

2020 AFRICA SDG INDEX AND DASHBOARDS SUMMARY REPORT

Leave No One Behind
to Achieve the SDGs in Africa



THE SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS
CENTER FOR
AFRICA



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
SOLUTIONS NETWORK
A GLOBAL INITIATIVE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS

Executive Summary

The 2020 Africa SDG Index and Dashboards Report provides an assessment of where African countries stand with respect to the SDGs and their progress toward the goals, with the additional lens of “leave no one behind.” The report also includes a preliminary analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on the SDGs in Africa.

The global pandemic is a humanitarian and economic crisis with serious immediate and also potentially long-term impacts, particularly on the social and economic goals. An additional 60 million Africans could be pushed into poverty and food insecurity is expected to nearly double. An estimated 110 million African children and youth are out of school, fragile health care systems are being tested, and women are at risk of being left out even more. Slow economic activity and lockdowns will increase unemployment and debt, while decreasing remittances, development assistance and domestic revenue are added risks to financing for development and SDGs.

To rebuild, all countries should adopt the framework of sustainability. African governments are relatively well positioned to do so, as our updated implementation survey reveals. African governments have made significant efforts to endorse the SDGs and incorporate them into national strategies and development plans. The large majority of countries have identified government units to coordinate the implementation and have prioritized specific targets and indicators. Communication and information-sharing for stakeholder engagement is insufficient, but it has improved since the previous survey. All 34 country experts who validated results reported that lack of funding and resources is one of the most important challenges both in terms of SDG implementation and monitoring.

The analysis in terms of the current status and trends toward achieving the SDGs is comprehensive and comparable at the continental and subregional levels. Some key findings include:

- Overall, North Africa is the best-performing region on average, while Central Africa is the worst-performing. Tunisia has replaced Mauritius as the top-ranking country.
- Serious challenges exist and the majority of countries are currently performing very poorly. As in last year’s report, no country scored green for 13 of the 17 goals. The new Leave No One Behind (LNOB) Index and Dashboard results show that all African countries are currently struggling to tackle all kinds of inequalities.
- The goals facing the greatest challenges are SDG 3 (good health and wellbeing), SDG 9 (infrastructure), and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions). The goals where the continent is performing better are SDG 13 (climate action) and SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production).
- Across all countries and goals, the most frequently-observed trends are stagnation and moderate improvement, which is a positive development as compared to the 2019 analysis which was overwhelmingly stagnant. The only goal for which the majority of African countries are on track is SDG 13 on Climate Action.

This short summary report includes highlights from the full report, including part of the chapter on the impact of COVID-19, the results of the 2020 Africa SDG Index and Dashboards, and the new “leave no one behind” Index and Dashboards. Please see the full report for a more complete analysis, including the updated implementation analysis, special case studies, and detailed country profiles.



COVID-19 and SDG achievement in Africa

African governments have made commitments towards achieving the SDGs, but these efforts may be compromised by the COVID-19 pandemic. The gravity of the impact depends on the longevity of the crisis – a prolonged crisis will seriously threaten the progress made on SDGs at national and local levels. As of now, countries are reallocating resources and have locked down early to curb the spread of the pandemic and to save lives. In Sub-Saharan Africa, this quick aggressive action has so far prevented the exponential daily growth in confirmed cases or mortality that has happened in other parts of the world.

However, due to the emerging economic crisis, trade and financial streams have been hampered and global financial conditions are tighter than normal. Remittances, Official Development Assistance (ODA), and portfolio flows have taken a nosedive and are likely to remain subdued through 2021.¹ The slowdown of domestic economic activity translates into revenue shortfalls. The financing gap for SDGs in Africa that was already large is expected to widen, increasing fiscal vulnerability on African governments. Without financial resources, sustainable development is elusive.

