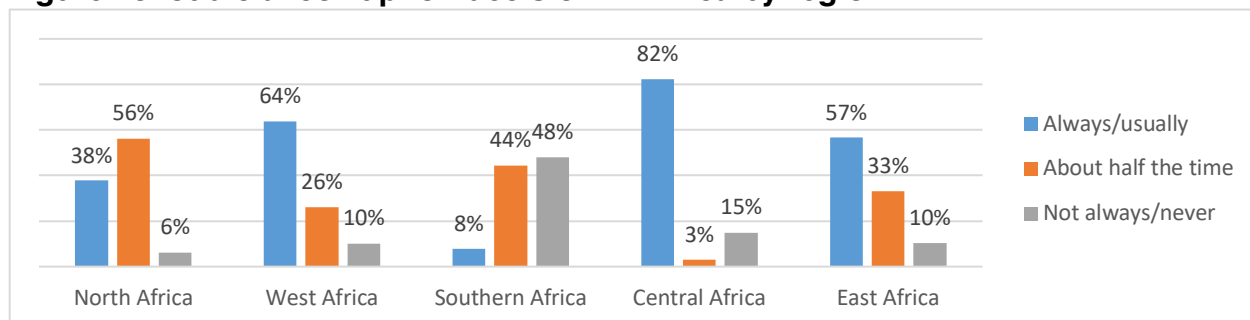
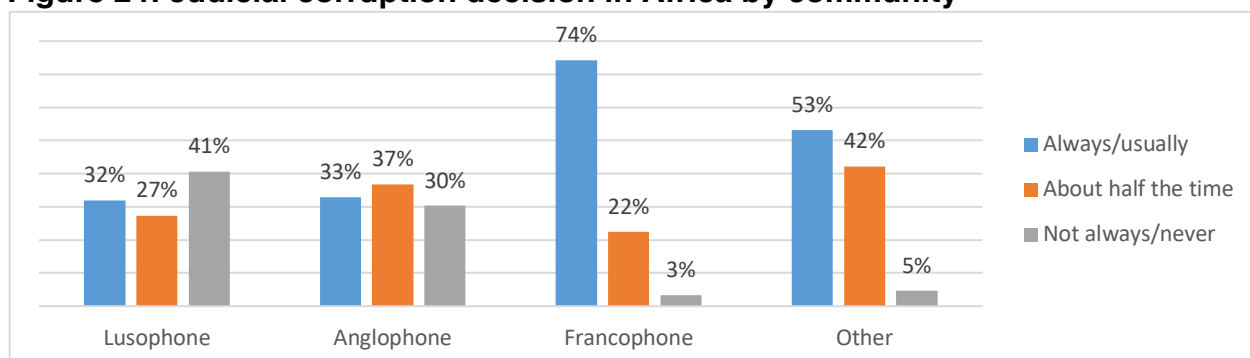
The African average of not always/never making undocumented extra payments in the judicial process is very low (17 percent) with only 12 countries above it, of which the least corrupt are South Africa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Namibia, Cape Verde, Eswatini and Botswana (Figure 22).

Comparing regions, judicial corruption decision tends to ‘not usually/never’ occur in Southern Africa. Central Africa, West Africa and East Africa are likely to foster corrupt judicial decisions (Figure 23).

With respect to community, the Francophone Africa community is likely to ‘usually/always’ promote corrupt judicial decisions. The Lusophone community followed by Anglophone are likely to not always/never foster judicial corrupt decisions (Figure 24).

Figure 22: Judicial corruption decision in Africa by country

Data sorted by the category 'always/usually' of the variable judicial corrupt decision.

Figure 23: Judicial corruption decision in Africa by region**Figure 24: Judicial corruption decision in Africa by community**

Media corruption

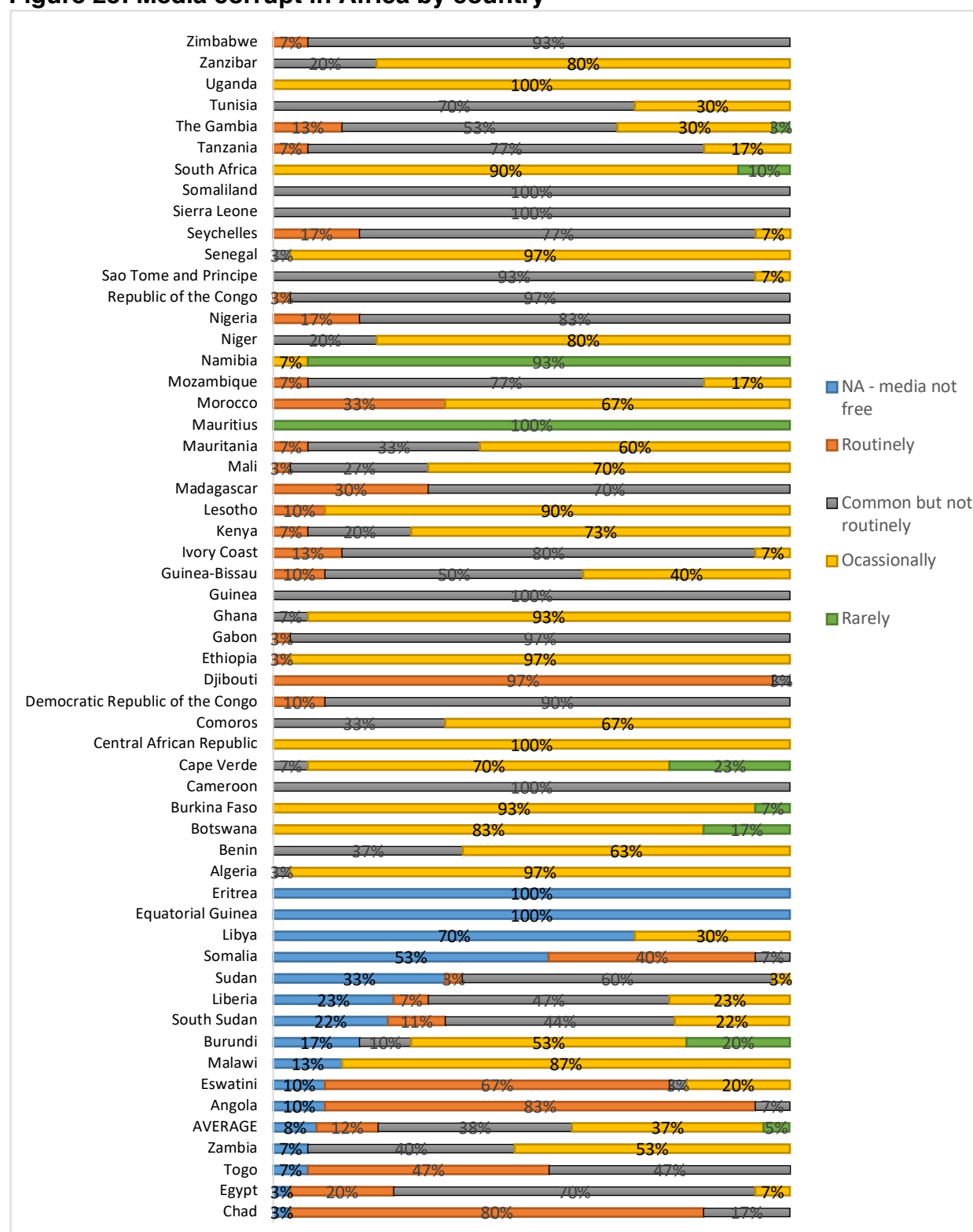
Media corruption is measured by the V-Dem question: “Do journalists, publishers, or broadcasters accept payments in exchange for altering news coverage?”

The data in Figure 25 shows that a significant proportion (8 percent) of media in Africa is not free – that is, the media is so closely directed by the government that any media corruption would be either unnecessary to ensure pro-government coverage or ineffective in producing anti-government coverage.

Where media freedom exists in the continent, in the majority of cases media corruption is a common phenomenon; it occurs occasionally (37 percent) or commonly but not routinely (38 percent). Media corruption at a significant level only rarely occurs in Africa (5 percent).

Countries where media tend to not be free at all are Eritrea and Equatorial Guinea while those where media corruption rarely occurs are Mauritius and Namibia.

Figure 25: Media corrupt in Africa by country



Data sorted by not applicable - media is not free category.

North Africa, Central Africa and East Africa tend less to have media freedom than other regions. Among those regions with media freedom, in West Africa, Southern Africa and even North Africa and East Africa it tends not to be normal for journalists, publishers, and broadcasters to alter news coverage in exchange for payments but it tends to happen occasionally, without anyone being punished.

In the Central Africa region it tends to be common, but not routine, for media professionals to alter news coverage in exchange for payments. In Southern Africa and West Africa it tends to be occasionally (Figure 26).

On community, the Francophone community tends to register more the issue of the media not being free than in other communities. While there is no difference between Francophone and Anglophone communities on media professionals altering news coverage in exchange of payments occasionally, media corruption tends to be common, but not routine, in the Lusophone community than Anglophone (Figure 27).

Figure 26: Media corrupt in Africa by region

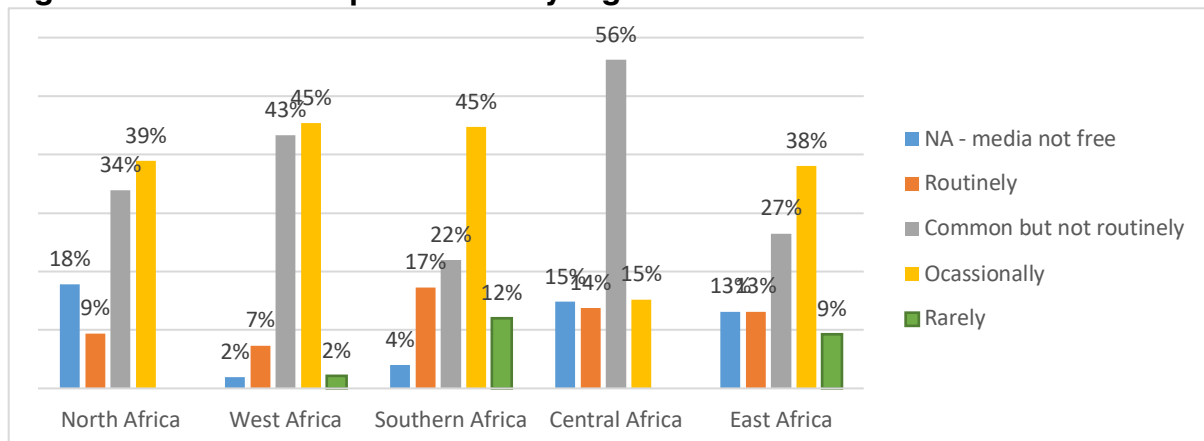
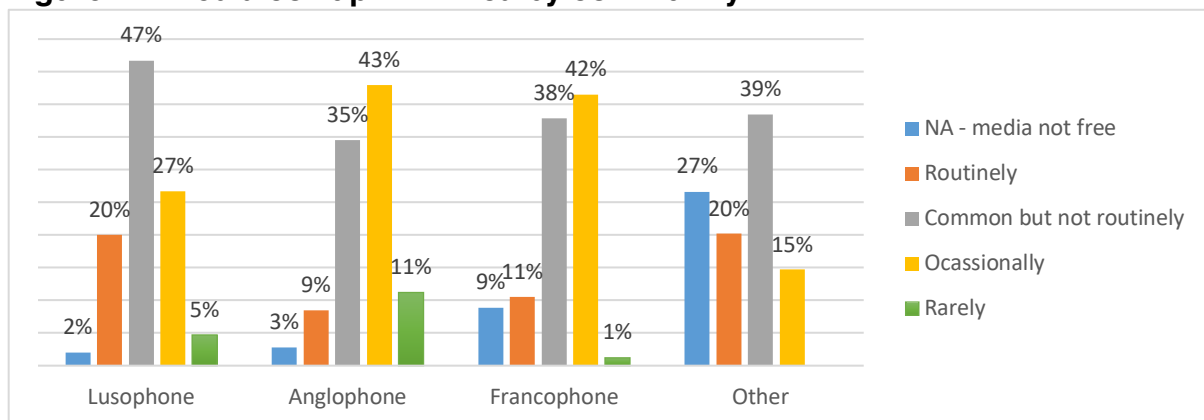


Figure 27: Media corrupt in Africa by community



SDG 16.6 - DEVELOP EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND TRANSPARENT INSTITUTIONS

The **SDG16.6 target**: “**Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels**” is one that electoral democracies usually fail to perform. When electoral democracies accomplish to conduct free and fair elections, they fail to satisfy liberal principles of respect for accountability besides personal liberties and the rule of law. With the African continent being characterised mainly by electoral autocracies and electoral democracies one would expect to find low levels in achieving the SDG16.6 target.

Electoral component index

Elections are a mechanism of accountability (Thomassen 2014). They “create a relationship of formal accountability between policy makers and citizens” (Ashworth 2012:184). This report measures electoral accountability by the V-Dem *electoral component index*, which is indicated by the question: “To what extent is the electoral principle of democracy achieved?”¹⁴ V-Dem clarifies that:

“The electoral principle of democracy seeks to achieve responsiveness and accountability between leaders and citizens through the mechanism of competitive elections. This is presumed to be achieved when suffrage is extensive; political and civil society organizations can operate freely; elections are clean and not marred by fraud or systematic irregularities; and the chief executive of a country is selected directly or indirectly through elections” (Coppedge et al. 2020:289).

