



Centre for Policy, Research and Strategic Studies
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Press release

Gambians expect Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission to heal the nation but want human-rights violators prosecuted, study shows

Gambians have varying expectations of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC), including both national healing and justice, Afrobarometer's inaugural national survey in the country reveals.

More than one-fourth of Gambians say they or a member of their family suffered at least one form of human-rights abuse at the hands of former President Yahya Jammeh's regime, and a majority of citizens believe that perpetrators should be tried in court. However, opinions are divided on whether to seek extradition of Jammeh to face justice in the Gambia.

While facing a variety of citizen expectations, the TRRC will also have to work to become known and trusted by the public: Fewer than half of Gambians say they trust the TRRC.

The government of President Adama Barrow established the TRRC as part of a broader transitional-justice process aimed at addressing past human-rights abuses and building a stable democratic future through justice moored to respect for the rule of law and human rights. The commission is reported to have received pushback from Jammeh supporters and tagged as a "witch hunt" aimed at the former president.

Afrobarometer survey

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues in Africa. Six rounds of surveys were conducted in up to 37 African countries between 1999 and 2015, and Round 7 surveys are being completed in 2018. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples.

The Afrobarometer team in the Gambia, led by the Centre for Policy, Research and Strategic Studies (CepRass), interviewed 1,200 adult Gambians in July and August 2018. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.