The whole world is facing the challenges of the COVID-19 crisis but poor countries are at high risk.² Studies indicate that the pandemic affects all segments of the population but is most unfavourable to those living in vulnerable conditions, including people living in poverty and people without access to health services and limited access to basic services.³ The pandemic will have short and long-term impacts across SDGs. The immediate impact is on the well-being of humanity (SDG 3), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), food security (SDG 2), and poverty (SDG 1). Other collateral havoc will emerge due to the interlinkages between the SDGs. On the positive side, some environmental indicators are faring better. For example, SDG 13 (climate action) has benefited from a drop in global emissions and SDG 11 from reduced air pollution. Whereas COVID-19 will negatively impact the ambitions of African nations for sustainable development, the SDGs framework can serve as a guiding tool for protecting lives and economies both in the short and long term. It is an opportunity to better develop and design coordinated responses to make the best use of the synergies between different goals.

At the time of writing, it was not easy to assess the full impacts of the pandemic on the SDGs achievement, but we predict some overarching trends for certain key social and economic goals in Figure 1. *Please see the full report for the complete analysis.*

1. Ratha, Dilip K. et al, 2020, *COVID-19 Crisis Through a Migration Lens (English)*. Migration and Development Brief; no. 32. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/989721587512418006/COVID-19-Crisis-Through-a-Migration-Lens>
2. Gerszon M., et al, 20 April 2020, "The impact of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) on global poverty: Why Sub-Saharan Africa might be the region hardest hit." World Bank Blog, online at: <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/impact-covid-19-coronavirus-global-poverty-why-sub-saharan-africa-might-be-region-hardest>
3. UN DESA, 13 May 2020, "COVID-19 to slash global economic output by \$8.5 trillion over next two years." <https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/policy/wesp-mid-2020-report.html>.



Figure 1 Summary of COVID-19 impacts on the SDGs



2020 Africa SDG Index

The 2020 Africa SDG Index and Dashboards Report describes African countries' progress towards achieving the SDGs and indicates areas requiring faster progress. The report uses the most recent data available that have been aligned as closely as possible with official SDG indicators, as well as some measures of the African Union Agenda 2063.

The Index ranks 52 African countries based on 97 indicators across all 17 goals. The SDG Index score can be interpreted as a percentage of achievement and signifies a country's position between the worst (0) and best (100) outcomes. The same basket of indicators is used for all countries to generate comparable scores and rankings. The SDG Index score Tunisia tops this year's ranking with a score of 67.1, meaning that the country is 67% of the way towards achieving the SDGs, according to our methodology (see Section IV of the full report for the detailed methodology).

Overall, the average score across all countries is 53.82, which is slightly higher than the 2019 average, but still implies that, four years in, the continent as a whole is only halfway to achieving the SDGs. Seychelles and Equatorial Guinea are excluded due to insufficient data coverage.

Figure 2 2020 Africa SDG Index Ranking

Rank	Country	Score	Rank	Country	Score
1	Tunisia	67.10	27	Zambia	53.25
2	Mauritius	66.79	28	Mali	53.22
3	Morocco	66.30	29	Eswatini	52.94
4	Algeria	65.90	30	Libya	52.70
5	Cabo Verde	65.59	31	Malawi	52.64
6	Egypt	65.44	32	Lesotho	52.43
7	Botswana	63.93	33	Mozambique	52.17
8	Ghana	62.69	34	Sierra Leone	51.59
9	South Africa	62.20	35	Djibouti	51.30
10	São Tomé and Príncipe	61.61	36	Angola	51.18
11	Senegal	58.69	37	Republic of Congo	50.81
12	Kenya	58.54	38	Niger	50.47
13	Namibia	58.31	39	Burundi	50.37
14	Gabon	58.07	40	Guinea	50.20
15	Côte d'Ivoire	57.67	41	Liberia	49.33
16	Rwanda	57.65	42	Nigeria	48.84
17	Tanzania	57.00	43	Madagascar	47.94
18	Burkina Faso	55.90	44	Sudan	47.85
19	Uganda	55.71	45	Comoros	46.98
20	The Gambia	55.53	46	Guinea-Bissau	46.37
21	Togo	54.41	47	Democratic Republic of Congo	44.83
22	Ethiopia	54.15	48	Eritrea	44.17
23	Zimbabwe	53.79	49	Somalia	42.73
24	Mauritania	53.78	50	Chad	40.34
25	Benin	53.53	51	Central African Republic	38.05
26	Cameroon	53.37	52	South Sudan	32.36