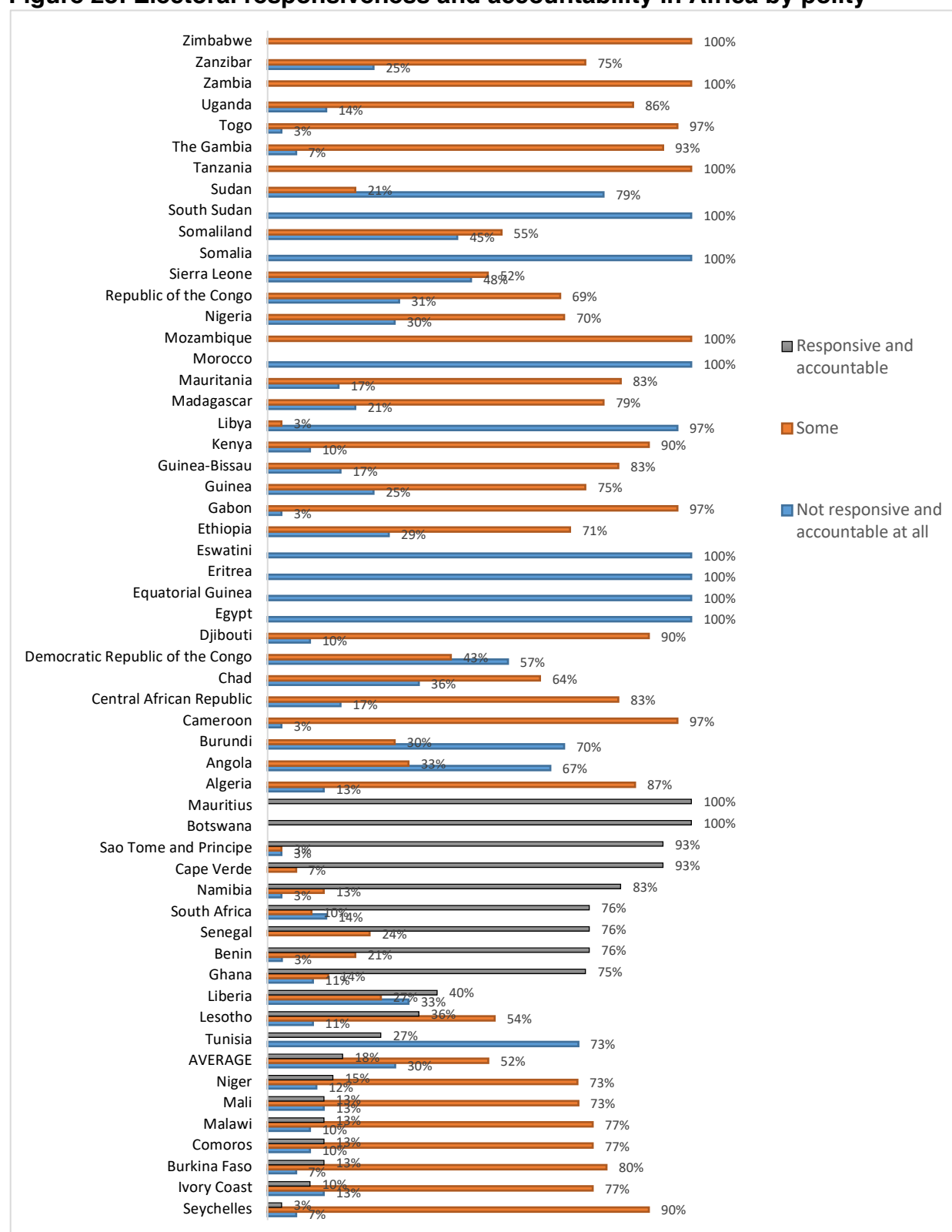
Accountability through elections in Africa is low. About 52 percent of African polities only have ‘some’ (.34-.67) level of responsiveness and accountability of leaders to their citizens through mechanism of competitive elections; 18 percent are not responsive and accountable at all; and 30 percent are responsive and accountable.

Responsiveness and accountability in Africa is likely to be found in Botswana and Mauritius; and it is unlikely to be found in South Sudan, Somalia, Morocco, Eswatini, Eritrea, Equatorial Guinea, and Egypt (Figure 28).

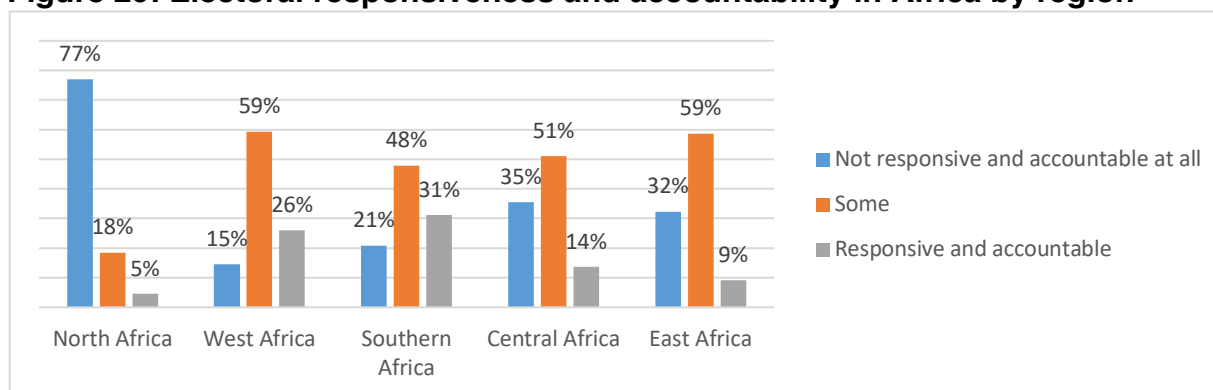
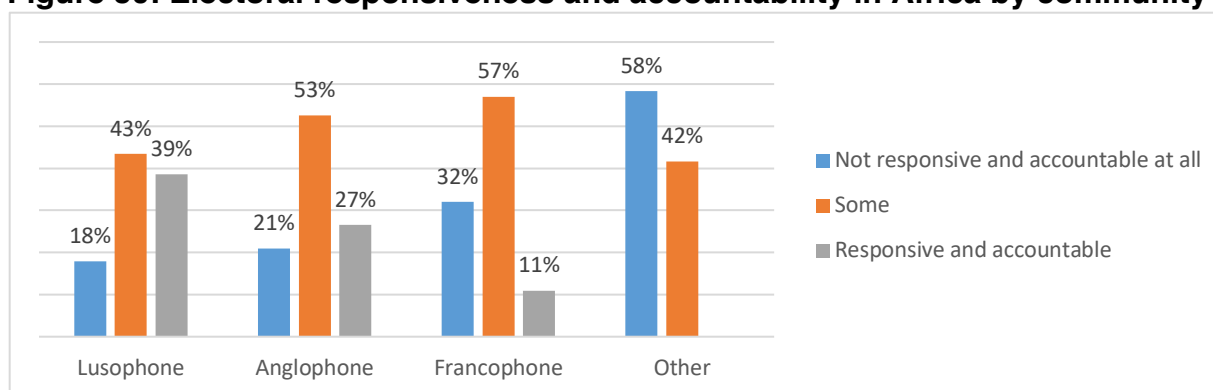
Southern Africa and West Africa tend to have more electoral responsiveness and accountability than other regions (Figure 29); and the same applies to Lusophone and Anglophone communities compared Francophone community (Figure 30).

¹⁴ The *electoral component index* “is operationalized as a chain defined by its weakest link of freedom of association, suffrage, clean elections, and elected executive” (Coppedge et al. 2020).

Figure 28: Electoral responsiveness and accountability in Africa by polity



'Not responsive and accountable at all' range from 0 to .33; 'some' responsiveness and accountability .34 to .67; and 'responsive and accountable' .68 to 1.

Figure 29: Electoral responsiveness and accountability in Africa by region**Figure 30: Electoral responsiveness and accountability in Africa by community**

Freedom of expression and alternative sources of information index

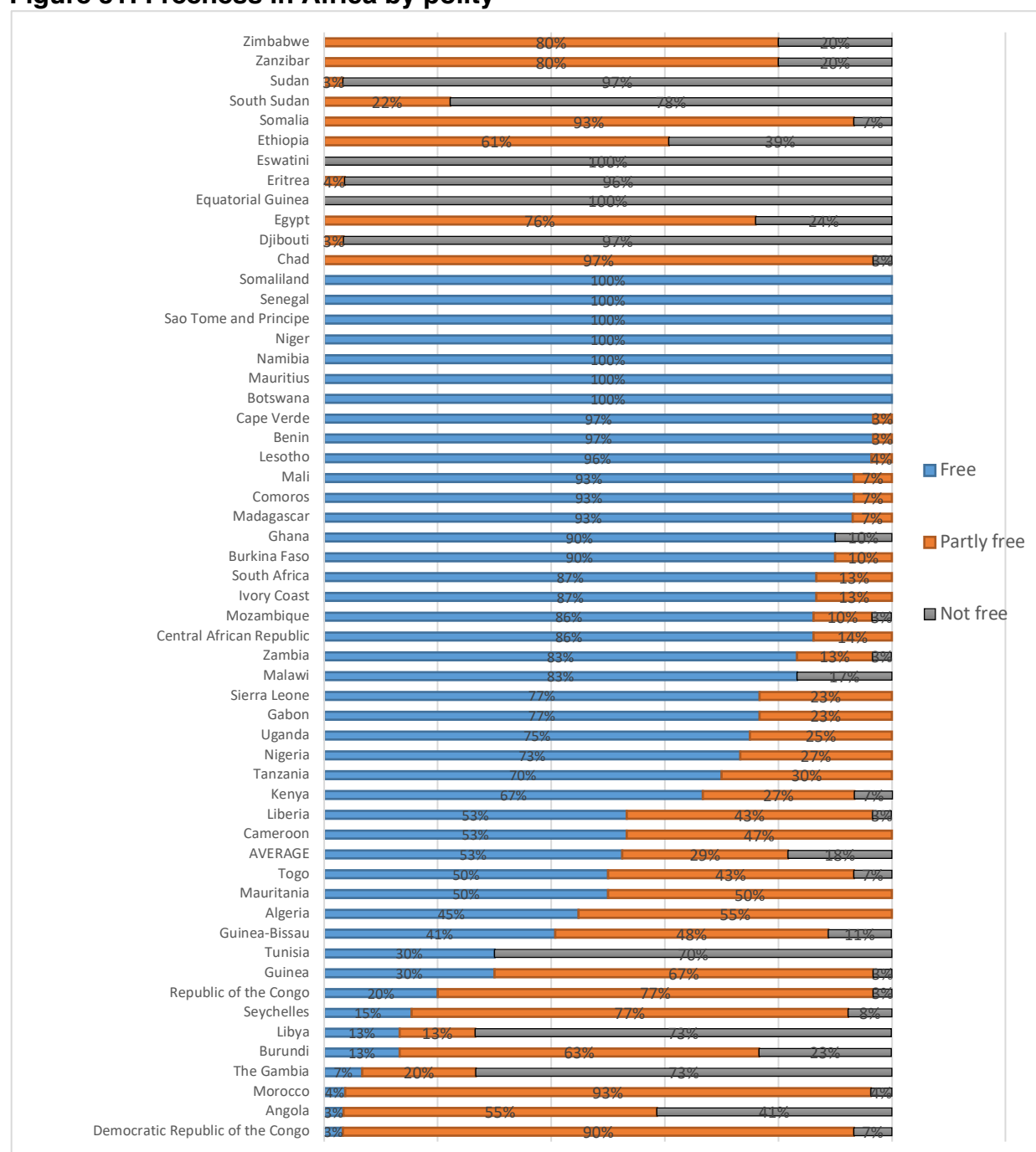
To hold policy makers to account and develop transparent institutions, citizens in polities have to air their views freely. There is no demand to account if there is no freedom of expression. They also have to have alternative sources of information that are relatively free from the state. *Freedom of expression and alternative sources of information* is measured by the V-Dem question: “To what extent does government respect press and media freedom, the freedom of ordinary people to discuss political matters at home and in the public sphere, as well as the freedom of academic and cultural expression?”¹⁵

Delivery of freedom is something that Africans have to make effort on. After liberating themselves from colonialisation and most of them embracing formally democracy in 1990s, in practice, only a majority of 53 percent of African polities are free – that is, their governments respect press and media freedom, the freedom of ordinary people to

¹⁵ It is an index “formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators for media censorship effort, harassment of journalists, media bias, media self-censorship, print/broadcast media critical, and print/broadcast media perspectives, freedom of discussion for men/women, and freedom of academic and cultural expression” (Coppedge et al. 2020:45).

discuss political matters at home and in the public sphere, as well as the freedom of academic and cultural expression. About 29 percent are partly free; and 18 percent are not free.

Figure 31: Freeness in Africa by polity



'Not free' range from 0 to .33; 'partly free' .34 to .67; and 'free' .68 to 1. Data sorted by 'free' category of freedom of expression and alternative sources of information index.

Freedoms are likely to be found in Mauritius, Botswana, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal and Somaliland. But unlikely to be found in Equatorial Guinea and Eswatini (Figure 31). Among regions, West Africa and Southern Africa tend more to be free, North Africa is likely to not be free (Figure 32).

With respect to community (Figure 33), Lusophone and Anglophone communities tend more to be free than the Francophone community.

