

African Tax Outlook (ATO) - African Tax Administration Forum



Objective and features

1. Objective

ATO aims to provide information on selected African countries for African tax administration, tax policy makers, and tax practitioners to compare and improve tax administration and revenue performance. ATO assesses and compares participating countries against indicators in various categories: tax rates, tax bases, tax structure, revenue performance, tax administration, taxpayer service, and compliance.

2. Institutional coverage

National governments (of participating African countries).

3. Technical coverage

ATO assesses and compares data of a number of African countries against indicators in four broad categories: tax bases, tax structure, revenue performance, and tax administration.

4. Application method

Self-assessment.

Methodology



5. Methodology

ATO is used to analyze data on taxation trends in participating countries. It analyzes data on taxation trends and provides

- a collection of good practices used for cross-country or regional comparisons and benchmarking;
- evidence-based recommendations to reform tax policies, tax administrations, and tax systems in general; and
- an analysis of observed trends within and across countries.

The ATAF databank collects information and provides in-depth analysis to improve comparability, analysis, quality, and accessibility of revenue data for Africa.

6. Benchmarking system

Data collection and reporting tool.

7. Linkage to PEFA framework

Some of the ATAF indicators cover tax administration topics examined with PEFA performance indicator on revenue administration (PI-19).

8. Complementarity with PEFA framework

ATAF indicators and ATO reports provide information that could be used in areas relevant to PEFA Pillar V: Predictability and Control in Budget Execution.

Development and use



9. Development and coordination

ATAF's ATO was launched in June 2016 to make available reliable tax statistics and analyses pertaining to African tax administrations, in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of member country taxation. The ATO data portal, launched in November 2017, provides ATAF members and non-members with the opportunity to collect a harmonized set of national-level information and data on tax and customs administration.

ATAF and ATO countries constantly upgrade and introduce new indicators in response to feedback on previous editions of the ATO to ensure that indicators reflect the fast-changing tax environment.

10. Assessment management

Focal points from each participating country for data collection commit to a documented data collection process using the online ATO data platform and ATO Guidebook. The main steps to prepare each annual edition of the ATO are as follows: (1) a data collectors' capacity-building workshop, (2) data collection period prior to the year of publication, (3) a validation workshop, and (4) drafting of the annual publication. Preparation of the ATO publication is done in collaboration with the ATAF Secretariat and participating countries to ensure strong ownership and that skills are utilized from these countries. The ATO project is also an opportunity to bring visibility to participating tax administrations.

11. Uses by the government and members of the PFM community

The ATO data platform provides users access to harmonized information and data on tax and customs administration and allows participating tax administrations to conduct their own analysis. These indicators support African tax authorities as they implement reforms and policies to broaden the tax base, narrow tax gaps, simplify and improve fairness in tax systems, enhance overall voluntary compliance, and keep policy makers informed on tax matters. The ATO report is intended to

- improve cross-country or regional comparisons and benchmarking;
- provide evidence-based recommendations to reform tax policies and tax administrations;
- analyze the data in terms of taxation trends around the continent, identify good practices, and draw inferences on the heterogeneity of the tax data over time and across countries; and
- provide comparable data on tax policy, tax administration, and tax legislation.

12. Sequencing with other tools

Data collected can be used by countries and partner organizations to conduct analysis on national tax systems and make cross-country comparisons between participating administrations.

13. PFM capacity building

Data compilation includes capacity-building workshop specifically aimed at data collectors of tax administrations. Face-to-face sessions on a proposed area of need in the respective year are targeted at tax officials from tax administration of ATAF member countries. Virtual training programs also target tax officials in two areas - tax audit and tax treaties.

14. Tracking of changes and frequency of assessments

Users of the databank can compare past data and trends of countries. Data from ATAF databank is used every year to produce the annual editions of the ATO.

15. Resource requirements

Participating countries have agreed to a cost sharing formula to ensure the financial sustainability of the ATO project.

Transparency



16. Access to methodology

Guidelines, templates, and other supporting documents are only accessible for participating countries.

17. Access to assessment results

The databank and ATO report can be accessed through the ATAF [website](#).