



Southern African Barometer UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA

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Gaborone, Botswana

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Batswana Demand Constitutional Reform and Overwhelmingly Support Bogosi or Chieftainship**

The Afrobarometer is a comparative series of public attitude surveys, covering up to 35 African countries in Round 5 (2011-2013). It measures public attitudes on democracy and its alternatives, evaluations of the quality of governance and economic performance. In addition, the survey assesses the views of the electorate on critical political issues in the surveyed countries. The Afrobarometer also provides comparisons over time, as four rounds of surveys have been held from 1999 to 2008 and Round 5 is currently underway.

Afrobarometer's work in Botswana is coordinated by the Southern African Barometer research team at the University of Botswana. Fieldwork for Round 5 was conducted in Botswana from 30 June to 11 July 2012. The survey interviewed 1200 adult Batswana, and a sample of this size yields results with a margin of error of +/-3% at a 95% confidence level.

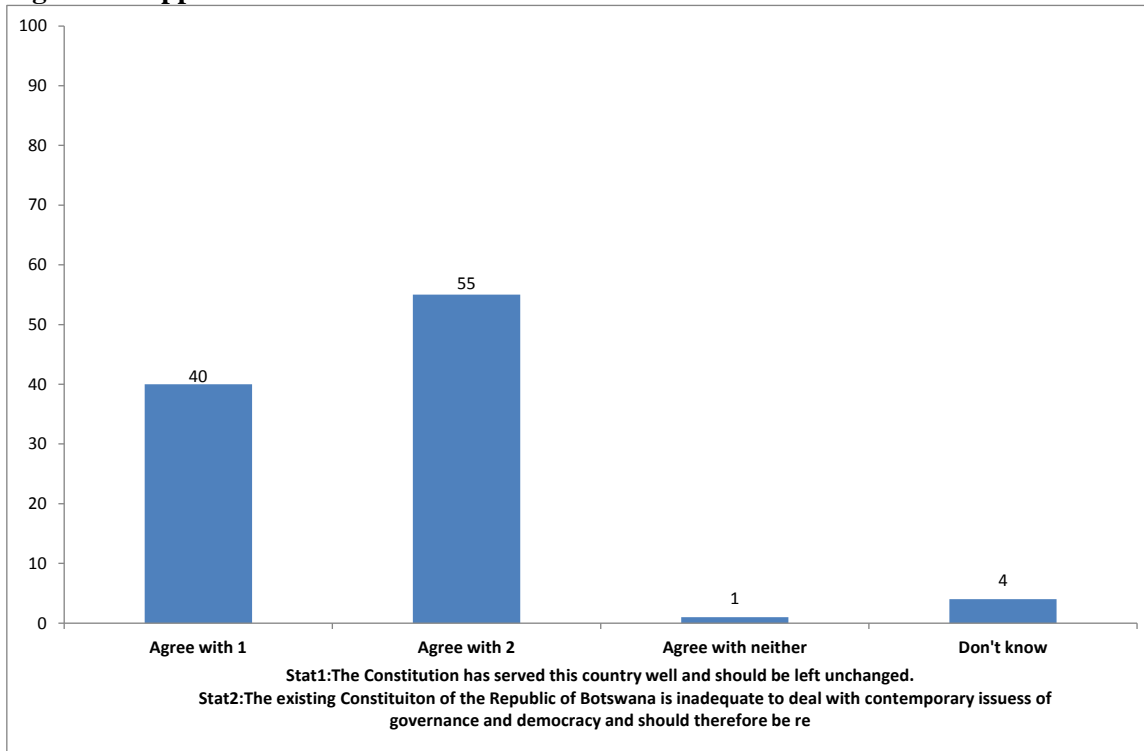
## FINDINGS

Batswana generally support a constitutional review process, with the reason that the existing Constitution is inadequate to deal with contemporary issues of governance and democracy. Further, a strong majority would want the government to retain chieftainship or Bongosi as a way of maintaining the country's value systems.

The Afrobarometer survey findings reveal strong support for constitutional reform with 55% reporting that the existing supreme law of the land needs to be reviewed against four in ten (40%) who believe that the current constitution is still relevant and must not be changed (see Figure 1 below). The need for constitutional review is more pronounced amongst the urban residences (56%) and the semi-urbanites (57%) as compared to their rural counterparts (52%). A clear majority (71%) who report that Botswana is not a democracy support constitutional review, and almost the same proportion (72%) amongst those mentioning that "Botswana is a democracy with major problems" rally behind constitutional reform. This compares to 58% support for constitutional review among those who view Botswana as a democracy with minor problems, and 42% among those who paint Botswana as a full democracy.