Figure 32: Freedom of expression and alternative sources of information in Africa by region

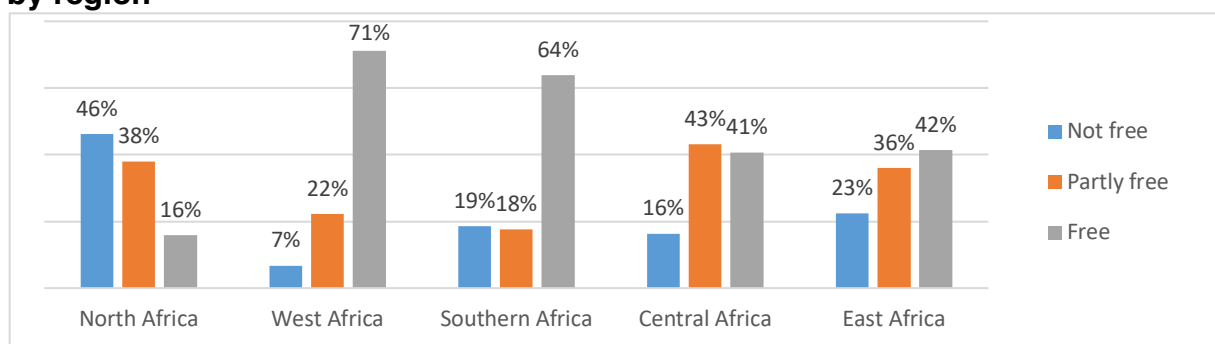
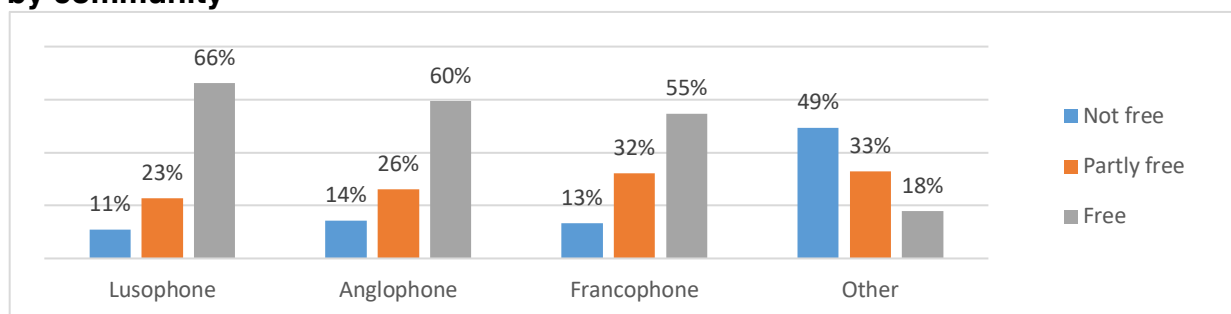


Figure 33: Freedom of expression and alternative sources of information in Africa by community

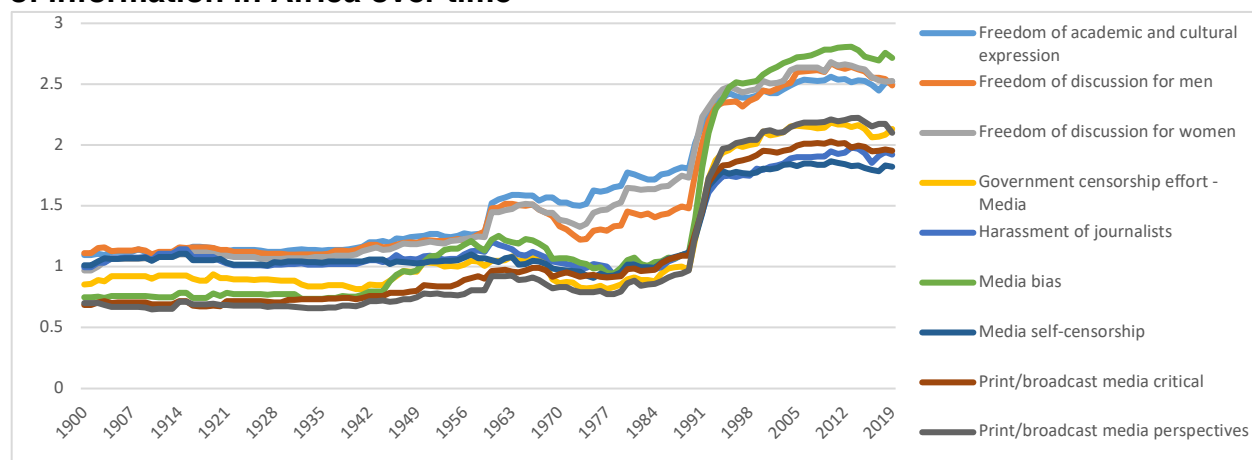


Which aspect of freedom is low and/or changing?

The level of freedom of expression and alternative sources of information in Africa is mainly associated with media self-censorship, media critical, harassment of journalists, government censorship effort of media, and media perspectives.

There is 'little/no' self-censorship among journalists when reporting on issues that the government considers politically sensitive; there are 'few/none' of the major print and broadcast outlets that routinely criticise the government; 'some' journalists are harassed by governmental or powerful nongovernmental actors while engaged in legitimate journalistic activities; there is 'direct and routine' attempt to censor the print or broadcast media by the government; and 'only government perspectives' are represented in the major print and broadcast media (Figure 34).

Figure 34: Variations of aspects of freedom of expression and alternative sources of information in Africa over time



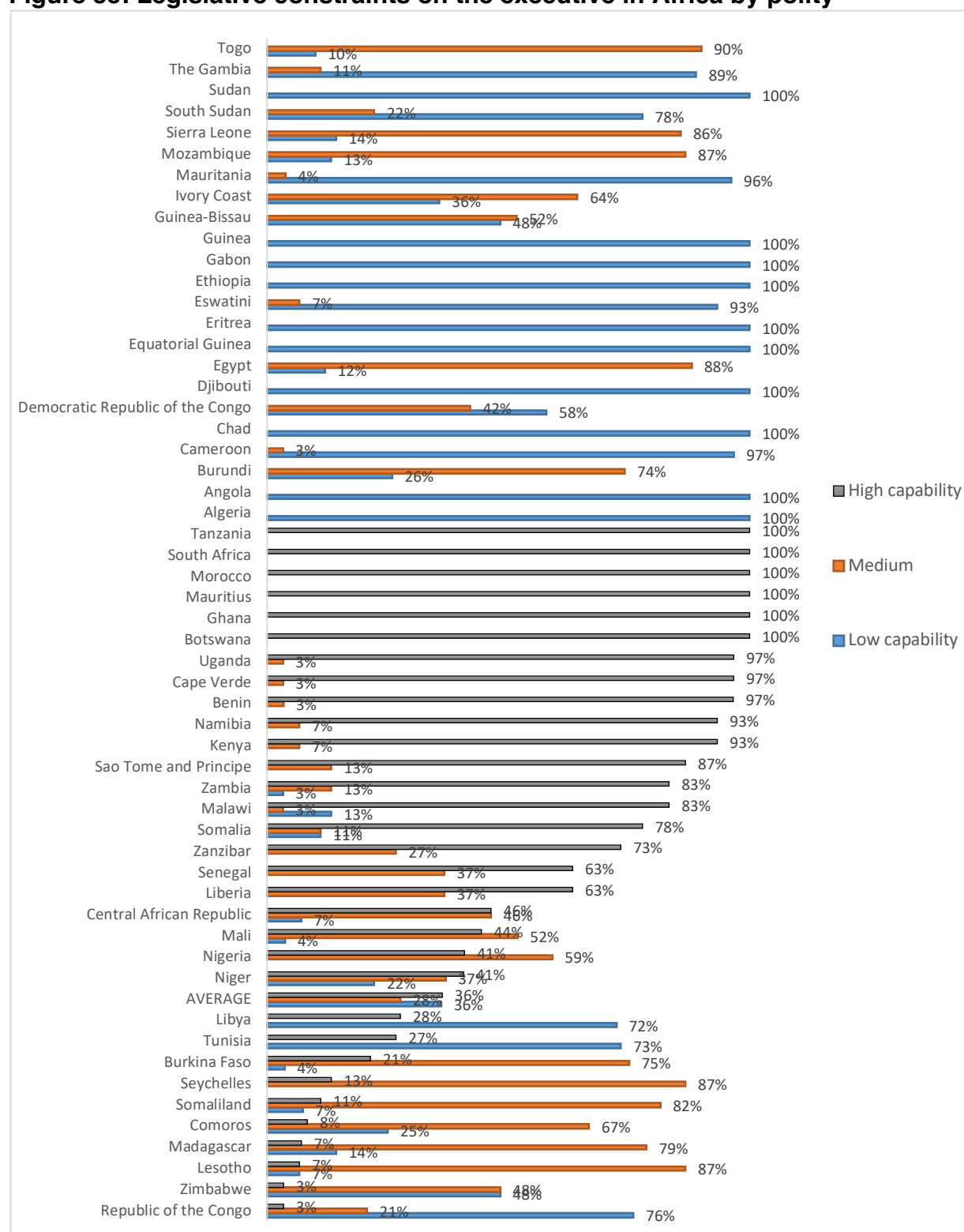
Legislative constraints on the executive index

To develop accountable transparent institutions polities have to have capable legislatures – that is, legislatures that can constrain the executive by questioning and investigating it. *Legislative constraints on the executive* is indicated by the V-Dem question: “To what extent are the legislature and government agencies *e.g.* comptroller general, general prosecutor, or ombudsman capable of questioning, investigating, and exercising oversight over the executive?”¹⁶

The capability of the legislature to question, investigate and exercise oversight over the executive in Africa is minimal. Only 18 percent of African polities have legislature with ‘high’ capability over the executive; 32 percent have ‘medium’ and about half (50 percent) have ‘low’ capability (Figure 35).

Among those with high capability, Mauritius, Botswana and Cape Verde lead ahead; and among those with low lead ahead Sudan, Guinea, Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, Djibouti, Chad, Angola, the Gambia, Mauritania, Eswatini, and Cameroon.

¹⁶ It is a composite index “formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators for legislature questions officials in practice, executive oversight, legislature investigates in practice, and legislature opposition parties” (Coppedge et al. 2020:49).

Figure 35: Legislative constraints on the executive in Africa by polity

'Low' capability range from 0 to .33; 'medium' .34 to .67; and 'high' .68 to 1. Data sorted by 'high' capability category of legislative constraints on the executive index.

East Africa is likely to have 'high' capability of the legislature over the executive while Central Africa is likely to have 'low' capability (Figure 36).

Moving to community, 'high' capability of the legislature over the executive tends to be in Anglophone and Lusophone communities. The Francophone community tends more to have 'low' capability (Figure 37).

Figure 36: Legislative constraints on the executive in Africa by region

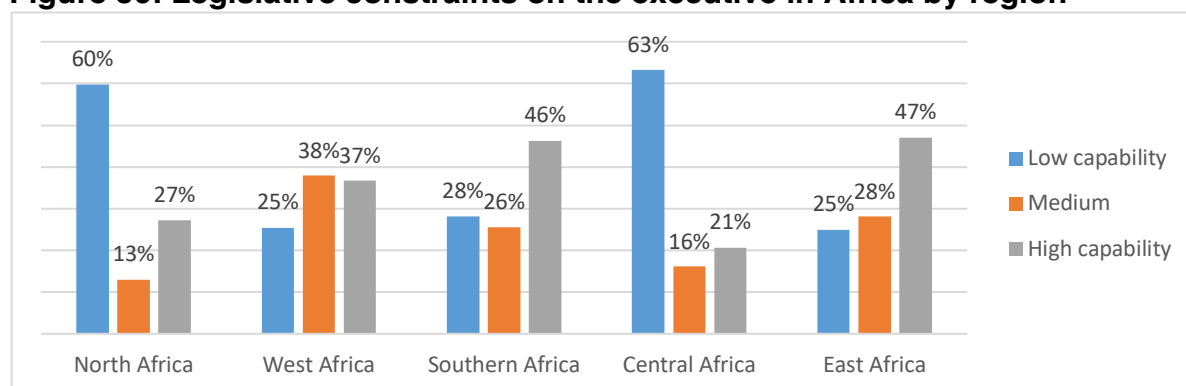
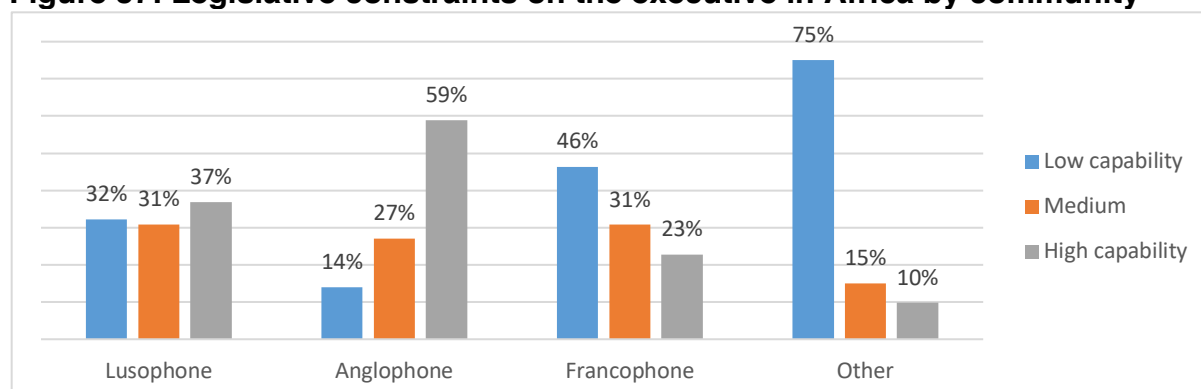


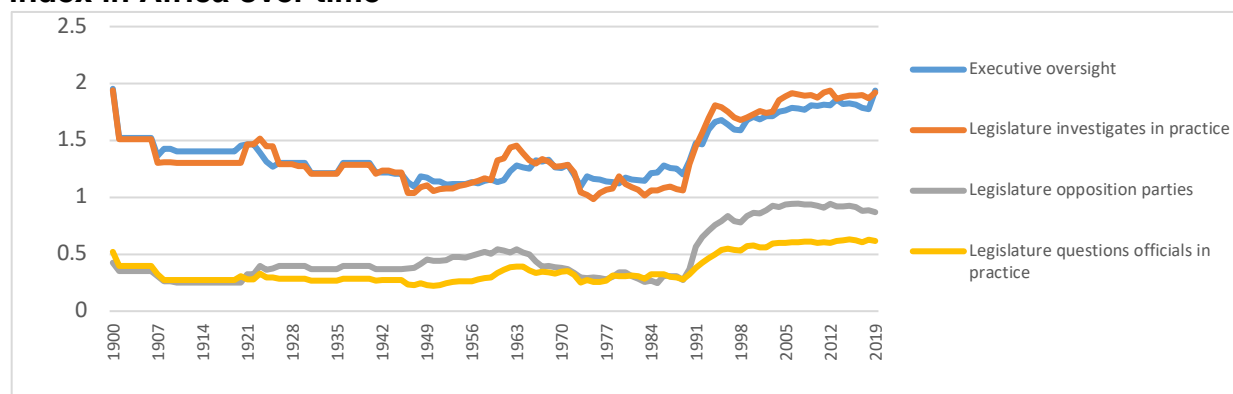
Figure 37: Legislative constraints on the executive in Africa by community



Which aspect of legislative constraints on the executive is low and/or changing?