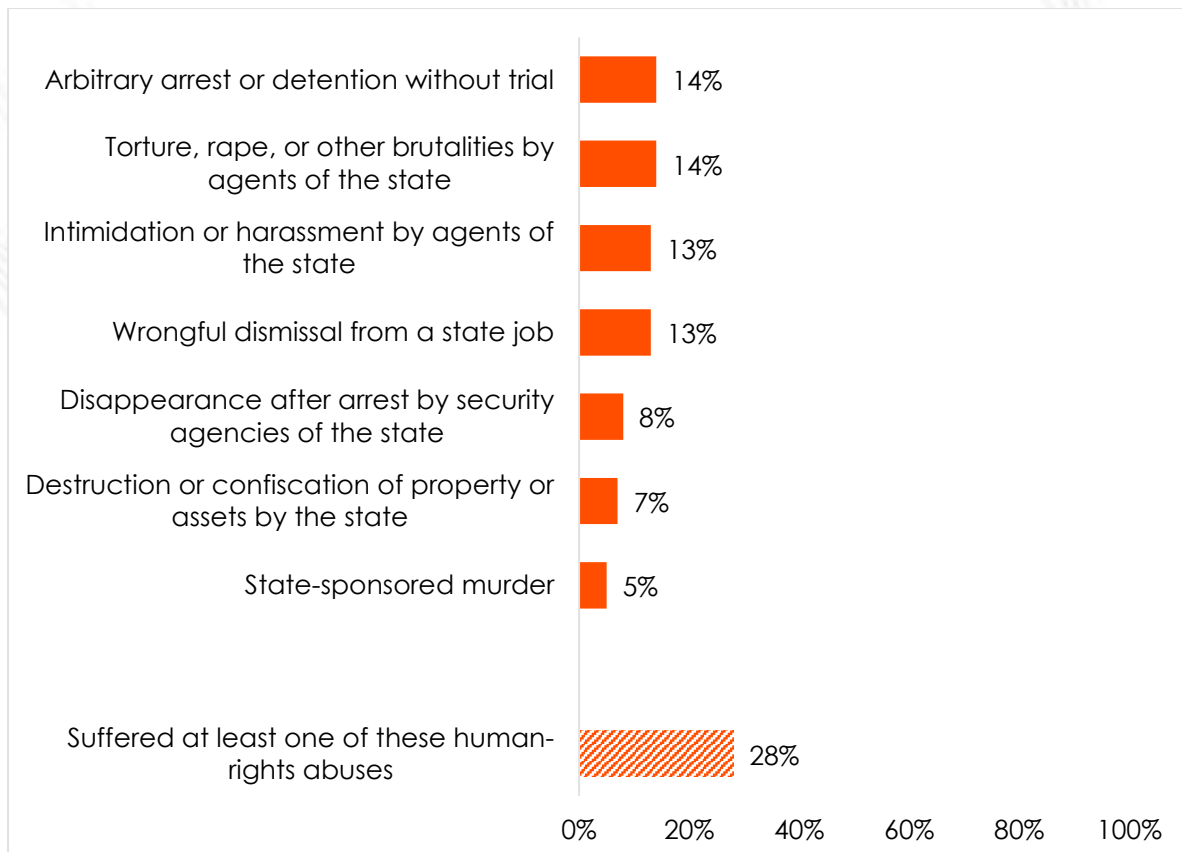
Key findings

- More than one in four Gambians (28%) say they or a member of their family suffered at least one form of human-rights abuse under the regime of former President Yahya Jammeh (Figure 1).
- Citizens expect a variety of outcomes from the TRRC's work, ranging from national peace, reconciliation, forgiveness, and healing (34%) to accurate records of the previous regime's human-rights abuses (30%), prosecution of accused perpetrators (28%), and support and reparations for victims (Figure 2).

- Fewer than half (46%) of Gambians say they trust the TRRC “a lot” or “somewhat.” Three in 10 (29%) say they don’t know whether or not they trust the commission or refused to answer the question (Figure 3). These responses may point to a lack of public awareness of the commission’s mandate and operations.
- Among key institutions in the country, the TRRC and the Constitutional Review Commission (both trusted “somewhat” or “a lot” by 46% of the population) are two of the least trusted, ahead only of opposition political parties (38%), and more than 20 percentage points behind religious leaders (85%), traditional leaders (71%), and the president (67%) (Figure 4).
- Two-thirds (68%) of Gambians say perpetrators of crimes and human-rights abuses during Jammeh’s regime should be tried in court, irrespective of the work of the TRRC. Half (51%) say the former president should face prosecution for crimes and human-rights abuses (Figure 5).
- Six in 10 Gambians (60%) recommend a collaborative effort between the governments of Ghana and the Gambia to ascertain the truth about 44 Ghanaians who were murdered in the Gambia.

