

News Release

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Demand for Democracy in Africa Rises | Supply Falls Short

Africans' support for democracy is robust and rising (**7 in 10** Africans prefer democracy to other political regimes) but the supply of democracy has not kept pace with demand.

The findings, published today (April 23, 2014) in the report "Demand for Democracy is Rising in Africa, But Most Political Leaders Fail to Deliver" reveal people's dissatisfaction with the political leadership on the workings of democracy in the 34 countries surveyed¹.

Key Findings

- A majority of Africans say they *want* democracy (71%) but, at the same time, only a minority (46%) also rejects all alternative forms of autocratic rule.
- More than half of all survey respondents in 16 African countries now evince a deep commitment to democratic rule: the composite index of *demand for democracy* climbed 15 percentage points, from 36% in 2002 to 51% in 2012.
- But people don't always think they are *getting* democracy. A composite index of *supply of democracy* reveals that fewer than half (43%) consider their country a democracy and, at the same time, say they are satisfied with the way democracy works.
- Rightly or wrongly, people think that the consolidation of democracy, while partial everywhere, is most advanced in East Africa and least advanced in North Africa. Other regions fall in between, with democratic demand being greatest in West Africa. Regimes in this region may be particularly susceptible to mass mobilization from below as citizens exert pressure for more democracy.

¹ In the Round 5 (2011-2013) surveys reported here, data were collected in 51,605 face-to-face interviews across 34 countries: Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe

- Several African countries – notably Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Uganda and Zimbabwe – continue to experience a *deficit of democracy* in which popular demand for democracy greatly exceeds the amount of democracy that political elites are willing or able to supply.
- People increasingly believe that the quality of elections is the best sign of a democratic regime. Thus, popular attachment to institutions is slowly but surely displacing mass loyalty to dominant personalities.

Charts

Figure 1: **Support for democracy**
 | 34 countries, 2011-2013

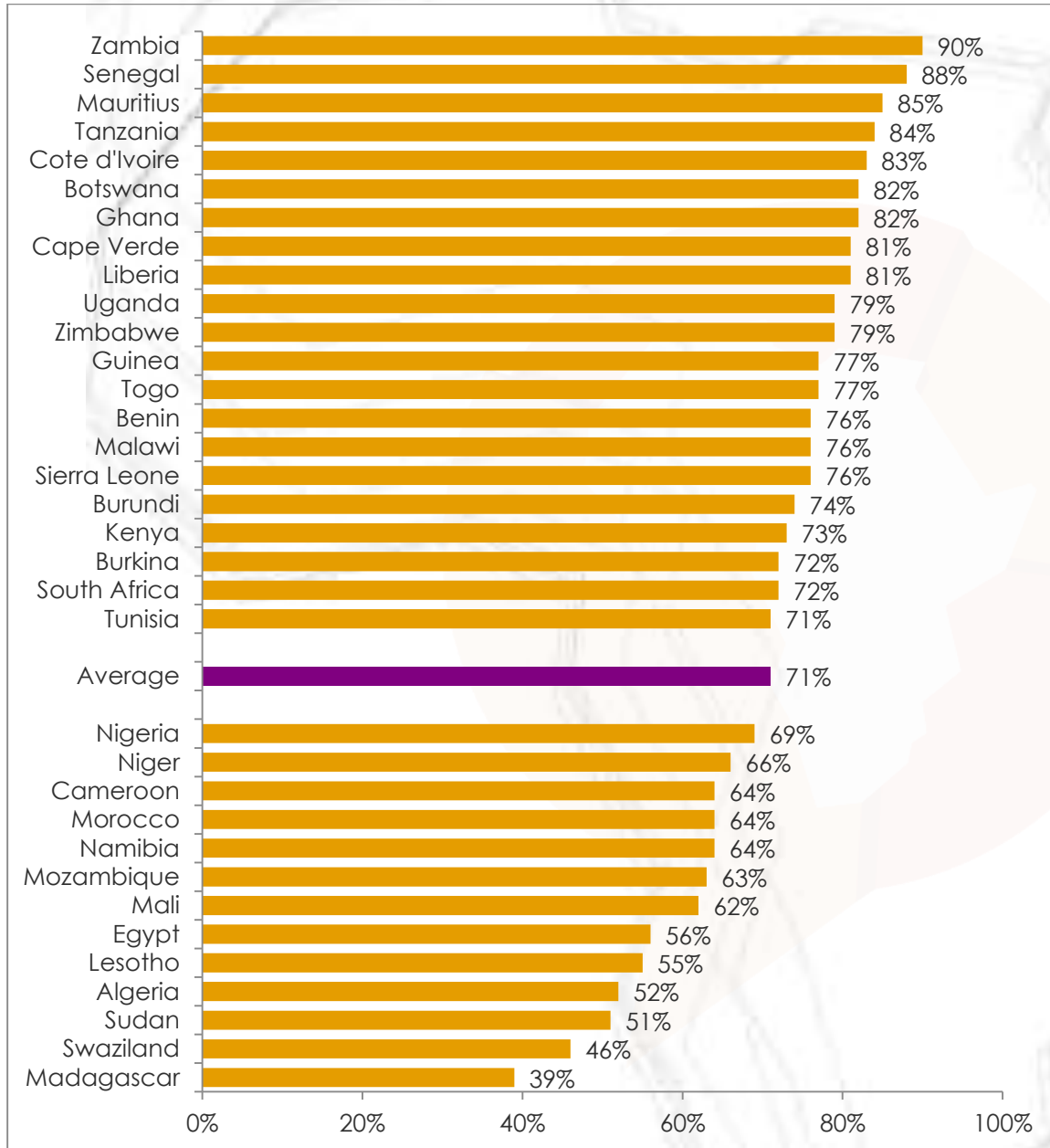


Figure 2: Demand for democracy
 | support democracy + reject authoritarian alternatives
 | Highest and lowest countries, circa 2011-2013

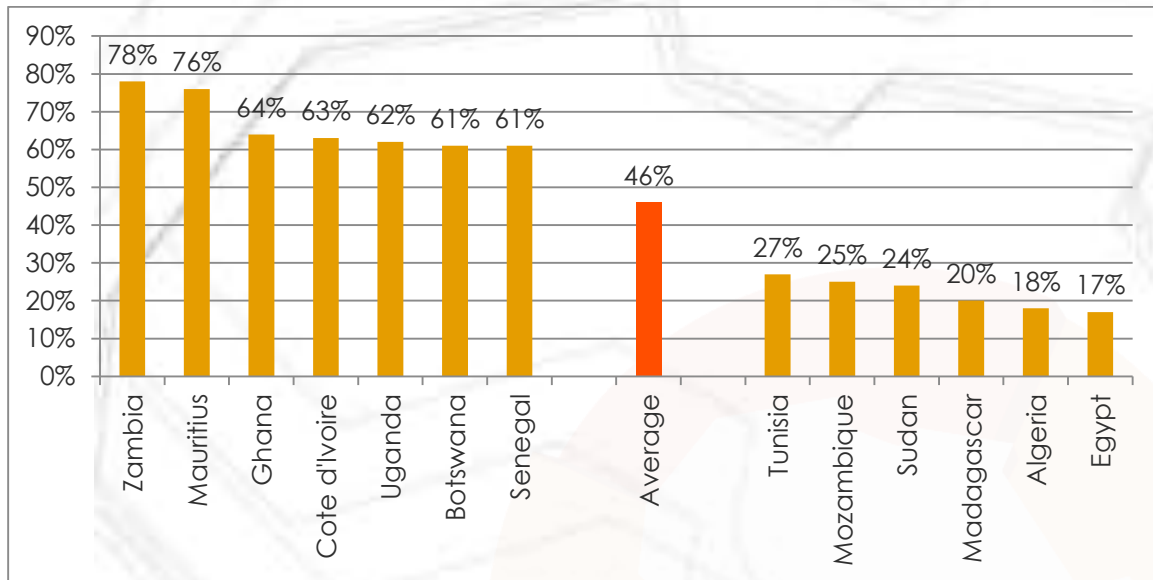


Figure 3: Do Africans think they are getting democracy?
 | Average trends, 16 countries, 2002-2012