The legislative constraints on the executive index is low in Africa. This is due to both low levels of the legislature to question officials from the executive and low levels of questioning from the legislature opposition parties, although the level of the second improved from the early 1990s (Figure 38). Other indicators of legislative constraints on the executive improved in the last years, mainly from 2018 to 2019.

Figure 38: Contributions of aspects of legislative constraints on the executive index in Africa over time



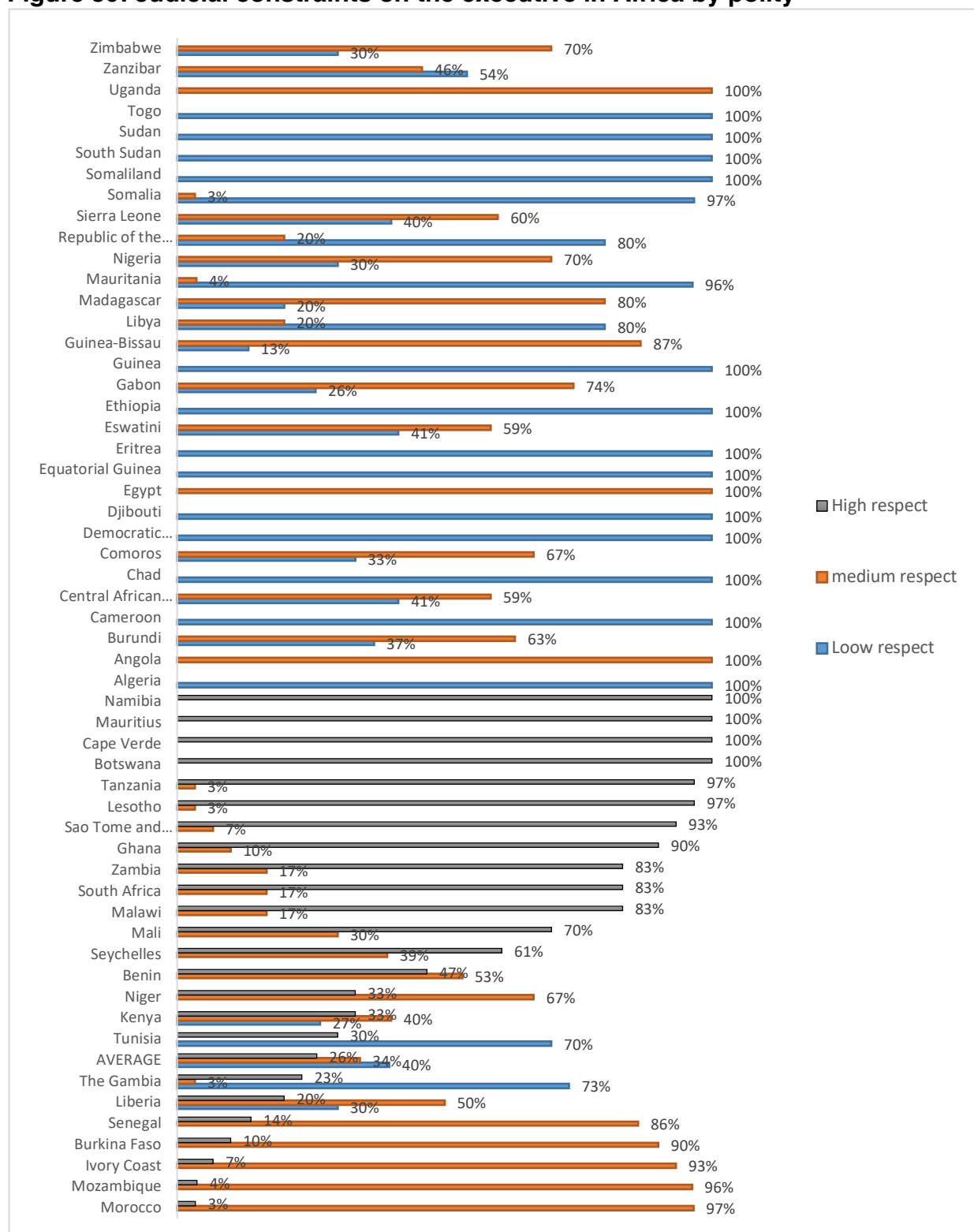
Judicial constraints on the executive index

Developing accountable institutions also requires that the judiciary constrains the executive by ensuring that the executive respects the constitution, complies with the judiciary and the court system and the judiciary is independent. *Judicial constraints on the executive* is measured by the V-Dem question: “To what extent does the executive respect the constitution and comply with court rulings, and to what extent is the judiciary able to act in an independent fashion?”¹⁷

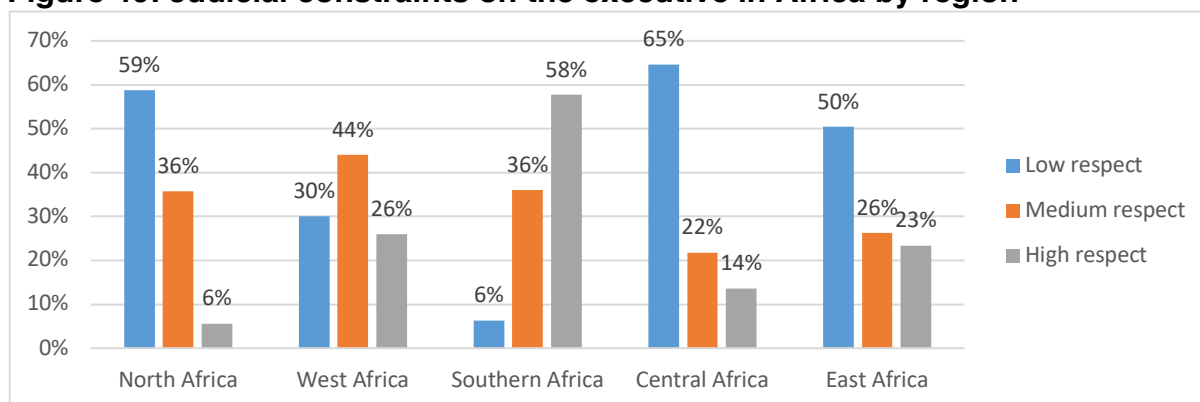
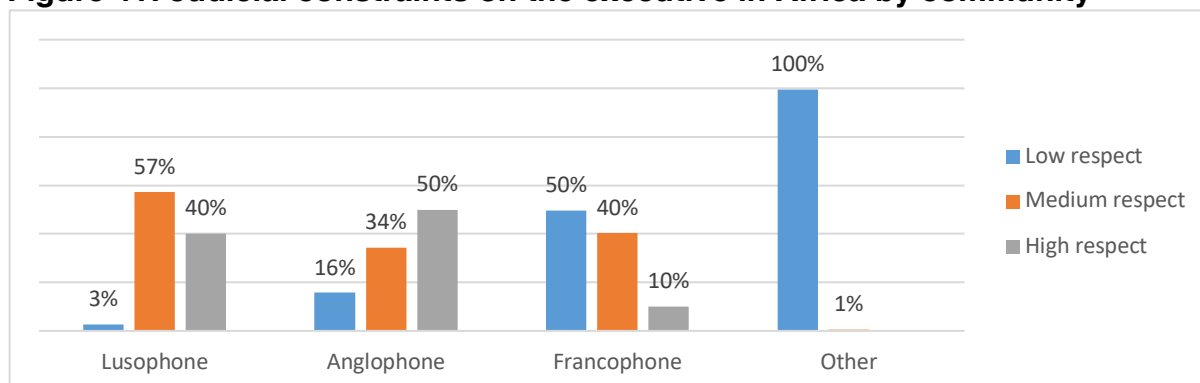
Judicial constraints on the executive is low in Africa. Only 14 percent of the continent have ‘high’ respect to the constitution, comply with the court rulings and the judiciary is able to act in an independent fashion. The majority of African countries have ‘medium’ (40 percent) or ‘low’ (46 percent) respect. Botswana and Lesotho are at the top with ‘high’ levels of judicial respect on the executive. Politics that are worse on judicial constraints on the executive are: Togo, South Sudan, Guinea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Chad, Algeria (Figure 39).

Southern Africa tends more to have judiciary constraints on the executive. But North Africa and Central Africa regions are likely to have ‘low’ respect to the constitution, compliance with the court rulings and the judiciary that is able to act in an independent fashion (Figure 40). On community, judicial constraints on the executive is likely to be found among Anglophone and Lusophone communities (Figure 41).

¹⁷ It is an aggregated index “formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators for executive respects constitution, compliance with judiciary, compliance with high court, high court independence, and lower court independence (Coppedge et al. 2020:49).

Figure 39: Judicial constraints on the executive in Africa by polity

'Low' respect range from 0 to .33; 'medium' .34 to .67; and 'high' .68 to 1. Data sorted by 'high' respect category of judicial constraints on the executive index.

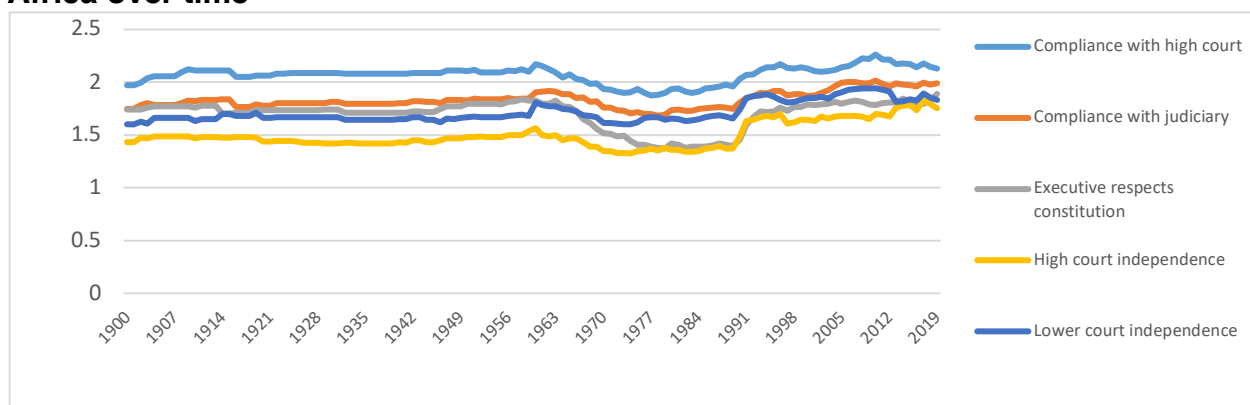
Figure 40: Judicial constraints on the executive in Africa by region**Figure 41: Judicial constraints on the executive in Africa by community**

Which aspect of judicial constraints on the executive is low and/or changing?

The level of judicial constraints on the executive is low in Africa mainly because the high court tends to be of low independence; the members of the executive tend to violate the constitution; and most recently from early 2010s, the lower courts tend to be of low independence. Compliance with the high court tends to be high but it appears that it has been losing momentum from early 2010s.

In 2019, regardless of its level, the data shows that compliance with the high court, and the independence of high and lower courts declined while executive respect of the constitution increased (Figure 42).

Figure 42: Contribution of aspects of judicial constraints on the executive index in Africa over time



SDG16.7 - ENSURE RESPONSIVE, INCLUSIVE, AND REPRESENTATIVE DECISION-MAKING

The SDG16.7 target: “**Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels**” can be tracked by assessing the extent to which the participatory and deliberative principles of democracy are met in polities as well as political power is distributed by social groups.

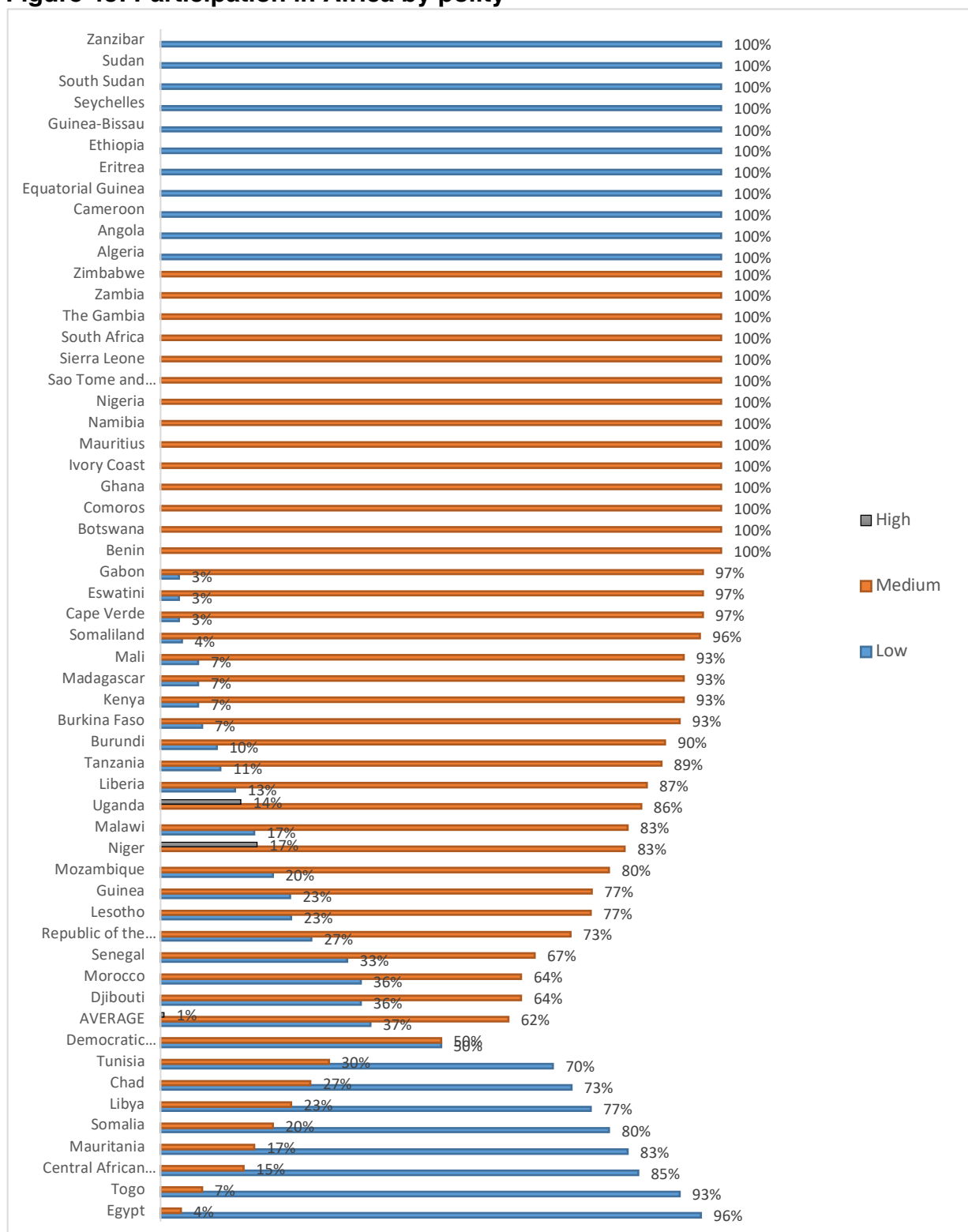
Participatory component index

Participatory component is measured by the question: “To what extent is the ideal of participatory democracy achieved?”

