

## ADVISION LESOTHO

Advice Lesotho  
Maseru, Lesotho  
16 December 2014

## News release

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### **Despite 'bad' economic conditions, Basotho increasingly optimistic about the future**

Although a majority of Basotho say the country's and their personal economic conditions are bad, they are increasingly hopeful that things will improve in the coming year, according to a new Afrobarometer survey.

The recent African Economic Outlook Report for Lesotho (2014), revealed that the country's economy grew by 3.4% in 2013 which was well below the estimated 2012 growth rate of 6.5%. It is however expected to grow by about 4.4% in the next two years. The country's economy suffered significantly from high poverty levels, with 57% of households living below the poverty line, high unemployment rate (25%) and also registered a high Gini coefficient of 0.51.

#### **Key findings**

- Seven of ten Basotho (70%) say their personal living conditions are "fairly bad" or "very bad," and 59% say the same of their country's economic conditions. But on both issues, the proportion of negative assessments has declined over time (Figure 1).
- Half (51%) of respondents say their living conditions are "worse" or "much worse" than those of other Basotho.
- Four in 10 Basotho (42%) say the economic conditions of the country were worse 12 months ago while one in 5 (21%) say they were better.
- Looking ahead, 62% of Basotho expect the country's economic conditions to be "better" or "much better" in 12 months' time. The proportion of optimistic responses has increased steadily since 2006, when only 25% were hopeful for a better economic situation (Figure 2).

#### **Afrobarometer**

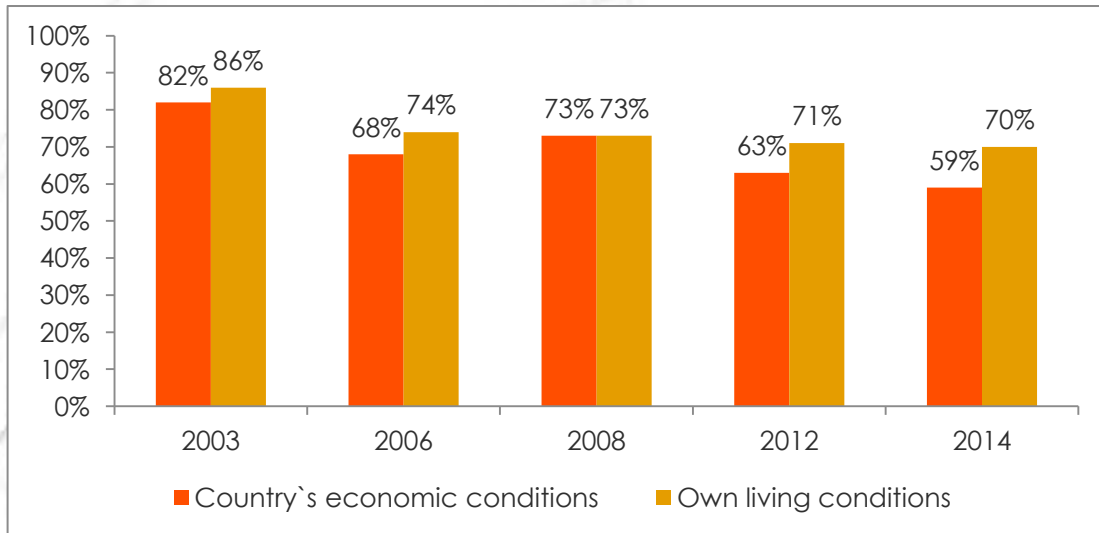
Afrobarometer is an African-led, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues across more than 30 countries in Africa. Five rounds of surveys were conducted between 1999 and 2013, and Round 6 surveys are currently under way (2014-2015). Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples of between 1,200 and 2,400 respondents.

The Afrobarometer team in Lesotho, led Advice Lesotho, interviewed 1,200 adult Basotho in May 2014. A sample of this size yields results with a margin of error of +/-3% at a 95%

confidence level. Previous surveys have been conducted in Lesotho in 2000, 2003, 2005, 2008, and 2012.

