AFRO BAROMETER
Let the people have a say

African insights 2024

Democracy at risk –
the people's perspective

Afrobarometer

Afrobarometer, a nonprofit corporation with headquarters in Ghana, is a pan-African, non-partisan research network. Regional coordination of national partners in more than 35 countries is provided by the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana), the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR) in South Africa, and the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) at the University of Nairobi in Kenya. Michigan State University (MSU), the University of Cape Town (UCT), and the University of Malawi provide technical support to the network.

Vision

A world in which Africa's development is anchored in the realities and aspirations of its people

Mission

To make citizen voice a key pillar of Africa policy and decision making

Afrobarometer provides high-quality data and analysis on what Africans are thinking. With a data bank of more than 385,000 interviews in 42 African countries, we are leading the charge to bridge the continent's data gap. Our data inform many global indices, including the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer, and the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators.

All Afrobarometer data and analysis are public goods, available at www.afrobarometer.org, and may be analysed free of charge using our online data analysis tool.

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Foreword: Afrobarometer and African democracy

Until the late 1990s, not much was known about the values, preferences, or insights of Africans. The idea of polling African citizens seemed impossible, even laughable, to some observers. Experts, media pundits, and politicians purported to know what the people thought. Conventional wisdom held that Africans typically focused on economic and social development and did not care much about democracy or human rights. As a result, many scholars and pundits were taken by surprise by anti-authoritarian and democratic revolutions in Africa after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

Afrobarometer started in 1999 as the modest brainchild of three scholars who were curious about the reactions of ordinary citizens to political openings – such as competitive elections – in a handful of African countries. Our first 12-country data set in 2001 demonstrated that Africans could be polled like citizens in any region of the world, and effectively debunked the notion that Africans are indifferent to democratic governance.

Like Africa's democracies, Afrobarometer has come a long way in the 25 years since. Our Round 1 survey could cover only a dozen countries that were sufficiently politically open. Today, after completing our ninth round of surveys in 39 countries, Afrobarometer findings represent the views of more than 75% of the African population and reach policy actors throughout the world, delivering on Afrobarometer's explicitly democratic goal of "giving voice to the people" in public policy and decisions that impact their lives. It's true that some 14 countries still remain outside of Afrobarometer's coverage; surveys and related activities have been suspended in some countries on account of hostile political conditions; and in a few instances, our national partners have faced political reprisals.

However, it is a significant measure of Africa's advance in democratic governance that Afrobarometer surveys have been conducted and findings disseminated in 42 countries to date. After all, successful AB surveys require some level of cooperation and buy-in from governments. We rely on national statistical agencies for access to national population census frames (from which our

samples are drawn) and enumeration area maps to guide the selection of households for interviews. And in many countries, the national partner must secure a government permit – usually routinely granted – to undertake fieldwork. Even more remarkable is that policy actors, including government leaders across the continent, regularly use Afrobarometer survey findings.

As we reflect on these changes, three transformations stand out.

First, the enterprise. As colleagues eagerly joined our initial effort, Afrobarometer grew into a network of more than 40 independent African research bodies coordinated since 2008 entirely within the continent. By 2019, the challenges of managing this large-scale and far-flung enterprise led us to officially register Afrobarometer as a non-profit corporation

> " Our first 12-country data set in 2001 demonstrated that Africans could be polled like citizens in any region of the world, and effectively debunked the notion that Africans are indifferent to democratic governance.

based in Ghana, with strict organisational procedures to match our research standards. As a new home-grown generation of professionals took charge, Afrobarometer has gained global attention as the go-to source for high-quality data on what Africans are thinking. Policy actors, academics, students, investors, and journalists make copious use of our data and analysis. So do regional and global governance indices such as the Ibrahim Index of African Governance and the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators, as well as continental democratic governance tracking initiatives like the African Peer Review Mechanism and the African Union's African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

Second, the context. In a post-Cold War climate of opening societies and ascendant democratic values, Afrobarometer was able to grow rapidly and obtain a public presence. The past decade, however, has been marked by power struggles in some countries, the scourge of corruption, a resurgence of big-power competition and shifting international alliances, a pandemic and global economic crisis, the spreading threat of extremist violence, declining liberties, and recent military coups. This changed setting makes public opinion research – including country coverage – more challenging, and certainly no less vital.