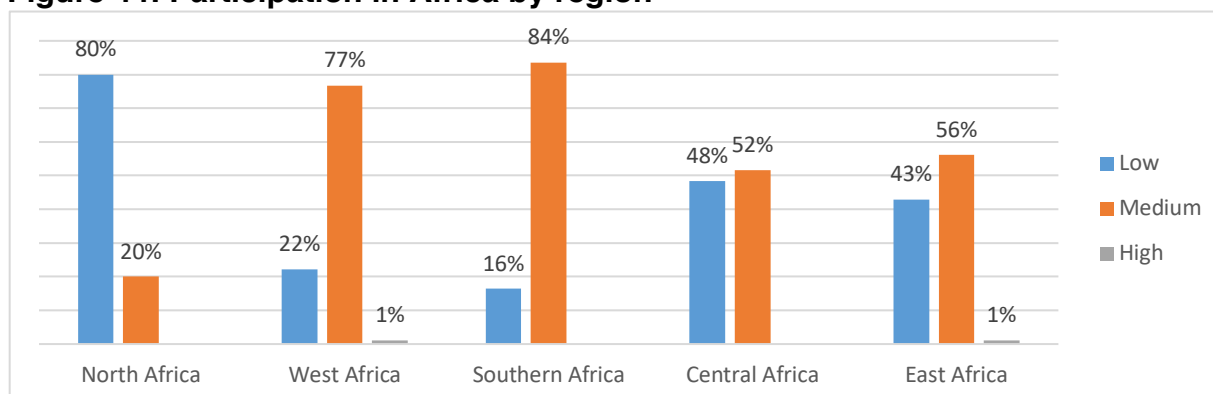
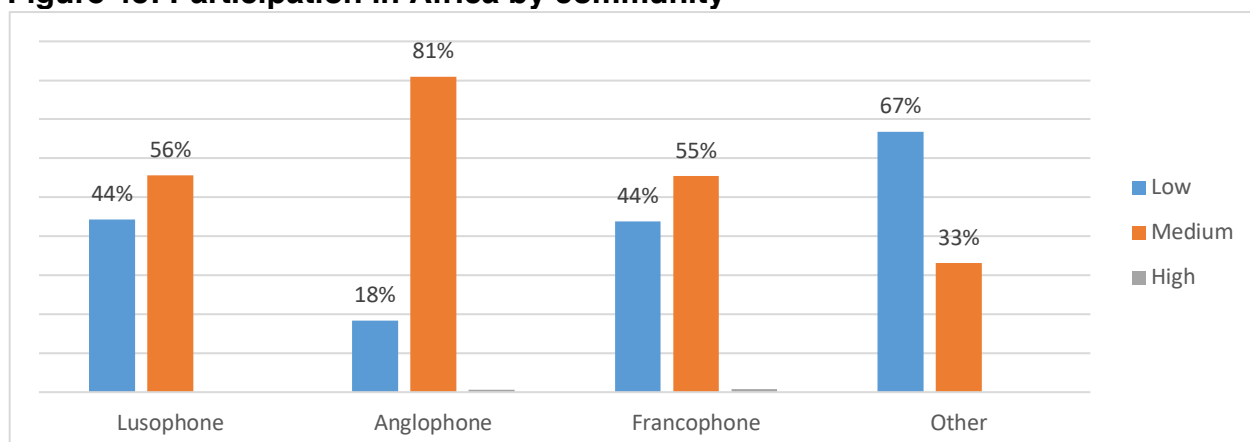
“The participatory principle of democracy emphasizes active participation by citizens in all political processes, electoral and non-electoral. It is motivated by uneasiness about a bedrock practice of electoral democracy: delegating authority to representatives. Thus, direct rule by citizens is preferred, wherever practicable. This model of democracy thus takes suffrage for granted, emphasizing engagement in civil society organizations, direct democracy, and subnational elected bodies. To make it a measure of participatory democracy, the index also takes the level of electoral democracy into account” (Coppedge *et al.* 2020).

Africa has an insignificant level (1 percent) of ‘high’ participation in civil society organisations, direct democracy, and subnational elected bodies like local and regional governments. The majority of African polities (62 percent) have only medium level and over a third (37 percent) have ‘low’ level of participation of citizens in political processes (Figure 43). Of the 55 polities assessed, 14 are rated fully with ‘medium’ and 11 ‘low’ participation levels.

Regional assessment reveals that participation in the political process is much worse in North Africa and Central Africa (Figure 44) while community analysis show that political participation is much worse both in Lusophone and Francophone communities (Figure 45).

Figure 43: Participation in Africa by polity

'Low' range from 0 to .33; 'medium' .34 to .67; and 'high' .68 to 1. Data sorted by 'medium category of participatory component index.

Figure 44: Participation in Africa by region**Figure 45: Participation in Africa by community**

Which aspect of the participatory component is low and/or changing?

The *participatory component index* is composed of four indices: *civil society participation index*; *direct popular vote index*; *local government index*; and *regional government index* (Figure 45). Of these, contributing the most towards the low level of the participatory component index is the direct popular vote followed by regional government. Direct democracy through referendums and plebiscites are not common in the African continent. Most (if not all) public issues tend to be deliberated by representatives in the legislature and or the executive. It is unlikely that African polities allow their citizens to decide themselves on certain key issues.

The low level of participatory component in the continent is also accounted for by participation in regional government elections. Citizens from South Africa and Mozambique, for instance, participate in the regional government, as provincial governors¹⁸ are elected by the people. But Mozambicans only started participating in

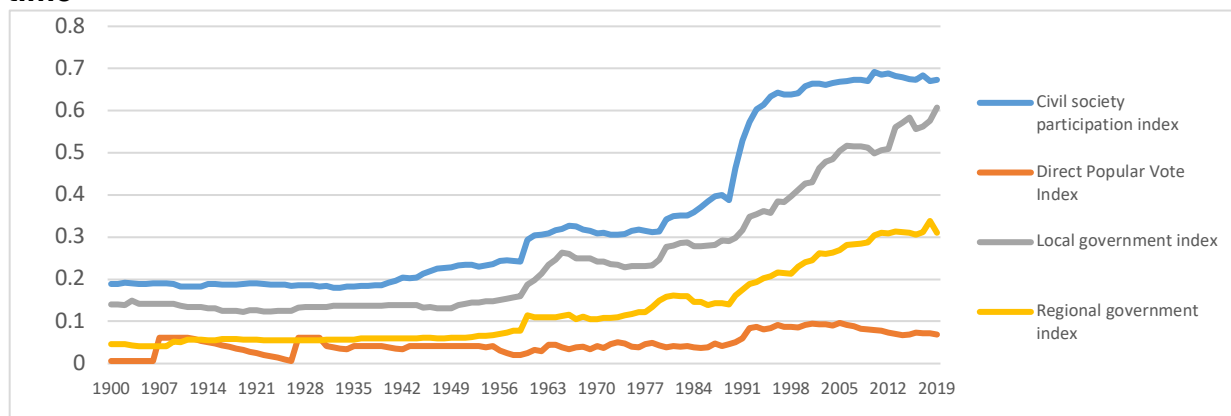
¹⁸ Premiers in South Africa.

provincial government since 2019. Nonetheless, the levels of participation in regional government in Africa is low. The increase in the regional government index suggests that more African polities are commencing to decentralise power at the regional level allowing their citizens to participate more in government. But regional government participation declined in 2019.

On the other hand, civil society participation in Africa is relatively high. This suggests that major civil society organisations (CSOs) tend to be consulted by policy makers, the involvement of the people in CSOs tends to be high, women tend to not be prevented from participating, and legislative candidate nominations within party organisations tend to be decentralised or made through party primaries. After improving in the mid-1990s and early 2010s it seems that civil society participation stayed about the same.

Nonetheless, local government has not only increased but it is continuing increasing. Africans are being allowed to participate in local government as their leaders have been increasingly decentralising power to local municipal level through competitive local elections.

Figure 45: Contribution of aspects of participatory component index in Africa over time



Deliberative component index

Deliberative component is a composite index indicated by the V-Dem question: “To what extent is the deliberative principle of democracy achieved?”¹⁹ As V-Dem clarifies:

“the deliberative principle of democracy focuses on the process by which decisions are reached in a polity. A deliberative process is one in which public reasoning

¹⁹ The index is formed by point estimates drawn from a Bayesian factor analysis model including the following indicators: *reasoned justification*, *common good justification*, *respect for counterarguments*, *range of consultation*, and *engaged society*” (Coppedge et al. (2020:53).

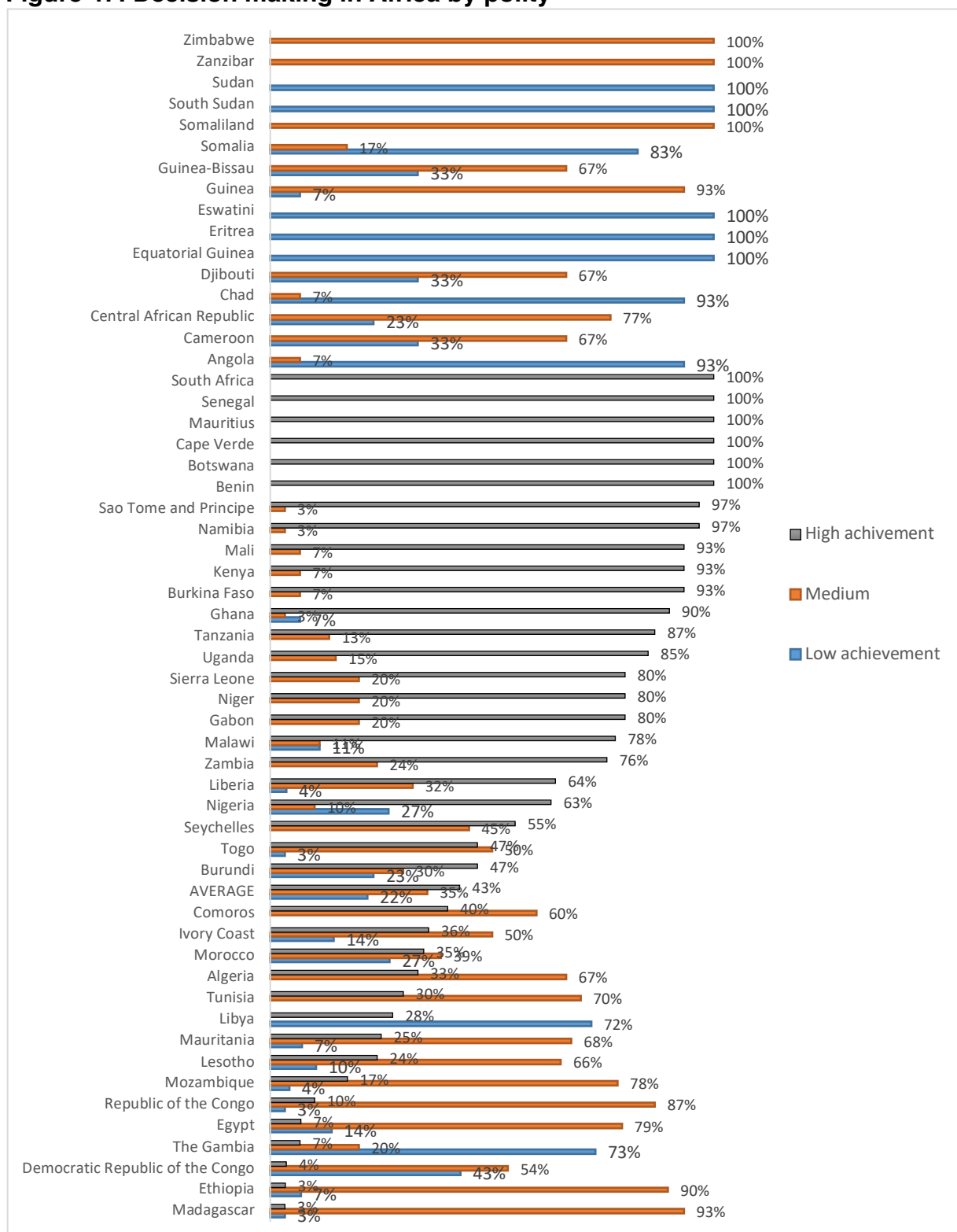
focused on the common good motivates political decisions—as contrasted with emotional appeals, solidary attachments, parochial interests, or coercion. According to this principle, democracy requires more than an aggregation of existing preferences. There should also be respectful dialogue at all levels—from preference formation to final decision—among informed and competent participants who are open to persuasion. To measure these features of a polity we try to determine the extent to which political elites give public justifications for their positions on matters of public policy, justify their positions in terms of the public good, acknowledge and respect counter-arguments; and how wide the range of consultation is at elite levels” (Coppedge *et al.* 2020:53).

