Highlights of Round 6 survey findings from 36 African countries

- 65% Electricity
- 63% Piped water
- 54% Tarred/paved roads
- 93% Cell phone service
- 30% Sewerage

Share of citizens with access to services
35 countries | 2014/2015
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Afrobarometer

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues across Africa. Six rounds of surveys were conducted between 1999 and 2015. Round 6 (2014/2015) interviews with about 54,000 citizens in 36 countries represent the views of more than three-fourths of the continent’s population. Findings from Round 6 surveys continue to be released, while fieldwork for Round 7 surveys began in September 2016.

Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent’s choice with nationally representative samples, which yield country-level results with a margin of sampling error of +/-2% (for a sample of 2,400) or +/-3% (for a sample of 1,200) at a 95% confidence level.

For more on survey methods and findings (including detailed country-level analyses), as well as free access to all data sets and an online data analysis tool, please visit www.afrobarometer.org.

20 March 2017
Priority problems and investments

Africans’ most urgent problems are unemployment and health care, and their top priorities for greater government spending are education and health care.

Key findings

- The most frequently cited problems are unemployment, health, and education. Taken together, poverty and food shortage are also a dominant concern.

- But the most important problems vary by country: Water supply is the top problem in Guinea and Burkina Faso, while food shortage is the most frequently cited problem in Malawi, Mali, and Niger. In Kenya and Madagascar, crime and security top the list.

- Poor citizens emphasize problems of basic survival (health, water, and food) and infrastructure and place comparatively less emphasis on unemployment and security.

- On the narrower question of which of six specific sectors should be prioritized for greater investment of state resources, education and health care are citizens’ top priorities. Education is the top priority in three-fourths of all countries.

- But investment priorities also vary by country. Agricultural development is the top priority in Malawi, Mali, and Burundi, while infrastructure heads the list in Lesotho. Security ranks as a higher priority in Kenya, Nigeria, and Tunisia than in other countries.

Most important problems | 36 countries | 2014/2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure/transport</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water supply</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty/destination</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming/agriculture</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other economic issues</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food shortage/famine</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime and security</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of the economy</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pol. violence/war/terrorism</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy/pol. rights</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other economic issues</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of the economy</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pol. violence/war/terrorism</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy/pol. rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other economic issues</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of the economy</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pol. violence/war/terrorism</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other economic issues</td>
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<td>Management of the economy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corruption</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>Housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pol. violence/war/terrorism</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Democracy/pol. rights</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other economic issues</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were asked: In your opinion, what are the most important problems facing this country that government should address? (Note: Respondents could give up to three responses. Figure shows % of respondents who cite each problem among their top three.)

More:
Infrastructure

Despite progress over the past decade, the development of infrastructure for electricity, water, sewerage, and roads remains an enormous challenge across Africa, especially in rural areas.

Key findings

- Provision of basic service infrastructure remains a challenge. On average across 35 African countries, only about two-thirds of citizens live in communities with an electric grid (65%) and/or piped water infrastructure (63%), and less than one in three have access to sewerage (30%). More than three times as many have access to cell phone service (93%), while about half (54%) live in zones with tarred or paved roads.

- Across 18 countries tracked since 2005/2006, the availability of all five services has increased modestly. Sewerage shows the least progress, with access increasing by just 8 percentage points over the past decade.

- Countries vary enormously in their provision of basic service infrastructure. For example, while availability of electricity and piped water is universal in Mauritius and Egypt, only 17% of Burundians live in zones with an electric grid, and only 17% of Liberians have access to piped water.

- Regional comparisons show North Africa with the best availability of all five services, followed closely by Central Africa. East Africa ranks last in the availability of electricity, piped water, sewerage, and cell phone service.

- Rural residents continue to be severely disadvantaged in most countries, with urban-rural gaps of more than 40 percentage points in the average availability of an electric grid, sewerage, and piped water infrastructure.

More:

Lived poverty

While adequate food and clean water remain daily challenges for millions of Africans, “lived poverty” – going without life’s basic necessities – has declined in two-thirds of countries surveyed by Afrobarometer. Lived poverty tended to decrease in countries that had made progress in developing basic infrastructure.