Third, new knowledge. "African insights 2024: Democracy at risk – the people's perspective" documents the evolution of popular views on democracy and governance in Africa. Here we highlight one key finding: Africans continue to demand democracy even in the face of diminishing supply. In 2005,

we claimed in *Public Opinion, Democracy, and Market Reform in Africa* (Cambridge University Press) that popular support for democracy was "wide but shallow."

The evidence now seems to suggest that support for democracy has become "narrower but deeper": While somewhat fewer Africans cite democracy as their preferred form of government, more demand accountable governance, and solid majorities remain committed to the democratic norms of freedom, elections, competition, the rule of law, and checks on presidential power. These sustained findings strike us as a firm foundation for continuing to promote public opinion as a pillar of democratic governance over the next 25 years.

– Afrobarometer founders Michael Bratton, Robert Mattes, and E. Gyimah-Boadi

Executive summary

Africa's democratic project faces challenging times. Since 2020, soldiers have pushed out elected governments in six countries. Three presidents have defied constitutional limits to claim third terms in office. Other leaders use subtler means to erode democracy, weakening checks on their authority and harassing the political opposition. Non-compliance by member states frustrates the African Union's progress in enforcing democratic norms.

These setbacks overshadow successful elections, ruling-party transitions, the ouster of long-sitting presidents, the strong showing of the judiciary in electoral disputes, and other – very real – democratic advances, and fuel dire warnings from stakeholders that democracy is losing ground on the continent.

Afrobarometer has documented the democratic aspirations and experiences of African citizens for the past 25 years. This report, the first in what will be an annual series on high-priority topics, distills findings from data spanning more than a decade, including the latest round of nationally representative surveys in 39 countries, representing the views of more than three-fourths of the continent's population. In a nutshell: Africans want more democratic governance than they are getting, and the evidence suggests that nurturing support for democracy will require strengthening integrity in local government and official accountability.

As detailed in this report, most Africans prefer democracy to any other system of government and reject non-democratic alternatives, including military rule. They also strongly endorse norms, institutions, and practices associated with democratic governance, such as choosing political leaders through the ballot box, constitutional limits on presidential tenure, presidential compliance with court rulings, parliamentary oversight of the executive, media freedom, and multiparty competition. Remarkably for a continent with huge gaps in government services, a clear – and growing – majority say it is more important for a government to be accountable to the people than to "get things done."

Other trends portend danger for the continent's democratic development. Over the past decade, popular support for democracy has declined sharply in several countries, including Mali, Burkina Faso, South Africa, Namibia, and Guinea. Opposition to military rule has weakened: More than

half of Africans express a willingness to tolerate military intervention "when elected leaders abuse power for their own ends," even though two-thirds reject institutionalised military rule. While Africa's youth differ little from their elders in their support for democracy, they express a greater willingness to tolerate military intervention.

If indicators of popular support for democracy offer reasons for both optimism and concern, Africa's perceived supply of democracy continues to lag behind its citizens' aspirations, and people are increasingly dissatisfied with the way democracy is working in their countries. Indicators of democratic and accountable governance delivered by elected leaders have either been declining over time, as in the case of presidential respect for the courts and Parliament, or have remained stagnant at very low levels, as in the case of equal treatment before the law.

What is driving these trends? Analysis of Afrobarometer data shows that while popular satisfaction with democracy is highly susceptible to economic, social, and political performance, support for democracy is resilient against economic factors such as poverty and poor economic management. Instead, the evidence points to political factors, including rising corruption in local government, poor-quality elections, and a lack of presidential accountability, as factors that tend to undermine popular faith in democracy.

> " Africans want more democratic governance than they are getting, and the evidence suggests that nurturing support for democracy will require strengthening integrity in local government and official accountability.

We explore some of these trends, as well as the widely varying experiences of individual countries, with brief case studies on South Africa, Mali, Kenya, Zambia, and Senegal. Country democracy scorecards present graphic illustrations of Afrobarometer findings on the most critical indicators of democratic demand and supply.