Africa Dashboards and Trends

The 2020 Africa SDG Dashboards provide a visual representation of countries' performance by SDG to identify priorities for action. The "traffic light" color scheme (green, yellow, orange, and red) illustrates a country's current status for a particular goal: a green rating denotes SDG achievement and is assigned to a country on a given SDG only if all the indicators under the goal are rated green. Yellow, orange, and red indicate increasing distance from SDG achievement. Red and orange are the most common colors on the Africa Dashboards, representing 79%, and showing that the majority of countries are off-track on most of the 17 goals.

According to the Dashboard's system of color coding, the goals that are facing the greatest challenges are SDG 3 (good health and wellbeing) with 87% of the countries scoring red, and SDG 9 (infrastructure) and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) both with 78% countries scoring red. Goal 7 is close behind with 74% of countries in red. Moreover, as in last year's report, no country scored green for 13 of the 17 goals. Overall just under 2% of the whole dashboard is green. The goals where the continent is performing better are SDG 13 (climate action) and SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production) with 20% and 7% of countries achieving green, respectively.

The SDG Trends, symbolized by the arrows, indicate whether a country is on track to achieve a particular goal by 2030 based on recent past performance of a given indicator. Indicator trends are then aggregated at the goal level to give a trend indication of how the country is progressing in the goal overall. Interestingly, the analysis of SDG trends in Africa reveals a more varied and nuanced picture of whether African countries are progressing sufficiently to achieve the SDGs by 2030. Despite SDG 3 (good health and wellbeing) facing the greatest challenges at the moment, 76% of countries are moderately improving. SDG 8 (decent work) also has a majority of countries (57%) registering moderate improvements.

However, the current challenging status of SDG 9 (infrastructure) and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) will likely persist as trends are stagnating for two-thirds of countries. Goal 4 (education) similarly faces a majority (61%) of stagnation. These three goals represent the worst trends. SDGs 2 (hunger and sustainable agriculture), 5 (gender equality), 6 (water and sanitation), and 7 (sustainable energy) are split between countries that are stagnating and those registering moderate improvements – as the regional analysis (available in the full report) demonstrates, many of these differences are grouped geographically.