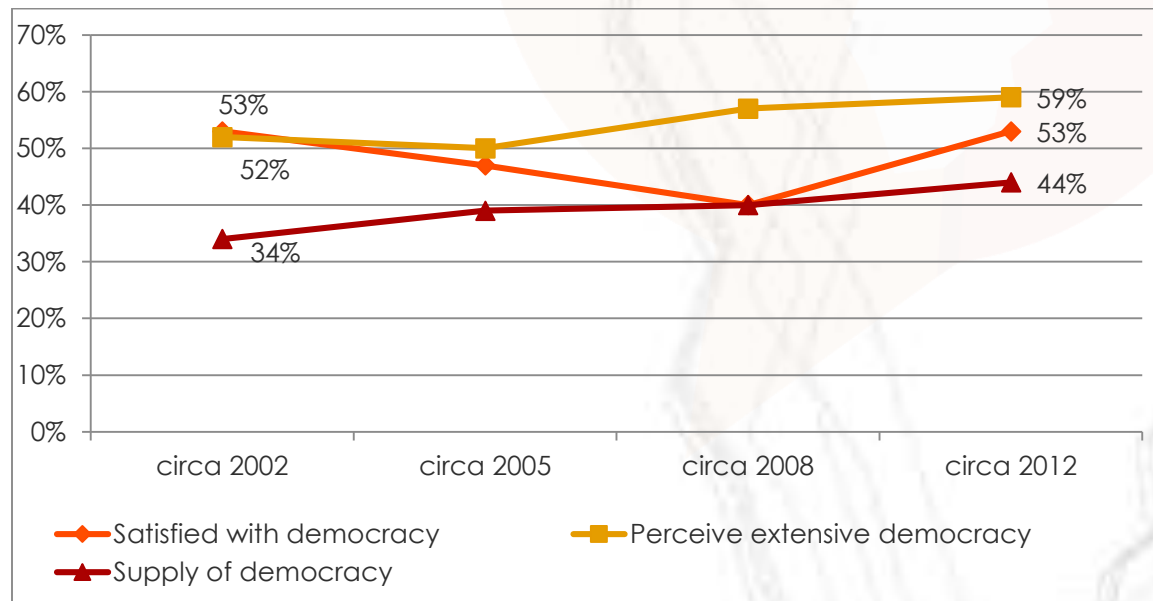
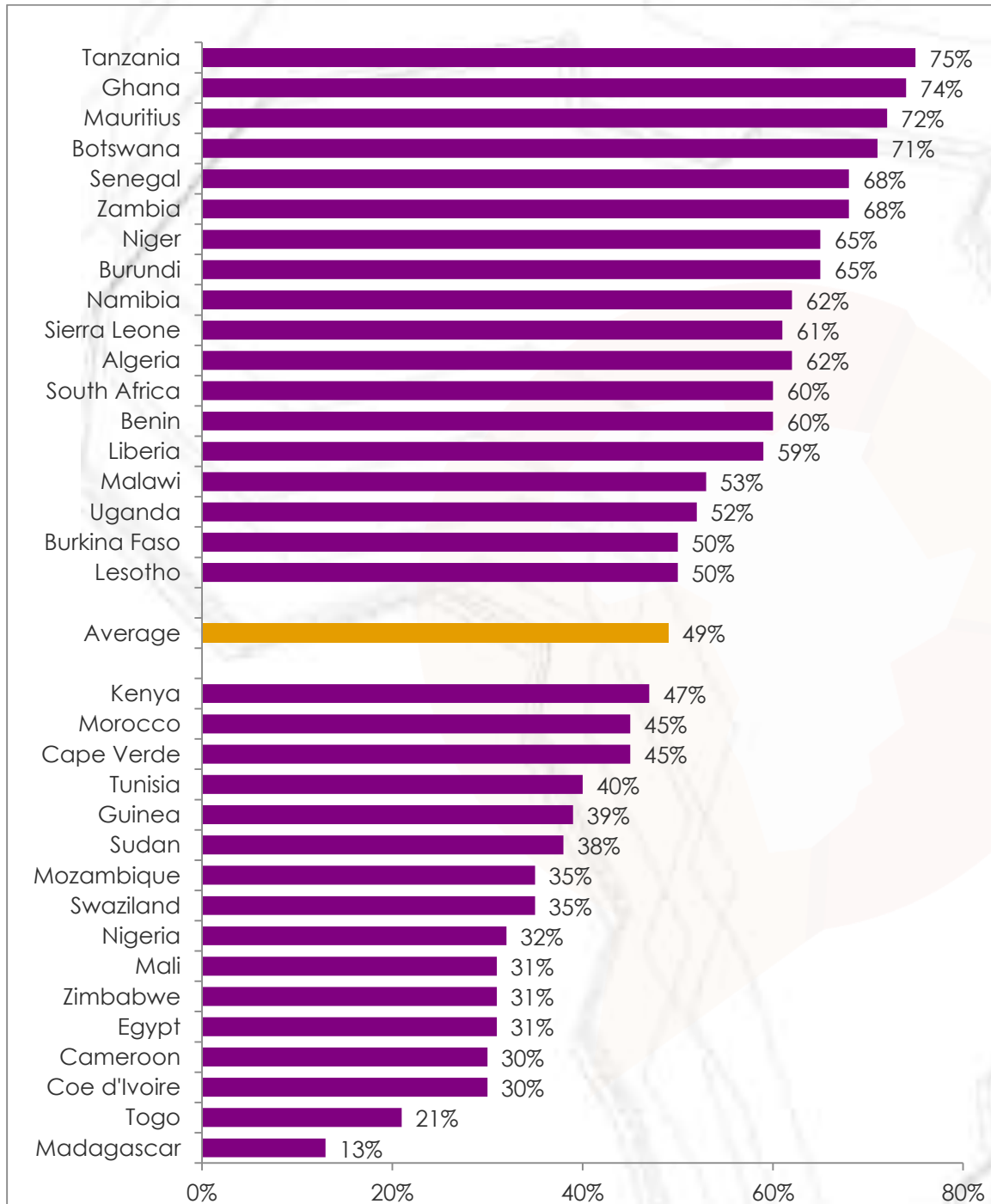


Figure 4: **Satisfaction with democracy**
 | 34 countries, 2011-2013



Afrobarometer

Afrobarometer measures the social, political, and economic atmosphere in Africa. Afrobarometer surveys are conducted in many African countries and are repeated on a regular cycle. The survey instrument asks a standard set of questions in all participating countries, but there are also a set of country-specific questions that address relevant issues within each country.

Data for Afrobarometer Round 5 was collected across the continent from 2011 to 2013. The survey asks questions on a wide range of issues including democracy and governance, economy, approval ratings of leaders and institutions, decentralization and local government, living conditions, perceptions of corruption, security, national and ethnic identity, as well as media and election preferences.

Together with its National Partners in each country, Afrobarometer is a joint enterprise of the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana), the Institute for Empirical Research in Political Economy (IREEP) in Benin and the Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi in Kenya. The project receives technical support from Michigan State University (MSU) and University of Cape Town (UCT).