The data consistently reveal that while there is still a deep well of democratic support on the continent, it is not a bottomless one. The fact that even long-standing democracies such as Botswana and Mauritius are failing to live up to their citizens' expectations must be marked as an important early warning signal. The failure of governments to deliver democratic and accountable governance threatens to undermine the democratic project on the continent and leave citizens increasingly disappointed in, and at odds with, political authorities in the coming years. Countering these political failings must be a priority for African governments, as well as for regional, pan-African, and international actors committed to strengthening democracy on the continent.

Key findings

Support for democracy

⊙ On average across 39 countries, support for democracy remains robust: Two-thirds (66%) of Africans say they prefer democracy to any other system of government, and large majorities reject one-man rule (80%), one-party rule (78%), and military rule (66%).

⊙ But across 30 countries surveyed consistently over the past decade, support for democracy has declined by 7 percentage points, including by 29 points in South Africa and 23 points in Mali.

⊙ Opposition to military rule has weakened by 11 points across 30 countries, most dramatically in Mali and Burkina Faso (by 40 and 37 points, respectively).

⊙ More than half of Africans (53% across 39 countries) are willing to accept a military takeover if elected leaders "abuse power for their own ends."

⊙ Growing majorities call for government accountability and the rule of law, and support for other democratic norms has held steady over the past decade, including presidential accountability to Parliament, multiparty competition, presidential term limits, and media freedom.

⊙ But support for elections has dropped by 8 percentage points across 30 countries, though a large majority still consider it the best method for choosing their leaders.

Supply of democracy

⊙ Fewer than half (45%) of Africans think their countries are mostly or completely democratic, and only 37% say they are satisfied with the way democracy works in their countries.

⊙ Across 30 countries, both indicators show declines – of 8 and 11 percentage points, respectively – over the past decade.

⊙ Satisfaction with democracy has dropped precipitously in some of Africa's most high-profile democracies, including Botswana (-40 points), Mauritius (-40 points), and South Africa (-35 points).

⊙ Other indicators of democratic supply also show at least modest declines, including citizen assessments of the quality of elections and their president's accountability to Parliament and the courts.

Drivers of democratic attitudes

⊙ Deepening citizen dissatisfaction with how democracy is performing is strongly associated with perceived declines in both socioeconomic and political performance.

⊙ But support for democracy as a system of government is more resilient to economic and social deficiencies. Where we see declines in support for democracy, they are most closely linked to adverse changes in political performance, such as declining election quality, increasing levels of corruption, and failure to promote the rule of law.

Given the importance of citizen support to the survival of a democratic project, these findings underscore the centrality of restoring faith in African governments' ability to deliver accountable, democratic governance.

Introduction:
Democracy in Africa, ca. 2024

When countries across Africa began embracing democratic forms of government in the 1990s, many observers and scholars predicted a short lifespan for democracy on the continent. Looking to the modernisation theories of the 1950s, analysts believed that the ability to maintain a democracy was inextricably linked to economic wealth, and argued that democracy would not thrive in low-income societies. Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi (1997), for example, argued that "the richer the country, the more likely it is to sustain democracy." Given that the poor make up nearly 40% of the sub-Saharan population (Schoch & Lakner, 2020), others echoed these arguments, postulating that Africa's democratic transitions faced a high likelihood of reversal (Mbaku, 2020; Norris, 2016; Bigman, 2011).

Africa initially seemed to defy these dire predictions. While Freedom House (2024a) recorded only four "free" and 20 "partly free" democracies in Africa in 1990, these numbers had grown to nine and 25 by 2000.

But the past decade has witnessed democratic declines in Africa and around the globe. By 2023, the number of free/partly free democracies in Africa had fallen to 30 (though still with nine rated as "free"). Since 2020, soldiers have pushed out democratically elected governments in six countries – Burkina Faso, Gabon, Guinea, Mali, Niger, and Sudan – in a spate of coups that sometimes appeared to enjoy a measure of public support.