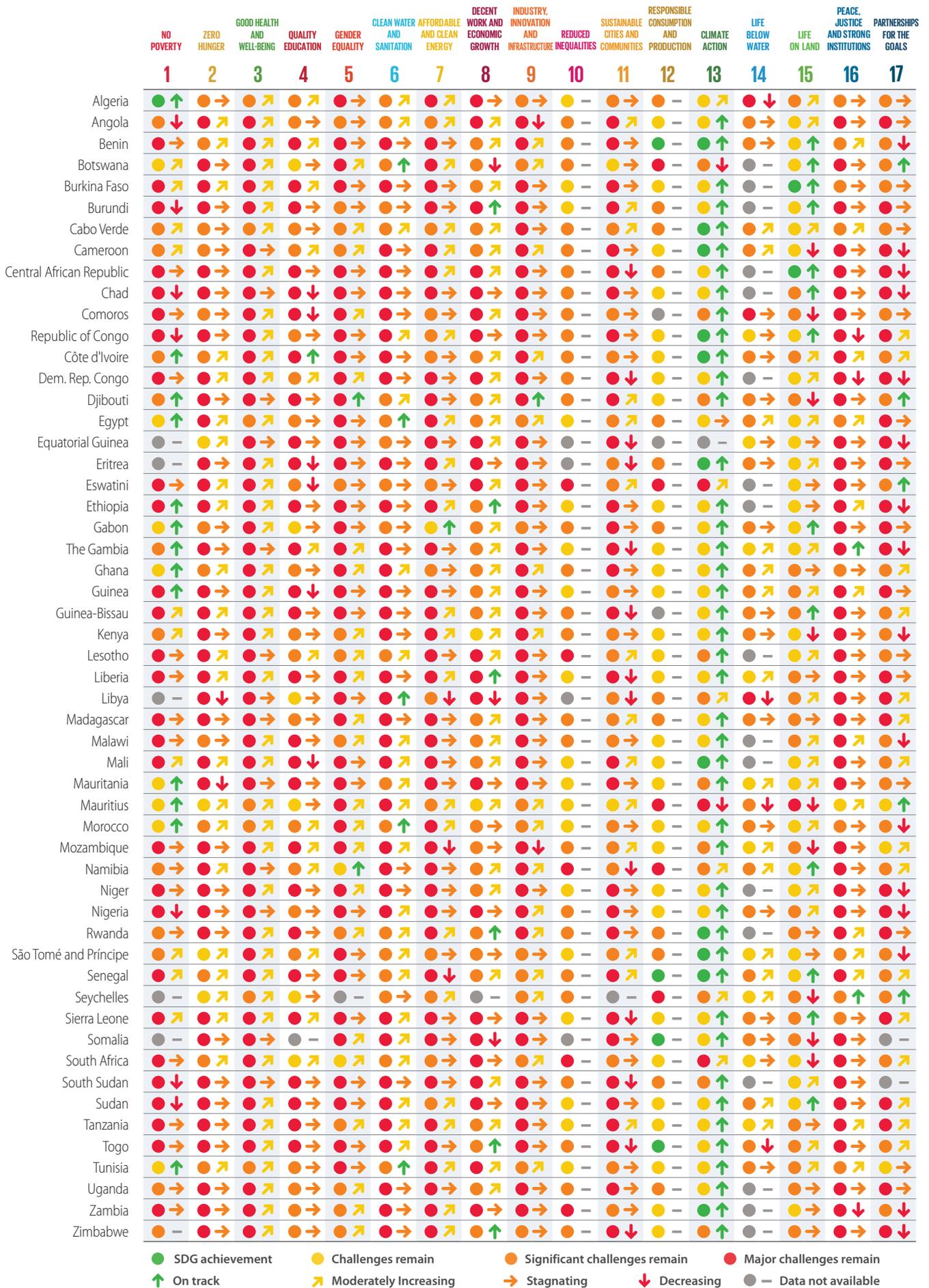
There is no single goal for which the majority of countries are off track, although there are a troubling number of countries that have adverse trends in SDGs 11 and 17. Overall decreasing trends are observed in 9% of cases vs. 11% on track. Across all countries and goals, the most frequently-observed trend is stagnation (41%) and moderate improvement (35%), which is a positive development as compared to the 2019 analysis. The only goal for which the majority of African countries are on track to meeting SDG targets is SDG 13 on Climate Action, with 81% of countries "on track." This is distantly followed by SDG 1 (poverty) and SDG 15 (life on land), both with 24% of countries "on track." In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is likely that the gains on SDG 1 will be lost and other challenges may emerge in areas such as health.

This trend analysis is incomplete due to insufficient data availability. No trend analysis is possible for goals 10 and 12 due to a lack of time-series data. In addition, 31% of countries did not have enough data for goal 14 because they are landlocked countries.



Figure 3

2020 Africa SDG Dashboard and Trends



● SDG achievement
 ● Challenges remain
 ● Significant challenges remain
 ● Major challenges remain
↑ On track
 ↗ Moderately Increasing
 → Stagnating
 ↓ Decreasing
 ● Data not available

Note: If the country has data for less than 50% of the indicators under a goal, the dashboard color for that goal is grey. Time series data are not available for the indicators under SDGs 10 and 12. For more information on the methodology and data used, please refer to the full report or website www.africasdginde.org

Source: Authors' analysis



Leave No One Behind Index and Dashboard

The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs are guided by the principle to “leave no one behind”, which commonly denotes inequalities within each country. Such inequalities may include inequalities in income and wealth; in access to public services and infrastructure; gender inequalities; and in access to food, health, education, and outcomes related to human development.