In the same way, support for constitutional review is particularly strong amongst Batswana who report dissatisfaction with the way democracy works in Botswana. Hence, we see 70% of Batswana reporting that they are "not at all satisfied" and 65% who are "not very satisfied" with the status of democracy, in support for constitutional reform. Conversely, just 41% of Batswana who are very satisfied with the way democracy works in Botswana express support for constitutional reform.

**Figure 1: Support for Constitutional Review**



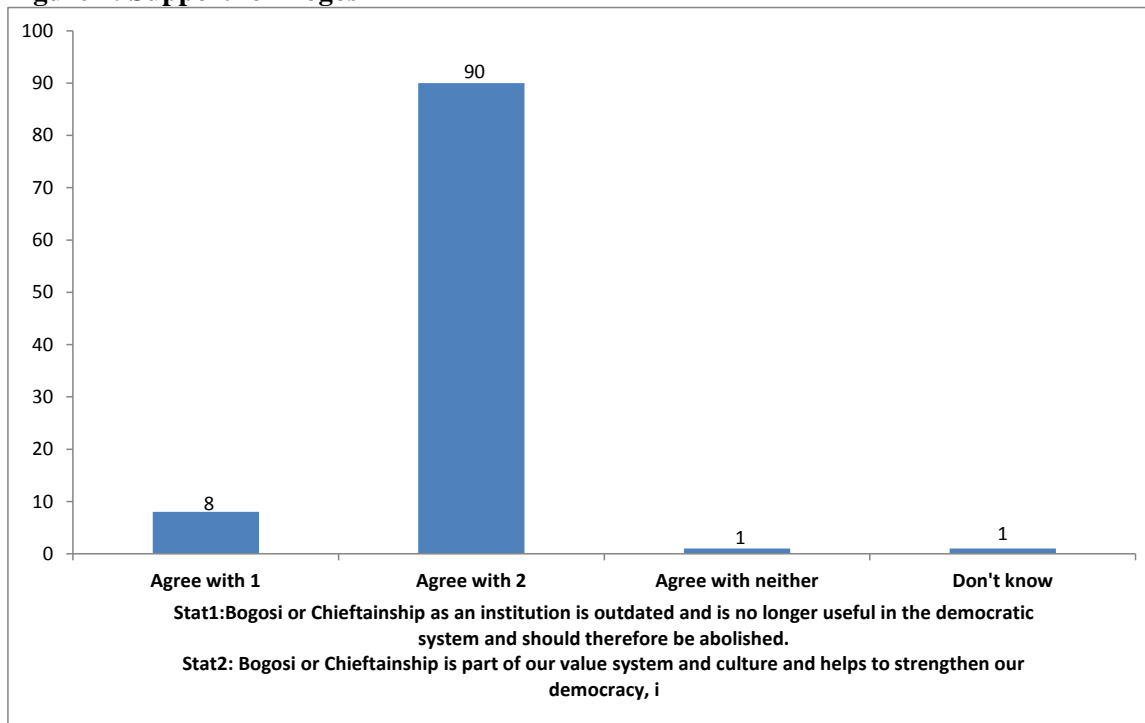
*Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement 1 or Statement 2. Statement 1: The Constitution of the Republic of Botswana has served this country well and should be left unchanged.*

*Statement 2: The existing Constitution of the Republic of Botswana is inadequate to deal with contemporary issues of governance and democracy and should therefore be revised.*

### **Overwhelming Support for Chieftainship or Bogosi**

Batswana see the relevance of Chieftainship as part of their value system and culture. The survey findings revealed an overwhelming majority of 90% in support of Bogosi, with only 8% opposing its existence (see Figure 2). Support is extremely high across all locations, with support for Bogosi amongst rural Batswana 93% only slightly higher than amongst urbanites (88%) and semi-urbanites (89%).

**Figure 2: Support for Bogosi**



*Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement 1 or Statement 2. Statement 1: Bogosi or chieftainship as an institution is outdated and is no longer useful in the democratic system and should therefore be abolished. Statement 2: Bogosi or chieftainship is part of our culture and helps to strengthen our democracy, it should therefore be retained.*

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