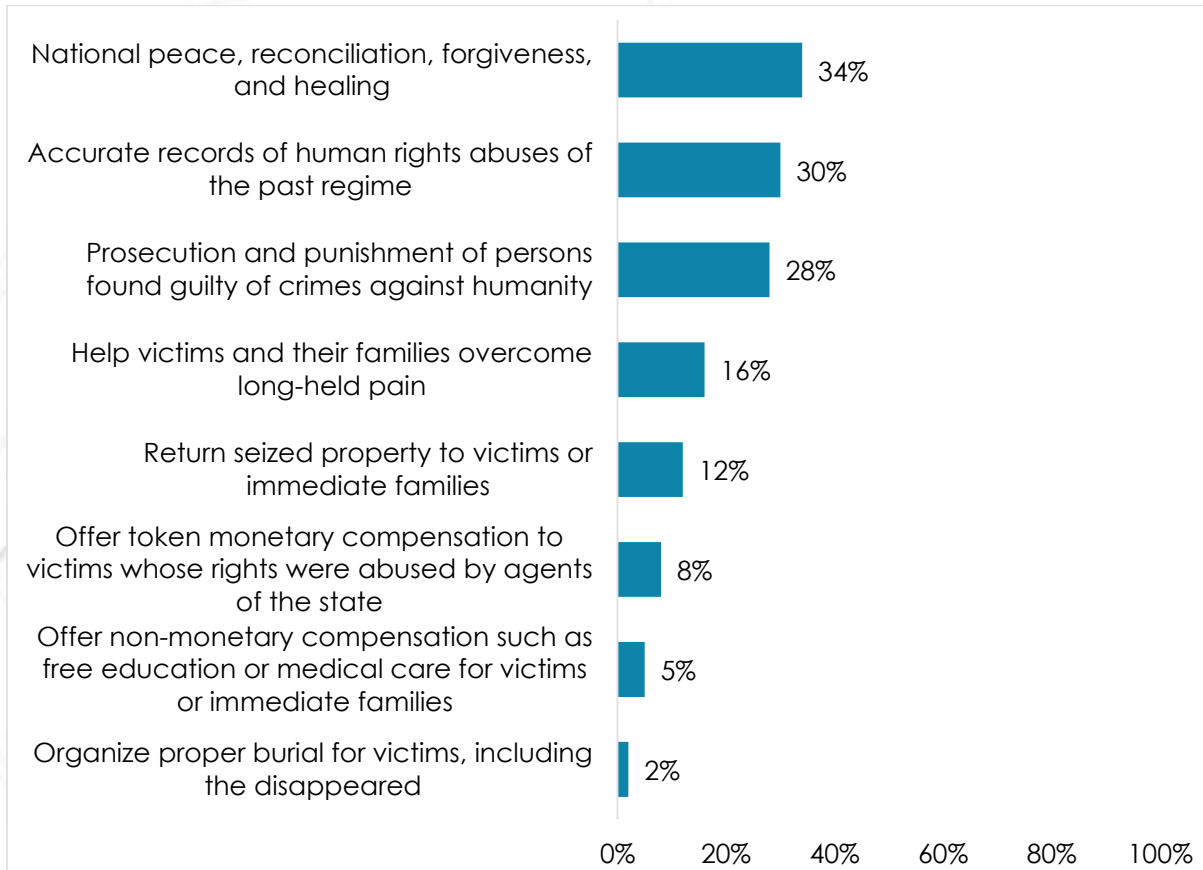
Charts

Figure 1: Suffered human-rights abuse | The Gambia | 2018



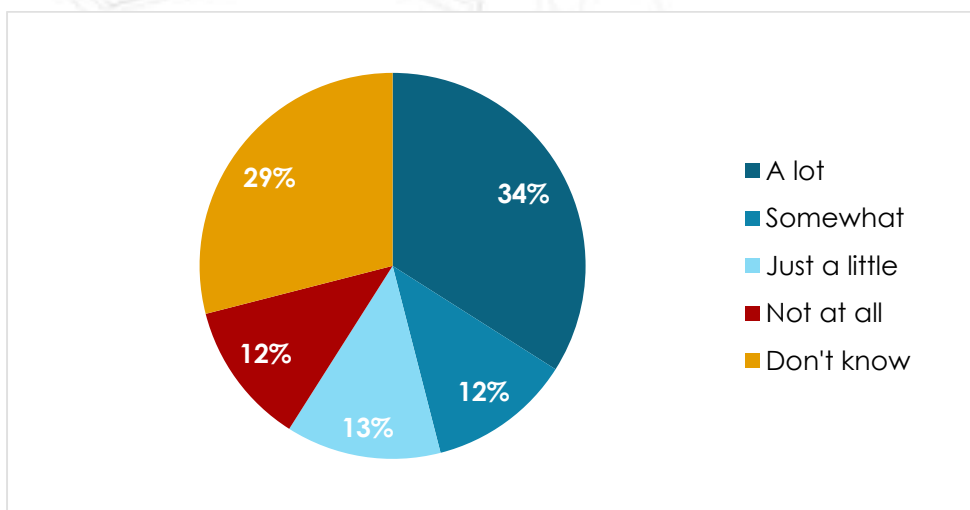
Respondents were asked: Some people suffered various human-rights abuses under Yahya Jammeh’s regime. Please tell me whether you or any member of your family suffered the following human-rights abuse?

Figure 2: Expectations of the TRRC | The Gambia | 2018



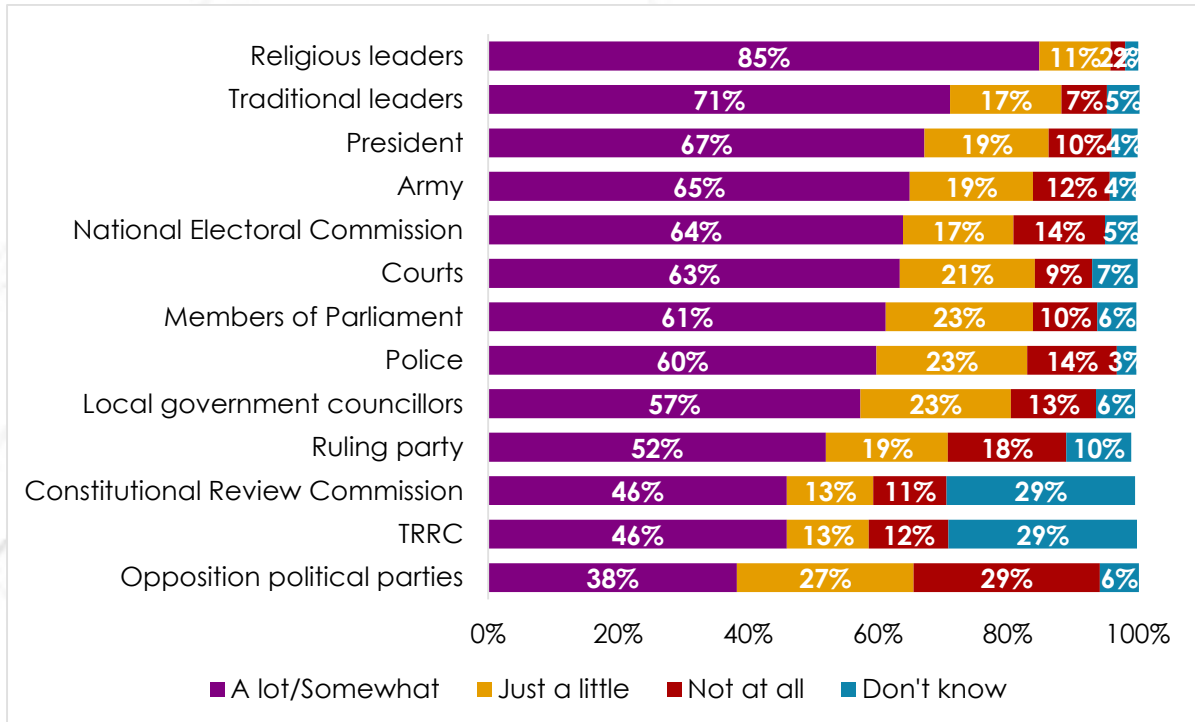
Respondents were asked: People have different expectations about the outcome of the work of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC). Please tell me the two most important outcomes you expect from the commission's work? (Respondents could give up to two responses.)

