

GOOD GOVERNANCE RATING INDEX

UK Report flags three Nigerian States as Worst-Managed

A new governance review has named Zamfara, Kwara, and Benue as Nigeria's poorest-performing states between 2023 and 2025. The ranking comes from a midterm report released in London by the Good Governance Rating Index (GGRI), a UK-based organization that tracks leadership quality, service delivery, and accountability in developing democracies. According to the report, the three states — led by Governors Dauda Lawal of Zamfara, AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq of Kwara, and Hyacinth Alia of Benue — performed very poorly across key governance areas, including health, education, infrastructure, economic opportunities, transparency, and security.

GGRI said its findings were based on official government reports, independent audits, field surveys, and citizen feedback collected between May 2023 and August 2025. “The performance of Zamfara, Kwara, and Benue falls well below the national average across all measurable indicators. These states have consistently demonstrated weak leadership, poor policy choices, and a lack of transparency that have compounded the hardships of their citizens,” the report stated. Zamfara ranked lowest overall, with GGRI highlighting the worsening insecurity crisis. Armed banditry and mass abductions remain widespread in the state. “Zamfara has no clear developmental agenda despite the governor's rich manifesto at inception. Corruption and the activities of government agents and non-state actors have continued to fuel insecurity even with billions regularly allocated as security votes. The state's infrastructure is collapsing, workers' welfare remains poor, and the vast revenues received from the Federation Account are not translating into meaningful development,” the report noted. The report also criticized the education and health sectors in Zamfara. “Zamfara's education sector is in ruins, with over 60 percent of school-age children in rural areas either out of school or attending poorly equipped classrooms. Health facilities are chronically underfunded, and maternal mortality rates remain among the highest in the country. Instead of institutional reforms, the government has prioritized political patronage, worsening the plight of ordinary citizens.”

Kwara, under Governor AbdulRazaq, was ranked second-worst. GGRI observed that despite promises of reforms, economic and social indicators have stagnated. “Poverty is deepening in Kwara, while economic activities remain largely stagnant. The state capital and surrounding towns are plagued with dirty streets and environmental decay, symptomatic of corruption and ineptitude in governance. Infrastructure continues to crumble, with Ilorin suffering from bad roads, unreliable water supply, and inadequate public housing,” the report stated. It added: “The education sector has deteriorated,

with many schools lacking qualified teachers and learning materials. Health outcomes are similarly poor, with rural health centres understaffed and ill-equipped. Governor AbdulRazaq has mastered the art of lofty promises and public relations, but the reality is that his citizens are not feeling the impact of government on their daily lives.”

Benue State, led by Governor Alia, ranked third-worst. GGRI warned that insecurity, poverty, and governance failures are pushing the state deeper into crisis. “Benue has witnessed a collapse in rural infrastructure, with primary schools in many local government areas reduced to ghost structures and hospitals either abandoned or non-functional,” the report noted.



It added: “The governor has shown little willingness to confront insecurity, leaving thousands of internally displaced persons without hope of resettlement. Poverty levels are climbing, economic activities are stagnant, and corruption among state officials is rife. The surroundings in both rural and urban centres are dirty and neglected, with no major infrastructure projects to inspire confidence. What exists is the entrenchment of despair and a government adrift without a clear development agenda.”

GGRI warned that the poor performance of Zamfara, Kwara, and Benue has national consequences, affecting Nigeria's human development index and democratic consolidation. “The tragedy is not only that citizens are being denied the dividends of democracy, but also that these failures erode public trust in governance. If unchecked, the long-term consequence will be

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the deepening of poverty, instability, and disillusionment,” the report stated. The organization called on the federal government, civil society, and international partners to increase oversight and support reforms in these states. It recommended urgent interventions in education and health, stronger accountability for public spending, and security strategies tailored to each state's challenges. GGRI further urged citizens to demand accountability from their leaders. “Governors are elected to lead, not to explain away failures. The people of Zamfara, Kwara, and Benue must insist on good governance as a right, not a favour,” it concluded. The Good Governance Rating Index is recognized as an independent evaluator of governance across Africa. Its reports are often used by donor agencies, development institutions, and investors for planning and engagement. A new governance review has named Zamfara, Kwara, and Benue as Nigeria's poorest-performing states between 2023 and 2025. The ranking comes from a midterm report released on Monday in London by the Good Governance Rating Index (GGRI), a UK-based organisation that tracks leadership quality, service delivery, and accountability in developing democracies. According to the report, the three states — led by Governors Dauda Lawal of Zamfara, AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq of Kwara, and Hyacinth Alia of Benue — performed very poorly across key governance areas, including health, education, infrastructure, economic opportunities, transparency, and security. GGRI said its findings were based on official government reports, independent audits, field surveys, and citizen feedback collected between May 2023 and August 2025.

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