**Charts**

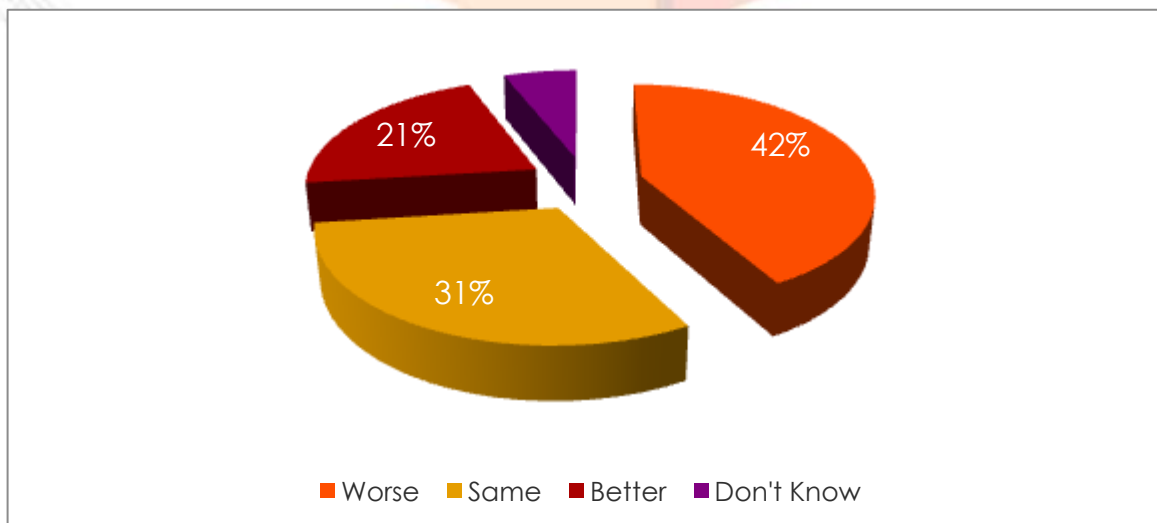
**Figure 1: Perceptions of economic conditions as bad | Lesotho | 2003-2014**



**Respondents were asked:**

*In general, how would you describe:  
 The present economic conditions of this country?  
 Your own present living conditions?  
 (% saying "fairly bad" or "very bad")*

**Figure 2: Evaluating the country's economic conditions in the previous 12 months time | Lesotho | 2014**

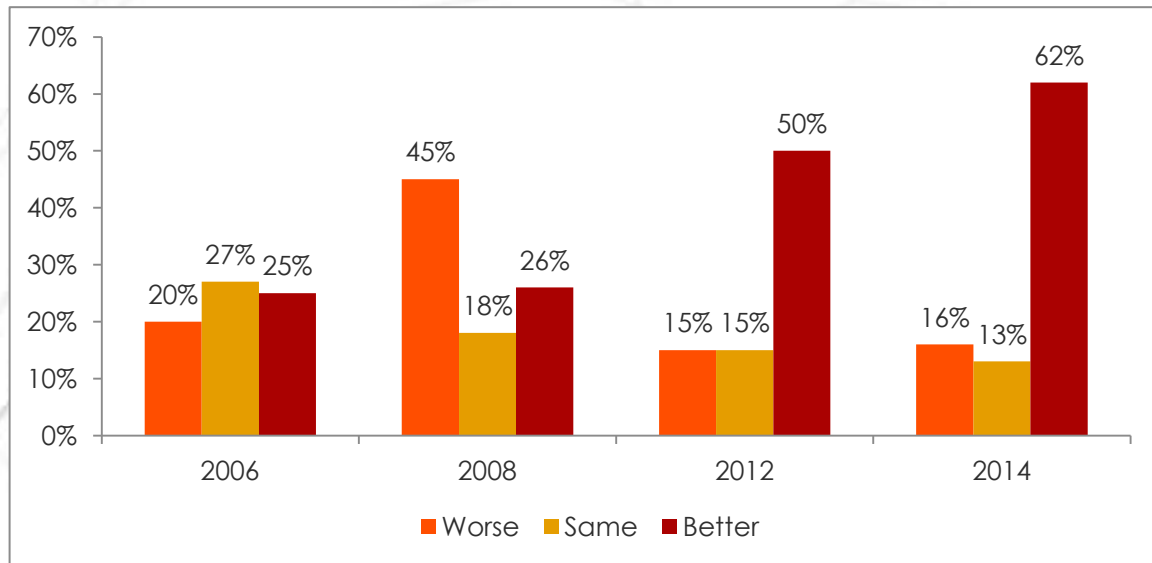


**Respondents were asked:**

*Looking back, how do you rate economic conditions in this country 12 months ago?*

(“Worse” category combines “worse” and “much worse” responses; “better” combines “better” and “much better” responses)

**Figure 3: Projecting the country’s economic conditions in 12 months’ time | Lesotho | 2006-2014**



**Respondents were asked:**

Looking ahead, do you expect economic conditions in this country to be better or worse in 12 months’ time? (“Worse” category combines “worse” and “much worse” responses; “better” combines “better” and “much better” responses)

**For more information, please contact:**

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