Chapter 4

'WAITING FOR HAPPINESS' IN AFRICA[1]

VALERIE MØLLER, BENJAMIN J. ROBERTS, HABIB TILIOUINE,
AND JAY LOSCHKY

Valerie Møller, Institute of Social and Economic Research, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa.
v.moller@ru.ac.za

Benjamin J. Roberts, Co-ordinator: South African Social Attitudes Survey and Senior Research Manager: Democracy, Governance & Service Delivery, Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa.
broberts@hsrc.ac.za

Habib Tiliouine, Department of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Oran, Algeria.
htiliouine@yahoo.fr

Jay Loschky, Regional Director Africa, Gallup.
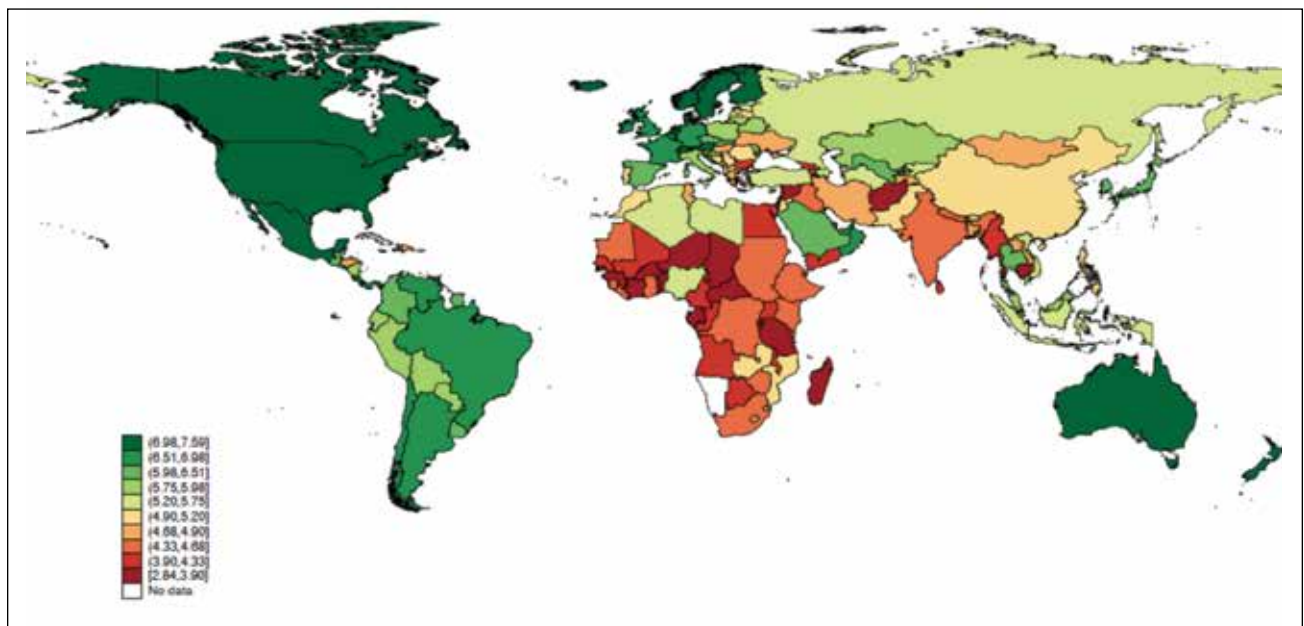Jay_Loschky@gallup.com

Introduction

Are the people in Africa really among the least happy in the world? And if African countries do have a 'happiness deficit', what are the prospects of Africa achieving happiness in the near future? These are questions we shall try to address in this chapter.

The World Happiness Report (WHR), published since 2012, has found that happiness is less evident in Africa than in other regions of the world. It reports Gallup World Poll (GWP) ratings of happiness, measured on the 'ladder of life', a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 indicating greatest happiness. On the map of the Geography of Happiness, published in an earlier World Happiness Report Update 2015, the happiest countries in the world are shaded green, the unhappiest red. Africa stands out as the unhappiest continent, being coloured almost entirely in shades of glaring red (See Fig. 4.1).

In 2017, the WHR reports that average ladder scores for over four in five African countries are below the mid-point of the scale (see Fig. 4.2). And only two African countries have made significant gains in happiness over the past decade[2]. There are also considerable inequalities in life evaluations in African countries, and this inequality in happiness has increased over the past years[3].
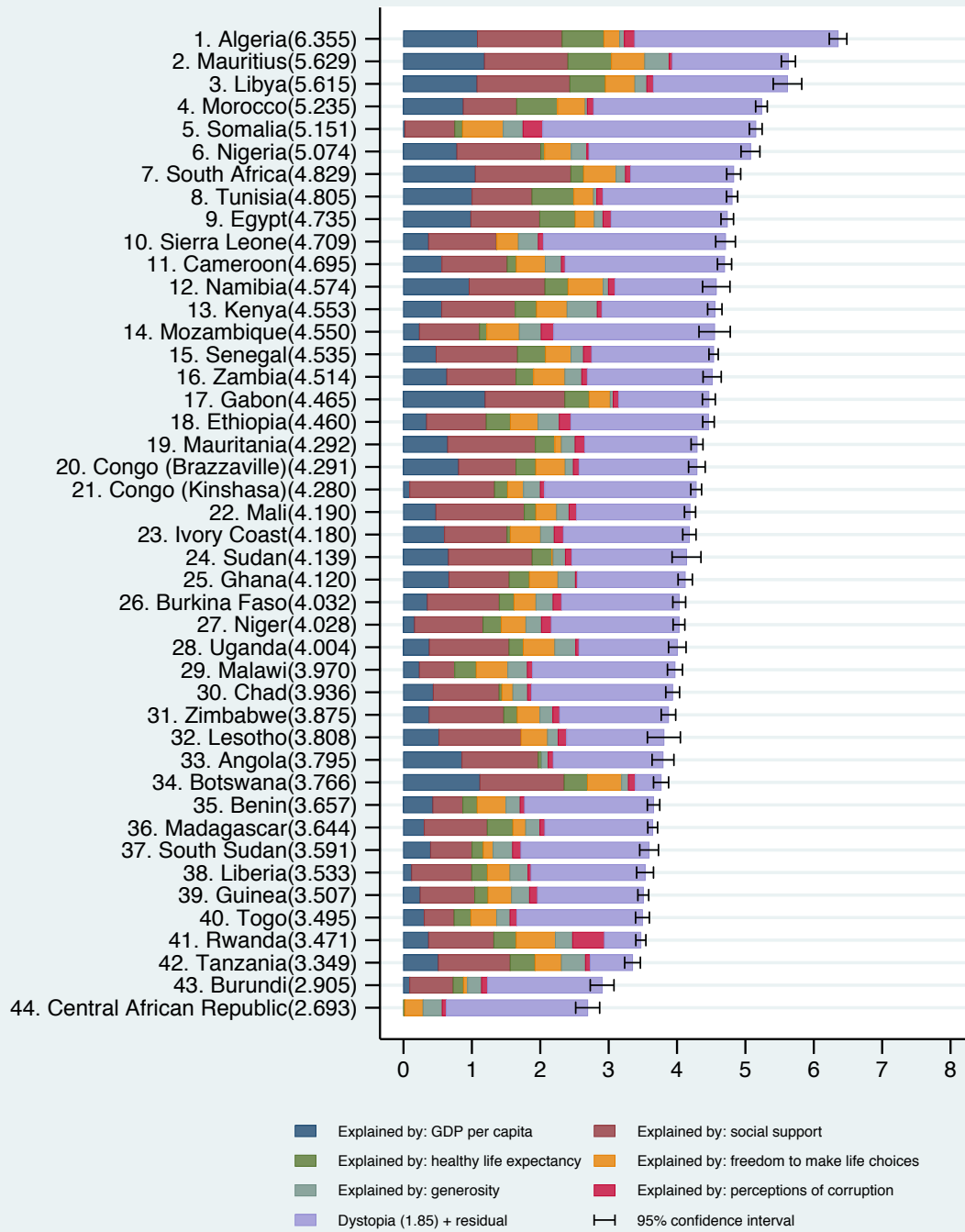
In this chapter, we shall tentatively seek a number of explanations for the unhappiness on the African continent, which is home to about 16% of the world's population. It will be no easy task to identify factors that may have shaped perceptions of well-being among the 1.2 billion African people who live in 54 nation states with different historical, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds. Nonetheless, we shall attempt to describe some of the positive and negative experiences in the lives of people in African countries that likely impact on personal

Figure 4.1 Geography of Happiness

Source: Helliwell, Huang, & Wang (2015, p. 20)

Figure 4.2: Ranking of Happiness in Africa, 2014-16

1. Algeria(6.355)
2. Mauritius(5.629)
3. Libya(5.615)
4. Morocco(5.235)
5. Somalia(5.151)
6. Nigeria(5.074)
7. South Africa(4.829)
8. Tunisia(4.805)
9. Egypt(4.735)
10. Sierra Leone(4.709)
11. Cameroon(4.695)
12. Namibia(4.574)
13. Kenya(4.553)
14. Mozambique(4.550)
15. Senegal(4.535)
16. Zambia(4.514)
17. Gabon(4.465)
18. Ethiopia(4.460)
19. Mauritania(4.292)
20. Congo (Brazzaville)(4.291)
21. Congo (Kinshasa)(4.280)
22. Mali(4.190)
23. Ivory Coast(4.180)
24. Sudan(4.139)
25. Ghana(4.120)
26. Burkina Faso(4.032)
27. Niger(4.028)
28. Uganda(4.004)
29. Malawi(3.970)
30. Chad(3.936)
31. Zimbabwe(3.875)
32. Lesotho(3.808)
33. Angola(3.795)
34. Botswana(3.766)
35. Benin(3.657)
36. Madagascar(3.644)
37. South Sudan(3.591)
38. Liberia(3.533)
39. Guinea(3.507)
40. Togo(3.495)
41. Rwanda(3.471)
42. Tanzania(3.349)
43. Burundi(2.905)
44. Central African Republic(2.693)

Explained by: GDP per capita
Explained by: healthy life expectancy
Explained by: generosity
Dystopia (1.85) + residual
Explained by: social support
Explained by: freedom to make life choices
Explained by: perceptions of corruption
95% confidence interval

Source: Gallup World Poll

well-being. We shall also try to identify the prospects for change and development that could spell hope for increasing the happiness of African people in future.

The 'patchwork of countries that make up Africa'[4]

Africa includes 54 countries, the largest number of nation states on a single continent. Forty-seven of the 166 countries in the Gallup World Poll, about a quarter, are African countries. South Sudan, which gained its independence in 2011 following Africa's longest civil war, is now included in the poll. The GWP has also collected data in Djibouti on the Horn of Africa, in the small island state of Comoros, and in both Somalia and Somaliland, although the latter region is not officially recognised as an independent state but considered a part of Somalia[5]. The 2017 World Happiness Report tracks the happiness of 44 African countries polled by Gallup, including the island states of Mauritius and Madagascar located off the east coast of Africa (see Fig. 4.3[6]).

At the outset, it will be important to remember that Africa is the continent with the longest history of humankind. We all have ancestors on the continent. Given the length of time that Homo sapiens have dwelt in Africa, it is also the continent with the greatest cultural diversity and a wealth of ancient civilisations. There are a multitude of different ethnicities and languages spoken in Africa. The continent extends from the Mediterranean Sea in the north to the meeting of the Indian and Atlantic Oceans in the south, and from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Suez Canal and the Red Sea in the east. Climatic regions range from temperate coastal regions, deserts and semi-deserts, bushland and savannah, to tropical jungles over the equator.

Africa's turbulent history has produced an extremely diverse cultural and linguistic landscape. Centuries of slavery, colonialism and apartheid preceded the period of independence. During the turbulent years following the 'first dance of freedom'[7] in the 1960s, the new African nation states experimented briefly with various styles of self-rule in what has been called the 'third wave' of democracy[8]. The expansion of the Arabian Islamic Caliphate into North Africa in the 7th century and the European 'scramble for Africa' in the late 19th century introduced several of the European and Arabic languages that still serve as lingua franca and national languages on the continent. Over the centuries, African people have adopted some of the customs, technological advancements and new lifestyles of their former colonial masters. In recent times, Africa has leapfrogged older technology to embrace the latest advancements, such as mobile phones and solar-powered electricity.

This tumultuous history will have left its imprint on expectations and perceptions of personal well-being.[9] Given the diversity found on the continent, it is natural to expect, as is shown in Figure 4.2, that there will be large differences among African countries in both life evaluations and likely reasons for these differences. Africa watchers frequently note how different the situations are from one African country to the next. Contrary to the once commonly held view that Africa is a single entity or 'brand', each country in fact has unique features that distinguish it from its neighbours.[10] For this reason, there is likely to be a multitude of explanations for Africa's 'happiness deficit'. In this chapter we can only begin to search for plausible factors that may have undermined Africa's potential for happiness and satisfaction with life.