Since indicators related to leaving no one behind are distributed across many SDGs, we present a new Leave No One Behind (LNOB) Index that tracks inequalities within African countries using a broad range of measures (see Table 4 in the Methodology section for details). All indicators included in the Africa LNOB Index are also part of the Africa SDG Index and Dashboards. The LNOB Index brings out inequalities in access and outcomes that may be hidden by the average values that dominate the overall SDG Index. These data are the most recent at the time of publication, but we expect that the COVID-19 pandemic will exacerbate these inequalities. In addition, since the underlying data are not disaggregated, this analysis does not capture other common inequalities such as geography (urban/rural), ethnic or racial, or the status of the vulnerable population groups such as people with disabilities, migrants, and older people.

The results below show overall coherence between the SDG Index ranking and the LNOB ranking. The top four are the same, but reshuffled, and the bottom five are in the exact same order. There are some notable exceptions: Eswatini, Lesotho, Angola, Djibouti, Burundi, and Comoros all score at least ten spots higher in the LNOB ranking. The current SDG status is very challenging, all scoring in the bottom half of the overall Index, but these countries have less inequality within their population. For example, access to basic services may be very low but this applies to everyone. Conversely, some countries perform much worse on the LNOB. This includes Togo, Ethiopia, Zambia, Burkina Faso, and Mali which are all at least ten positions lower in the LNOB ranking. While they rank in the top half of the SDG Index due to good performance on environmental goals, these countries are facing more issues related to social inequalities.



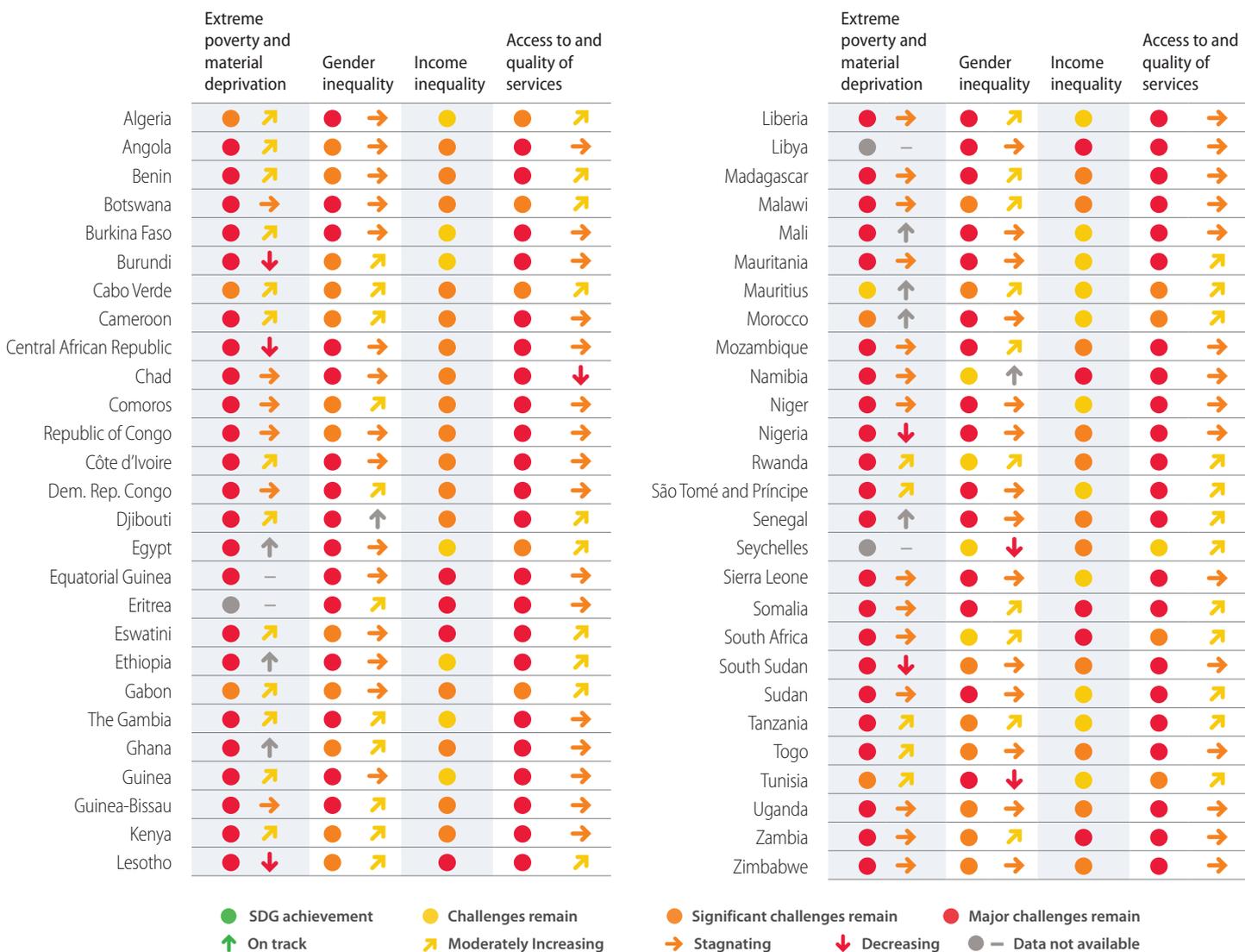
Figure 4 2020 Leave No One Behind Index Ranking