And while coups are the most extreme example, they are by no means the only democratic setbacks of the past few years. Just since 2020, presidents in Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, and pre-coup Gabon managed – like several others before them – to circumvent term limits to stay in office. Leaders in Benin, Tunisia, and elsewhere have used a variety of means to subvert the democratic political order, weakening institutional checks on their authority, harassing the political opposition, imposing media blackouts, and even, in the case of Tunisia, suspending Parliament. Even Ghana's much-heralded reputation for clean elections has been tarnished by increased violence, with eight fatalities during the 2020 presidential polls, and President Nana Akufo-Addo has grown increasingly heavy-handed, stifling the media and eroding the accountability of institutions.

Thus Africa, like much of the world, entered 2024 under a cloud of concern about the declining state of democracy, with people openly speculating about where the next coup might take place. The optimism that greeted the 1990s wave of democratic transitions on the continent has clearly dissipated, and many worry that Africa's democratic project may have entered a period of steep decline.

But there is more to this story than doom and gloom. In some countries, citizens and institutions have successfully fought back against anti-democratic efforts. Most recently, amid public outcry at the prospect of a "constitutional coup," Senegal's Constitutional Council blocked President Macky Sall's effort to postpone the presidential election, which ultimately resulted in a win for the opposition. High courts in Kenya and Malawi have rejected the results of flawed elections and required them to be re-run. In 2021, Zambian voters resoundingly rejected their country's slide back toward authoritarianism, electing opposition candidate and now-President Hakainde Hichilema in a landslide. Citizen activists, journalists, artists, and Africa's youth have also stepped up, using a creative mix of new technology and old-school protest tactics to fight against corruption and for better government. Witness the successful Nigerian efforts to #EndSARS through popular protests and effective use of social media. And while Benin, Mali, and Tunisia have fallen from their previous Freedom House ratings as "free" countries, Lesotho and Seychelles have ascended to this coveted status, in Lesotho's case as recently as 2022.

Some good news – or at least mixed news – can be found in Afrobarometer's most recent survey findings as well. "African insights 2024: Democracy at risk – the people's perspective," the first in what will be an annual series on high-priority topics, distills findings on democracy from Round 9 (2021/2023) surveys covering 39 countries and trends over the past decade.

As we report beginning on Page 8, Africans remain largely committed to democracy and aspire to live under governments that are democratic and accountable. Demand for accountability has gone up over the past decade. But there are also critically important signs that in some respects democratic support may be weakening in the face

of governments that avoid accountability, rig elections, and circumvent the popular will. These findings demand close attention.

Meanwhile, the long-standing trend of increasing popular dissatisfaction with what governments are delivering, both economically and politically, continues apace. Citizen satisfaction with democracy continues to decline, along with their confidence that their political systems are bound by norms of accountability and the rule of law. Many African governments are still failing to deliver the political systems and outcomes that their citizens demand, and the problem is only getting worse.

These trends vary dramatically by country, and we highlight several of the most striking examples in case studies beginning on Page 27. In the section titled "Country democracy scorecards" beginning on Page 33, we present graphic illustrations of the most critical indicators of democratic demand and supply in several African countries, with links to a full 39-country set of scorecards on the Afrobarometer website.

The section titled "Politics or economics: What drives Africans' support for democracy?" (Page 22) explores these trends further, examining whether the declines in democratic support and satisfaction are driven by poor economic performance, poor political performance, or some measure of both. While we find that declining satisfaction with democracy is associated with both economic and political shortcomings, support for democracy is more resilient. Even in the face of overwhelming social needs, poor economic performance does not appear to undermine popular preference for democracy. But poor political performance is another story: Corruption, poor-quality elections, and failure to adhere to the rule of law may gradually be whittling away at democratic support. Countering these political failings must be a priority for African governments, as well as for regional, pan-African, and international actors committed to strengthening democracy on the continent.

Afrobarometer methodology

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Nine survey rounds in up to 42 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 9 surveys, conducted between late 2021 and mid-2023, cover 39 countries. Round 10 surveys were launched in January 2024.

Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice. Nationally representative samples yield country-level results with a margin of error of +/-2 percentage points (for N=2,400) to +/-3 percentage points (for N=1,200) at a 95% confidence level.

Data are weighted to ensure nationally representative samples. When reporting multi-country averages, all countries are weighted equally (rather than in proportion to population size).