The quality of life of African people can be observed from a number of different perspectives. There have been many frames of reference for the narrative of Africa since independence ranging from the dismissive 'basket case' to the 'structural adjustment' imposed by the International Monetary Fund during the 1980s followed by debt forgiveness in the 1990s. The 'Africa Rising' narrative in the new millennium was followed by the global economic recession; and lately Africa has become part of the so-called

Figure 4.3: Map of Africa with Average Happiness Scores
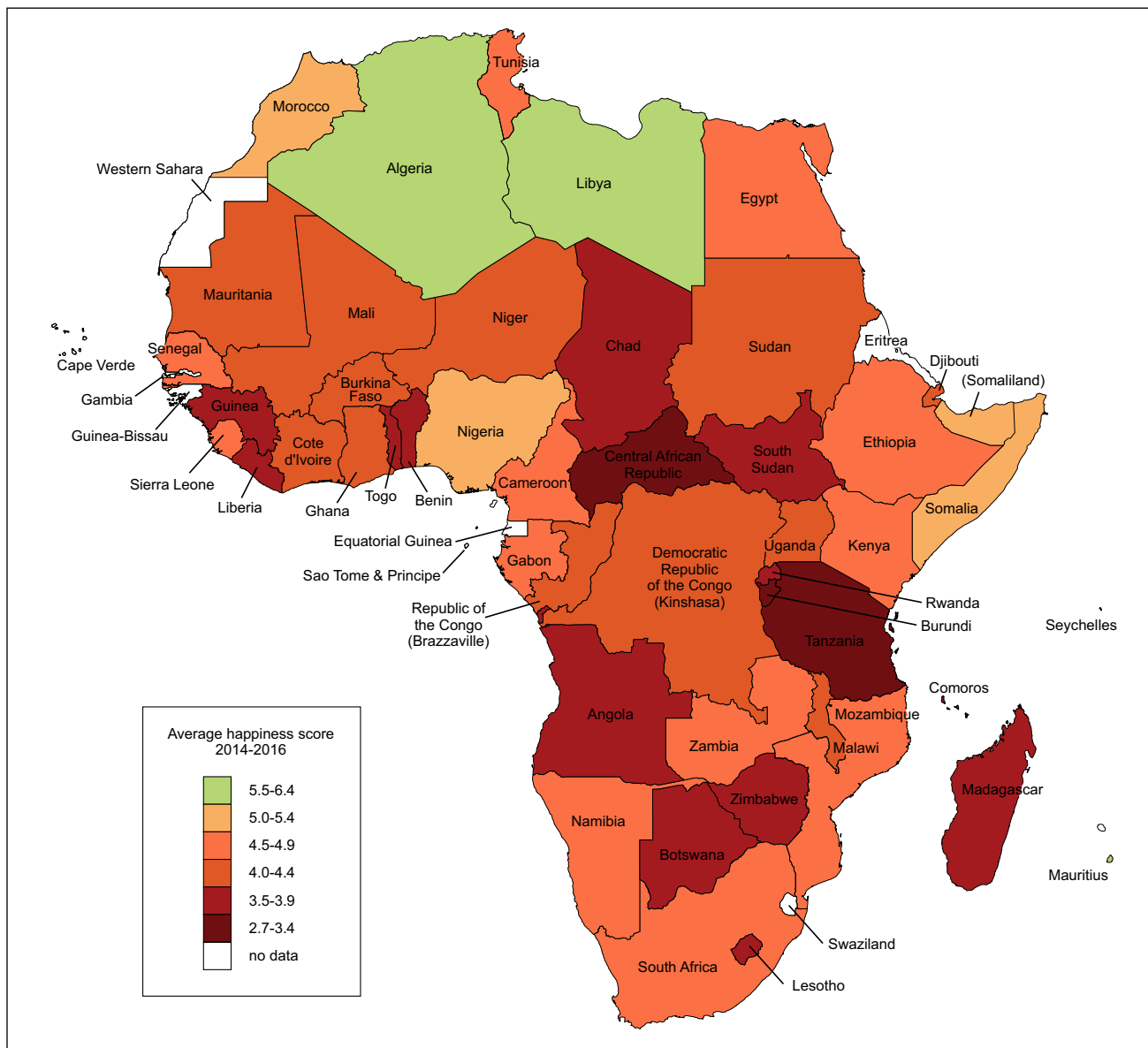
Source: Gallup World Poll data

'war on terror'. Each of these narratives homes in on a different set of factors that may determine the fortunes of Africa and its people.[11]

Twenty-first century Africa is no longer associated only with 'endless famine, disease, and dictatorship'. The 'Africa Rising' narrative, which overturned earlier stereotypes, projected a continent with a growing urban middle class market with new consumer appetites.[12] Africa's youthfulness promised to be an asset in an increasingly ageing global society. The continent's rich mineral wealth had not been exhausted and its agricultural land was still waiting to be exploited. In the new millennium, foreign direct investment in Africa eclipsed development aid for the first time since the colonial era.[13]

Outline of this chapter

We start our examination by first reflecting on the paucity of data on African happiness. We then discuss local reactions of disbelief to some other polls that have found African countries to be among the happiest, in contrast to the Gallup World Poll findings reported above. We next consider whether Africa's happiness deficit since independence[14] may in fact be a long-standing one, in which case, it may take more time to remedy. Then we examine how changes in the lives of African people under democratic rule have affected quality of life on the continent. In particular, we review how aspects of good governance have affected the well-being of citizens. Finally, we consider how African people have managed to live with their 'happiness deficit' in anticipation of the good life.

Data for Africa

The GWP data on happiness for Africa is a valuable source of information on happiness in developing countries in Africa and serves as our point of departure. (See Technical Box 1: Gallup methodology in Africa). However, a major challenge for us when reflecting on Africa's well-being has been sourcing further data in support of our arguments. Our chapter will focus on all countries in Africa—unlike studies that divide Africa into sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa, or the extended region of MENA (Middle East and North Africa). While data coverage for Africa has improved over the past decades, there is still a dearth of social indicators that cover the whole of the continent. In particular, there is a shortage of trend data that would help us track the relationship between happiness and the factors that we think might have influenced happiness over time.[15]

We have opted for a practical solution. Where possible we draw on Africa's home-grown data. A useful source for our purpose is the Afrobarometer, which collects subjective indicators that give voice to ordinary citizens on the continent.[16] Other home-grown initiatives that provided useful pointers for our examination are the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG)[17] that covers all 54 countries on the continent based mainly on objective indicators, and the Arab Barometer, launched in 2005, which covers countries in North Africa and the Middle East.[18]

Do Gallup Happiness Ratings Ring True in Africa?

Before we consider what may be holding back African happiness, it will be important to know whether WHR reports on life evaluations in African countries ring true to people living on the continent. Measures of subjective well-being, other than Gallup World Poll ones, have, on occasion, ranked African countries such as Ghana and Nigeria among the happiest in the world. In these cases, it seems that local reactions to media reports on such high happiness rankings were mixed. In the Ghanaian case, political leaders reportedly took credit for promoting the well-being in their country, while their citizens tended to doubt that the scores were credible, and debated their validity. Similarly, Nigerian scholars referred to a 'Nigerian paradox' when their country achieved less than credible very high happiness rankings in international studies.

When Ghanaians heard that their country ranked among the ten happiest countries in the world in a news story circulating on the internet in 2006, there was excitement but also mainly disbelief. In her contribution to a handbook on happiness across cultures, Vivian Afi Abui Dzokoto recalls that the rating was received with mixed feelings of pride and disbelief that triggered debate on what 'really mattered' for well-being in Ghana. 'Did this statistic take into consideration the state of life in the country: the unemployment rates, traffic, state of roads, and the price of gasoline? Was it because Ghana was a very religious country? Or was it family values

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Technical Box 1: Gallup Methodology in Africa

Introduced in 2005, the Gallup World Poll is conducted in approximately 140 countries every year worldwide, including 40 in Africa, tracking attitudes toward law and order, institutions and infrastructure, jobs, well-being, and other topics.

Gallup surveys approximately 1,000 residents per country, targeting the entire civilian, non-institutionalized population, aged 15 and older. In 2016, face-to-face surveys were used in all of Sub-Saharan Africa and most of North Africa. In Libya, telephone survey methodology has been used since 2015 owing to the country's high rate of mobile phone coverage and ongoing instability which has made it too dangerous to use face-to-face interviewers.

In countries where face-to-face surveys are conducted in Africa, the first stage of sampling is the identification of 100 to 125 ultimate clusters (sampling units), consisting of clusters of households. Sampling units are stratified by population size and geography and clustering is achieved through one or more stages of sampling. Where population information is available, sample selection is based on probabilities proportional to size (PPS) sampling, otherwise simple random sampling is used. Samples are drawn independent of any samples drawn for surveys conducted in previous years. In most African countries, national coverage is at or near 100%. However, national coverage is lower in countries such as Nigeria (96%), Somalia (68%), and South Sudan (56%) where insecurity makes interviewing dangerous in specific regions or neighbourhoods.

Data weighting is used to ensure a nationally representative sample for each country and is intended to be used for calculations within a country. First, base sampling weights are constructed to account for household size. Weighting by household size (number of residents aged 15 and older) is used to adjust for the probability of selection, as residents in large households will have a disproportionately lower probability of being selected for the sample. Second, post-stratification weights are constructed. Population statistics are used to weight the data by gender, age, and, where reliable data are available, education. At country level in Africa, each survey carries a margin of sampling error ranging from a low of ±2.6 percentage points to a high of ±5.4 percentage points.

The Gallup World Poll is translated into 85 languages throughout Africa and attempts are made to conduct interviews in the language the respondent speaks most comfortably. When at least 5% of a national population considers a language to be their most comfortable language, a new language is added to the survey.

Where necessary, Gallup seeks the permissions of national, regional, and local governments. In many African locations, permission from Chiefs and Elders must also be sought in order to gain access to rural areas or villages. In Somalia, permission is obtained not only from authorities in Somaliland, Puntland, and the Central Government in Mogadishu, but also from so-called "emerging states" such as Jubbaland Administration and South-West State.

Following 4-5 day training courses in capital cities, interviewers are sent across the country to reach ultimate clusters. While public transportation is used in many cases, it is often necessary in some regions to rent 4x4's owing to poor infrastructure and the remoteness of many sampling areas. In South Sudan, all interviewers not working in Juba must be flown to provincial towns immediately following training as road networks make travel exceedingly difficult. While at least 30% of interviews are accompanied in-person or back-checked by supervisors in all countries, data is also monitored remotely throughout fieldwork by quality control personnel utilising GPS data and interviewer productivity metrics.

or the tropical climate?'[19]

In the case of the Nigerian happiness 'paradox', Aaron Agbo and his colleagues, writing in the same handbook on cross-cultural happiness, thought that respondents who indicated that they felt happy might not have meant they were truly happy with their situation, but rather they felt that reporting otherwise 'could only aggravate the matter'. Saying you are happy might have been a way 'of counter-acting everyday negative life experiences', they speculated.[20]

Africa's History of Depressed Happiness

Well-being may reflect the history of a region.[21] This may especially be the case for Africa that has a short history of self-rule. Low levels of subjective well-being are likely not to be a recent development in Africa. Indeed, the first international studies of happiness already found that evaluations of life were less positive in African countries south of the Sahara than elsewhere.

The WHR uses the ladder of life measure introduced by Hadley Cantril in the early 1960s as the yardstick for ranking countries on global happiness. Going back in time, Cantril's classic study of *The Pattern of Human Concerns* in 13 countries conducted in the early 1960s included two African countries: Nigeria represented an 'underdeveloped giant' along with Brazil and India, while Egypt was among three samples drawn in the Middle East. It seems that the country evaluations reported by Cantril in the 1960s for Egypt and Nigeria have not shifted much in fifty years. The highest score is 10 on Cantril's 0 to 10 ladder of life scale. Egypt's mean ladder score was 5.5 in Cantril's 1960s study and 4.735 as recorded in this year's WHR 2017 (see Fig. 4.2). Nigeria's ladder ratings in the two periods are 4.8 in Cantril's 1960s study and 5.074 in WHR 2017 (see Fig. 4.2).[22]

A decade after Cantril's study, the Gallup-Kettering study conducted in the 1970s, the largest global study of well-being of its time, found that African countries produced the lowest ladder of life scores, apart from India. A combined sample of eleven sub-Saharan African countries scored 4.61 in the 1970s, a ladder rating not very different from the most recent Gallup World Poll ladder ratings reported in WHR 2017 for the same eleven African countries that range from 3.35 to 5.07.[23]

Africa's Quest for Positive Change

Of importance for our discussion here is that the Gallup-Kettering study of the 1970s also asked respondents if they thought they would be happier if things could be changed about their lives. The desire for change was greatest by far in sub-Saharan Africa. Some 90% of African respondents wished for change in their lives and the vast majority in this group wanted not a 'few', but 'many' things to change to improve their lives.[24]

There can be no doubt that the most profound changes in the lives of African people were caused by the 'winds of change' that swept through the continent in the late 1950s and early 1960s, bringing independence to formerly subjugated peoples. On gaining independence from colonial rule, most countries on the continent experimented with democratic rule that was to restore dignity and freedom for Africa's people.

Why should democracy be important for African well-being? One argument is that Africa's approach to democracy focuses on 'horizontal equality' among diverse cultural and ethnic groups rather than on 'individual' or vertical rights.[25] Thus, Africa's democracy project might be said to be in tune with a continent that has always nurtured collectivist values, such as African humanism. It ensured societal well-being in the past and still continues to do so today.[26]

In the next sections, we shall review attitudes to democracy and citizen evaluations of good governance. Later we shall return to discuss threats to an inclusive African democracy, in the form of authoritarian leaders (Africa's so-called 'Big Men'), patronage systems, and corruption, all of which may have negative impacts on well-being on the continent.

Democracy, Good Governance, and the Promise of Prosperity

Africa is said to have embraced democracy 'in fits and starts' since the winds of change blew through the continent in the 1960s. Although the newly independent states adopted the Western liberal democratic systems of their former colonial masters, in due course authoritarian rule became the order of the day. By the end of the 1980s, only Botswana, The Gambia and Mauritius still had democratic systems. Democracy was generally restored in the 1990s, and today, the vast majority of Africa's countries are multi-party democracies, at least in name if not in practice. The African Union's Vision 2063 envisages a prosperous and peaceful Africa that promotes democratic governance. Free and fair elections are seen as a test of the strength of Africa's democracies and more than a third of states on the continent were due to hold elections in 2016.[27]

Africa's 'Third Liberation'. Now that Africa has liberated itself from both colonial and authoritarian rule, African countries are advised to achieve the so-called 'third liberation', that is, to free themselves from poor governance in order to accelerate development and prosperity.[28] International evidence suggests there is a strong link between good governance and well-being. Societies that have high levels of well-being tend to be economically developed, to have effective governments with low levels of corruption, to have high levels of trust, and to be able to meet citizens' basic needs for food and health.[29]

Supply and demand for democracy in Africa. Afrobarometer surveys have found that the most common meaning of democracy in Africa relates to civil liberties, especially freedom of speech.[30] And successive waves of the Afrobarometer show that Africans consider democracy to be preferable to any other form of government, disapproving of authoritarian options including one-party, military and one-man rule (see Fig. 4.4A left). However, this demand for democracy is not matched by supply over the course of fifteen years. The African countries that favour democratic rule outweigh those that are satisfied with democracy and regard their country as a democracy (see Fig. 4.4B right).

Importantly, Figures 4.5 and 4.6 show that satisfaction with democracy is weakly positively associated with happiness, while a 'democratic deficit'—the gap between preference for democracy and satisfaction with its functioning—depresses levels of happiness. Looking back over the past decade, Figure 4.7 indicates that gains and losses in satisfaction with democracy relate to corresponding changes in happiness.