LNOB Rank	SDG Index Rank	Country	LNOB Score
1	4	Algeria	76.74
2	2	Mauritius	74.74
3	1	Tunisia	73.51
4	3	Morocco	71.11
5	5	Cabo Verde	69.65
6	9	South Africa	68.95
7	6	Egypt	65.67
8	7	Botswana	65.12
9	14	Gabon	62.24
10	13	Namibia	60.42
11	30	Libya	59.52
12	10	São Tomé and Príncipe	58.22
13	8	Ghana	57.28
14	16	Rwanda	53.36
15	29	Eswatini	52.96
16	12	Kenya	50.44
17	19	Uganda	49.61
18	11	Senegal	48.93
19	23	Zimbabwe	48.86
20	32	Lesotho	46.95
21	17	Tanzania	46.56
22	36	Angola	45.71
23	15	Côte d'Ivoire	45.64
24	26	Cameroon	44.49
25	35	Djibouti	44.10
26	20	The Gambia	43.52
27	39	Burundi	42.88
28	24	Mauritania	42.38
29	45	Comoros	42.35
30	21	Togo	41.74
31	25	Benin	41.43
32	31	Malawi	41.17
33	33	Mozambique	39.77
34	22	Ethiopia	39.32
35	37	Republic of Congo	38.53
36	34	Sierra Leone	38.19
37	27	Zambia	37.93
38	18	Burkina Faso	36.92
39	28	Mali	35.72
40	42	Nigeria	35.03
41	41	Liberia	34.79
42	44	Sudan	34.47
43	43	Madagascar	32.26
44	40	Guinea	31.82
45	38	Niger	31.45
46	47	Dem. Rep. Congo	28.42
47	46	Guinea-Bissau	27.62
48	48	Eritrea	26.56
49	49	Somalia	24.64
50	50	Chad	20.13
51	51	Central African Republic	19.74
52	52	South Sudan	17.07