The deliberative principle of democracy in Africa is concerning. Below the 50 percent midpoint (43 percent) of African polities achieve deliberation at a ‘high’ level; 35 percent at ‘medium’; and 22 percent at a ‘low’ level. Polities that fully tend to achieve deliberation at ‘low’ levels include: Sudan, South Sudan, Eswatini, Eritrea and Equatorial Guinea while polities that completely tend to achieve deliberation at a high level are: South Africa, Senegal, Mauritius, Cape Verde, Botswana and Benin (Figure 47).

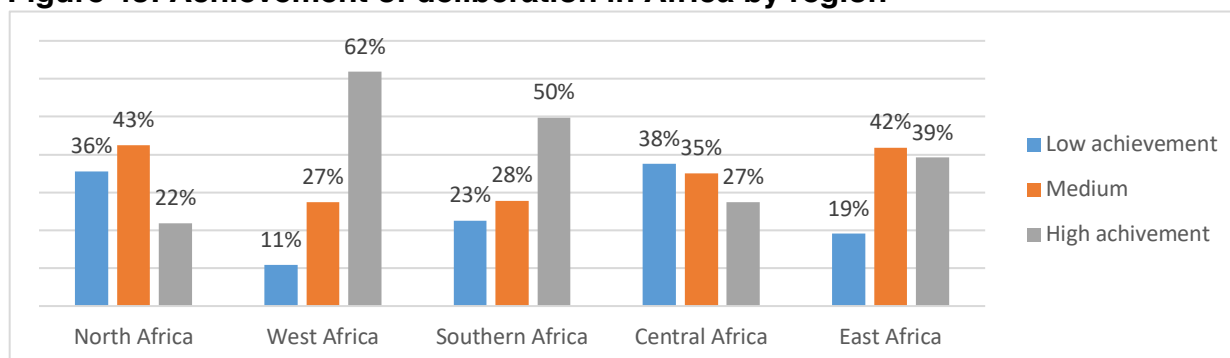
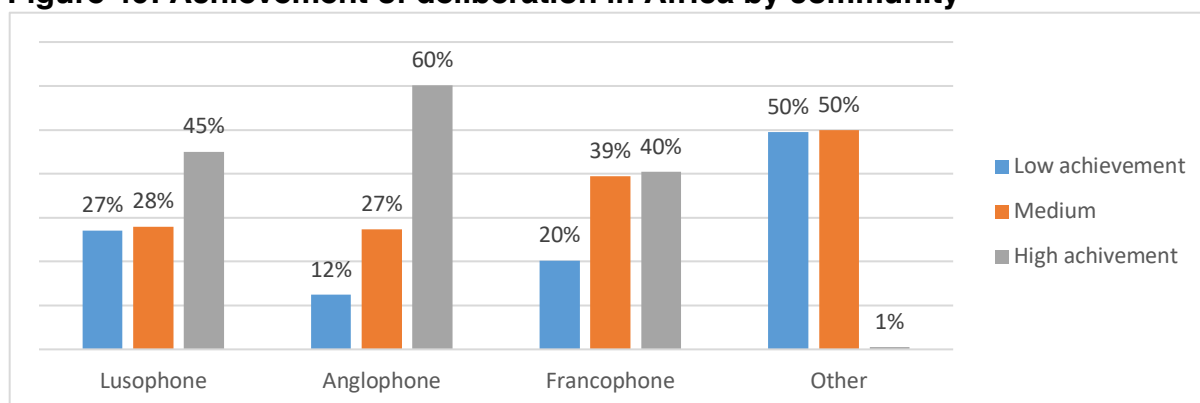
Achievement of deliberation appears to be ‘high’ in West Africa and Southern Africa; and low in Central Africa and North Africa (Figure 48).

On community, deliberation tends to be achieved highly in the Anglophone community (Figure 49).

Figure 47: Decision making in Africa by polity



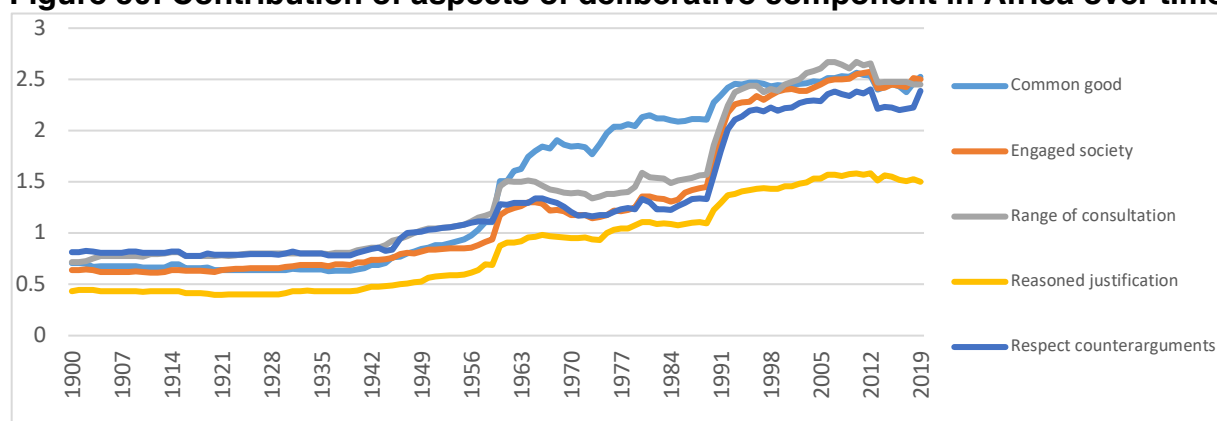
'Low' achievement range from 0 to .33; 'medium' .34 to .67; and 'high' .68 to 1. Data sorted by 'high' achievement category of deliberative principle of democracy index.

Figure 48: Achievement of deliberation in Africa by region**Figure 49: Achievement of deliberation in Africa by community**

Which aspect of deliberative component is low and/or changing?

Among the indicators of deliberative component, reasoned justification contributes less to it. This suggests that when important policy changes are being considered (*i.e.* before a decision has been made) political elites tend to give 'no/inferior' public and reasoned justifications for their positions. With exception to reasoned justification, all other indicators of the deliberative component tend to be high and stick together with the same trend over time. They declined in 2013 but with respect to counterarguments when policy changes are being considered they improved in 2019 (Figure 50).

That reasoned justification contributes less to the deliberative component suggests that the legislature opposition parties, civil society and media have to be better trained to demand accountability from the executive policy makers.

Figure 50: Contribution of aspects of deliberative component in Africa over time

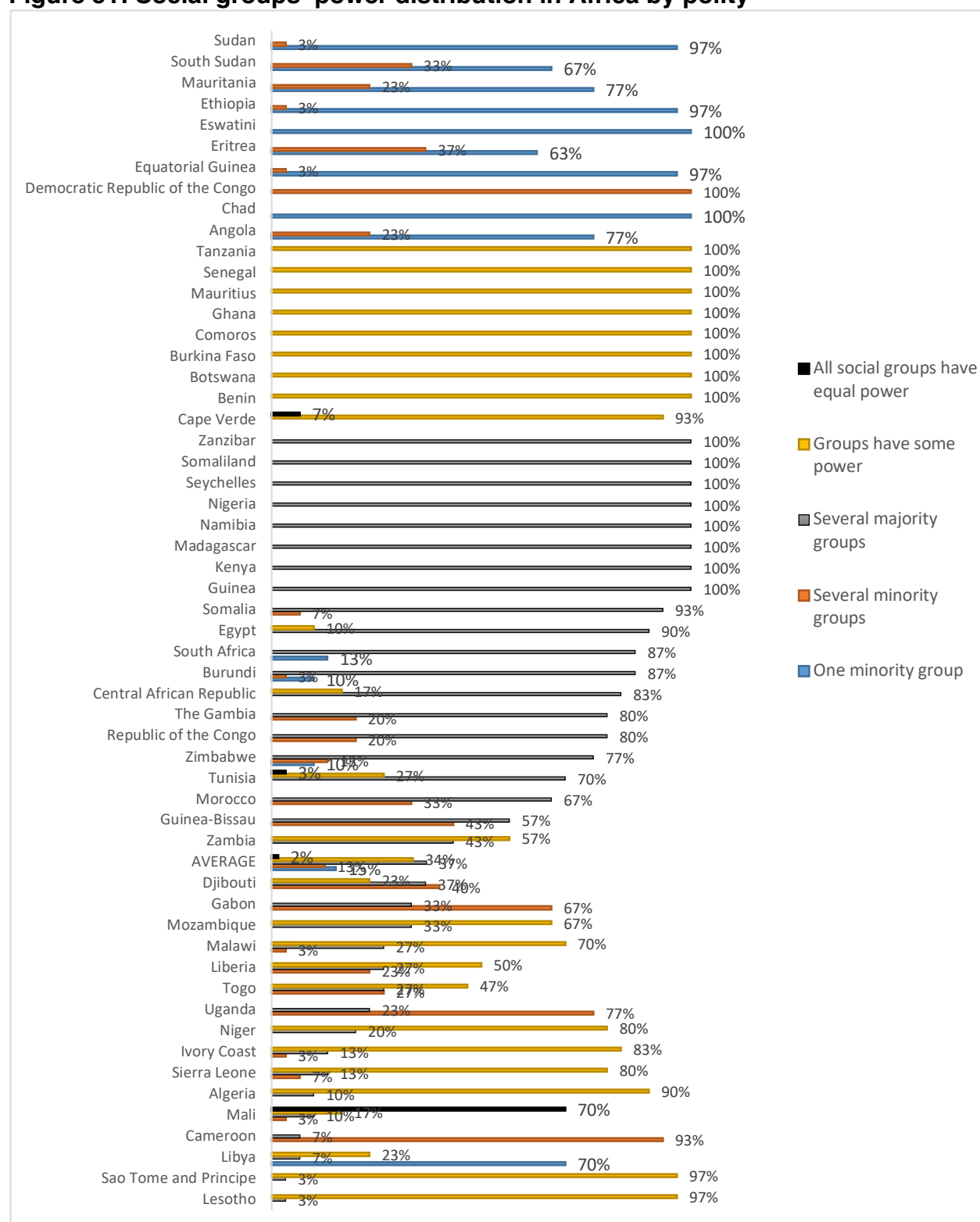
Power distributed by social groups

Power distributed by social groups is measured by the question: “Is political power distributed according to social groups?”²⁰ Sharing power by social groups is an issue in Africa. Only an insignificant percentage (3 percent) of all social groups have roughly equal political power, with Mali accounting with 70 percent of this level. About 15 percent of political power in Africa is monopolised by one social group comprising a minority of the population; and 13 percent by several social groups comprising also a minority of the population.

However about one third (37 percent) of political power in the continent is monopolised by several social groups comprising a majority of the population; and in another third (34 percent) either all social groups possess some political power, with some groups having more power than others; or different social groups alternating in power, with one group controlling much of the political power for a period of time, followed by another — but all significant groups have a turn at the seat of power (Figure 51).

²⁰ The V-Dem clarifies that “a social group is differentiated within a country by caste, ethnicity, language, race, region, religion, or some combination thereof. (It does *not* include identities grounded in sexual orientation or socioeconomic status.) Social group identity is contextually defined and is likely to vary across countries and through time. Social group identities are also likely to cross-cut, so that a given person could be defined in multiple ways, *i.e.*, as part of multiple groups. Nonetheless, at any given point in time there are social groups within a society that are understood — by those residing within that society — to be different, in ways that may be politically relevant”.

Figure 51: Social groups' power distribution in Africa by polity



Data sorted by the category 'several majority groups'

Power sharing by social groups tends to be worse in North Africa and Central Africa (Figure 52); and with respect to community, in Francophone and Lusophone African communities (Figure 53).

Figure 52: Social groups power distribution in Africa by region

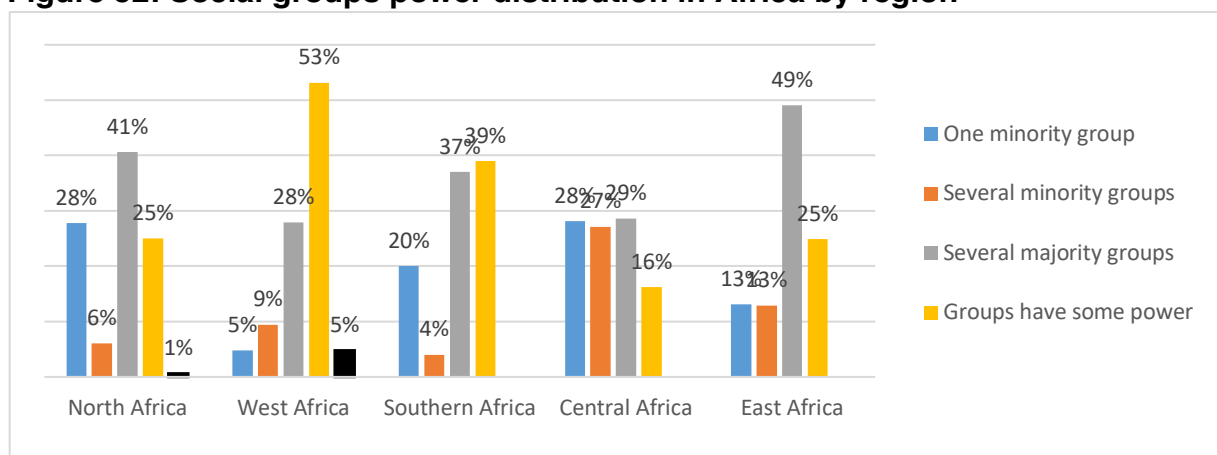
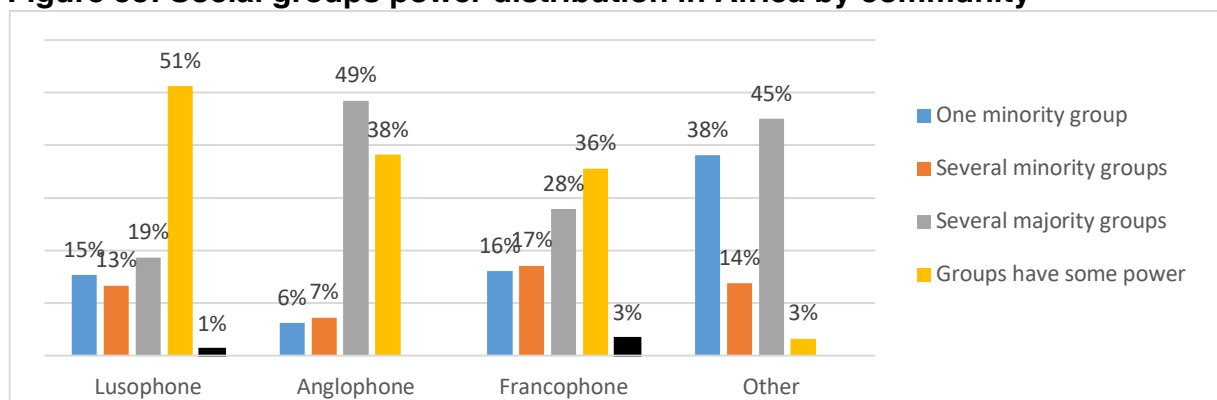