The material underpinnings of democracy and African well-being

It is important to note that African citizens expect much more of their democracies than just civil liberties such as free and fair elections. They are just as likely to associate democracy with better living conditions—with basic services such as clean water, electricity, and housing—as with regular elections, competing political parties, and freedom to criticise government.[31]

Given the continent's history of colonialism, there was hope that democracy would restore dignity to African people and improve their life circumstances. Africa's independence from colonial rule promised material benefits—the decent standard of living that provides dignity. It is telling that an improved or decent standard of living was the greatest hope expressed by Nigerians participating in Cantril's 1960s study. Before

**Figure 4.4: Trends in the Demand for and Supply of Democracy, 12 African Countries, 1999-2015**
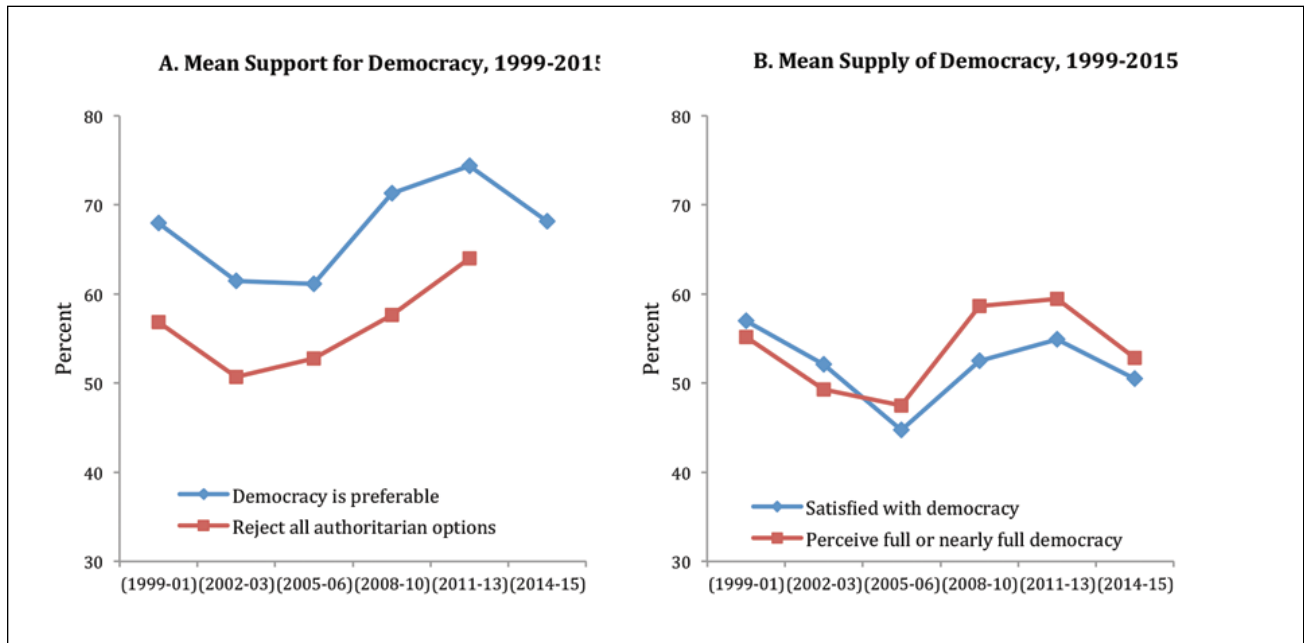
Source: Afrobarometer Rounds 1-6, Online Appendix, Table A4.1.

Figure 4.5: Satisfaction with Democracy and Happiness, 34 African Countries, 2013-2015
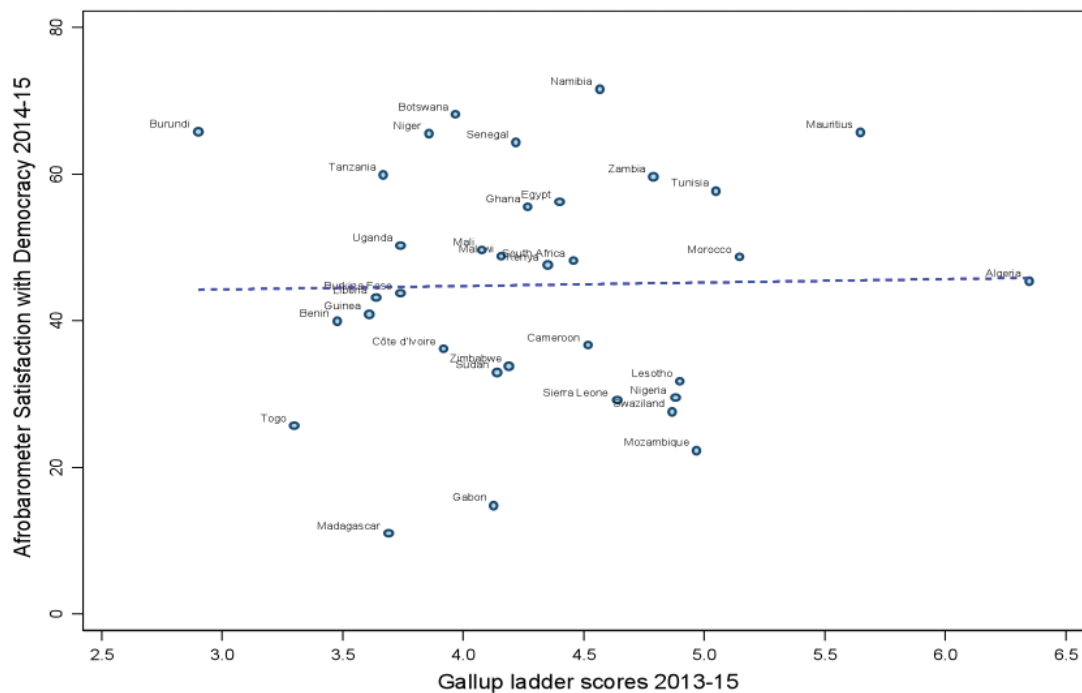
Sources: Afrobarometer Round 6 and Gallup World Poll ladder-of-life data, Online Appendix, Table A4.2.
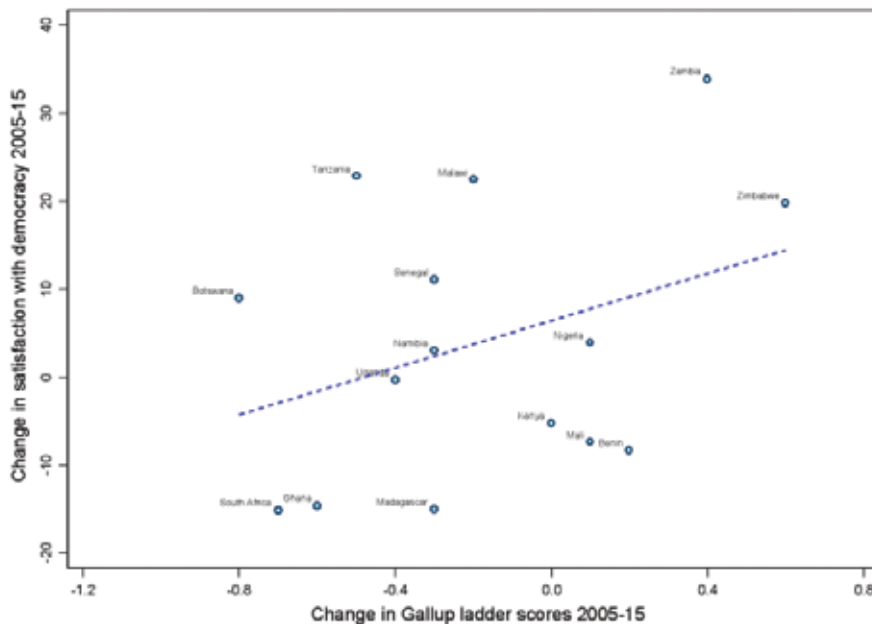
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Figure 4.6: Democratic Deficits and Happiness, 34 African Countries, 2013-2015[a]
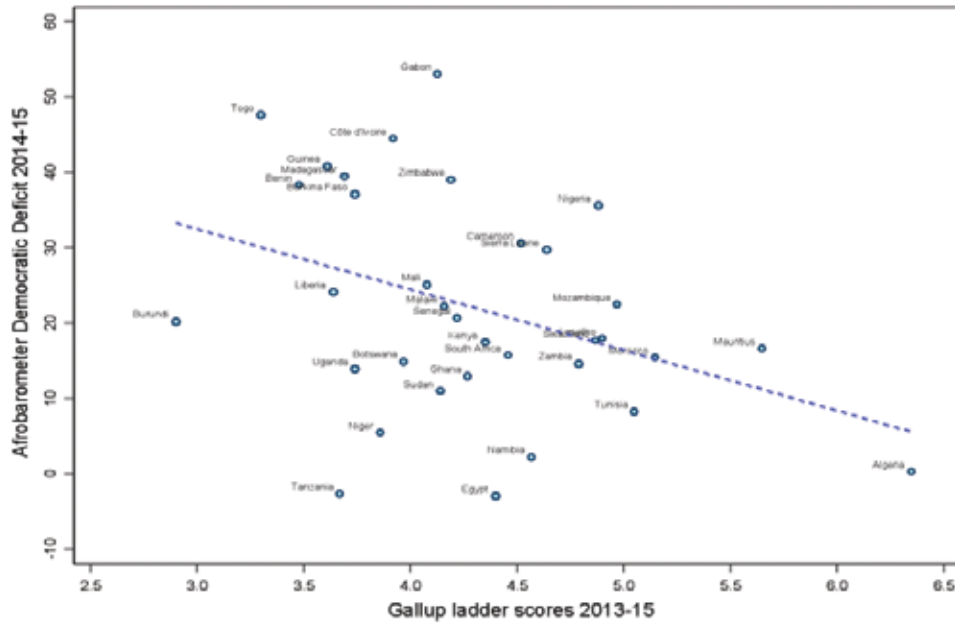
Sources: Afrobarometer Round 6 and Gallup World Poll ladder-of-life data, Online Appendix, Table A4.2.
a. The democratic deficit is the percentage point difference between the share stating that democracy is preferable and those that report satisfaction with democratic functioning. The larger the score, the greater the deficit.

Figure 4.7: Changes in Satisfaction with Democracy and Happiness, 15 African Countries, 2005-2015[a]

Sources: Afrobarometer Rounds 3 and 6 and Gallup World Poll ladder-of-life data, Online Appendix, Table A4.3.
a. Changes refer to absolute changes in levels of satisfaction with democracy and happiness between the two periods. The results are confined to those countries with available Afrobarometer and Gallup data in both time periods.

giving their life evaluations, 69% of Nigerian respondents stated they aspired to a better standard of living, while 60% worried that they might not achieve a decent standard of living.[32]

Waiting for the 'end of poverty'[33]. The Afrobarometer uses the Lived Poverty Index[34] to measure freedom from the experience of deprivations in everyday life. Respondents are asked whether they have gone without six basic necessities in the past year, ranging from food and water to electricity in the home. There is a strong negative association between happiness and lived poverty. African countries that have experienced less lived poverty report higher levels of happiness in the Gallup World Poll (see Fig. 4.8). Burundi, one of the world's poorest nations, that is struggling to emerge from a 12-year ethnic-based civil war, scores highest on Afrobarometer's lived poverty and lowest on happiness. In contrast,

Algeria, a leading North African oil-exporting country, and Mauritius, a strongly democratic island state, have low lived poverty and are the two happiest countries on the continent in the GWP. Other North African countries follow close behind Algeria and Mauritius in their lived poverty and happiness ratings.

Figure 4.9 indicates that changes in lived poverty and happiness over time are associated. For example, Zimbabwe, formerly a breadbasket in southern African and now often regarded as a failed state where unemployment and poverty are endemic and political strife and repression are commonplace, has experienced some poverty relief in daily life over the past decade. The drop in Zimbabwe's lived poverty score of 0.61 points in Figure 4.9 is matched by a corresponding increase of 0.64 points in its happiness score.

Figure 4.8: Happiness and Lived Poverty in 34 African Countries, 2013-15
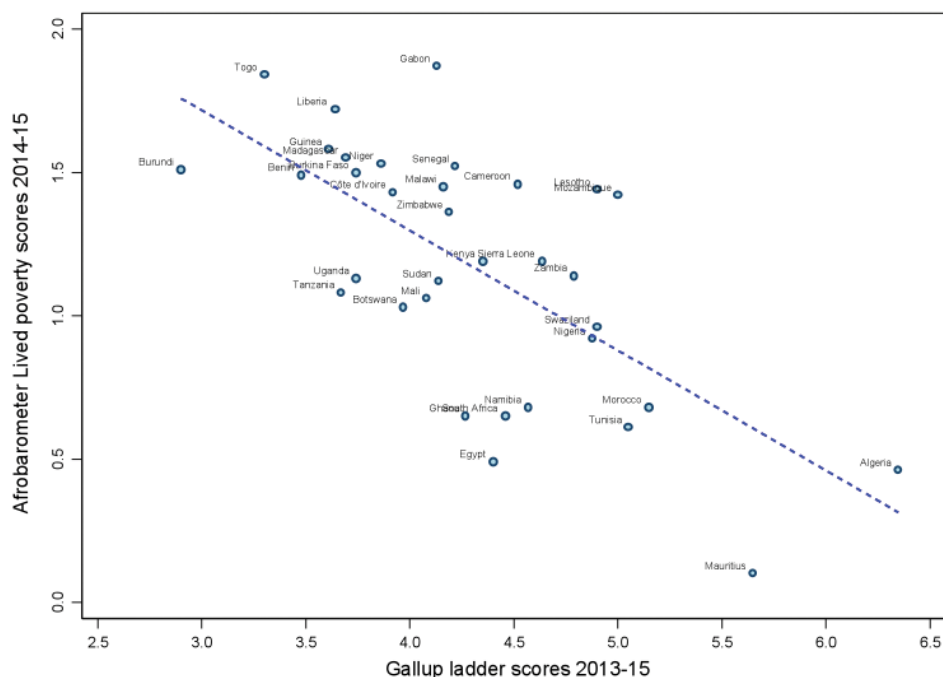
Sources: Afrobarometer Round 6 and Gallup World Poll ladder-of-life data, Online Appendix, Table A4.4.
Note: In three instances (Lesotho, Mozambique and Swaziland), there was no available happiness data point in the 2013-2015 period, so we instead utilized the data for the 2009-2011 period instead. In the case of Morocco, there was no lived poverty data for the 2014-2015 period, so we relied on Afrobarometer round 5 data for 2011-2013 in this case.

Figure 4.9: Changes in Happiness and Lived Poverty in 15 African Countries, 2005-15[a]
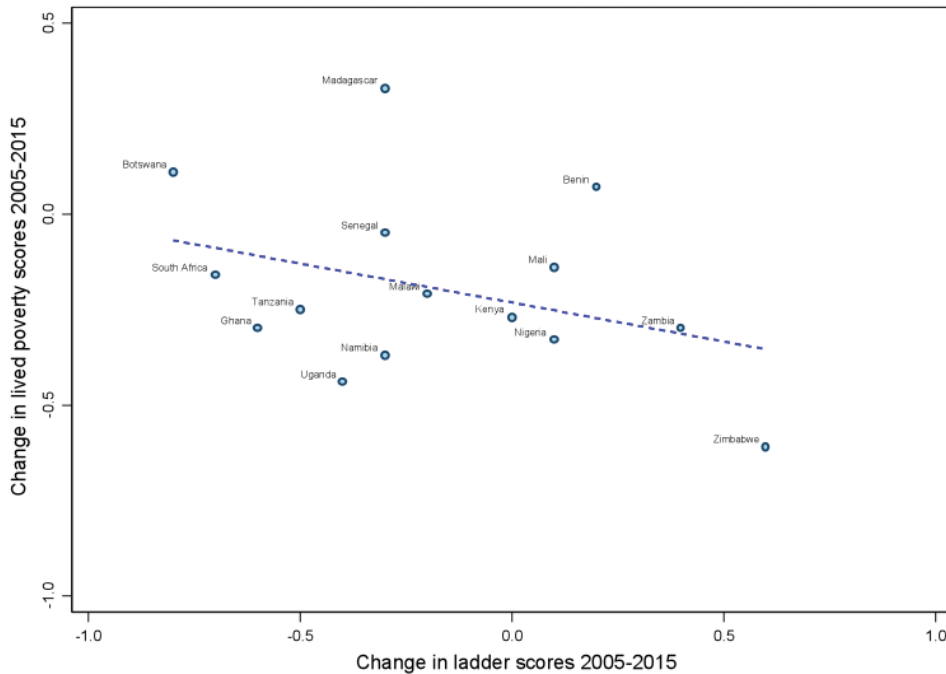
Sources: Afrobarometer Rounds 3 and 6 and Gallup World Poll ladder-of-life data, Online Appendix, Table A4.5.
a. Changes refer to absolute changes in levels of lived poverty and happiness between the two periods. The results are confined to those countries with available Afrobarometer and Gallup data in both time periods.