Figure 3: Popular trust in the TRRC | The Gambia | 2018



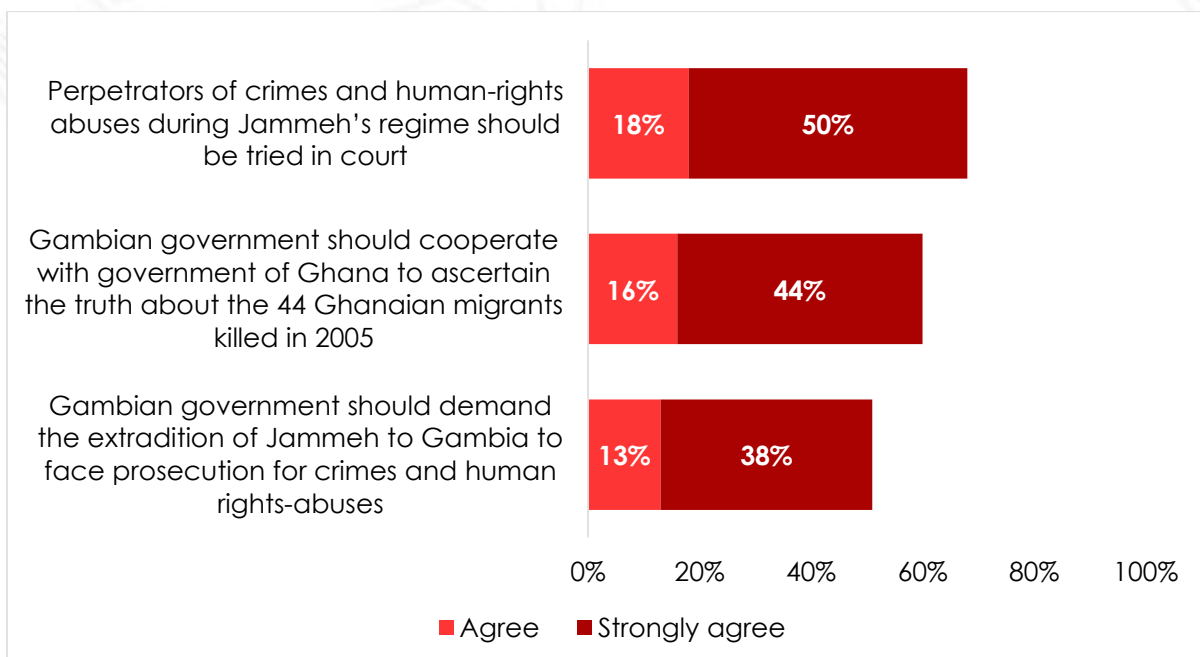
Respondents were asked: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: The Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC)?

Figure 4: Popular trust in key institutions | The Gambia | 2018



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

Figure 5: Bringing perpetrators to justice | The Gambia | 2018



Respondents were asked: For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you disagree or agree or haven't you heard enough to say?

For more information, please contact:

Demba Kandeh
Communications Manager
Centre for Policy, Research and Strategic Studies
Telephone: +220-2481478
Email: dekandeh@utg.edu.gm

