



Nairobi, Kenya
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News release

Kenyans overwhelmingly seek – and find – justice outside formal court system, Afrobarometer survey shows

Most Kenyans with justice-related problems turn to family and friends, traditional leaders, or other resources outside the formal court system – and are generally satisfied with the outcome, according to findings of an Afrobarometer survey.

Even though a majority of Kenyans say they trust courts of law at least “somewhat,” only about one in 30 survey respondents who had justice-related problems during the previous two years sought recourse in a court or tribunal.

The survey shows that about one-third of Kenyans think most or all judges and magistrates are involved in corruption – about half the perceived corruption level for the police, but twice the rate for traditional and religious leaders.

Key findings:

- Among Kenyans who had justice-related problems during the previous two years, most resolved their conflicts with the help of family or friends (33%), traditional leaders or community support (26%), or informal settlements among the parties involved (24%). Only 3% resolved their conflicts in formal courts or tribunals (Figure 1).
- Almost nine out of 10 respondents who had justice-related problems say they were “fairly satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the outcomes of the various avenues they used to seek justice (Figure 2).
- A majority (57%) of Kenyans say they trust courts of law “somewhat” or “a lot.” Trust in courts of law is weaker among better-educated Kenyans, ranging from 66% of those with no formal education to 52% of those with post-secondary qualifications. Trust is stronger among rural residents (60%) than in cities (50%) (Figure 3).
- Almost nine out of 10 Kenyans (86%) think at least “some” judges and magistrates are involved in corruption, including more than one-third (35%) who say “most” or “all” of them are corrupt (Figure 4). In contrast, far more Kenyans see most/all police officials as corrupt (68%), but far fewer see widespread corruption among traditional and religious leaders (14% and 15%, respectively).

Afrobarometer surveys

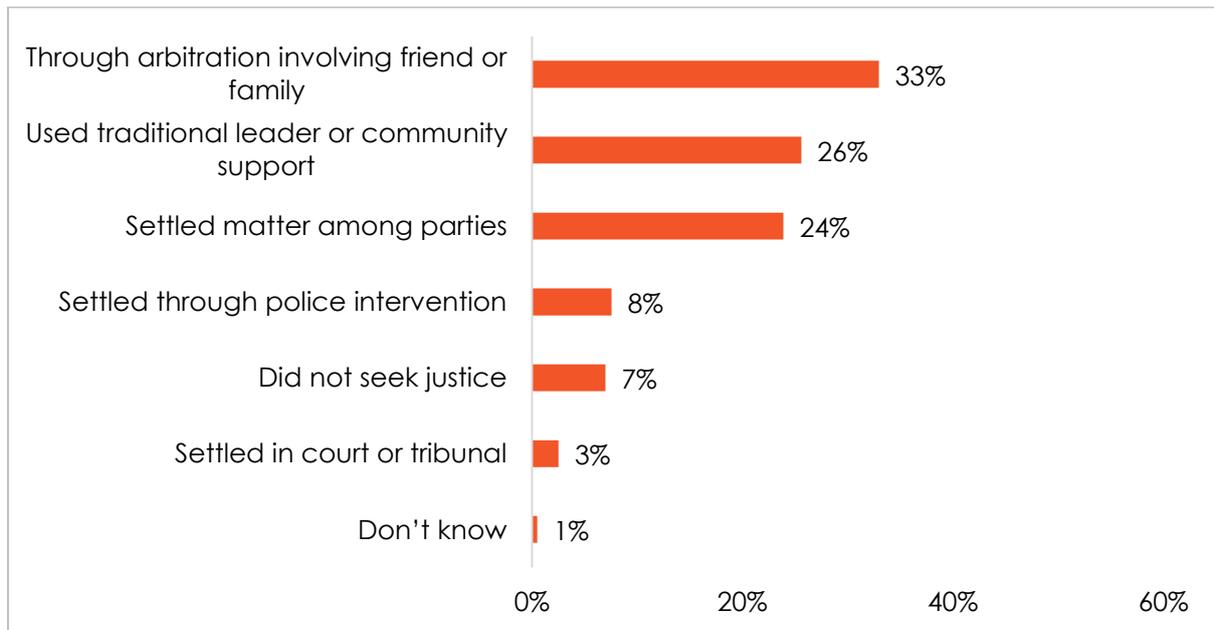
Afrobarometer is a pan-African, nonpartisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Seven rounds of surveys were completed in up to 38 countries between 1999 and 2018. Round 8 surveys in 2019/2021 are planned in at least 35 countries. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples.

The Afrobarometer team in Kenya, led by the Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi, interviewed 2,400 adult citizens of Kenya in August-September 2019. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-2 percentage points at a 95%

confidence level. Previous surveys in Kenya were conducted in 2003, 2005, 2008, 2011, 2014, and 2016.