Infrastructure development and happiness. Developing the continent's infrastructure is a major challenge that has not kept pace with population growth. The Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa estimates that the continent would need to invest up to $93 billion a year until 2020 for capital investment and maintenance.[35] Africa's huge backlog of infrastructure may play a more important role in determining personal well-being in Africa than in the more developed countries of the West, whose higher levels of happiness are indicated in shades of green in the Geography of Happiness map (see Fig. 4.1 above).

Afrobarometer reports that on average across 35 African countries, only about two-thirds of the people live in communities with an electric grid (65%) and/or piped water infrastructure (63%), and less than one in three have access to sewage

(30%), while more than three times as many have access to cellular phone service (93%). Only about half (54%) live in zones with tarred or paved roads. Regional comparisons show that North Africa has the best availability of all five services[36], which may be reflected in their higher than average happiness ratings on the continent (see Figs. 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 above).

It is telling that in 1994 the government of South Africa, the last country on the continent to gain its independence, promised a 'better life' to meet its newly enfranchised black citizens' aspirations for housing, running water, and electricity. Some twenty years later, there is still a marked difference between what determines happiness among black and white South Africans. Economists report that better access to infrastructure and public goods increases happiness among black South Africans, while determinants

Figure 4.10: Satisfaction with State Provided Infrastructural Services and Happiness in 34 African Countries, 2013-15[a]
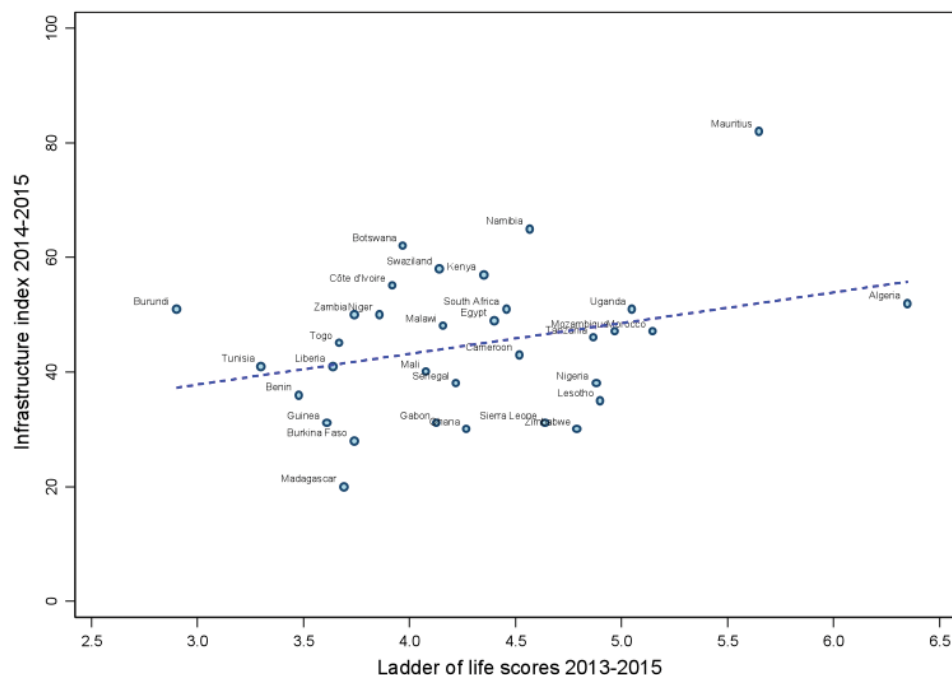
Sources: Afrobarometer Round 6 and Gallup World Poll ladder-of-life data, Online Appendix, Table A4.6.
a. In three instances (Lesotho, Mozambique and Swaziland), there was no available happiness data point in the 2013-2015 period, so we instead utilized the data for the 2009-2011 period instead. The index is simple average of the percent that the government is doing very or fairly well in handling four infrastructural services, namely: roads and bridges, electricity, water and sanitation, and basic health.

of the happiness among mainly wealthier white South Africans mirrors those typically found in Western developed research settings.[37]

Afrobarometer surveys highlight the importance of infrastructure development for the African experience of everyday well-being throughout the continent. The latest round of surveys found that the lived poverty index had declined in two-thirds of the 36 countries surveyed by Afrobarometer. Countries that had made progress in developing basic infrastructure were more likely to have experienced declines in lived poverty.[38] Figure 4.10 shows that satisfaction with the state's development of infrastructure in African countries is also positively associated with happiness.

Infrastructure and democracy. While poor infrastructure and lack of service delivery may contribute to lived poverty and depressed happiness, it may also undermine Africa's democracy project. A case in point is South Africa's relatively new democracy. The latest Afrobarometer survey conducted there suggests that South African citizens might be willing to give up their democratic rights in favour of their living conditions being improved. While almost two-thirds (64%) of South African respondents thought that democracy was preferable to any other kind of government, a similarly high percentage (62%) stated they would be 'very willing' or 'willing' to give up regular elections to live under a non-elected government capable of ensuring law and order and service delivery.[39] A growing global trend towards authoritarianism could lead to a resurgence of such regimes in Africa.[40]

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Africa's 'Big Men', Authoritarian Regimes, and Discontent

Three decades after its restoration in the 1990s, Africa's democratic process is still very fragile. Although the era of military coups, dictatorships and authoritarianism may be over, there are still a number of African leaders who resort to manipulating electoral and constitutional mechanisms and intimidating citizens in order to prolong their stay in power.[41] The Ibrahim Prize for good governance in Africa, instituted by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation in 2006, goes to former African leaders who have honoured their country's constitutionally mandated term limits, and have dedicated their rule to improving people's lives. Only five winners have been selected in the ten years since 2007.[42]

Africa's longest-ruling leaders are to be found across the continent. Fifteen leaders of 48 African countries that hold regular elections have served more than two terms or indicated their intention to do so in 2016. Africa's 'Big Men', who personalise power, often have poor human rights records and use repression to hang on to power.[43] They gain support through Africa's widespread patronage system.[44] A number of Africa's authoritarian regimes have survived because they have provided political stability or support for the 'war on terror', thus attracting the foreign aid and investment needed for development.[45]

An example of a country valued for its political stability after years of conflict is business-friendly Rwanda. The country was chosen to host the 2016 World Economic Forum on Africa in its capital city Kigali in recognition of its role as a model for regional development.[46] Rwanda's President Paul Kagame, a leader in Rwanda's post-genocide government since 1994, gained approval by referendum in 2015 to stand for an unprecedented third term in 2017. The controversial vote on the country's constitution means that Kagame could be in power until 2034 in a country with unusually low life evaluations relative to its economic success (see Fig. 4.2). President Kagame is said to have remarked that African countries that change their leaders too often have not fared as well as his country. He may not be alone in claiming that authoritarian rule is a more efficient form of democracy in less developed parts of the world.[47]

Citizens in a number of African countries appear to share President Kagame's view that strong leadership is in the interest of political stability and economic development. The latest Afrobarometer surveys show that views are divided on governance issues, such as one-man rule and term limits (see Table 4.1, top). On average, one-man rule is rejected by four out of five citizens, while only 11% are in favour, and three-quarters support two-term limits for their president. However, the differences between highest and lowest values of support and rejection are striking. Over 90% in Benin, Gabon, and Burkina Faso were in favour of constitutional two-term limits. In Mozambique, a country still suffering from the effects of a 16-year civil war that ended in 1994, near-equal proportions were against (35%) and in favour (30%) of one-man rule and only 50% supported a term limit. Noteworthy is that all four countries have experience of longer-term leadership.[48]

Trust and Corruption

Perceptions of the trustworthiness and honesty attributed to Africa's leaders and civil servants vary across the continent (see Table 4.1, middle). Highest and lowest values differ by at least 50 percentage points between countries. Within countries, trust in the president is consistently greater than trust in other members of the ruling party (Malawi and South Africa are exceptions). Similarly, government officials are consistently seen to be more corrupt than those in the office of the president (Gabon is an exception[49]). Nigeria was voted among the most corrupt countries on all three indicators recorded in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Support for Authoritarian Rule in Africa, Political Trust, and Perceived Corruption, Average and Range of Values Across 36 Countries, 2014-15 (%)

	African average	Lowest value	Highest value	Diff high to low	Three most positive ratings	Three most negative ratings
Reject one-man rule	80	35	93	59	MUS, SEN, BEN	MOZ, EGY, ALG
Support one-man rule	11	3	30	27	MUS, SLE, TZA	MOZ, SDN, TUN
Agree that Constitution should limit president to a maximum of two terms	75	50	93	43	BEN, GAB, BFA	MOZ, LSO, BWA
Trust President somewhat / a lot	56	29	82	53	EGY, BDI, NER	STP, MWI, LBR
Trust Ruling Party somewhat / a lot	47	20	72	52	BDI, NAM, NIG	GAB, LBR, NGA
All / most of government officials corrupt	39	15	70	55	CPV, MUS, STP	LBR, NGA, GAB
All / most of those in Office of President corrupt	31	13	63	51	CPV, TZA, BDI	LBR, BFA, NGA
Corruption increased a lot / somewhat in last year	58	26	83	57	MOR, BFA, EGY	RSA, NGA, GHA
Government doing very / fairly well in fighting corruption	30	10	54	44	BWA, SWZ, LSO	MDG, GAB, ZWE

Source: Afrobarometer Round 6, Online Appendix, Table A4.7.
Note: ALG=Algeria; BEN=Benin; BFA=Burkina Faso; BWA=Botswana; BDI=Burundi; CPV=Cape Verde; EGY=Egypt; GAB=Gabon; GHA=Ghana; LSO=Lesotho; LBR=Liberia; MDG=Madagascar; MWI=Malawi; MUS=Mauritius; MOR=Morocco; MOZ=Mozambique; NAM=Namibia; NER=Niger; NGA=Nigeria; RSA=South Africa; SLE=Sierra Leone; SEN=Senegal; STP=Sao Tome & Principe; SDN=Sudan; SWZ=Swaziland; TZA=Tanzania; TUN=Tunisia; ZWE=Zimbabwe

On average, 58% of respondents across all Afrobarometer countries surveyed thought corruption had increased in their country in the past year, while less than one in three approved of their government's efforts to fight corruption (see Table 4.1 bottom). Exceptionally, 54% in Botswana, considered to be a stable democracy, thought the government was doing well in fighting corruption. Noteworthy is that corruption might be easier to contain in smaller island states, such as Cape Verde, Mauritius, and Sao Tome & Principe, where Afrobarometer respondents indicated there was less corruption or approved of their governments' fight against corruption.

Our examination of the relationship between happiness and corruption (not shown here) suggests that it is not a recent increase or decrease in perception of corruption that counts, but rather longer-term changes. Over the past decade, happiness improved markedly in a number of countries where citizens saw a reduction in corruption at the top level of leadership (see Fig. 4.11) and stronger government performance in fighting corruption (see Fig. 4.12).

'Africa Uprising'[50]

The question is how long African citizens will support their strongmen and long-serving leaders. Five years ago, the so-called Arab Spring of 2011 saw regime change in North African countries that may have caused a ripple effect on

Figure 4.11: Changes in Happiness and Perceived Corruption in the Office of the President in 15 African Countries, 2005-15[a]
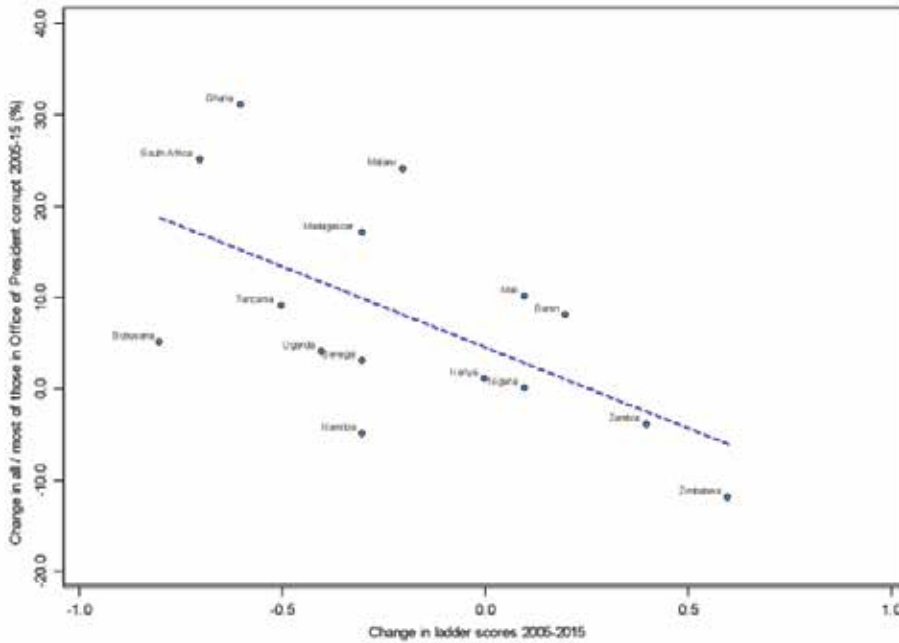
Sources: Afrobarometer Rounds 3 and 6 and Gallup World Poll ladder-of-life data, Online Appendix, Table A4.8.
a. Changes refer to absolute changes in levels of perceived corruption in the Office of the President and happiness between the two periods. The results are confined to those countries with available Afrobarometer and Gallup data in both time periods.