Figure 53: Social groups power distribution in Africa by community



SDG16.10 - ENSURE PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PROTECT FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Ensuring access to information

One way of achieving the SDG16.10 target of “**public access to information**” is by providing alternative sources of information that are relatively free and/or independent from the state and its agencies. This report measures *alternative sources of information* by the question: “To what extent is the media (a) un-biased in their coverage or lack of coverage of the opposition, (b) allowed to be critical of the regime, and (c) representative of a wide array of political perspectives?”²¹

Besides the existence of alternative sources of information, ensuring public access to information also requires that governments do not attempt to censor media work. *Government censorship effort media* is measured by the question: “Does the government directly or indirectly attempt to censor the print or broadcast media?”²²

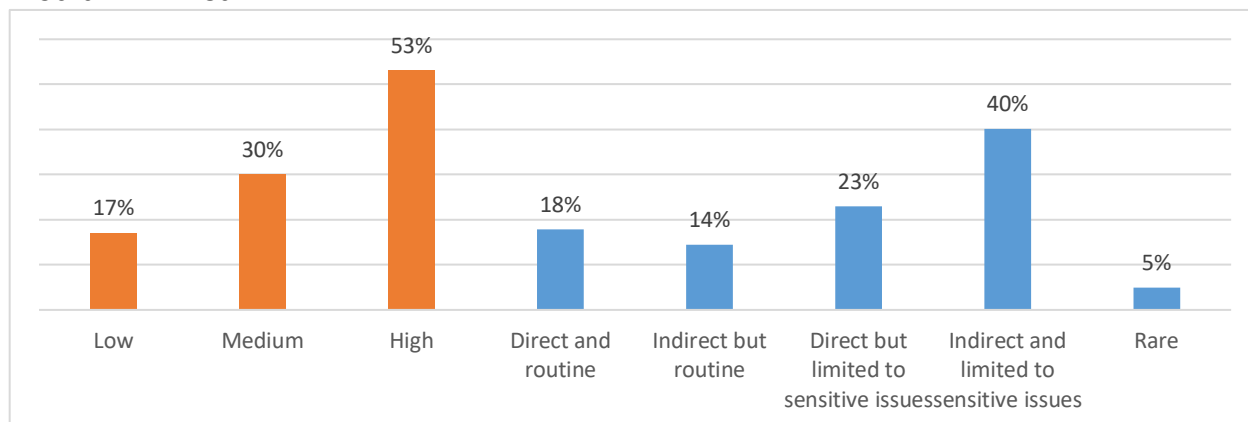
Figure 54 presents data both on alternative sources of information (orange) and government censorship effort-media (blue). The alternative sources of information in African countries are above the mid-point but it still remains low. The majority (53 percent) of African polities present ‘high’ levels for media to be un-biased, critical of the regime and representative of wide array of political perspectives. This level is accounted for mainly by West Africa followed by Central Africa and Southern Africa; and in terms of community by the Lusophone Africa community followed by Francophone.

But government censorship of the media to sensitive issues is concerning. The majority (63 percent) of African polities tend to have governments that attempts to censor media directly or indirectly to sensitive issues. Government media censorship tends to be more serious for the Lusophone community and in West Africa region.

²¹ It is an index “formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators for media bias, print/broadcast media critical, and print/broadcast media perspectives (Coppedge et al 2020).

²² V-Dem clarifies that: “Indirect forms of censorship might include politically motivated awarding of broadcast frequencies, withdrawal of financial support, influence over printing facilities and distribution networks, selected distribution of advertising, onerous registration requirements, prohibitive tariffs, and bribery”.

Figure 54: Alternative sources of information and government censorship effort media in Africa



Data on these issues by community and region are not displayed but was considered in the text.

Protecting fundamental freedoms

Protection of fundamental freedoms can be assessed by *freedom of expression*, which is measured by the question: “To what extent does government respect press and media freedom, the freedom of ordinary people to discuss political matters at home and in the public sphere, as well as the freedom of academic and cultural expression?”²³

The freedom of expression is low in Africa. Only about 46 percent of African polities have a ‘high’ respect to media freedom, of freedom to discuss political matters, and of academic and cultural expression (Figure 55). This level is accounted for mainly by West Africa and Southern Africa regions (Figure 56) and Lusophone and Anglophone communities (Figure 57).

²³ It is an index “formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the indicators for print/broadcast censorship effort, harassment of journalists, media self-censorship, freedom of discussion for men/women and freedom of academic and cultural expression” (Coppedge et al 2020).

Figure 55: Freedom of expression in Africa by polity

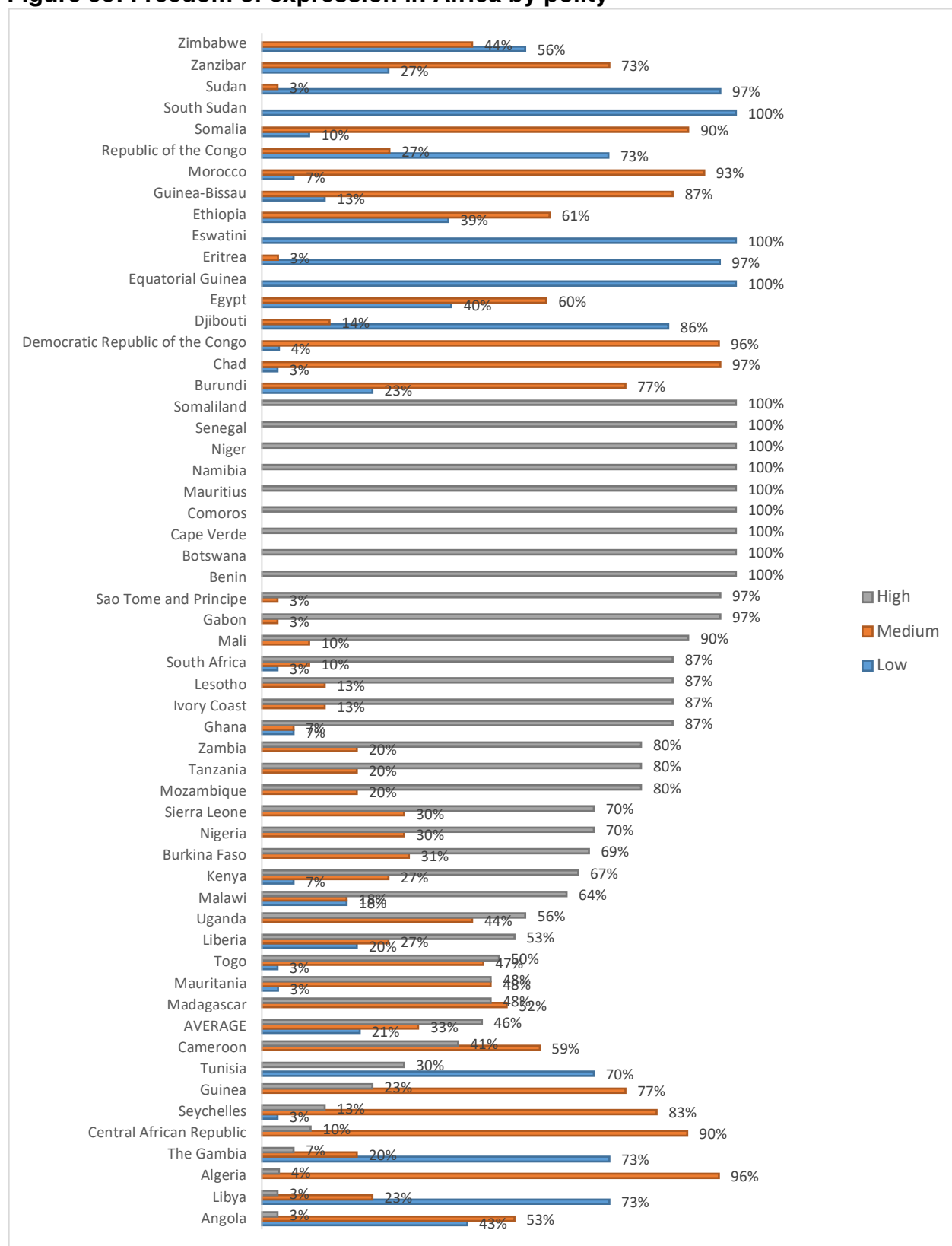
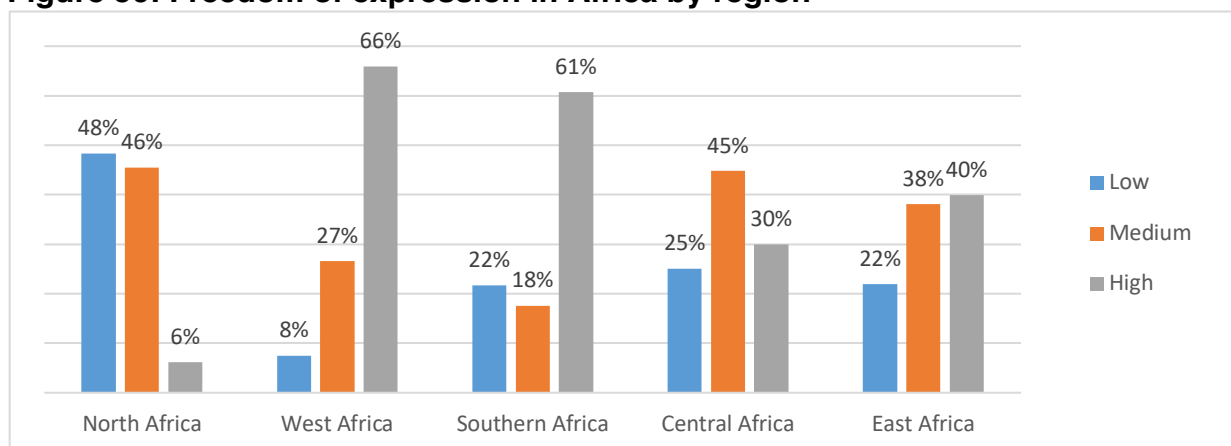
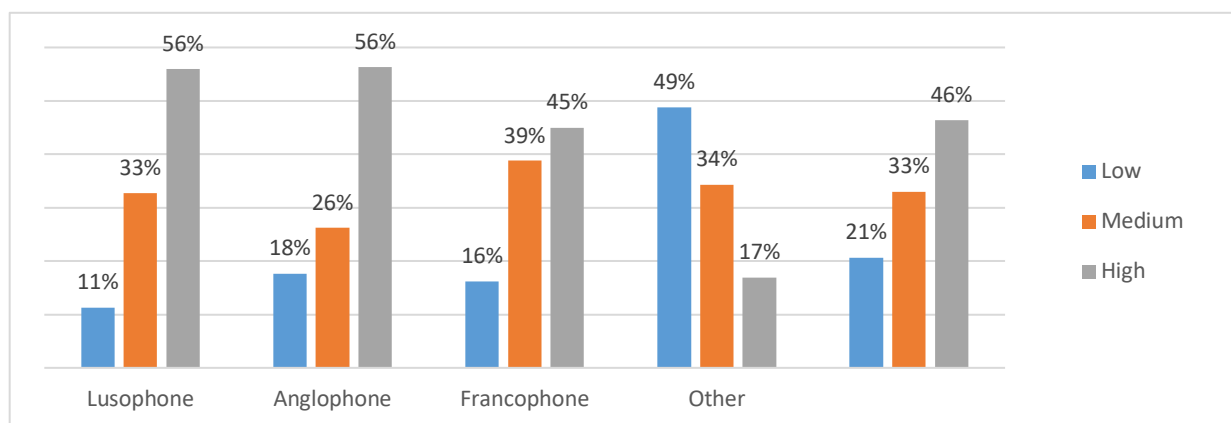


Figure 56: Freedom of expression in Africa by region**Figure 57: Freedom of expression in Africa by community**

SDG16.B - PROMOTE AND ENFORCE NON-DISCRIMINATORY LAWS AND POLICIES

In order to track the SDG16.b target “**Promote and Enforce Non-Discriminatory Laws and Policies for Sustainable Development**”, laws have to be transparent with predictable enforcement; and the need to have educational and health equalities.

Transparent laws with predictable enforcement is measured by the question: “Are the laws of the land clear, well publicised, coherent (consistent with each other), relatively stable from year to year, and enforced in a predictable manner?”²⁴ *Educational equality* by: “To what extent is high quality basic education guaranteed to all, sufficient to enable them to exercise their basic rights as adult citizens?”²⁵ And *Health equality* is measured by the question: “To what extent is high quality basic healthcare guaranteed to all, sufficient to enable them to exercise their basic political rights as adult citizens?”

Figure 58 presents data on transparent laws and predictable enforcement (yellow); educational equality (red); and health equality (blue). There are some limitations in Africa in having laws that are clear, well publicised, consistent with each other, relatively stable from year to year, and enforced in a predictable manner. About 41 percent of African polities have transparency and predictability of laws somewhat limited – that is, the laws of the land are mostly created in a non-arbitrary fashion but enforcement is rather arbitrary in some parts of the country. This limited transparency and predictability of laws is accounted mainly by East Africa, North Africa and even West Africa and Francophone African community. Yet about one-third (33 percent) have transparency and predictability fairly strong. This to say that laws of the land are usually created and enforced in a non-arbitrary fashion. Accounting for this level is mainly the Southern African region and Lusophone and Anglophone communities.