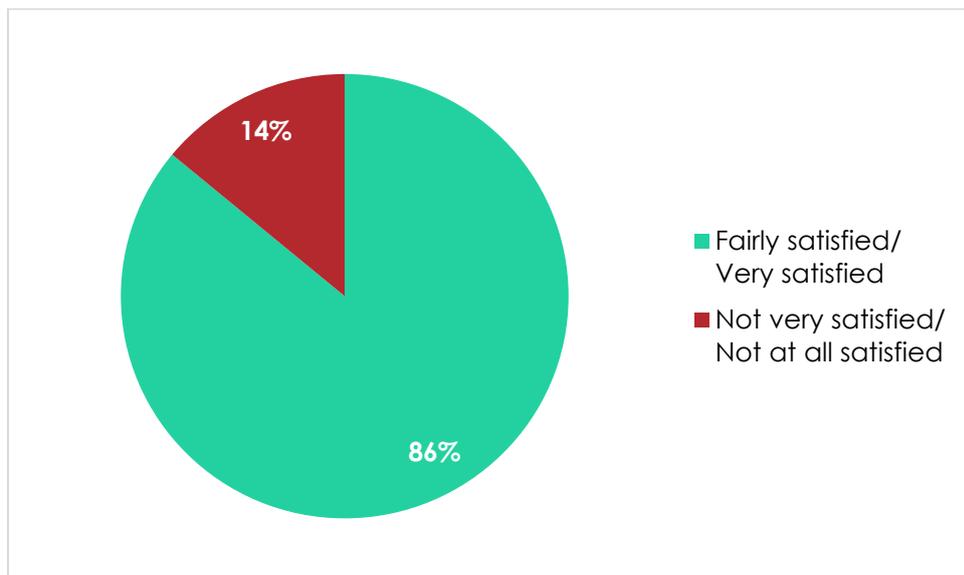
Charts

Figure 1 : Avenues to seek justice | Kenya | 2019



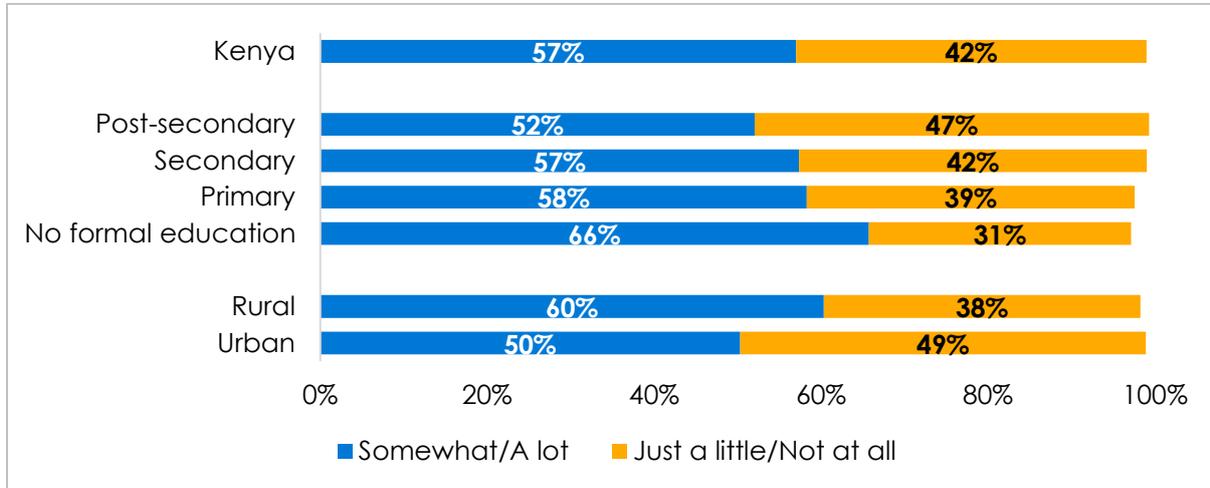
Respondents were asked: Thinking about problems you have encountered with either family members, neighbors, employer, government, or other entities in the last two years, which of the following avenues did you use to seek justice? (Respondents who said they had no justice-related problem during the previous two years are excluded.)

Figure 2 : Satisfaction with justice outcomes | Kenya | 2019



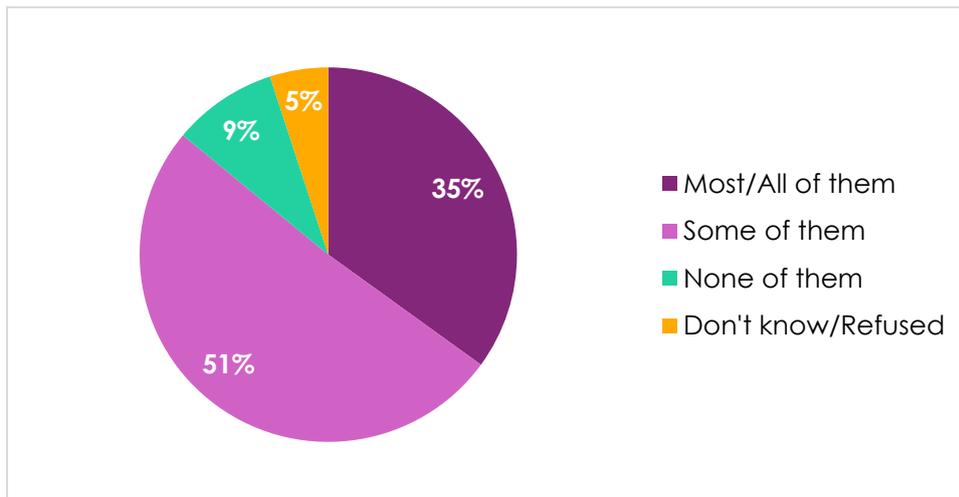
Respondents were asked: Given the avenue you used to seek justice, how satisfied were you with the outcome? (Respondents who said they had no justice-related problem during the previous two years are excluded.)

Figure 3 : Trust in courts of law | Kenya | 2019



Respondents were asked: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: Courts of law?

Figure 4 : Perceived corruption among judges and magistrates | Kenya | 2019



Respondents were asked: How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: Judges and magistrates?

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