

# 1. African Leaders. A Changing Landscape and Its Implications

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## Africa's Evolving Leadership Scenario

Leaders and leadership turnovers have been in the spotlight more than ever over the last few years in Africa. Across the region, some longstanding rulers were unexpectedly ousted. Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe and the Gambia's Yahya Jammeh, for example, were rather abruptly replaced in 2017 – if in very different ways – as had been Burkina Faso's Blaise Compaoré earlier and Sudan's Omar al-Bashir much more recently. The four had been in office for an average of some thirty years each. For the large majority of Zimbabweans, Gambians, Burkinabè and Sudanese, this was the first time they saw someone new at the top.

A number of other countries joined in. The departure of Mauritania's Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, also in 2019, was the result of the former coup-maker's surprising decision to retire at the end of his second and last constitutionally-allowed mandate. Joseph Kabila similarly abode by presidential term limits in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, if only reluctantly and after a three-year delay. Both in Mauritania and in the Congo outgoing leaders made sure they would be succeeded by palatable figures. Nigerians, meanwhile, renewed their mandate to Muhammadu Buhari, who had made history in 2015 as the

country's first president elected from the ranks of an opposition party.

The power handovers that drew the most attention and anticipation, however, were those that brought new faces at the helm in Ethiopia, Angola and South Africa. The largely unforeseen rise of Abiy Ahmed led to the swift adoption of wide-ranging initiatives, sending shockwaves both within Ethiopia and across the Horn. National and regional actors are still struggling to find new equilibria in an unfolding scenario. Compared to Ethiopia, the challenges faced by new leaders in Luanda and Pretoria may appear somewhat less complex, and certainly more domestically-oriented. João Lourenço followed in the footsteps of José Eduardo dos Santos in Angola, as the latter resolved to pass on power after a hefty thirty-eight years in office. The new President quickly proved far more autonomous and forceful than many had anticipated as he tried to dismantle the personal and patrimonial networks of the dos Santos regime and to reinvigorate the economy. In South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa was entrusted with somewhat similar goals as he successfully manoeuvred from within the ANC to oust Jacob Zuma from the presidency and to unravel his contentious power system.

At the head of the continent's most advanced economy, Ramaphosa well exemplifies how the rise of some new leaders galvanised expectations in Africa and beyond. An influential global magazine devoted its cover to him as "South Africa's best bet", and went on to task the new President with "stopping the rot" and even "saving the nation"<sup>1</sup>. Another major outlet broadened the spotlight to include "the five leaders who could transform the region" (Ramaphosa himself, but also the afore-said Lourenço, Abiy, Buhari as well as Félix Tshisekedi of the Democratic Republic of the Congo)<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> "To stop the rot in South Africa, back Cyril Ramaphosa", *The Economist*, 25 April 2019.

<sup>2</sup> J. Devermont and J. Temin, "Africa's democratic moment? The five leaders who could transform the region", *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 98, no. 4, July/August 2019, pp. 131-143.

The current emphasis on the new wave of sub-Saharan rulers – and the great hopes they generated – is reminiscent of at least two past periods the region went through. One is the independence era, between the late 1950s and the early 1960s. At that time, it was the founding fathers of newly-sovereign African states who embodied the promise of change and rapid social and economic progress. From Sekou Touré (Guinea) to Julius Nyerere (Tanzania), from Modibo Keita (Mali) to Kenneth Kaunda (Zambia), Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana) and many others, the new heads of African polities were almost as revered as monarchs – indeed, a number of them notoriously went on to adopt “President-for-life” titles. While the primary concern of this first generation of leaders was arguably more political than economic – with a central focus on establishing new states and forging new nations – their achievements in terms of development were on the whole largely disappointing. By the late-1990s, a second group of “new leaders” – this time heading a much more limited number of countries – were celebrated by some international observers as charismatic and innovative figures that, following the violent overthrow of governments by the guerrilla movements they led, appeared to be re-shaping the development trajectories of Uganda (Yoweri Museveni), Ethiopia (Meles Zenawi), Eritrea (Isaias Afwerki), Rwanda (Paul Kagame) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Laurent-Désiré Kabila)<sup>3</sup>. A majority of them are still in office today (Museveni, Isaias and Kagame), while the remainder were likely only prevented to stay on by death, whether the result of murder (Kabila) or of natural causes (Meles). In three cases out of five – Uganda, but more recently especially Ethiopia and Rwanda – development outcomes have indeed been quite impressive. While the Kigali and Addis Ababa regimes are at times presented as models of African-style “developmental states”, some observers warn that “both records are

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<sup>3</sup> D. Connell, Dan and F. Smyth, “Africa’s new bloc”, *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 77, no. 2, 1998, pp. 95-106; M. Ottaway, *Africa’s new leaders. Democracy or state reconstruction?*, Washington, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999.

exceedingly dependent on the leaderships of single men, and one wonders what happens after they have been, inevitably, replaced. Indeed, Ethiopia now faces this question, directly<sup>4</sup>. Ultimately, one may add, rulers emerging from guerrilla insurgencies have been a rarity rather than standard practice in Africa. In spite of the many armed conflicts that have historically plagued the region, their number does not extend much beyond the few abovementioned examples. The prevailing modes of leadership change south of the Sahara have taken an entirely different route.

For the better part of three decades after independence – in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s – African countries were dominated by one-party and military rulers. The pluralistic arrangements originally adopted in many new states as European colonial authorities handed over power to African elites were soon dismantled by leaders who hastened to make opposition parties illegal or were themselves ousted by coups d'état. By the 1990s, domestic and international pressures for political change were felt across the region, as country after country embarked upon introducing elections and opening politics, at least formally, to opposition parties. A blunt divide thus separates the first half of Africa's sixty years of independence (1960s-1980s), during which multiparty experiences were rendered marginal, from the second half (1990s-2010s), when they became the norm. The region as a whole shifted from rule by unelected leaders (as a matter of fact, many of them were elected unopposed under single-party voting) to elected leaders who typically reached office and/or where confirmed in office via multiparty contests. Beyond the surface, however, wildly diverse degrees of "democracy" separated the relatively open and lively politics of countries such as Ghana, Senegal or even Kenya, from hegemonic systems that *de facto* remain under the overwhelming and blatant dominance of the same political elite in places such as

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<sup>4</sup> N. van de Walle, "Conclusion: democracy fatigue and ghost of modernization theory", in T. Hagmann and F. Reyntjens, *Aid and authoritarianism in Africa: development without democracy*, London, Zed Books, 2016, p. 174.

Congo-Brazzaville, Chad or Gabon. Indeed, as it was recently pointed out: “the modal African country is not democratic so much as an electoral autocracy in which multi-party elections are regularly scheduled and the regime adopts the language and rituals of democracy, but remains profoundly authoritarian, with unaccountable executive branches of government, politicised judicial systems and various human rights abuses”<sup>5</sup>.

## Leaders and Development

Surviving in office for as long as possible is often thought to be the primary concern of political leaders. The latter’s true success, however, arguably lies not so much in the ability to stay on, but rather in their ability to guide a country and its people towards progress and development. Indeed, with the exception of national independence or international war, a country’s social and economic advancement is usually the main criterion a political leader is assessed against. This implies the common if often overlooked assumption that leadership does matter for development; that, while it certainly has to contend with a wide array of other factors, leadership can make a difference, for good or for bad.

The issue has been little delved into by researchers<sup>6</sup>. A rare and early investigation brought into the open the aforementioned conjecture by asking whether “*new* leaders make a difference” in terms of “policy priorities”<sup>7</sup>:

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>6</sup> For some recent exceptions, see B. Jones and B. Olken, “Do leaders matter? National leadership and growth since World War II”, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, vol. 120, no. 3, 2005, pp. 835-864; D. Brady and M. Spence, “Leadership and Politics: A Perspective from the Commission on Growth and Development”, in D. Brady and M. Spence (eds.), *Leadership and Growth*, World Bank Publications, Washington DC, 2010; W. Easterly and S. Pennings, *Shrinking dictators: assessing the growth contribution of individual national leaders*, mimeo, October 2018; C. Berry and A. Fowler, *Leadership or luck? Randomization inference for leader effects*, mimeo, April 2018.

<sup>7</sup> V. Bunce, *Do new leaders make a difference? Executive succession and public policy under*

leadership succession is the most visible and salient aspect of the political process ... whether through election or *coup d'état*, [it] is considered important not only because it concerns power and the powerful but also because of its implications for change. New leaders may mean new policies ... or a change in government performance [...] Thus [...] the central importance of leadership succession is not the process itself, but rather its expected impact<sup>8</sup>.

Bunce's empirical findings confirmed that – regardless of the politico-institutional gulf separating Western democracies from socialist states – in both sets of countries “leadership change mean[t] policy change”<sup>9</sup>. Contrary to the claim that chief executives were largely inconsequential, “dispensable actors”<sup>10</sup>, they turned out to be key players shaping policy processes, notably in terms of a government's budgetary priorities<sup>11</sup>.

Thirty years later, Brady and Spence (2010b) adopted a similar perspective, if with a more specific focus on economic development, pointing at what high-growth stories across world regions teach us:

leadership plays a role in generating sustained growth ... There is no one style of leadership [...] nor is leadership the only input [...] [Yet] practitioners and observers and a wide range of scholars are right in believing that, at least at times, leadership makes a difference in terms of altering the trajectory of a developing economy [...] The obvious first stage is where the leadership chooses an economic model or strategy [...] The second stage [...] concerns how leaders adjust strategies and choices to changing circumstances<sup>12</sup>.

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*capitalism and socialism*, Princeton, Princeton, University Press, 1981, p. 44.

<sup>8</sup> V. Bunce, “Changing leaders and changing policies. The impact of elite succession on budgetary priorities in democratic countries”, *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 24, no. 3, 1980, p. 373.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 384.

<sup>10</sup> F. Greenstein, *Personality and Politics*, Markham Publishing Company, Chicago, 1969, p. 47.

<sup>11</sup> V. Bunce, (1980), p. 391.

<sup>12</sup> D. Brady and M. Spence, (eds.), *Leadership and Growth...*, cit., pp. 2-5.

While leaders are not unconstrained, it is thus argued, they do have significant room for shaping a country's development path and progress. Yet not all of them succeed. What is it, then, that explains which leaders exploit the leverage they potentially hold – and strive for their nation's advance – as opposed to adopting behaviours and measures that are detrimental to that very goal?

The key political and institutional changes observed across Africa – as briefly summed up in the previous section – offer good ground for a comparative scrutiny and understanding of the broader implications of leadership dynamics. On the one hand, the elected leaders of the current multiparty era can be contrasted with their predecessors during the one-party/military epoch to examine which of the two groups was associated with better development achievements, if any. On the other hand, the progress and performances attained by today's democratically-elected rulers can be set against those of their current authoritarian peers – also now typically elected – to learn whether contemporary Africa is a place for reaping the fruits of a democratic dividend or, on the contrary, of an authoritarian advantage.

## Towards a Comprehensive Analysis

To fully account for the development impact of sub-Saharan leaders, an entirely new collection of data, called the Africa Leadership Change (ALC) dataset, was recently built<sup>13</sup>. For all countries on the continent from 1960 – or subsequent year of independence – to 2018, the dataset includes all handovers of the top political office. This most typically implies a presidential turnover, but at times, or for specific countries, it may take the form of a power transfer involving prime ministers, monarchs

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<sup>13</sup> G. Carbone and A. Pellegata, *Political leadership in Africa. Leaders and development South of the Sahara*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2020 (forthcoming). The ALC dataset and related Codebook can be freely downloaded from the ISPI website at <https://www.ispionline.it/en/africa-leadership-change-project>, where a number of interactive visualisation tools are also available.

or heads of military juntas. The ALC data comprehensively account for the way leaders take office and how they leave it (e.g. via a popular vote or through a *coup d'état* or an armed guerrilla, handpicked by their predecessors or defeated by the opposition, etc.), how much time they spend in power, the changing nature of their power base and legitimacy during their stay (for example, when elections are introduced by a coup-maker), as well as several other aspects of their rule.

The overall picture that emerges from the ALC project shows how deeply leadership dynamics have transformed across the region between the pre- and post-1990 periods. Duration in office, for a start, declined significantly. Eighty per cent of Africa's "twentennials" – i.e. the 36 leaders who remained in power for two decades or more – reached office in the 1960s, 1970s or 1980s; only a minority did so after that. Meanwhile, coups d'état have become rarer and rarer (although removals such as Compaoré's and al-Bashir's remind us that military interventions – in these specific cases ignited by popular protests – are still an option, particularly with presidents who overstay in office), whereas holding elections with multiple parties has now turned into an established practice with few exceptions. It is true that a number of African power-holders – from Guinea's late Lansana Conté to Chad's Idriss Déby, from Uganda's Museveni to Djibouti's Ismaïl Guelleh, and others – managed to alter or by-pass presidential term limits so that they could remain in office longer than allowed by existing norms. But many others were unsuccessful in their attempts – from Frederick Chiluba in Zambia to Olusegun Obasanjo in Nigeria – or they desisted for a variety of reasons, either way helping consolidate somewhat constitutional rule. The current scenario, therefore, increasingly consists of shorter average stays in office, as pointed out, and much more frequent power handovers, in the form of both electoral "successions" (i.e. where the incoming and outgoing power-holders belong to the same political force) as well as electoral "alternations" (i.e. where an opposition leader wins office, bringing about a government turnover).



## What Kind of Rulers?

Political reforms thus ushered in a post-1990 landscape that requires updating our understanding of African power-holders and leadership trends. A highly influential study of leaders across the continent, for example, had framed them as “personal rulers”<sup>14</sup>. While the authors did draw some distinctions among national strongmen – and famously labelled them “princes”, “prophets”, “autocrats” or “tyrants” – they stressed the prevalence of an underlying, common leadership style from Malawi to Liberia, from Côte d’Ivoire to Swaziland and beyond. The latter revolved around the centrality of authoritarian and neo-patrimonial practices as political survival strategies, to the detriment of formal political processes, rule of law and open politics. After independence, public institutions had quickly weakened in most sub-Saharan polities and now hardly offered alternative centres of power to counter the individual at the top.

While there is certainly no shortage of corruption and autocratic rule in contemporary Africa, the analytical value of Jackson and Rosberg’s framework has gradually declined. The constitutional changes that were undertaken since the latter decade of the twentieth century set the background for the growing relevance of institutions in shaping African politics<sup>15</sup>.

The changing leadership trends can be illustrated with help from a new typology based on the three criteria laid out in Figure 1, namely: duration in office, openness to multipartism, and degree of democracy<sup>16</sup>. First, the typology sets apart the

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<sup>14</sup> R.H. Jackson and C.G. Rosberg, *Personal rule in black Africa. Prince, autocrat, prophet, tyrant*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London, University of California Press, 1982; R.H. Jackson and C.G. Rosberg, “Personal rule: theory and practice in Africa”, *Comparative Politics*, vol. 16, no. 4, 1984, pp. 421-442.

<sup>15</sup> D. Posner and D. Young, “The institutionalization of political power in Africa”, *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 18, no. 3, 2007, pp. 126-140; D. Posner and D. Young, “Term limits: leadership, political competition and the transfer of power”, in N. Cheeseman, (ed.), *Institutions and democracy in Africa. How the rules of the game shape political developments*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2018, pp. 260-277.

<sup>16</sup> G. Carbone and A. Pellegata (2020) (forthcoming).

numerous leaders who only held sway in an African capital for a very short spell – that is, less than one year – whether because they were abruptly or even violently ousted or because from the very beginning they were simply meant to bridge over a transition period. Colonel Christophe Soglo’s three-month tenure in Benin (1963-1964) or Kgalema Motlanthe’s eight-month spell in South Africa (2008-2009), for example, fall in this category. Overall, there were some 92 such interim office-holders, or “transients”, out of the 360 leaders who served in office between 1960 and 2018. They represent a hefty 25.5% of all rulers, but only governed for a combined 28 years, or 1% of all country-years for the entire period (see Table 1). About one third of transients remained in power for no longer than three months. Some did occasionally play important functions – for instance, by favouring regime transitions or peace deals – but, one may argue, a few months hardly offered them the opportunity to shape their country’s social and economic progress (or failure) in a more direct way.

As a second criteria, leaders who were elected via multiparty voting are separated from those who were not (some who were formally entrusted with popular mandates are still deemed ‘unelected’ when they run unopposed). The latter group are labelled “autocrats”. Because many African leaders started off as elected presidents or prime ministers only to subsequently eliminate open elections (especially in the 1960s), while a number of others initially gained office as unelected rulers, but went on to allow multiparty competition (especially since the 1990s), each of them is categorised as elected or unelected depending on whether or not he or she had a multiparty electoral mandate for the better part of his/her stay in office. The 119 autocrats thus identified represent by far the largest of our groups. Moreover, with an average eleven years in office, they ruled independent African countries for virtually half of all country-years (i.e. 1,276 out of 2,577). All but one of the post-independence ‘personal rulers’ that Jackson and Rosberg (1982) scrutinised in their work fall in this category, including

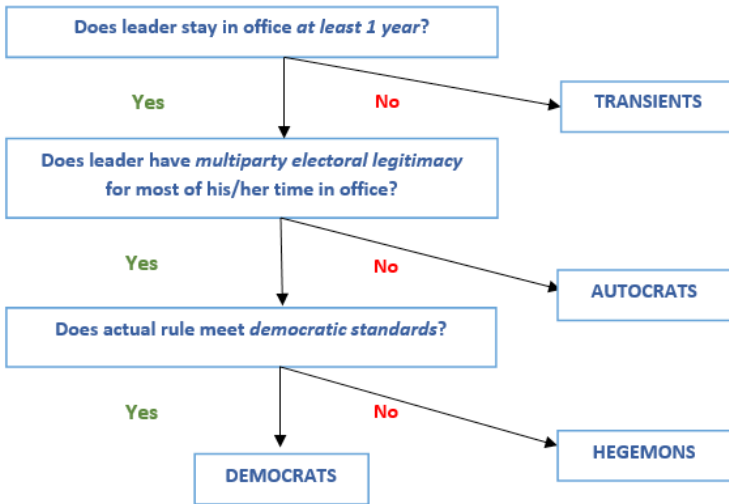
the likes of Félix Houphouët-Boigny (Côte d’Ivoire), Ahmadou Ahidjo (Cameroon), Hastings Banda (Malawi), Ahmed Sékou Touré (Guinea), Julius Nyerere (Tanzania) and Idi Amin Dada (Uganda).

Finally, we divide elected leaders depending on whether or not minimal standards for open and pluralist politics were met for the better part of their tenure (i.e. as indicated by a Polity 2 country score averaging 6 or more during their entire stay)<sup>17</sup>. Leaders satisfying this last criterion are labelled “democrats” – they are 84 and account for 23.4% of all leaders (for example Yayi Boni in Benin, John Kufuor in Ghana or Mwai Kibaki in Kenya) – while those stopping short of it are deemed “hegemons”, a group comprising 65, or 18.1% of all rulers (Joaquim Chissano, Armando Guebuza and Filipe Nyusi of Mozambique all fall into this group, as do Benjamin Mkapa, Jakaya Kikwete and John Magufuli of Tanzania). While hegemonies are less numerous, however, they are prevalent when we turn to average stays in office (almost twelve years against democrats’ six) and overall number of years they ruled the region (i.e. 755 country-years against democrats’ 518).

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<sup>17</sup> The Polity2 score assigned to a country for 2017 – the last year currently covered by the Polity Project – were extended to 2018. For details on the Polity2 measure of democracy see <http://www.systemicpeace.org/polityproject.html>.

FIG. 1.1 – CRITERIA FOR A NEW TYPOLOGY OF AFRICAN LEADERS



Source: G. Carbone and A. Pellegata (2020).

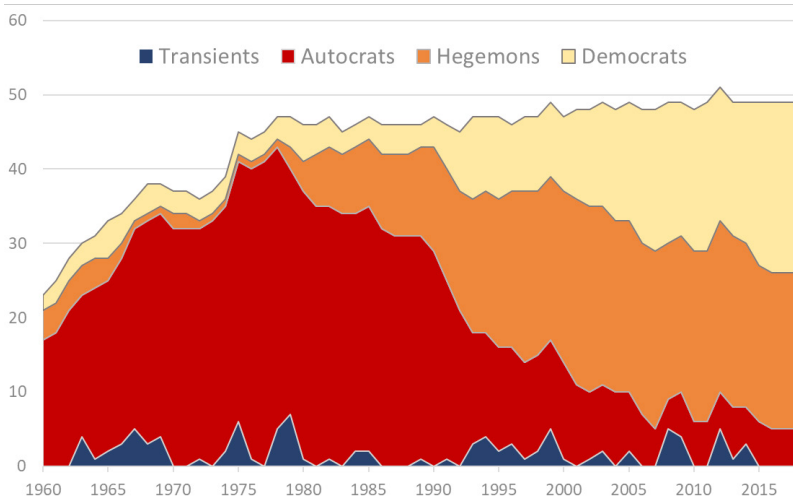
Note: elected leaders include those who constitutionally “inherit” an electoral mandate following resignation or death of an elected incumbent.

TAB. 1 – THE DISTRIBUTION OF AFRICAN LEADERS ACROSS LEADERSHIP TYPES

	N of leaders		Country-years in office		Avg. years in office
	N	%	N	%	
<b>Transients</b>	92	25.5 %	28	1 %	0.3
<b>Autocrats</b>	119	33 %	1,276	49.5 %	10.7
<b>Hegemons</b>	65	18.1 %	755	29.4 %	11.6
<b>Democrats</b>	84	23.4 %	518	20.1 %	6.2
	360	100 %	2,577	100 %	7.2

Source: G. Carbone and A. Pellegata (2020).

FIG. 2 - TYPES OF LEADERS IN AFRICA, 1960-2018



Source: G. Carbone and A. Pellegata (2020).

Since the aim of this classification is to help understand Africa's evolving leadership scenario, what is most revealing is the overtime trend in the prevalence of different types of leaders. Drawing on the ALC data, Figure 2 displays the changing incidence of autocrats, hegemons, democrats and transients from 1960 to 2018<sup>18</sup>. The resulting picture is largely self-explaining, with the often long-serving autocrats taking the largest share of the left-hand side of the graph – peaking in 1977, when they numbered 41 in 45 then-independent states – but declining progressively afterwards. Hegemons and democrats follow a somewhat symmetrical course, as they expand their ranks, respectively, starting from the 1980s and the 1990s. The increase of hegemons begins earlier largely because they include leaders

<sup>18</sup> Note that in the figure the total number of leaders is at times higher than that of independent countries in the region as a result of there being years in which a single country had one or more transient leaders.

who were already in office prior to the reforms of the 1990s but eventually spent a longer time in power with an electoral mandate (for example, Paul Biya in Cameroon, Blaise Compaoré in Burkina Faso, Omar Al-Bashir in Sudan or even Joaquim Chissano in Mozambique). While the annual number of hegemons stabilises at around twenty-something from 1995 on (with a peak of 25 in 2000-2001), democrats take time to catch up but ultimately become the largest group, if only marginally, from 2015 on. Across the entire period, the presence of transient leaders remains a more regular and limited phenomenon, only marginally entering the overall picture. As of mid-2019, sub-Saharan Africa counted 23 democrats, 20 hegemons and 6 autocrats (including Sudan's Abdel Fattah Abdelrahman Burhan, who might eventually turn out a transient leader, alongside eSwatini's Mswati III, Eritrea's Isaias Afwerki, South Sudan's Salva Kiir, Somalia's Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed "Farmajo", and Uganda's Yoweri Museveni<sup>19</sup>).