Figure 4.12: Changes in Happiness and Perceived Government Performance in Fighting Corruption in 15 African Countries, 2005-15[a]
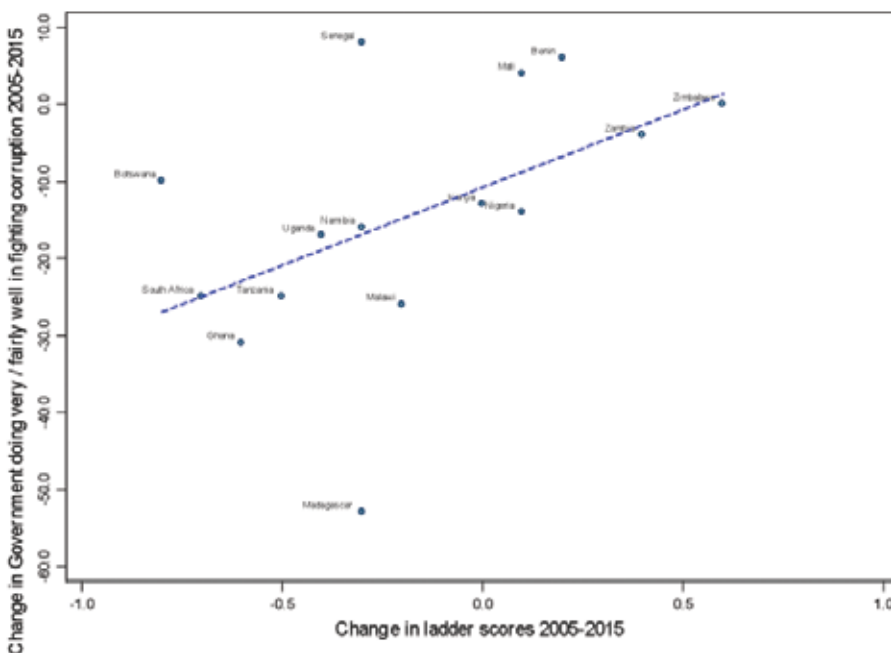
Sources: Afrobarometer Rounds 3 and 6 and Gallup World Poll ladder-of-life data, Online Appendix, Table A4.8.
a. Changes refer to absolute changes in the shares perceiving government performed very / fairly well in fighting corruption and levels happiness between the two periods. The results are confined to those countries with available Afrobarometer and Gallup data in both time periods.

the continent. When Burkina Faso's dictator of 27 years, Blaise Compaoré, was toppled in November 2014, an Africa watcher foresaw that a season of protest might have hitched a ride on the Sahara's Harmattan, a wind that blows south every November.[51] Interestingly, the Gallup World Poll conducted a year prior to the coup in Burkina Faso found awareness of the Arab Spring was greater in Burkina Faso than in other sub-Saharan countries.[52]

It may be significant that a further long-term president was almost ousted in 2016. Yahya Jammeh had boasted he would rule The Gambia for a billion years.[53] In December, his 22-year authoritarian rule was set to end by a shock election result. The event was initially heralded as a triumph for African democracy until Jammeh later disputed the election outcome. He was finally forced to step down in early 2017.[54]

Youth have always been in the forefront of protest. In the past two years, youth and student protests have swept through many countries south of the Sahara, including in Ethiopia where a state of emergency was imposed in mid-2016.[55] It is significant that the student protests there and in South Africa have been interpreted as a clash between generations.[56]

In 2016, Afrobarometer reported that their latest round of surveys found 11% of youth reported having been involved in at least one protest action in the past year.[57]

The disconnect: Africa's 'youth bulge' and ageing leaders

A problem for Africans who yearn for change and greater life chances is that there is a dramatic disconnect between Africa's longest serving leaders and the continent's youth.[58] The age

Figure 4.13: Trends in Mobile Cellular Telephone Subscriptions and Individual Internet Usage per 100 Inhabitants in Africa, 2005-16[a]
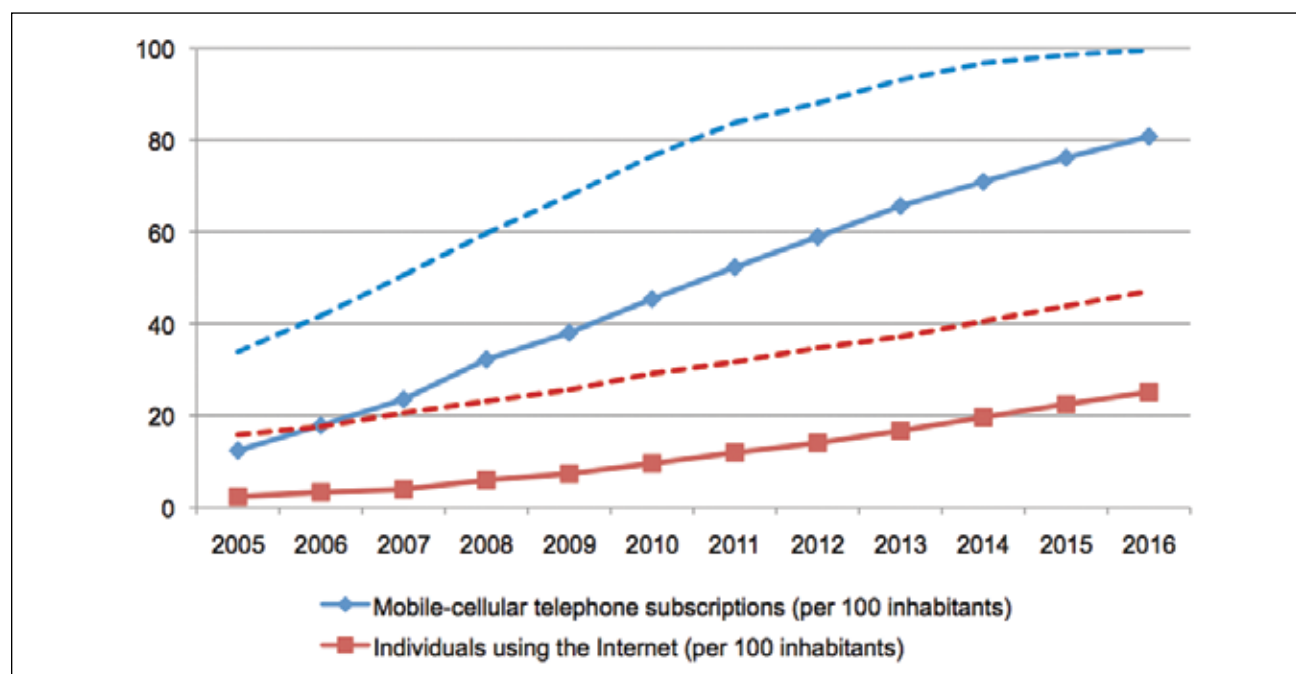
Sources: ITU World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators database, Online Appendix, Table A4.9.
a. The dashed lines represent the World average on the two ICT indicators.

difference between leaders and the youth is striking. While the average age of Africa's presidents is estimated to be about 70 years, some 70% of African citizens are younger than 30 years. Most of Africa's leaders will have been born before the age of television and mobile phones and before the end of the colonial era. Given this generation gap, there is likely to be a mismatch between youth's expectations of democracy, and the reality that confronts them.[59]

Social media played an important role in the Arab Spring and has continued to do so in more recent youth protests across Africa. Figure 4.13 shows that mobile phones have captured the imagination of the people on the continent. Africa's mobile-cellular telephone and internet usage is fast catching up with the rest of the world.

Youth voting with their feet

At the heart of the Arab Spring were disgruntled youth seeking democratic representation and economic participation. Political analysts have warned that responses to Africa's current youth revolts may not necessarily meet protestors' demands for greater access to education and to skills that will lead to employment.[60] An important question, therefore, is what will happen to Africa's youth who do not find jobs in their countries of birth by their mid- to late twenties. Will they despair, join extremist groups, or emigrate?

Africa's increasingly IT-connected youth will have expectations of a higher standard of living than their parents. Not all rural youth are content to till the soil as past generations have done and will try to find greener pastures in urban areas or, in some cases, even overseas. African people have always been on the move.[61]

Consider that South Africa's migrant labour system, introduced during the colonial era, forced rural men to work on faraway mines to earn the cash to pay a hut tax. In the twentieth century, labour circulation became a way of life

and working on the mines became a rite of passage for young Xhosa men. Working underground, they earned both prestige and the money to pay bride wealth in order to get married.[62]

Fast forward to 2016. Young men in a rural village in The Gambia, where President Jammeh's authoritarian rule was challenged in the December elections, see the need to risk a perilous 4,800 km journey across the Sahara and the Mediterranean in search of work in Europe. They hope to earn money in order to be able to marry a local young woman and gain respect in their community. As many as 600 of the approximately 4,000 villagers have risked this so-called 'Back Way'.[63]

Youth working overseas earn not only to benefit themselves but also to support their families in Africa. The remittances sent home by nearly 140 million Africans living abroad currently surpass Western foreign aid.[64] Africans fleeing conflict in their countries or seeking a better life have overwhelmed Europe in the past year. Since 2014, an estimated 80,000 of the passengers on the Mediterranean people-smuggling boats have come from sub-Saharan Africa.

'Asinamali'[65]—we have no money!

Africa will need to provide jobs for its youth if it is to meet their aspirations for the good life. In 2010 there were roughly 200 million Africans between 15 and 24 years of age and this number could rise to over 450 million by 2050. According to an African Development Bank report, young people aged 15 to 24 constitute 37% of Africa's labour force but make up 60% of the continent's total.[66] It is estimated that 18 million jobs will need to be created every year just to accommodate Africa's current jobseekers.[67]

The latest Afrobarometer identified unemployment as a top concern in African countries (see Fig. 4.14). Some Africa watchers argue that the continent is already falling behind in providing education and employment for its youth. The

Figure 4.14: The Most Important Problem Facing African Countries, 2013-15 (%)[a]
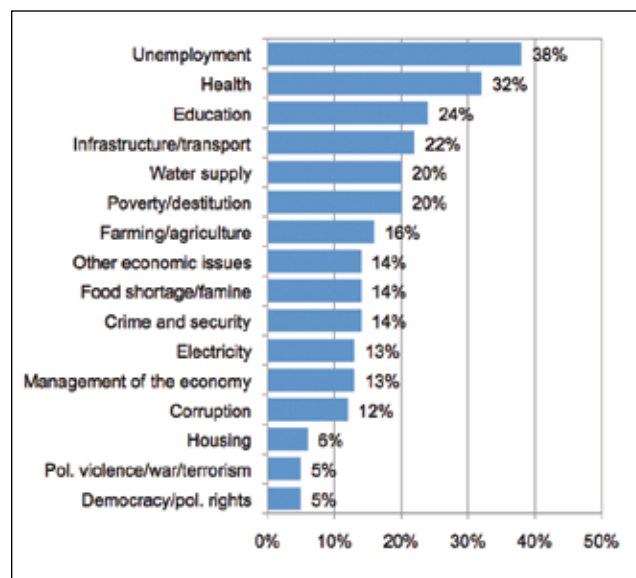
Source: Afrobarometer (2016) Highlights of Round 6 survey findings from 36 African countries, p.2, Online Appendix, Table A4.10.
a. Respondents were asked: In your opinion, what are the most important problems facing this country that government should address? Respondents were allowed to provide up to three responses. The bars in the figure show the percentage of respondents who mentioned each problem among their top three challenges.

African Development Bank has pointed out that in 2012 only a quarter of young African men and just 10% of young African women managed to get jobs in the formal economy before they reached the age of 30.[68]

One hopeful future scenario sees the African continent diversifying from extractive industries to investing in its youth. If business friendly policies were introduced, some analysts predict that production in China could shift to Africa[69] and Africa's 'youth bulge' could be 'put to work'. However, there are also fears of 'Chinese neo-colonialism' that might jeopardise Africa's future.

Drought and commodity prices as risk factors for 'Africa Uprising'

It might be worth considering that economic recessions following periods of drought have played a critical role in fueling the continent's discontent, as in the cases of the Arab Spring and the Ethiopian protests. Drought may well spark further uprisings. Africa has a long history of extreme weather patterns[70], which is likely to be aggravated by climate change in the 21st century.[71] In 2016, countries in east and southern Africa experienced severe drought conditions that have negatively affected food production and increased food prices. It was anticipated that the drought would be followed by severe flooding in the region.[72]

A further risk factor for discontent and unrest is the combination of lower demand for commodities and lower commodity prices, which will call for belt-tightening in Africa's oil-producing countries. The latest International Monetary Fund outlook for sub-Saharan Africa predicts a growth of only 1.4%. A number of African countries have already had to turn to the IMF and the World Bank for bailouts. Sub-Saharan countries, including Angola, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Zambia, and Zimbabwe have asked for financial assistance or are in talks to do so.[73]

Demography and Well-Being

Although major investment in Africa's youth is needed to address barriers to youth employment, there may not be time to make sufficient investment to avert a population 'time bomb'. The international Children's Worlds survey suggests that Africa is lagging behind other countries in investing in its youth. (See Technical Box 2: African children's well-being in international context). Noteworthy is that some of Africa's smaller nations, particularly island states such as Mauritius, are among the happiest (see Figure 4.2 above), a finding that suggests it may be easier for the state to provide services for a smaller number of people.

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Technical box 2: African Children's Well-being in an International Context

African countries are aware that investing in children will contribute to a better future for their nations and their people. Over the past decade, Africa has seen significant changes that affect child well-being, including a reduction in infant and child mortality, and improved access to basic health services. However, there are still many factors that hold back the advancement of young children, such as malnutrition and stunting, on-going conflict in some countries, and unequal education for girls.

Research on the well-being of African children is still in its infancy. Children's Worlds, the International Survey of Children's Well-Being, is so far the largest international comparative research on children's own views of their lives and well-being. Children's Worlds aims to create awareness of the state of child well-being among children, their parents and their communities, and to inform policy makers and the general public. The 2013-14 wave tracked just over 53,000 children aged about 8, 10, and 12 years in 15 countries across four continents. Country samples typically include approximately 1,000 children attending mainstream schools in each age group.

The survey is based solely on children's own evaluations, perceptions and aspirations. Children are asked to evaluate their lives relating to some dozen domains, including their living situation, home and family relationships, money and economic circumstances, friends and other relationships, the local area, school, time use, the self, children's rights, and subjective well-being.

The survey uses a number of response formats for its questionnaire items: Life circumstances are captured by agreement with statements on 5 or 10-point response scales from 'I do not agree' to 'I totally agree'. Responses to frequency items, mainly time-use ones, are recorded on a 4-point scale from 'rarely or never' to 'every day or almost every day'. Domain and life satisfactions are rated on a 0 to 10-point scale from 'not

at all satisfied' to 'totally satisfied'. For international comparative purposes, country standing is variously reported as the country's mean score on a survey item, the standard deviation of the mean country score to indicate dispersal of responses, and the rank order of the country's score among the 15 countries.

Three African countries are included in the Children's Worlds 2013-14 survey: Algeria, Ethiopia, and South Africa. The samples of children drawn are representative of the whole country in the case of Ethiopia, the Western Cape Province in South Africa, and the Western Region of Algeria. These three countries differ markedly according to their objective socio-economic indicators. For example, Gross Domestic Product per capita in Algeria and South Africa is approximately ten times higher than in Ethiopia, the poorest country in the Children's Worlds survey apart from Nepal. Ethiopia ranks 173 out of 187 on the Human Development Index, the lowest ranking among the 15 countries, compared to somewhat higher HDI rankings for Algeria (93) and South Africa (118) in 2013. South Africa is the most unequal country in the survey, with a very high Gini coefficient of 63 (100 indicates highest inequality).

Select findings from the Children's Worlds 2013-14 survey among approximately 36,000 children aged 10 to 12 years provide glimpses of how African children view and evaluate their lives compared to age peers in Colombia, Estonia, Germany, Israel, Nepal, Norway, Poland, Romania, South Korea, Spain, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.

Home and family life: Children in all 15 countries generally viewed their home and family life fairly positively. Algeria's evaluations of this domain ranked among the most favourable while Ethiopia's were often the least favourable. Algerian children achieved high rankings for satisfaction with 'my family life' and endorse-

ment that parents listened to them and treated them fairly. In contrast, children in all three African countries were among the most dissatisfied with 'the house or flat where you live', and Ethiopian and South African children were most likely not to 'feel safe at home' and not to 'have a quiet place to study at home'.

Local area. The African countries rated the 'area you live in in general' and opportunities for 'doing things away from home' less favourably than others, and were less likely to say they have places to play and feel safe in the area where they live.

Material well-being. The Children's Worlds index of material deprivation asked children if they had or lacked nine items including good clothes for school, a computer at home, internet access, a mobile phone, own room, books to read for fun, a family car, 'own stuff' to listen to music, and a television in the home. Pooled world data indicated that, on average, children lacked only 1.9 items. Norway's children suffered the least material deprivation; they lacked only 0.2 items on average. Ethiopia was the most materially deprived of all countries, with 6.3 lacked items. There was less material deprivation in the other African countries: Algeria lacked 3.6 items, South Africa 2.3, but the distribution of deprivation was particularly uneven in the two countries. African children were also among the least satisfied with 'the things you have' compared to other countries.

School life. Children in all 15 countries were mainly positive about school life. African children were no exception. For example, endorsement of 'I like going to school' by Ethiopian and Algerian children was higher than in other countries. Children in Algeria were also among the most satisfied with 'my life as a student', 'my school experience', and 'the things I learn at school'. Unusually, Ethiopian children's evaluation of school life was generally more positive than home life, although they did not feel very safe at school.

Time use. Homework was one of the most common after-school activities in all countries. African children also looked after siblings and other family members and helped with household chores. Participation in organized spare-time activities, such as reading for fun and sports were less common, particularly in Ethiopia and Algeria.

Safety. Satisfaction with personal safety, a topic explored across the domains of home, school, local area, and the self, attracted lower scores in South Africa and Ethiopia than in many other countries.

Subjective well-being. Three indicators measured children's overall subjective well-being: a satisfaction item (with 'life as a whole'), a frequency item ('how happy were you in the past two weeks'), and an agreement item ('I feel positive about the future'). Country scores on all three measures were highly skewed towards the positive end of the 0 to 10 point scale. In the 12-years survey, scores on the three measures were contained in a narrow band from 9.0-9.5 in Romania down to 7.5-7.6 in South Korea. Scores on subjective well-being varied across the African countries with Algeria leading, South Africa in an intermediate position, and Ethiopia lagging behind. Algeria ranked among the four countries with the highest scores on life satisfaction (9.1) and happiness (8.9) for 12 year olds. South Africa's distribution of life satisfaction scores for 10 and 12 year olds were the most extreme: low scores (below 5) and high scores (10) were split 7.4% to 63%. Ethiopia ranked second-lowest, after South Korea, on life satisfaction among 10 to 12 year olds. Only every second Ethiopian child rated life satisfaction with a score of 10 compared to over 7 in 10 in the four top-ranking countries.

In contrast to these widely varying present life evaluations, African children were consistently positive about the future. All three countries gave a future rating of 8.7 out of 10, a score only 0.3 points lower than top-ranking Romania's score of 9.

Final Comments. The select findings from the 2013-14 Children's World survey previewed here expose some of the disadvantages many African children face in early life. The most glaring hardship may be doing without the resources that children in more developed countries take for granted. Obviously, much needs to be done to improve African children's life circumstances. Meanwhile Africa's children, like all children around the world, try to enjoy everyday life. Importantly, they express confidence in their future.

Further information: See the report on the Children's Worlds Survey, 2013-14, in 15 countries (Rees & Main 2015), and African country reports on Children's Worlds surveys in Algeria (Tiliouine 2015b), Ethiopia (Mekonen & Dejene 2015), and South Africa (Savahl et al. 2015), available on the project website: www.isciweb.org

For centuries Africa was underpopulated. The continent only started to reach its potential for population growth toward the end of the 20th century.[74] Now Africa's exploding population is expected to double by 2050. Population growth, together with migration to Africa's urban areas has put severe pressure on the state's capacity to provide education, health services, and infrastructure. Further population growth may undermine progress in human development achieved so far. It is predicted that by 2050, Africa could have 35 cities with over 5 million inhabitants with Kinshasa and Lagos each exceeding 30 million.[75]

Africa's population challenge. Demographers Jean-Pierre Guengant and John May describe the scale of the continent's new population challenge. In the early 1960s, they report, African countries had fertility rates of between 5.5 and 7.5, comparable with other developing economies at that time. Whereas Asian and Latin American nations saw their fertility rates decline at a fairly steady rate over the next fifty years, African countries' fertility stayed high until the 1980s, before it fell sharply. As a result, they predict that Africa's overall population will rise sharply, its big cities will grow alarmingly, and although its labour force will also expand, its 'youth bulge' will be 'hard to manage'.[76]

Currently, some 78% of Africa's people live in countries that have not passed the demographic transition to low fertility and low mortality; only the countries in the far north and south of the continent are exceptions with lower fertility rates. Countries with the top ten fertility rates in the world are found in sub-Saharan Africa, with nearly all above six children per woman. Fertility rates are particularly high among Africa's landlocked countries and ones with low rates of urbanisation. Niger, a land-locked country in the Sahel is a case in point. It has the world's highest fertility rate of 7.6. The rate of contraception use among child-bearing age women in sub-Saharan Africa is lower than in other regions of the world.[77]

Our examination of demographic factors (see Figs. 4.15 and 4.16) suggests that African countries with higher fertility rates and a large youth population may find it harder to provide quality of life for their citizens.

Figure 4.15: Fertility Rates and Happiness in 34 African Countries, 2013-15[a]
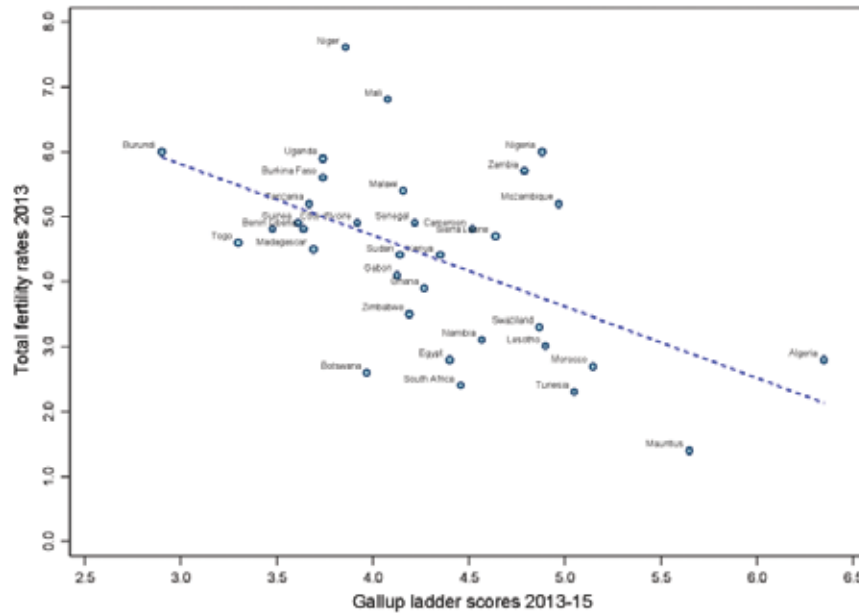
Sources: World Bank World Development Indicators and Gallup World Poll ladder-of-life data, Online Appendix, Table A4.11.
a. In three instances (Lesotho, Mozambique and Swaziland), there was no available happiness data point in the 2013-2015 peri-od, so we instead utilized the data for the 2009-2011 period instead.

Figure 4.16: Youth Share (under 15 years) and Happiness in 34 African Countries, 2013-15[a]
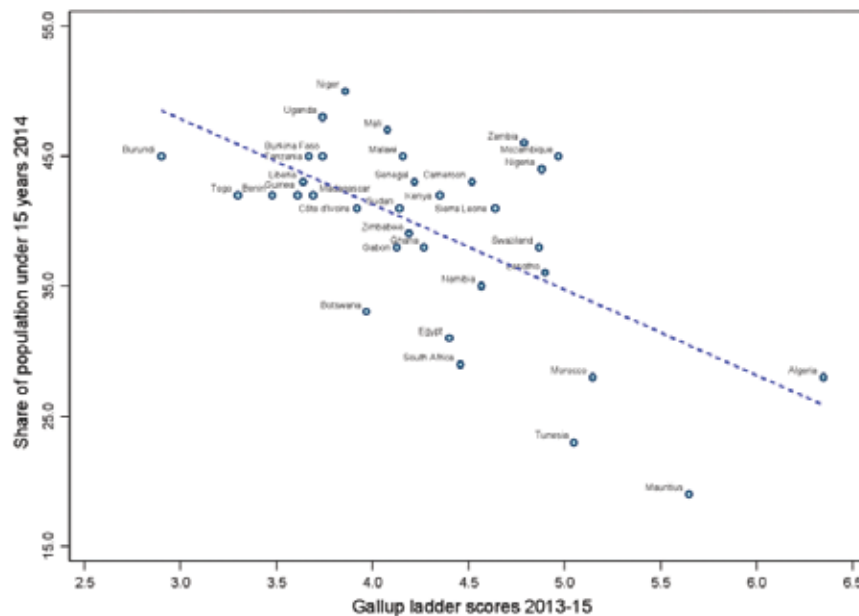
Sources: World Bank World Development Indicators and Gallup World Poll ladder-of-life data, Online Appendix, Table A4.11.
a. In three instances (Lesotho, Mozambique and Swaziland), there was no available happiness data point in the 2013-2015 peri-od, so we instead utilized the data for the 2009-2011 period instead.

The Unfinished Story: African Resilience and Hope for the Future

African resilience

Given the development challenges that Africa currently faces, it may take a while before people in Africa join the happiest people on the globe. Meanwhile, Africa's relative happiness deficit is buoyed by its astonishing resilience. The West African scholars, cited in the introduction to this chapter, referred to African people's coping skills when discussing how improbable it was for their countries to be assigned high happiness rankings in international studies. In the case of Nigeria, Aaron Agbo and his colleagues reason that the country's happiness 'paradox' serves as an 'adaptive mechanism'.[78] Similarly, Vivian Dzokoto reproduces a typical 'emblematic' conversation between a foreign visitor and a local to illustrate how Ghanaians cope in everyday life. The visitor to Africa is perplexed to find there is no running water when turning on the tap, and asks successive questions to seek a plausible explanation. In response, the Ghanaian, who takes such things for granted, simply shrugs and says: 'My friend, this is Ghana. Sometimes, the water runs, sometimes, it doesn't. That is how it is. Here, take this bucket. There is water in the tank around the corner.'[79]

African optimism

Optimism that 'many things' will change for the better, to paraphrase the Gallup-Kettering question put to African respondents in its 1970s global survey, is a further coping skill perfected by African people. People living on the continent have developed this skill over time, possibly over centuries, to make daily hassles and hardships tolerable.[80] A series of studies of democracy and happiness in the authoritarian states of Chad and Zimbabwe, and in South Africa's new democracy, suggest that even when the demand for democracy in Africa is not matched by satisfaction with living conditions, discontent is tempered by optimism for the future.[81]

The majority of African countries rate life at present below the mid-point of the Cantril ladder scale in the latest available Gallup World Poll. This is not the case for average future ratings. Projected ladder ratings in five years' time are uniformly higher than present evaluations across all countries on the continent. In fact, the percentage increase in future expectations of life is often higher among some of the least contented nations.

Nigeria's track record of such positive expectations is well documented. Cantril's 1960s study already reported a difference of 2.6 points between the country's average present (4.8) and future (7.4) ladder ratings.[82] Similarly, in 2016, there is a difference of 2.9 points between Nigeria's present (5.3) and future (8.2) ratings in the Gallup World Poll. An international study of comparative ladder ratings in ten countries with large populations, including China, India and the United States, found Nigeria's 2.6 point difference between present and future ratings to be by far the largest.[83] Nigeria's spirit of optimism may be exceptional by world standards, but not in Africa.

On average in African countries, future life evaluations are much higher than present ones. Optimism, the gap between present and future ladder ratings, is greatest for Africa's youth and decreases with age (see Fig. 4.17). In almost all African countries, youthful optimism is above the national average (see Fig. 4.18). It is likely that this belief that things may change for the better helps African people to manage their lives in difficult circumstances. African children may grow up with such a sense of optimism (see Technical Box 2 above).

Figure 4.17: Average Cantril Present and Future Ladder Evaluations by Age Group, 37 African Countries, 2015-16
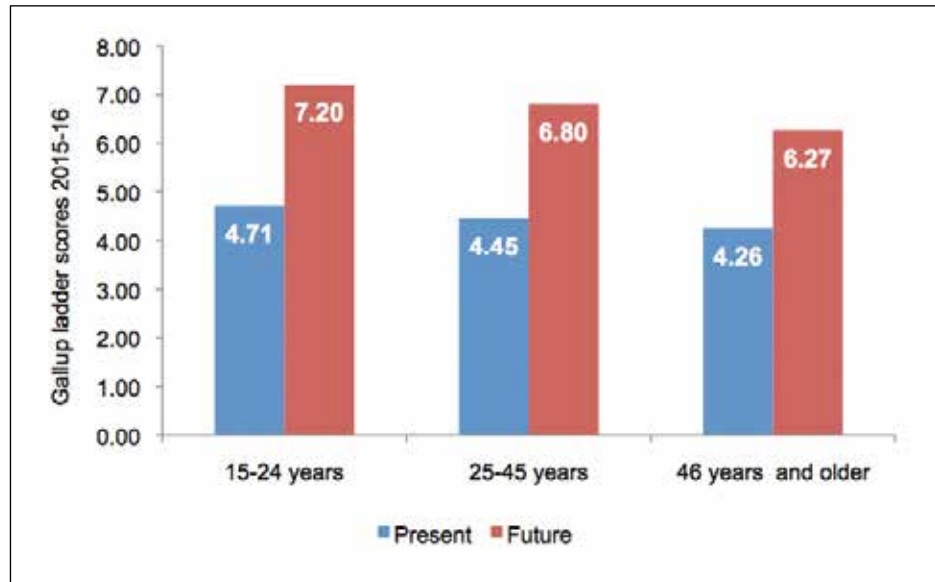
Sources: Gallup World Poll ladder-of-life data, Online Appendix, Table A4.12.

Figure 4.18: Comparison of Differences Between Future and Present Ladder Scores Between Youth (15-24 years) and the National Average, 37 African Countries, 2015-16[a]
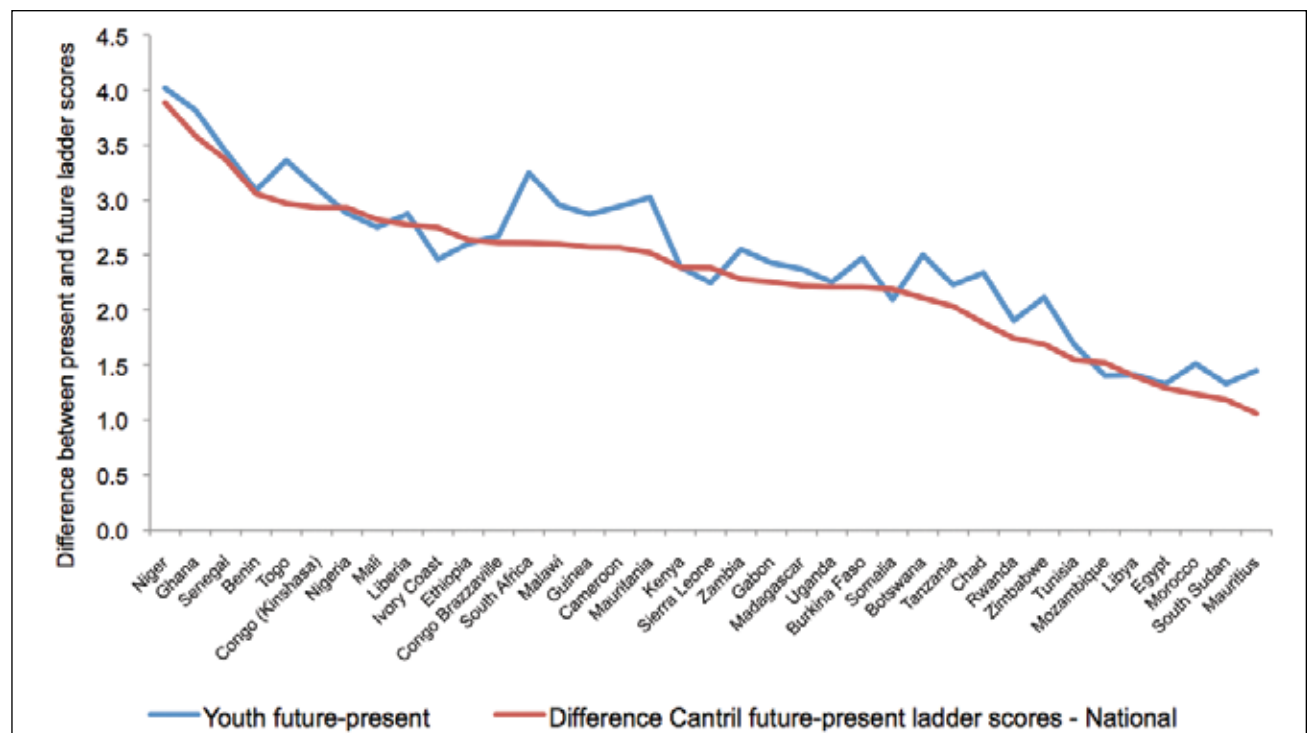
Sources: Gallup World Poll ladder-of-life data, Online Appendix, Table A4.12.
a. The data are ranked from highest to lowest difference in ladder scores based on national averages.

Figure 4.19: Importance of Religion in Life, 9 African and 21 Other Countries, 2013[a]
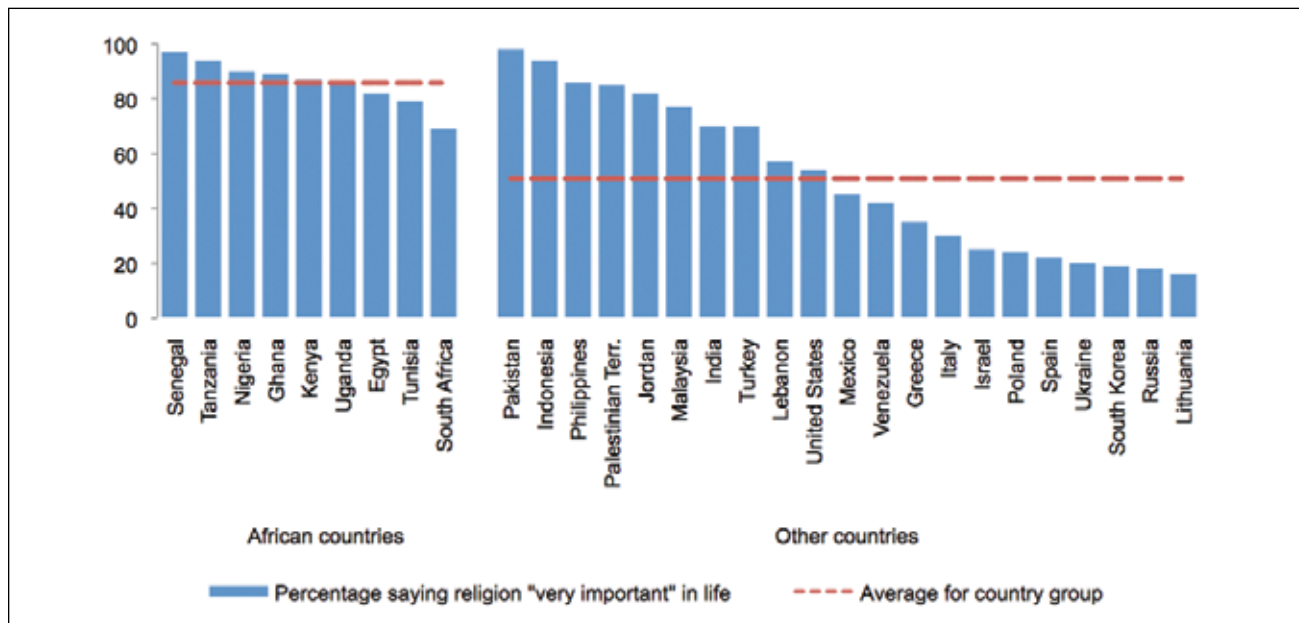
Sources: Pew Global Attitudes & Trends Question Database, Online Appendix, Table A4.13.
a. The data are ranked from highest to lowest within each country cluster based on the percentage saying that religion is 'very important' in life.

Drying tears[84]—African religiosity

African people also tend to turn to religion to find fellowship, comfort, and a sense of hope in the future.[85] A recent Pew study of religiosity[86] across 30 countries found that the importance of religion is higher, on average, in Africa than elsewhere (see Fig. 4.19). The relationship between religiosity and happiness among these countries lends support to the idea that faith might assuage Africa's unhappiness (see Fig. 4.20).

Conclusions

In this chapter we have attempted to explore the reasons why African countries lag behind other countries in the world in their evaluation of life. We took as our starting point the aspirations expressed by the Nigerian respondents in the 1970 Gallup-Kettering study who were about to embark on their first experience of freedom from colonialism. Nigerians stated that *many* changes, not just a few, were needed to improve their lives and those of their families. Fifty years on, judging by the social indicators we have presented in this chapter, people in many African countries are still waiting for changes to improve their lives and to make them happy. In short, African people's expectations that they and their countries would flourish under self-rule and democracy appear not to have been met.

Africa's lower levels of happiness compared to other countries in the world might be attributed to this disappointment with different aspects of development under democracy. Although most citizens still believe that democracy is the best political system, they are critical of good governance in their countries. While there has been significant improvement in meeting basic needs according to the Afrobarometer index of 'lived poverty', population pressure may have stymied infrastructure and youth development.

Figure 4.20: Happiness and the Importance of Religion in Life, 9 African and 21 Other Countries, 2013-15[a]
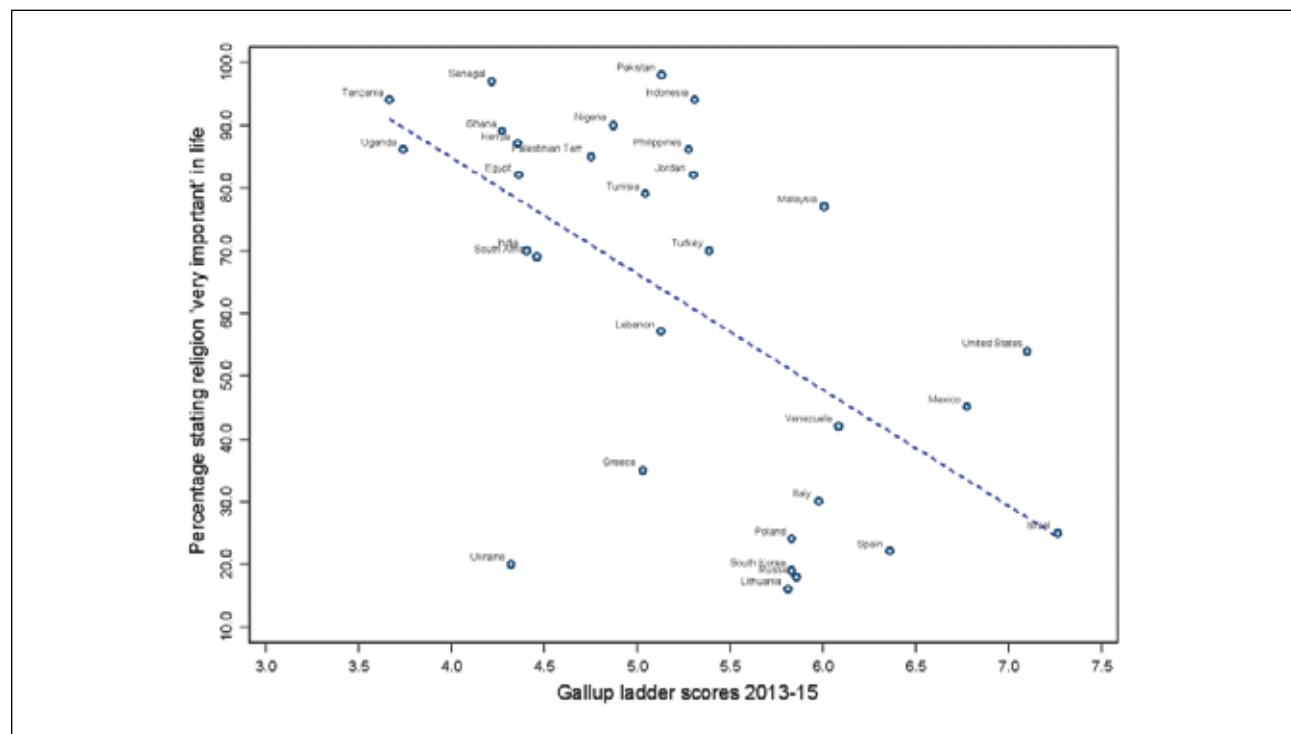
Sources: Pew Global Attitudes & Trends Question Database and Gallup World Poll ladder-of-life data, Online Appendix, Table A4.14.

a. The religiosity data are based on the percentage saying that religion is 'very important' in life. The 2007 values for Morocco and the Netherlands are based on 2005 data, while it is based on 2009 data for Hungary. The 2013 values are based on 2011 data in the cases of Lithuania, Sweden and Ukraine, and 2012 data in India and the United States.

Most countries in the world project that life circumstances will improve in future.[87] However, Africa's optimism may be exceptional. African people demonstrate ingenuity that makes life bearable even under less than perfect circumstances. Coping with poor infrastructure, as illustrated in the case of Ghana referred to in this chapter, is just one example of the remarkable resilience that African people have perfected. African people are essentially optimistic, most of all the youth who have their lives ahead of them. This optimism might serve as a self-fulfilling prophecy for the continent.

What if Africa looks to its youth to realise the continent's dreams of prosperity? What if the African youth's confidence in their future and their entrepreneurial spirit were to be matched by substantial investment in their development? Then, no doubt, African countries would join the ranks of the world's prosperous and happy nations.

1 'Waiting for Happiness' is the title of Abderrahmane Sissako's 2002 film that depicts the daily lives of people living in northwest Africa's Mauritania. See Niemiec & Wedding (2014, p. 329).

2 Equal numbers of African countries gained or lost happiness over the periods 2005-2007 to 2014-2016 as set out in Chapter 2 of this report. However, only two African countries out of 126 worldwide made significant gains of 0.5 point increases or more in their ladder scores. Sierra Leone – one of the three West African countries affected by the outbreak of the Ebola virus in 2014 – gained 1.1 points, Cameroon 0.59 points. In contrast, six countries' ladder scores dropped significantly by 0.6 points or more over the two periods. (see WHR 2017, Chapter 2).

3 In 2014-16, the average standard deviation in happiness ratings was 2.301 for 44 African countries, ranging from 1.588 for Senegal to 3.287 for Sierra Leone (See Fig. 14 in the Statistical Appendix WHR 2017). Average standard deviation in happiness ratings for 39 African countries increased from 2.132 to 2.265 over the periods 2012-15 to 2014-16.

4 Dianna Games (2015) at Business Advisory Africa at Work (www.africaat-work.co.za) refers to the 'patchwork of countries that make up Africa'. Responsible for this patchwork is the 19th century 'scramble for Africa' that created borders that cut across ethnicities and ancient polities (see Meredith 2011). In the interest of political stability on the continent, the African Union, formed in 2002 with the objectives of promoting peace and democracy on the continent, supports the maintenance of country borders dating back to independence. South Sudan, which gained its independence from Sudan in 2011, is an exception.

5 The 2016 WHR reported ladder scores for both Somaliland and Somali in the global distribution of happiness (see Helliwell, Huang & Wang, 2016, Figure 2.2, pp. 20–22). Ladder scores for two small African countries of Comoros and Djibouti were included in earlier WHRs: Comoros in the WHR Updates 2013 to 2016 and Djibouti in WHR 2015.

6 There were no ladder scores available for the 2014–16 period for Comoros, Djibouti, Mauritania and Somaliland, so we used the latest available data reported in earlier WHRs instead. The map shows a 2012–14 ladder score for Djibouti (4.369) (see Helliwell et al. 2015, Fig. 2.2, p. 28), and 2013–15 ladder scores for Comoros (3.956), Mauritania (4.201) and Somaliland (5.057) (see Helliwell et al. 2016, Fig. 2.2, p. 21–2).