Source: Authors' analysis



Figure 5 Leave No One Behind Dashboard



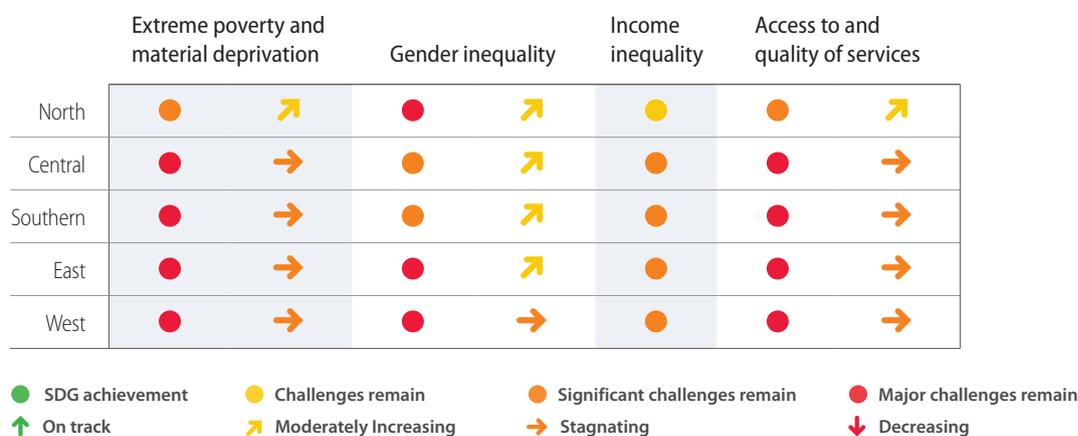
Source: Authors' analysis



On this LNOB Dashboard, the stark conclusion is that all African countries are currently struggling to leave no one behind. There are no greens at all. 'Extreme poverty and material deprivation' and 'Access to and quality of services' emerge as the biggest challenges, with 83% and 81% respectively in red. Gender inequality is also a very critical challenge with 56% red and 37% orange. The best scores are under the 'Income inequality' category, which has only 9% red, 50% orange, and 33% yellow.

The overall trends are somewhat more promising. While stagnation still emerges as the dominant trend (51%), there are some countries registering improvements (39%) and even the hope of ending certain inequalities (6%). Despite the dire current situation, 13% of countries are on track to end extreme poverty and material deprivation and 33% are moderately improving. However the other 37% are stagnating. Only 4% are on track to end gender inequalities and the majority of countries (54%) are stagnating. 'Access to and quality of services' remains the most serious challenge in the long run - no countries are on track and 57% percent are stagnating. Only 41% are showing some moderate improvements. Unfortunately, data on trends are not available for the income inequality metrics.

Figure 6 Leave No One Behind Subregional Dashboard



Source: Authors' analysis

All regions perform poorly on the subregional LNOB Dashboard. All categories of inequality face serious challenges, except for income inequality in North Africa, which is a moderate challenge. Overall North Africa has the best score with only one red category. East and West Africa have the worst current scores with three red categories. Income inequality faces deep challenges but it is the least dire LNOB category. On trends, no region is on track for any categories and stagnation is the dominant trend. North Africa again performs best with moderate improvements across all categories. West Africa is the worst performing subregion with stagnation across the board. Gender equality as a category is benefitting from moderate improvements in all but one region.



2020 AFRICA SDG INDEX AND DASHBOARDS SUMMARY REPORT

Leave No One Behind
to Achieve the SDGs in Africa



THE SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS
CENTER FOR
AFRICA

The Sustainable Development Goals Center for Africa is deeply committed to accelerating the implementation of the SDGs across the continent, including developing a new program to help governments build and strengthen capacity on data and statistical systems for reporting on the SDGs



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
SOLUTIONS NETWORK
A GLOBAL INITIATIVE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS

The Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) mobilizes global scientific and technological expertise to promote practical solutions for sustainable development, including the implementation of the SDGs and the Paris Climate Agreement.

© The Sustainable Development Goals Center for Africa and Sustainable Development Solutions Network

The views expressed in this report do not reflect the views of any organization, agency or program of the United Nations. It has been prepared by a team of independent experts from the SDG Center for Africa and the SDSN Secretariat.

For more information, please visit www.AfricaSDGIndex.org

The production of this report was made possible with the generous support of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation.