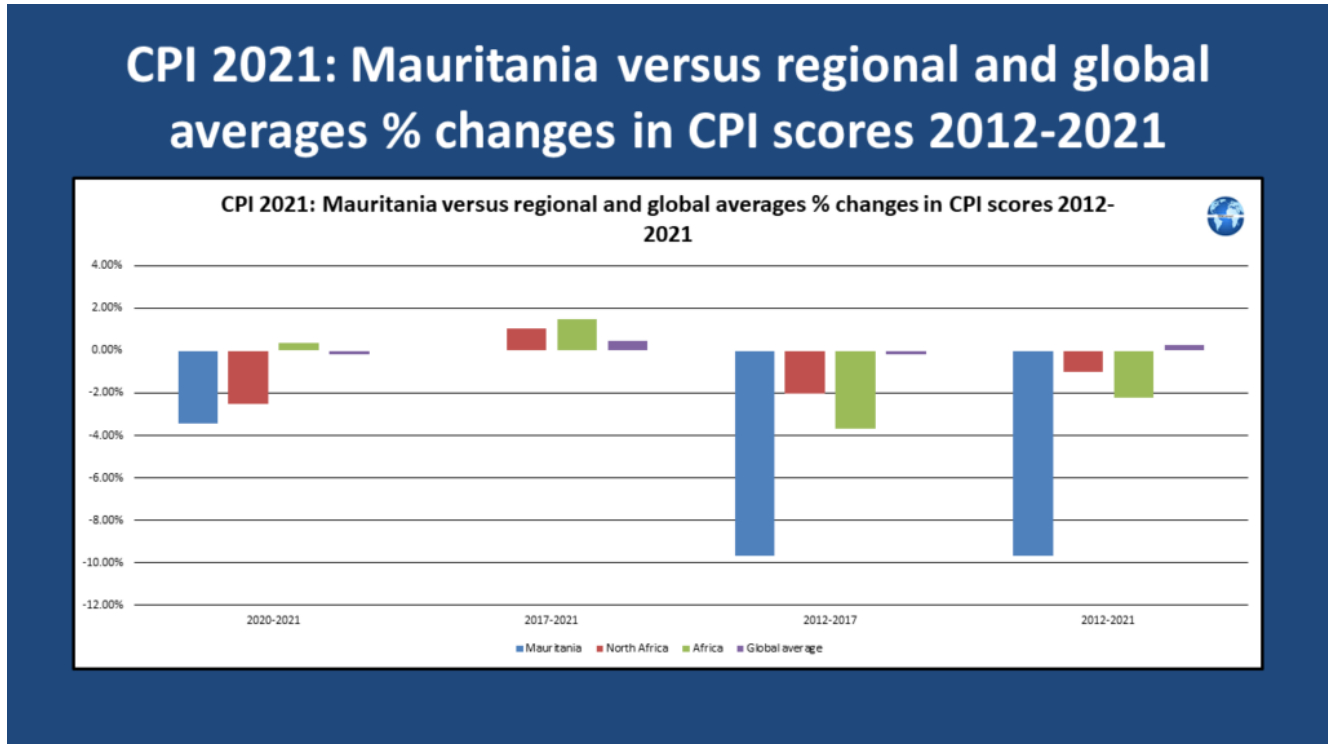


Corruption in Mauritania in 2021



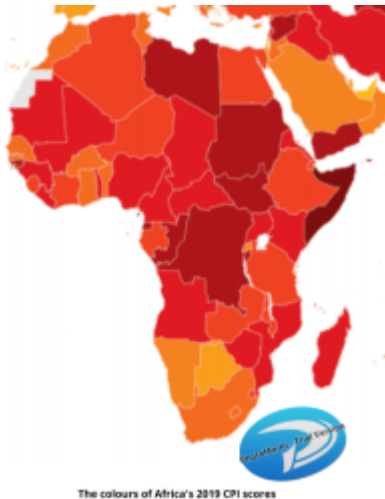
Corruption was a serious problem in public administration in Mauritania during 2021 and the government rarely held officials accountable or prosecuted them for abuses according to the [US State Department's 2021 report on human rights practices in Mauritania](#), published on 12 April 2022.

The US State Department notes there were reports government officials used their power to obtain personal favours, such as unauthorized exemption from taxes, special grants of land, and preferential treatment during bidding on government projects.

Corruption was most pervasive in government procurement but was also common in the distribution of official documents, fishing and mining licenses, land distribution, as well as in

bank loans and tax payments.

Corruption and social media correlation outcomes in Africa



Does social media usage have any impact on country corruption levels? We have investigated the relationship between corruption and social media usage in Africa at a country level and present our findings below.

Methodology

Transparency International's [2019 CPI scores](#) published in

January 2020 are taken to represent the measure of corruption in Africa.

The social media activity at a country level is taken as the subscriber numbers provided for Facebook by Internet World Stats at www.internetworldstats.com as at 31st December 2019 and for Twitter by We Are Social as quoted in their 'Digital 2020' publication.

The Africa Population numbers are mid-year 2020 estimates taken from the United Nations Population Division published by Internet World Stats at www.internetworldstats.com.

Facebook data was available for 54 African countries in the CPI index but Twitter data was only available for 52 of those countries. These 52 countries were taken as our starting point.

We then removed from the list of 52 countries the 4 countries with distinctly higher corruption levels than the remainder as they did not offer results consistent with the remaining states which we consider to reflect the disruptive effect of very high corruption levels on social and economic behaviour. This leaves a sample of 48 countries.

Statistical robustness

The sample of 48 countries provides a confidence level of 95%. The margin of error is 5%.

Statistical Method	Facebook Results	Twitter Results
Pearson	0.657	0.699
Spearman	0.672	0.625

Conclusion

The above results are relatively robust from a statistical perspective. These demonstrate that, for the data used in our two samples, a strong relationship exists between 2019 CPI scores and per capita penetration levels of country Facebook and Twitter subscribers. This implies that the greater the level of public intercourse via social media the lower the level of corruption in the country concerned.

Developing Systems to Combat Corruption



Posted by David Fellows [\[1\]](#)

Introducing the concept of “objective data”

In March 2018, we republished a short note on the use of [objective data](#) to combat corruption [2]. The piece highlighted statistical techniques being used in western countries to identify corruption by correlating unorthodox procurement practices with aberrant supplier behaviour established from factually based ‘objective’ administrative data. It was suggested that less complex approaches to the analysis of ‘objective’ data could be used to indicate the need for further forensic examination of officials, suppliers, and politicians. The emphasis was on finding workable approaches for developing countries that were compatible with the available resources.

The term ‘objective’ data refers to factual information derived from official government records. It represents data on transactions, activity schedules, and personal information, recorded through established processes, that give the information credibility. This contrasts with ‘subjective’ data which is often based on opinions or experience that is poorly evidenced and of limited application, as is the case with corruption perception surveys.

Frequent use of objective data

Objective data is checked and compared in dozens of administrative processes which can produce anomalies that may indicate the presence of corruption. For example, invoices are checked against orders and goods received notes or contract certificates, or payroll submissions are checked against timesheets. In addition, national bodies charged with the oversight of public administration – such as supreme audit institutions and public procurement commissions – are

routinely engaged in the examination of objective data which can also lead to the identification of corruption.

Such findings are then included in published reports that may be used to identify process deficiencies or potentially to prosecute cases of fraud and corruption. These oversight functions can be particularly effective when they are invested with independence from government, extensive powers of enquiry, transparency of reporting, and due consideration of findings.

Developing objective administrative data systems

Apart from routine scrutiny provided by administrative processes and oversight arrangements, programs of administrative reform provide excellent opportunities for the development of systems that incorporate the automatic validation and cross-referencing of administrative data to help identify patterns of corrupt activity.

Such arrangements are straightforward, well known, and remarkably simple to put into effect but in practice they are rarely complete or well executed. Too often there is a lack of expectation that good administration will have a beneficial effect. This places a premium on those who hold relevant managerial roles, requiring them to value high standards of administrative practice; exercise oversight responsibilities courageously, insightfully and in partnership with others as necessary; and ensure that reform opportunities are used to best effect. Well prepared and committed management is a prerequisite to any well-intentioned anti-corruption initiative.

Objective administrative data applications

Some examples of objective administrative data and its use to combat corruption are included in an Appendix available [here](#).

The use of objective data could also be developed in other ways. For example:

1. Countries could prepare anti-corruption strategies that include the use and development of objective data and staff training. Such strategies should be accompanied by operational guidance. Anti-corruption strategies and related material are often referred to as being part of the standard anti-corruption armoury but are rarely made available. In practice, however, few of these documents have been produced to a reasonable standard anywhere in the developing world, and perhaps it is time to redress this omission.
2. Additionally, collaboration between states, perhaps on a regional basis, could be helpful in developing techniques for interrogating data, preparing anti-corruption strategies, sharing knowledge of corrupt practices, and building operational cooperation between countries
3. Consideration should also be given by multilateral agencies and regional representative bodies to the development of an international systems assessment schema (akin to PEFA methodology^[31]) that would indicate the efficacy and shortcomings of individual administrative systems for the purposes of combatting corruption.

This article is written with government administration in mind, but similar considerations apply to local governments and state-owned enterprises.

^[1] Director, PFMConnect. The author thanks John Leonardo for his helpful comments.

^[2] This blog was first published at <http://blog-pfm.imf.org/pfmblog/2018/03/how-useful-are-perc>

[ption-indices-of-corruption-to-developing-countries.html](#)

[3]

See

https://pefa.org/sites/default/files/PEFA%20Framework_English.pdf

Forthcoming blog: Developing Systems to Combat Corruption



In a March 2018 blog PFMConnect co-principal David Fellows discussed the [deficiencies surrounding corruption perception indices](#) and outlined how objective data analysis could offer a clearer insight into the systemic nature of corrupt behaviour, thus providing a more precise indication of the corrupt parts of an administration, the number of external parties that are engaged in corruption, and features of the [public financial management \(PFM\) system](#) that need to be strengthened in order to combat corruption.

In a forthcoming blog “**Developing Systems to Combat Corruption**”, David describes how an objective data system is used in practice and how the concept may be developed. Some

further examples of objective data and their use to combat corruption is available [here](#).