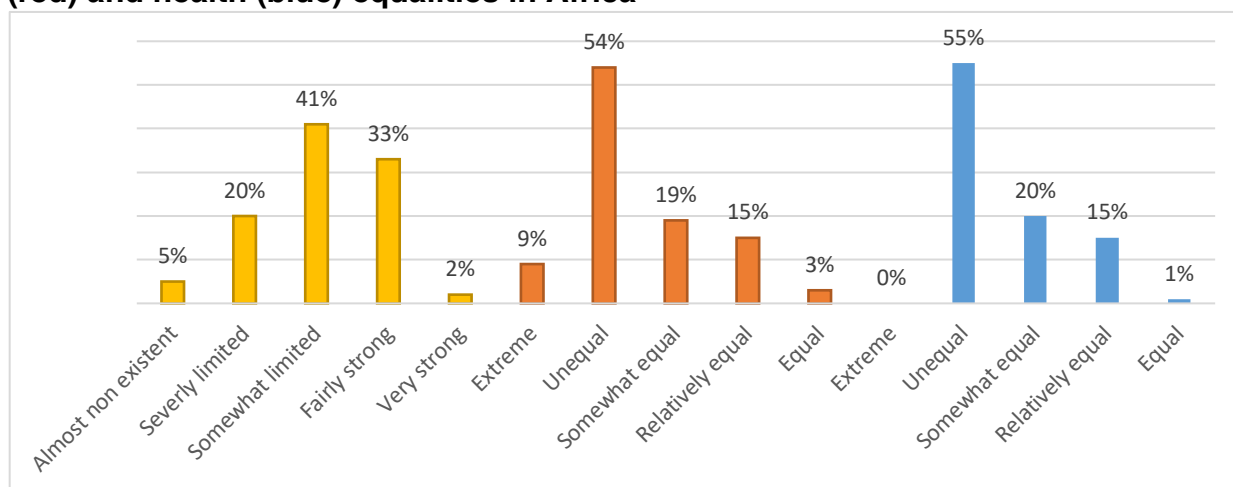
With respect to educational equality, the majority (54 percent) of African polities have unequal educational inequality – that is, the provision of high quality basic education is extremely unequal and at least 25 percent of children receive such low-quality education that it undermines their ability to exercise their basic rights as adult citizens. African regions and communities that, respectively, do well at this category are Western Africa and the Anglophone community.

Educational equality does not differ significantly with health equality. The majority (55 percent) of African polities have unequal health inequalities. Because of poor-quality healthcare, at least 25 percent of citizens’ ability to exercise their political rights as adult citizens is undermined. Observed by region and community, this level is influenced by West Africa and East Africa and the Anglophone community.

²⁴ “This question focuses on the transparency and predictability of the laws of the land”.

²⁵ “Basic education refers to ages typically between 6 and 16 years of age but this varies slightly among countries”.

Figure 58: Transparent laws with predictable enforcement (yellow) and educational (red) and health (blue) equalities in Africa



Data on these issues by community and region are not displayed but was considered in the text.

CONCLUSIONS

Three decades after embracing multiparty democratic practices, mainly in the 1990s, many African polities still face serious challenges to “***promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels***” if they are to achieve SDG 16.

Based on the 2020 V-Dem data (V10), this report found that Africa polities present low levels on:

- respect of freedom from political killings, compromising the achievement of the SDG16.1 target: **Reduce violence everywhere**;
- respecting the rule of law and access to justice, risking the achievement of the SDG16.3 target: **Promote the rule of law and ensure equal access to justice**;
- conducting clean elections, constraining SDG16.5 target: **Reduce corruption and bribery**;
- legislative and judicial constraints on the executive; and electoral accountability, risking the SDG16.6 target: **Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions**;
- participation in civil society organisations, direct democracy and subnational elected bodies; reaching a decision on the basis of common good and respectful dialogue; and power sharing by social groups, compromising the SDG16.7 target: **Ensure responsive, inclusive and representative decision-making**; and
- freedom of expression and alternative sources of information, threatening the achievement of SDG16.10: **Ensuring public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms**. This is exacerbated by the fact that government censorship of media tends to be high in the continent.

The continent also presents high levels of executive and public sector corruption, judicial corrupt decision and media corruption, threatening the reach of the **SDG16.5 target on reducing corruption and bribery**. Transparent laws and predictable enforcement and educational and health equalities are also limited, creating barriers to the **SDG16.b target to promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies**.

Despite the overall low levels shown throughout this report, there are also some areas where African polities are showing signs of progress towards achieving SDG16 including:

- On **elections (SDG16.5)**, the capacity of EMBs and the voting registry have been increasing over time since the 1990s.²⁶

²⁶ The autonomy of EMBs increased over time although after 2014 there has been a decline.

- With respect to **freedom of expression and alternative sources of information (SDG16.10)**, media bias improved as the levels of bias reduced from 2016 and again in 2019. Yet harassment of journalists declined in 2019; and media self-censorship increased in 2018.
- Regarding **legislative oversight (SDG16.6)**, both the legislature oversight over the executive and legislature investigation in practice have been increasing over time since 1990s.
- On **participation (SDG16.7)**, political participation in both local and regional governments have been increasing over time since 1990s. In addition, participation in civil society has been increasing over time and it still remains high contributing to the overall share of political participation, although it has been declining since 2011.
- With respect to **decision-making (SDG16.7)**, political elites' acknowledgement and respect to counter arguments; and justification in terms of common good when important policies are being considered increased in 2019. Also civil society engagement when important policies are being considered improved from the 1990s to 2013 and again in 2018.

Finally, the report found variance in the SDG16 targets across the different regions and communities on the continent, with the Francophone African community appearing to perform poorly in almost all, if not all, of the SDG16 targets and indicators compared to Anglophone and Lusophone communities. Further research, such as analysing the influence of formal and informal governance structures of former colonial powers, may help explain the factors contributing to these differences. For example the poor performance of the Francophone African community could be associated with “The Ongoing Relationship Between France and its Former African Colonies” (see Benneyworth 2011) in post-independence, in terms of political, security, economic and cultural connections. As Benneyworth (2011) point out:

“France has sought to maintain its interests [in Africa] by influencing African internal affairs, whether it be helping the likes of Cameroon, Gabon and Senegal to avoid coups thanks to security guarantees or when in 1993 France, via state owned oil company Elf-Aquitaine, sought to influence the Congo parliamentary elections by denying essential loans needed to pay civil servants. With permanent military bases originally found in Senegal, Côte d’Ivoire, Chad, Djibouti, Gabon, Cameroon and the Central African Republic, responsibility to ‘defend’ Africa from Communism during the Cold War dovetailed with French interests in maintaining regional hegemony” (Benneyworth 2011).

Longitudinal changes in SDG targets and indicators over time will also help inform the underlying barriers and enablers in African polities towards achieving SDG16. The next edition of this report (SDG16 in Africa: 2021 Report) will help contribute towards this.

Policy Recommendations

Based on the indicators shown in this report to be ‘at risk’ in the aggregated composite indices, the following policy recommendations are outlined to help national and international policymakers and development actors focus their efforts towards the achievement of SDG16 in Africa by 2030.

SDG16.3 “promote the rule of law and ensure equal access to justice”, is at risk in Africa in the aspects of: public sector corrupt exchanges; executive bribery and corruption exchanges; executive embezzlement and theft; public sector theft; high court independence; judicial corrupt decision; and judicial accountability, as they constrain African polities to better perform on the rule of law index.

1. **Recommendation:** To improve their rule of law, African polities have to ensure that the power of the executive; its public service and the judiciary are constrained by other constitutional bodies like the legislature. The legislature can play a major role on this through law-making by influencing the executive, establishing effective anti-corruption units, oversight and investigating the executive, its public administration and the judiciary. But also the media and civil society should monitor closely the behaviour of the branches of government by disclosing corruption when detected and even making litigations.

SDG16.5: “substantially reduce corruption and bribery”, is at risk in the following indicators: election vote buying; election voting irregularities; EMB autonomy and capacity; and free and fair elections.

2. **Recommendation:** To ensure that corruption and bribery are not part of the electoral process, African polities have to establish autonomous EMBs; develop EMB capacity; enforce electoral legislation against those who break it; and criminalise vote buying.

SDG16.6: “develop effective accountable and transparent institutions” is at risk in a number of aspects. For the *freedom of expression and alternative sources of information index*, it is at risk of freedom of academic and cultural expression; the ability of the media to cover many perspectives besides that from the government; the existence of many media that routinely criticize the government; the media operating without being censored by the government; and self-censorship among journalists when reporting on politically sensitive issues. For *legislative constraints on the executive* it is at risk from: the ability of the legislature to question officials in practice; and the legislature’s opposition to question the executive. And for *judicial constraints on the executive*, the independence of both the high court and low courts; and the executive to respect the constitution.

3. **Recommendation:** To enhance freedom of expression and alternative sources of information, African polities should enhance institutional autonomy of their universities and freedom of research and teaching. Also media professionals especially those that are independent from the state should organize themselves in associations/groups so that they can better respond to any incidents of government harassment or censorship. They should also train themselves regularly to improve their work by sticking to media ethics, be better informed and play a watchdog role of the behaviour of those in public office.
4. **Recommendation:** To boost the legislature to constrain the executive, African polities should strengthen the legislature's capacity to question officials in practice; and the legislature's opposition to question the executive.
5. **Recommendation:** To improve the judiciary to constrain the executive, African polities should establish arrangements that make both the high court and lower courts independent; and ensure that the executive respect the constitution.

SDG16.7 target: "Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels" is at risk in a number of aspects. For the participatory component it is at risk from direct democracy. For the deliberative component it is at risk from the ability of political elites to justify their positions when important policy changes are being considered (i.e. before a decision has been made).

6. **Recommendation:** To enhance the participatory component, African polities should decide on certain issues directly rather than always delegating their elected representatives to do so.
7. **Recommendation:** To improve decision making, African polities should hold their representatives to account to justify their choices and reasons of their choices.

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ANNEX: V-DEM DATA METHODOLOGY

The V-Dem data is collected (and/or coded) from three types of data: Type A data (comprising one-third of the total ~400 indicators) is gathered from extant sources (other datasets or secondary sources) and requires no original coding. Type B data (comprising 1/6 of indicators) is gathered from country specific sources and does not require coding decisions, being factual in nature. The former is collected by a V-Dem Research Assistant based at V-Dem Institute under the supervision of a Principal Investigator and or Project Manager while the latter by Country Coordinators under supervision of Regional Managers.

Type C data (comprising half of the indicators) is coded by Country Experts – generally academics or policy makers who are nationals and/or residents in a country, with deep knowledge of that country and of specific substantive area. It requires some degree of judgement about the state of affairs obtaining in a particular country at a particular point in time. The type C coding is the most difficult, since it involves judgment on the part of the coder. Accordingly, a number of steps taken to minimise error and to gauge the degree of imprecision that remains. To perform this coding, V-Dem seek a minimum of five Country Experts to code each country year for every indicator.

The Type C data indicators are organised into twelve sections/surveys and four clusters, as follows:

1. Elections
 - Political parties/electoral systems
 - Direct democracy
2. Executive
 - Legislature
 - Deliberation
3. Judiciary
 - Civil liberty
 - Sovereignty
4. Civil society organisations
 - Media
 - Political equality

Type D data is created from A, B and C coding. This includes “cumulative” indicators such as “number of elections since 1900” of a particular country. For this report note that the analysis was restricted from 1990 onwards. It also includes more aggregated variables such as components and principles.

To identify Country Experts, the Regional Manager in consultation with Country Coordinators compile a list of 60-100 Country Experts based on their intimate knowledge of a country. This list includes their country of origin, current location, highest educational degree, current position, and area of expertise. To pick up the five Country Experts, V-Dem look first at *area of expertise* like advanced degree in social sciences, law, or history; a record of publications; and positions in civil society that establish their expertise in the chosen area. The second criterion is *origin of country* to be coded. V-Dem requires a minimum of three out of five (60 percent) Country Experts should be nationals and/or permanent residents of the country they code (preferably both). This criterion should help avoid Western/Northern biases in coding, which can also come from self-selection biases in who makes the migration to Western/Northern universities. The third criterion is the coder's *willingness to devote time* to the project, to deliberate carefully over the questions asked in the survey, and to report their honest judgment. The fourth criterion is *impartiality*. This means avoiding those coders who might be beholden to powerful actors – by reason of coercive threats or material incentives – or who serve as spokesperson for a political party or ideological tendency. The final criterion is obtaining *diversity* in professional background among coders chosen for a particular country. This entails a mixture of professionals who are active in political affairs (e.g. in media or civil society organisations) along with academics who study these topics.

After weighting these five criteria, an initial cast of 15-25 Country Experts are contacted to code. For each section/survey 5 Country Experts are required. When coders respond to V-Dem survey questions they are also required to report a level of confidence for each coding, an indicator of their subjective level of uncertainty scored from 0 to 100. In order to cross Experts aggregations, V-Dem used Bayesian item response theory measurement model (see Coppedge et al., 2015).



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Our goal is to strengthen empirical social science capacity by supporting and conducting relevant systematic research to inform Mozambican decision-makers for policy intervention and implementation.

Our mission is to produce and promote evidence-based research for effective public policy and decision making in Mozambique.

Our main objectives are:

- To **produce scientifically reliable data** on Mozambican citizens, elites and political institutions,
- To **build institutional capacity** for systematic research in Mozambique, and
- To broadly **disseminate and apply systematic research results** to inform policymaking and implementation.

The values shared by the organization:

- We are an **independent and interdisciplinary** research organization;
- We are **accountable to the public** whose trust we hold;
- We **uphold integrity, neutrality and objectivity** in our work; and
- We are **committed to excellence** in all endeavours.