7 The title of a chapter in Meredith's (2011, p. 162) history of Africa.

8 See Huntington (1991), Diamond (2008), and Diamond & Plattner (2010).

9 For reports on Africa's quality of life and well-being from an historical perspective, see Tiliouine (2015a) and Tiliouine & Meziane (2017) on North Africa, and Roberts et al. (2015) and Møller & Roberts (2017) on sub-Saharan Africa.

10 See Furlonger (2016) commenting on access to African markets in a South African business daily.

11 See veteran Africa journalist and University of Kent professor Keith Somerville's (2013) views on the different lenses through which we can observe and evaluate Africa's performance.

12 See, for example, Roger Southall's (2016) portrait of South Africa's emergent black middle class.

13 See the article on 'Africa Rising' by Aryn Baker (2015), *Time* Magazine's Africa correspondent.

14 In this chapter we limit our examination of happiness to Africa's post-independence period, which coincides with the emergence of the 1960s social indicators movement that applied the first rigorous measures of quality of life and well-being. It is possible that Africa's people, or at least those of standing, flourished in earlier times, e.g. when the pharaohs ruled in the Nile valley (van Wyk Smith 2009), during Islam's golden age in Africa (Renima, Tiliouine & Estes 2016), and at the height of the ancient kingdoms and civilisations in West and East Africa (see Møller & Roberts 2017). Going further back in time, Africa's more egalitarian hunter-gatherer societies (Reader 1997), whose expectations of life will have been more modest than present-day ones, might have been more contented than contemporary African citizens.

15 Richard Easterlin (2010) argues that it is important to examine time-series as opposed to point-of-time evidence on happiness.

16 The Afrobarometer is an African-led series of public attitude surveys on democracy and governance, whose coverage of African countries has increased from 12 in Round 1 (1999–2001) to 36 in Round 6 (2014–2015). Afrobarometer's Round 6 interviews with about 54 000 citizens in 36 countries represent the views of more than three-fourths of the continent's population.

17 The Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) covers all 54 countries on the continent. The tenth iteration of the IIAG 2016 incorporates Afrobarometer public attitude survey data for the first time. This addition means that just over 17% of IIAG's 95 indicators are now provided by African sources (Mo Ibrahim Foundation 2016, p. 9). See www.afrobarometer.org and Mo Ibrahim Foundation (2016).

18 See http://www.arabbarometer.org/

19 See Vivian Afi Abui Dzokoto's (2012, p. 311) chapter on happiness in Ghana, which she contributed to a handbook on happiness across cultures. An Associate Professor of African America Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University in the USA, Dzokoto was raised in Germany and Ghana.

20 See the chapter on happiness in Nigeria, which University of Nigeria researchers Aaron A. Agbo, Thaddeus C. Nzeadibe, and Chukwuedozie K. Ajaero (2012, p. 303) contributed to a handbook on happiness across cultures. Lead author Aaron Agbo is based in the Department of Psychology; his colleagues Nzeadibe and Ajaero in the Department of Geography at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

21 Inglehart and Klingemann (2000, cited in Tov & Diener 2009, p.22) suggest that, apart from economic development, national levels of well-being might also reflect historical factors. Their research found that the number of years living under communist rule negatively predicted national well-being in former communist states of Eastern Europe and the USSR. One might consider that Africa's history of colonial rule may have played a similar role in shaping life evaluations on the continent. In South Africa, we were only able to rule out the possibility that cultural factors rather than miserable living conditions and lack of opportunities in life might be responsible for the very low happiness ratings of black South Africans under apartheid. Eight years into democracy, there was a sufficiently large subsample of black respondents of economic standing to test the notion. A 2002 study found that the higher happiness ratings of South Africa's emergent black economic elites matched their better standard of living under democracy (Møller 2004).

22 Hadley Cantril's (1965) classic study for the 1960s reports the mean present ladder ratings of 4.8 for Nigeria (p.78) and 5.5 for Egypt (p. 118). Nigeria's ladder rating of 4.875 in the WHR 2016 (Helliwell et al. 2016, pp. 20–21, Figure 2.2) is almost identical to its 1960 rating of 4.8.

23 See the Gallup-Kettering global survey (1976). The range of Gallup World Poll ladder ratings 2014-16 for the 11 countries is taken from Figure 4.2 above.

24 Of the 90% in the sub-Saharan sample who wished for change in their lives, 67% wanted 'many things' to change, 22% 'just a few' things. The question on the 'extent of change necessary for a happier life' read: 'Thinking about how your life is going now, do you think you would be happier if things could be changed about your life? (If yes) Would you like many things about your life changed or just a few things? See Table VI in the Gallup-Kettering Global Survey (1976) summary volume's reprint of: Human Needs and Satisfactions, Mankind: The Global Survey and the Third World, Blue Supplement to the "Monthly Public Opinion Surveys" of the Indian Institute of Public Opinion, Vol. XXI, Nos. 9 & 10. http://worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl/hap_bib/freetexts/~Gallup_Kettering_1976k.pdf

25 Noting that Africans live on the world's 'most ethnically diverse and fractious continent', John Stremlau (2016) argues that Africa's democracies need to cater to the needs of multiple groups in society.

26 See Møller & Roberts (2017).

27 See Akokpari (2004) and Mtimkulu (2015).

28 Greg Mills and Jeffrey Herbst (2012) contend that Africa has already undergone two liberations, first from colonialism and then from the autocratic rulers that often followed on colonial rule. Africa is now awaiting its third liberation from bad governance so that it can accelerate its development towards more jobs and less poverty.

29 Here we refer to observations on the importance of good governance for citizen well-being in Helliwell and Huang (2008) and the volume on well-being for public policy edited by Ed Diener, Richard Lucas, Ulrich Schimmack & John Helliwell (2009, p. 60) and an OECD working paper that traces the linkages between good governance and national well-being (Helliwell et al. 2014). Similarly, an Institute for Security Studies African Futures scenario links gains in effective governance with poverty reduction on the continent (Aucoin & Donnenfeld 2016).

30 See Afrobarometer (2002).

31 The briefing paper on the first round of Afrobarometer surveys conducted in 12 countries in 2001 reports that the democracy concept is understood mainly as civil liberties, such as freedom of speech. In practice, people want democracy to deliver basic necessities of life such as food, water, shelter and education, even more strongly than they insist on regular elections, majority rule, competing political parties, and freedom to criticise the government. See Afrobarometer (2002).

32 See Cantril (1965, p. 75).

33 Referring to development economist Jeffrey Sach's (2005) book by that title.

34 Afrobarometer's Lived Poverty Index is an experiential measure that is based on a series of survey questions about how frequently people actually go without six basic necessities during the course of a year. Respondents report how often (just once or twice, several times, many times, always) they or a member of their family have gone without enough food, clean water for home use, medicines or medical treatment, cooking fuel, cash income, and electricity in the home. See Mattes (2008) and www.afrobarometer.org

35 See Gernetzky (2016).

36 See Afrobarometer (2016) on highlights from Round 6 survey findings from 36 African countries and Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 69 by Mitullah, Samson, Wambua, & Balongo (2016) on infrastructure development challenges in Africa.

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37 Bookwalter (2012) reports that studies conducted by economists found factors such as rising levels of income and access to consumption goods were more likely to boost happiness among white South Africans.

38 Robert Mattes, Boniface Dulani and E. Gyimah-Boadi (2016) report on the drop in lived poverty in African countries in their January 2016 Afrobarometer policy paper.

39 See Afrobarometer (2015, p. 22) for results relating to conditional support for democracy in South Africa amid rising discontent, and Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 71 by Lekalake (2016).

40 See Robert Stefan Foa and Yacha Mounk (2017) on the global rise in citizens wishing for a strong leader in their paper on signs of democratic deconsolidation.

41 See Maphunye (2016).

42 Since being launched in 2006, the Ibrahim Prize has been awarded to President Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique (2007), President Festus Mogae of Botswana (2008), President Pedro Pires of Cabo Verde (2011), and President Hifikepunye Pohamba of Namibia (2014). President Nelson Mandela of South Africa was the inaugural Honorary Laureate in 2007. See Turianskyi (2016) and http://mo.ibrahim.foundation/news/2016/mo-ibrahim-foundation-announces-no-winner-2015-ibrahim-prize-achievement-african-leadership

43 See Cohen & Doya (2016).

44 Many scholars have written about the clientelism, cronyism, nepotism, and rent-seeking practices that have kept Africa's leaders in power and retarded economic growth and advances in democracy. See among others, Cheeseman (2015), Meredith (2011; 2014), Mills (2014), Mills & Herbst (2012), Ndulu & O'Connell (1999), van de Walle (2003), and Wrong's (2010) account of Kenya's whistle-blowers. Regarding corruption, Historian Martin Meredith, visiting South Africa for the launch of his new book on Africa (Meredith 2014), was asked why Asian economies grew faster than African ones in spite of corruption. He replied that Asia's wealth was reinvested in Asia, whereas Africa's wealth left the continent (Interview with Meredith on the South African Broadcasting Corporation's After Eight morning programme, 26 November 2014, own notes).

45 See Somerville (2016)

46 See Joffe's (2016) report on the World Economic Forum on Africa.

47 See Serge Schmemann's (2016) overview of the challenges facing democratic principles in an unstable world that include authoritarian rule and the attraction of the 'big man'.

48 Benin's Mathieu Kérékou, in and out of power over a thirty year period since 1972, was barred from running for a third term as president in 2016 on constitutional and age grounds. Gabon's current President Ali Bongo, sworn in for a second seven-year term in 2016, took over from his late father who ruled the country for 41 years until his death in 2009. In Burkina Faso, meaning 'land of honest men', President Blaise Compaoré was in power for 27 years before he was toppled in the 2014 popular uprising. Mozambique's Joachim Chissano, installed as president in 1986 after President Samora Machel was killed in a plane crash, stepped down in 2004 after 18 years in office. He was awarded the Mo Ibrahim prize for good governance.

49 Ali Bongo was sworn in for a second seven-year term in September 2016, after Gabon's constitutional court upheld his narrow victory in a bitterly disputed election.

50 The title is taken from a book by Adam Branch and Zachariah Mampilly (2015) on the new wave of popular protest in Africa.

51 See Adebajo (2014).

52 See Loschky (2013).

53 See BBC's The Gambia country profile. http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13376517, Accessed 2 December 2016.

54 See Kiwuwa's (2016) report on Jammeh's quick acceptance of defeat that astounded the world until it was overturned. Postscript: Mr Jammeh finally left office in January 2017 after mediation by neighbouring countries and the threat of armed intervention. See Pilling (2017) on the significance of the turn of events in The Gambia for democracy in Africa.

55 Mark Swilling (2016) sees the protests in South Africa and Ethiopia as part of a wave of protests sweeping through the continent known as 'Africa Uprising'. In Kenya, Elizabeth Cooper (2014; 2016) interprets high school students' torching of boarding schools as political protest action.

56 African studies professor Jonny Steinberg (2016) describes South Africa's student protests as 'a war against the fathers' and 'inter-generational loathing'. Writing on Ethiopia's protests, Jeffry Gettleman (2016) cites a university lecturer in central Ethiopia saying that: 'If you suffocate people and they don't have any other options but to protest, it breaks out. ..the whole youth.. a whole generation is protesting'.

57 Afrobarometer (2016, p. 11).

58 See Greg Mills (2014, p. 571) on the disconnect between the expectations of youth and their ruling parties in authoritarian regimes in sub-Saharan Africa.

59   See Gopaldas (2015) and Population Reference Bureau (2016) on the age gap.

60   Already in 2002, a special issue of the *African Studies Review* 45(2) was devoted to the role of Africa's universities in promoting democratic culture in Africa. Amutabi (2002) examined the case of Kenya's universities. Nshimbi (2016) reviews the Nigerian experience of clashes between students and government in the past that led to repressive measures.

61   Africa has seen migration on the continent and beyond for millions of years (see Reader 1997).

62   See Francis Wilson (1972) on South Africa's migrant labour system.

63   See *The Daily Telegraph* (2015).

64   Bodomo (2013) reports that money sent home by Africans surpassed foreign aid by 2013. Remittances benefit households directly as they go towards paying school fees, building new homes and growing businesses.

65   Zulu for 'we have no money', the title of a play by Mbongeni Ngema in the Athol Fugard tradition that expresses the rage of young black men in South Africa during the apartheid era.

66   African Development Bank (2011, p. 2)

67   See OECD (2016) for a report on youth unemployment in North Africa.

68   See *The Economist* (2014), the Population Reference Bureau (2016), and Baker (2015).

69   See Davies (2015).

70   See Reader's (1997) biography of the African continent.

71   See Vink (2016).

72   See Chagutah (2016).

73   See Khor (2016).

74   See Reader (1997).

75   See Baker (2015), *The Economist* (2014) and Guengant & May (2013).

76   See Guengant & May (2013) and *The Economist*'s (2014) report on their study of African demography.

77   See Guengant & May (2013) and *The Economist*'s (2014) report on their study of African demography. The data we sourced gave Niger a fertility rate of 7.6, which is higher than the 7.5 rate reported by Guengant and May in 2013. This might indicate that Niger's fertility has increased since 2013.

78   See Agbo, Nzeadibe & Ajaero (2012, p. 303).

79   See Dzokoto (2012, p. 319).

80   Veenhoven (2005) reports that happiness in hardship is possible if people rise to the challenge of coping with difficulties in life.

81   The 2005 study conducted in Zimbabwe classified 45% of respondents as very democratic and a further 36% as democratic. Only 11% of Zimbabweans were satisfied with life at present, but twice as many (22%) thought they would feel satisfied with life in ten years' time (Dickow 2007, pp. 111, 121–2). The 2004 study conducted in four main cities in Chad found 60% of respondents supported democratic principles. Only 14 percent were very happy with their life at present, but more than twice as many (35%) thought they would be very happy with life in future (Dickow 2005, pp. 112, 128–9). In the 2002 South Africa study, 51% of black and 74% of white South Africans supported democratic values and were classified as either very democratic or democratic. Black respondents reported the lowest levels of current life satisfaction (37%) and happiness (38%) in the country, but 45% projected life satisfaction to increase in future (Møller & Hanf 2007, p.99 ff.).

82   See Cantril (1965, p. 78).

83   See Gulyas (2015).

84   With reference to a South African evangelical church's promise of salvation and prosperity: 'We are open seven days a week and seven services a day. The God of the Bible will dry away your tears and you will have the result you need in your life' (See Van Wyk 2014, p.160)

85   For example, see Pokimica, Addai & Takyi (2012) on the relationship between religion and subjective well-being in Ghana. Helga Dickow (2012) reports on religion, personal well-being, and attitudes to democracy among South Africans.

86   See Pew Global Attitudes and Trends question database, http://www.pewglobal.org/question-search/?qid=408&cntIDs=&stdIDs=

87   See Cantril (1965) and Gulyas (2015).

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ONLINE APPENDIX

(MØLLER, ROBERTS, TILIOUINE, & LOSCHKY, 'WAITING FOR HAPPINESS'
IN AFRICA)

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