Life under more democratic rulers – as opposed to life under hegemons and autocrats – differs, by definition, in terms of the extent to which liberties and rights are respected or trampled upon. But do the differences leaders are associated with also extend to a country's development prospects?

## **Leading for Development in Africa**

When Africans began demanding political changes across the region, during the 1980s, the notion that they needed to get rid of rulers and elites who had often proved inept at improving their living conditions – and in many cases had overseen the latter's deterioration and the spread of malfeasance – was a key motive in their mobilisation. They wanted new leaders under new political arrangements as a pre-condition for resetting their

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<sup>19</sup> Uganda is currently an electoral authoritarian regime like many others in Africa. Yet Museveni ruled for two decades in the absence of multiparty elections, only introducing them over the subsequent, shorter period of his time in office.

countries' failing quest for development. On the whole – as shown above – the political reforms they obtained did substantially alter the way African power-holders access, remain in, and ultimately leave office. New leaders thus emerged, alongside better regularised turnovers. But have contemporary Africa's elected rulers improved their countries' progress better than the previous, mostly unelected ones?

The country-year structure of the ALC data allows for an easy combination with performance indicators covering distinct development dimensions, such as economic growth, welfare measures and many others, thus favouring the use of econometric analysis for assessing the impact of different leaders – and types of leaders – on the advancement of the nations they head.

Empirical evidence is largely supportive of the notion that African elected power-holders – particularly but not only when electoral competition is democratic – are incentivised to adopt behaviours and initiatives that favour a variety of development achievements<sup>20</sup>. In general, elected office-holders are more successful developers than coup-makers, overstaying leaders, and unelected dictators: voting processes prove to be a plus not just on moral ground (i.e. in terms of freedom, political equality or justice), but they are also a tool towards a broader social and economic impact – particularly when popular votes are more open, narrowly contested and cyclically reiterated. Electoral successions and alternations – that is, rotation in office via elections, both when occurring in the context of ruling party continuity and when resulting from an opposition victory – are further ingredients that appear to spur social and economic performances.

When we turn specifically to the leadership types identified above, and look at their growth performances, it is not just sub-Saharan democrats but also elected hegemons who

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<sup>20</sup> G. Carbone and A. Pellegata (2020) (forthcoming).

outperform autocrats (interim office-holders are excluded)<sup>21</sup>. Similarly, both democrats and hegemons appear to do somewhat better than autocrats in improving citizens' wellbeing, particularly when measured through indicators such as life expectancy increases or child mortality reductions. Finally, while elected rulers are not systematically associated with reduced corruption, both democrats and hegemons (particularly the former) are empirically linked to the strengthening and amelioration of the administrative and extractive capacities of African polities. Thus, what type of leader is at the helm – the way he or she has achieved office, how he or she maintains the position, and the modes in which he or she can be replaced – counts not only from a political survival perspective, but also from a developmental point of view.

## **Conclusion**

Leaders remain central to contemporary African politics. But their position has changed inasmuch as they typically now operate in political settings that are significantly different from those prevailing in the past. Today, institutions have increasingly come to bear upon their actions, if imperfectly and incompletely. This in turn affects the “leader effect” on development, or on the lack thereof. Overall, the presence of electoral incentives tends to improve a leader's performance and achievements, and partly so even when a country's political regime is not truly democratic. Some three decades ago, sub-Saharan Africa adopted new mechanisms for selecting and replacing its leaders. It now appears that these very leaders are increasingly contributing to shaping new trajectories for Africa.

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.