Key findings

- Lived poverty remains extensive in Africa: 74% of survey respondents say they went without a cash income at least once in the previous 12 months, and substantial proportions say the same thing about necessary medical care (49%), enough clean water (46%), enough food (46%), and enough cooking fuel (38%).

- Yet Africa can no longer be characterized as uniformly poor, as levels of lived poverty vary widely across the continent. Lived poverty is highest in Gabon, Togo, and Liberia and lowest in Mauritius, Cape Verde, and Algeria.

- Respondents in full-time employment, with higher levels of education, who live in urban areas, and whose communities have infrastructure such as tarred or paved roads, piped water, sewerage, electricity, and health clinics are far less likely to report experiencing shortages of basic necessities.

- Respondents in Central and West Africa encounter the most frequent shortages, while North Africans experience the lowest levels of deprivation.

- Compared to the previous round of Afrobarometer surveys, levels of lived poverty declined in 22 of the 33 countries included in both surveys, with very substantial reductions in Cape Verde and Egypt. However, lived poverty increased in five countries, most steeply in Mozambique, Benin, and Liberia.

More:

Electrification

While more Africans live within reach of an electric grid than a decade ago, only four in 10 enjoy a reliable power supply. In some countries, the electric grid reaches only a fraction of the population; in others, an extensive grid is undermined by inadequate supply and poor service.

Key findings

- **Access:** Defined as having an electric grid within reach, access exists for two-thirds (66%) of Africans but varies widely across the continent. Only 17% of Burundians and 25% of Burkinabé live in zones with an electric grid, compared to 100% of Mauritians and Egyptians. Access is most limited in rural areas.

- **Connection:** Six in 10 Africans (60%) are actually connected to an electric grid, ranging from less than one in seven citizens in Burundi (11%), Malawi (12%), and Burkina Faso (14%) to universal coverage in Mauritius and Tunisia.

- **Reliability:** Neither access nor connection guarantees lights, as even in some countries where most households are connected, very few have electricity that works “most of the time” or “always.” The most striking example is Nigeria, where 96% of respondents are connected but only 18% of those connections work more than about half the time.

- **Government performance in providing reliable electricity:** On average, only four in 10 Africans (41%) say their government is performing “fairly well” or “very well” in ensuring power. Approval rates range from just 7% in Madagascar to 91% in Mauritius. In two-thirds of surveyed countries, majorities describe the government’s performance as “fairly bad” or “very bad.”

More:

Water and sanitation

Almost half of Africans go without enough clean water for home use, and a majority have to leave their compounds in order to access water.

Key findings

- Across 36 countries, almost half (45%) of respondents say they went without enough clean water at least once during the previous year. One in five (19%) did so “many times” or “always.”
- A majority of Africans (51%) can only access water outside of their compound.
- More than one-third (36%) of surveyed communities have no infrastructure for piped water. More than two-thirds (68%) lack sewerage infrastructure.
- One in five citizens (20%) have to leave their compound to use a latrine, and almost one in 10 (8%) have no access at all to a latrine or toilet, even outside their compound.
- Rural residents have far less access to water and sanitation than their urban counterparts. North Africa outperforms other regions, while East Africa lags behind.
- Water supply ranks fifth among important problems that citizens say their governments must address. In Burkina Faso, Guinea, and Niger, it’s problem No. 1.
- A majority (55%) of African citizens rate their government’s handling of water supply as “fairly bad” or “very bad.” Across 18 countries tracked since 2005/2006, negative ratings have increased by 14 percentage points.

More:

Health care

Almost half of Africans go without needed health care, and one in seven have to pay bribes to obtain needed care.

Key findings

▪ Afrobarometer fieldworkers found health clinics in 62% of all survey enumeration areas (EAs). Urban EAs (74%) are more likely to have clinics than rural zones (53%).

▪ Almost half (49%) of all Africans say they or a family member had to go without medicine or medical care at least once during the year preceding the survey.

▪ Among those who accessed health care during the previous year, four in 10 (42%) found it “difficult” or “very difficult” to get the care they needed. One in seven (14%) of those who accessed health services paid a bribe to obtain services.

▪ Close to half (46%) of citizens say their government is performing badly in improving basic health services.

▪ Africans rank health care as their second-most-important problem. In 31 of 36 countries, health care ranks either first or second on the list of citizens’ priority sectors for additional government spending.

▪ On average, nearly half (45%) of Africans are opposed to paying more taxes or user fees in exchange for increased government spending on health care.

More:

Tolerance

Contrary to common portrayals, Africans express high degrees of tolerance for people from different ethnic groups, people of different religions, immigrants, and people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). Homophobia is widespread but not universal: At least half of all citizens in four African countries say they would not mind or would welcome having homosexual neighbours.

Key findings

▪ Across 33 countries, large majorities of African citizens exhibit high tolerance for people from different ethnic groups (91%), people of different religions (87%), immigrants (81%), and people living with HIV/AIDS (68%).

▪ Tolerance levels are particularly high in regions and countries that are ethnically and religiously diverse, suggesting that experience is an important factor in inculcating an attitude of tolerance among African citizens.

▪ Similarly, tolerance for people living with HIV/AIDS is highest in countries with high HIV/AIDS prevalence, providing further evidence that intolerance and stigmatization can be unlearned through personal encounters.

▪ A large majority of Africans, however, are intolerant of homosexual citizens. Across the 33 countries, an average of 78% of respondents say they would “somewhat dislike” or “strongly dislike” having a homosexual neighbour.

▪ But not all of Africa is homophobic. Majorities in four countries (Cape Verde, South Africa, Mozambique, and Namibia), and more than four in 10 citizens in three other countries, would like or not mind having homosexual neighbours.

▪ Christians, urban residents, and younger citizens tend to be more tolerant than, respectively, Muslims, rural residents, and older people.

More:

Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 74: Good neighbours? Africans express high levels of tolerance for many, but not for all. At http://afrobarometer.org/publications/tolerance-in-africa.
Freedom of association in Africa

A half-century after the United Nations formalized the freedoms of assembly and association, how well are African governments protecting these fundamental rights?

Key findings

▪ Eight in 10 Africans feel at least “somewhat free” to join any political organisation they want, including a majority (58%) who feel “completely free” to do so. One in six (17%) say they feel “not very” or “not at all” free to associate as they wish. “Complete” freedom of association is a minority perception in 15 of 36 countries.

▪ Across 20 countries tracked since 2008/2009, the perception of “complete” freedom of association has been stable. In six of these countries, however, this perception declined significantly between 2008 and 2015, led by drops of 23 percentage points in Benin and 21 points in Burkina Faso.

▪ Women are somewhat less likely to feel “completely free” than men, 55% vs. 60%. The perception of being free increases modestly with age.

▪ In general, perceived freedom of association is correlated with higher levels of actual engagement in civic and political activities.

▪ Freedom of association also goes hand in hand with democracy: Citizens who feel free to associate also tend to feel free to speak and vote their minds, and are more likely to see their countries as well-functioning democracies.

▪ Despite high perceptions of freedom of association and its linkages with democracy, one-third (32%) of Africans agree that governments “should be able to ban any organisation that goes against its policies.”

More:

Media freedom

Amid growing concerns about restrictions on media freedom, Africans overwhelmingly support an independent media that holds government accountable.

Key findings

- A majority of Africans (54%) say the news media should have the right to publish any views and ideas without government control, while 42% say government should have the right to prevent publications that it “considers harmful to society.”

- More than two-thirds (69%) of Africans say the news media should “constantly investigate and report on government mistakes and corruption.” This is the majority view in every surveyed country except Egypt (where 46% agree).

- A majority (59%) of respondents say the news media is “somewhat” or “very effective” in revealing government mistakes and corruption.

- A slim majority (51%) of Africans say the media “rarely” or “never” abuses its freedom by publishing lies, but more than one-third (36%) – and in some countries more than two-thirds – say it does so “often” or “always.”

- Radio remains the most common news source, accessed by seven in 10 Africans either daily (47%) or “a few times a week” (22%). But radio and newspapers are slowly losing ground, while TV and the Internet are gaining. One in five Africans (21%) now regularly get their news from social media, and among youth and citizens with post-secondary education, the Internet and social media are more popular sources of news than newspapers.

More:
Regional integration

For advocates of regional integration as a path toward economic and political power for Africa, Afrobarometer’s survey findings suggest that many citizens still need to be convinced of the benefits of integration.

Key findings

- A majority (56%) of Africans say they should be able to move freely across international borders in order to trade or work in other countries. But in 15 of 36 surveyed countries, less than half of citizens support free cross-border movement. Support is strongest in West and East Africa and weakest in North Africa.

- Only one in four citizens (26%) say it is easy to cross international borders to work or trade in other countries. Central and West African countries are most likely to describe crossing borders as “difficult” or “very difficult.”

- Only one-third (34%) of respondents agree that governments should help guarantee free elections and human rights in neighbouring countries, while 58% instead emphasize the need to respect national sovereignty.

- About six of 10 citizens across 36 countries say the African Union (58%) and respective regional economic organisations (61%) help their country at least “a little bit”; about four of 10 say they help “somewhat” or “a lot.” Liberians have by far the most positive perceptions of AU and regional (ECOWAS) assistance, while only one-fourth of Moroccans consider the AU and UMA even slightly helpful.

- About three in 10 citizens say they don’t know enough about the AU and regional economic organisations to assess their helpfulness. But access to information makes a difference: Citizens who often listen to radio news are more likely to consider the AU and regional organisations helpful than are those who consume radio news less frequently.

Support for free movement across borders | by region | 36 countries | 2014/2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Support free movement across borders</th>
<th>Favour limiting cross-border movement of people and goods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West Africa</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Africa</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Africa</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Africa</td>
<td>44% 43%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Africa</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More:

China’s growing presence in Africa wins positive reviews

China rivals the United States in influence and popularity as a development model.

Key findings

- The United States the most popular model for national development (cited by 30% of respondents), followed by China (24%). About one in 10 respondents prefer their former colonial power (13%) or South Africa (11%) as a model.

- In Southern and North Africa, China matches the United States in popularity, and in Central Africa, China takes the lead (35% vs. 27% for the United States).

- A plurality of Africans see their former colonial power as wielding the greatest external influence in their country (28%), followed by China (23%) and the United States (22%). France is seen as particularly influential by its former colonies. China’s influence is perceived to be highest in Zimbabwe (55%) and Mozambique (52%).

- Almost two-thirds (63%) of Africans say China’s influence is “somewhat” or “very” positive, while only 15% see it as somewhat/very negative. Favourable views are most common in Mali (92%), Niger (84%), and Liberia (81%).

- A majority (56%) of Africans also see China’s development assistance as doing a “somewhat” or “very” good job of meeting their country’s needs.

- The most important factors contributing to a positive image of China in Africa are its infrastructure/development and business investments and the cost of its products, while the quality of its products gives its image a black eye. Political and social considerations rank low among factors affecting China’s image.

More:
How engaged is Africa’s youth?

Political and civic engagement by African youth is declining and is particularly weak among young women.

Key findings

▪ Political engagement is generally lower among African youth than among their elders, particularly in terms of voting. Two-thirds (65%) of 18- to 35-year-old respondents who were old enough to vote in the last national election say they did so, compared to 79% of citizens above age 35.

▪ Young women are less interested in public affairs than young men (48% vs. 60%) and less likely to discuss politics at least “occasionally” (61% vs. 74%).

▪ African youth are less likely than their elders to participate in civic activities: Less than half (47%) say they attended community meetings, while 40% joined others to raise an issue (vs. 57% and 47% for older citizens). Young women’s participation lags behind that of their male peers (by 9 percentage points, on average).

▪ Not quite half (48%) of youth say they contacted political or community leaders during the previous year to discuss an important issue, with lower reported engagement levels among young women than men (43% vs. 53%).

▪ 11% of young survey respondents say they attended at least one protest in the previous year (vs. 8% older citizens). Again, women report lower participation levels than their male peers (8% vs. 13%).

▪ In 16 countries tracked since 2002/2003, youth engagement has declined, particularly interest in public affairs and measures of civic activism.

More:

Afrobarometer Policy Paper No. 34: Does less engaged mean less empowered?
Political participation lags among African youth, especially women. At
Corruption

Based on Afrobarometer data, Transparency International estimates that nearly 75 million Africans paid a bribe in the past year – some to escape punishment by the police or courts, but many to get access to basic services.

Key findings

- A majority (55%) of Africans say corruption has increased over the previous year.
- Few bribe-payers (14%) report the incidents to authorities. Among those who do, most (68%) say authorities take no action, and many (29%) say they suffered negative consequences.
- Almost two-thirds (63%) of Africans say their government is performing badly at fighting corruption. But a narrow majority (54%) say ordinary citizens can make a difference in the fight against corruption.
- Majorities say the news media should constantly report on government mistakes and corruption (69%) and is in fact effective at playing this “watchdog” role (59%).

Who is corrupt? | 36 countries | 2014/2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Most/All are corrupt</th>
<th>Some are corrupt</th>
<th>None are corrupt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business leaders</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government officials</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax officials</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judges and magistrates</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local government councillors</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliament</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidency</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional leaders</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious leaders</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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?

More:

Do trustworthy institutions matter for development?

Government institutions that earn the public's trust are essential to the successful pursuit of development in Africa.

Key findings

▪ Across 36 countries in 2014/2015, Africans express more trust in informal institutions such as religious and traditional leaders (72% and 61% respectively) than in the formal executive agencies of the state (on average 54%). Still, people find certain executive agencies, such as the national army and the state presidency, to be quite trustworthy (64% and 57% respectively).

▪ Popular trust in the executive institutions of the state varies considerably across African countries, from more than 80% in Niger and Burundi to less than 40% in Nigeria, Liberia, and São Tomé and Príncipe.

▪ Institutional trust is related to perceptions of corruption. If people think office-holders are honest, they are likely to deem an institution trustworthy, and vice versa.

▪ Trustworthy institutions help to achieve the development outcomes that Africans say they want. For every one of the public's stated development priorities, trust in the state is associated with positive popular assessments of government performance.

▪ Thus, socioeconomic development is not a purely technical or engineering exercise. Development outcomes also depend on good governance, which citizens assess partly in terms of whether they find political institutions trustworthy.

More:
Election management in Africa


Key findings

▪ On average across 36 surveyed countries, just half (50%) of respondents say they trust their electoral commission “somewhat” (25%) or “a lot” (25%). Some of the lowest levels of trust are expressed in countries with closely contested elections in 2016, including Gabon (25%), São Tomé and Príncipe (31%), and Ghana (37%).

▪ Two-thirds of Africans rate their most recent election as “completely free and fair” (41%) or “free and fair, but with minor problems” (24%). Citizens’ views on election quality are generally consistent with assessments by international experts.

▪ But substantial proportions of the population are skeptical about the quality of their elections. More than four in 10 Africans say that voters are at least “sometimes” threatened with violence at the polls (44%); that opposition candidates are at least “sometimes” prevented from running (43%); that the news media “never” or only “sometimes” provides fair coverage of all candidates (43%); and that voters are “often” or “always” bribed (43%).

▪ Only one-third (34%) think that votes are “always” counted fairly. Several countries with a history of election-related violence express low levels of confidence in the vote count, including Kenya (26%), Zimbabwe (22%), and Nigeria (6%).

▪ Fully half of Africans say that elections do not work well as mechanisms to 1) ensure that people’s views are represented (50%) and 2) ensure that voters are able to remove non-performing leaders from office (51%).

How well do elections work?
36 African countries | 2014/2015

Elections ensure that...

- People’s views are represented: 42%
- Voters are able to remove non-performing leaders from office: 40%

More:


**MPs and local councillors:**
**Do they serve voters or themselves?**

Members of Parliament and local government councillors across Africa have earned little trust and largely negative performance ratings from their constituents.

**Key findings**

- Fewer than half of Africans say they trust their MPs (48%) and local councillors (46%) “somewhat” or “a lot.”
- Large majorities say at least “some” of their MPs and local government councillors are corrupt, including one-third of citizens who see “most” or “all” of these elected representatives as corrupt.
- A majority (59%) say that officials who commit crimes “often” or “always” go unpunished.
- About three-fourths of Africans say their MPs and councillors “never” or “only sometimes” listen to what their constituents have to say.
- More than two-thirds (69%) believe that political party leaders are more concerned with pursuing their own ambitions than with representing the people’s interests.
- Fewer than half of Africans approve of the job performance of their MPs (45%) and local government councillors (49%). Disapproval is especially high among citizens who see their leaders as driven by personal ambition rather than public service, as corrupt, or as uninterested in what their constituents have to say.

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**Do elected representatives make the grade? Citizen perceptions | 36 African countries | 2014/2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MPs</th>
<th>Councillors</th>
<th>MPs</th>
<th>Councillors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political party leaders are more concerned with serving the public interest than with advancing their own ambitions</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of these elected officials are corrupt</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elected officials often or always listen to what their constituents have to say</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens trust them “somewhat” or “a lot”</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>49%</td>
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**More:**

Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 115: Job performance of MPs, local councillors: Are representatives serving voters or themselves? At [http://afrobarometer.org/publications/ad115-job-performance-mps-local-councillors-are-representatives-serving-voters-or-themselves](http://afrobarometer.org/publications/ad115-job-performance-mps-local-councillors-are-representatives-serving-voters-or-themselves)
Access to justice in Africa: The view from below

Weak public trust, high perceptions of corruption, and difficulties encountered when engaging with the courts make access to justice a challenge in many African countries.

Key findings

- A slim majority (53%) of Africans trust the courts at least “somewhat.” One in three respondents believe that “most” or “all” judges and magistrates are corrupt.

- African publics are nonetheless convinced of the legitimacy of judicial rulings: 72% say courts have the right to make decisions that people always have to abide by.

- About one in eight citizens (13%) report contact with courts in the past five years, ranging from 4% in Burkina Faso to 28% in Egypt and Morocco. Men and more educated citizens engage more with courts than women and uneducated citizens.

- Among those reporting contact with the courts, 54% say that obtaining the needed assistance was difficult, and 30% report paying bribes to court officials.

- Common problems in dealing with the courts include long delays, difficulty understanding legal procedures, lack of counsel, judges who do not listen, and high costs. Poor, uneducated, and rural citizens are more likely to encounter problems in the courts than their wealthier, better-educated, and/or urban counterparts.

- Democracies are doing a markedly better job of providing access to justice for their citizens than autocracies. Post-conflict countries face much greater challenges in providing access to justice than countries that have enjoyed greater internal stability.

More:
Do Africans still want democracy?

Despite warning signs of a democratic recession, public support for democracy remains higher than a decade ago, and most Africans still say they want more democracy than they’re actually getting.

Key findings

- Africans support democracy as a preferred type of political regime (67%). Large majorities also reject alternative authoritarian regimes such as presidential dictatorship (78%), military rule (73%), and one-party government (78%). Smaller proportions are committed democrats who agree on all four of these aspects of democratic preference (43%), an index we call “demand for democracy.”

- Large cross-national differences exist in demand for democracy. For example, while three in four Mauritians are consistent, committed democrats, fewer than one in 10 Mozambicans merit the same description. There is also an important gender gap, with women (39%) significantly less likely to demand democracy than men (49%).

- Across 34 countries included in both of Afrobarometer’s two most recent rounds of surveys, popular demand for democracy increased in 10 countries, decreased in 14 countries, and remained essentially unchanged in 10 countries. As for longer-term trends in 16 countries surveyed since 2002, a steady, decade-long upward trend in demand for democracy has ended with a downward turn since 2012.

- African countries with high-quality elections are more likely to register increases in popular demand for democracy than countries with low-quality elections.

- In a positive sign for the future of democracy, popular demand for democracy still exceeds citizen perceptions of the available supply of democracy in most African countries (26 out of 36 in 2015).

More:

For more information, please contact:

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Support for Afrobarometer

Thanks to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the U.S. State Department, the National Endowment for Democracy, and the World Bank, Afrobarometer surveys are continuing in 2017. But planned country coverage is still limited, and Afrobarometer’s longer-term survival remains uncertain. Voices of support for our work will continue to be essential.