For more information on Afrobarometer's methodology, visit www.afrobarometer.org/surveys-and-methods/.

Democracy in Africa: Trends in popular satisfaction and support

Democracy and governance have been signature topics for Afrobarometer since its inception. It was in 2001, with the completion of the network's first data set, that we conclusively learned how broad the support for democracy was on the continent. Across those initial 12 countries, we found resounding rejection of military rule (82%), one-man rule (80%), and one-party rule (69%), as well as solid preference for democracy over any other kind of government (69%). In their essence, those first numbers are not so different from the findings we report below from our ninth round of surveys in 2021/2023, which capture the views of a much more diverse sample of 53,444 respondents in 39 countries, 25 years further down the road in Africa's democratic experiment.
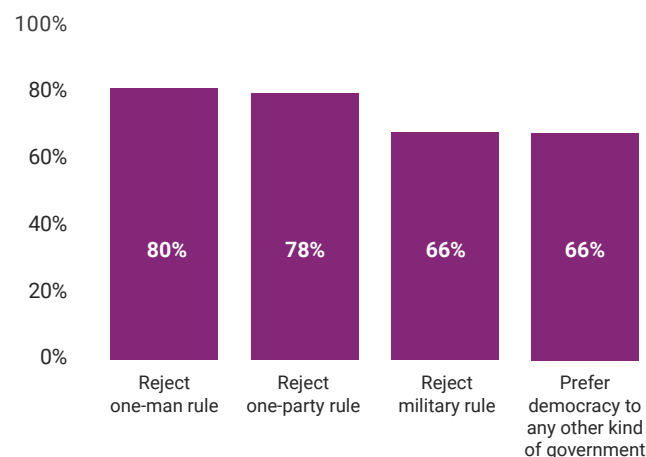
In addition to the impressive breadth of democratic support, another common thread in Afrobarometer's frequent reporting has been the growing gap between popular support for democracy and the lagging supply of democratic governance (Asunka & Gyimah-Boadi, 2021).

In this section, we report our latest findings and examine trends in democratic attitudes over the past decade. While all Afrobarometer survey rounds since Round 5 (2011/2013) have covered at least 34 countries, some countries are added or lost in each round due to political changes or other factors, leaving 30 countries for which we have data from all five survey rounds between 2011 and 2023. These 30 countries are the focus of our discussion here, although we also report on all 39 countries included in Round 9. (See Table A.1 and Figure A.1 in the Appendix for lists of the 39 and 30 countries, respectively.)

Africans' aspirations for democratic governance

African democracies have faced multiple economic, political, and social headwinds over the past decade, and delivery of economic growth and social services continues to be an enormous challenge for many countries. Yet the evidence from Afrobarometer surveys suggests that there is still very robust support for democracy across much of the continent. Across 39 countries surveyed in 2021/2023, two-thirds (66%) of African citizens say they prefer democracy to any other system of government (Figure 1). This strong preference

Figure 1: Support for democracy and rejection of authoritarian rule | 39 countries | 2021/2023

| | | | |
| Reject one-man rule: 80% | Reject one-party rule: 78% | Reject military rule: 66% | Prefer democracy to any other kind of government: 66% |

(For all question texts and reported response options, please see Page 36)

for democracy is reinforced by even larger majorities who reject two of the non-democratic forms of government that dominated the continent prior to the democratic transitions of the 1990s: More than three-quarters disapprove of one-man rule (80%) and one-party rule (78%). And two-thirds (66%) oppose military rule.

In fact, Afrobarometer has previously shown that democratic support in Africa is resilient – even in the face of many potentially erosive factors – and that the real "democratic problem" on the continent is rooted in the lack of adequate supply of democracy by African leaders, rather than a lack of popular preference (Afrobarometer Network, 2023). To a significant extent, that continues to be the case. Yet the story is perhaps growing more complex. While a number of key indicators of democratic commitment have held steady or even improved over the past decade, several others – including some that seem critical in the face of the recent spate of military coups – have weakened.

We begin with the core indicators of democratic demand mentioned above, now focusing on findings across the 30 countries that Afrobarometer has tracked consistently over the past decade. Two have remained quite steady: In 2011/2013, 82% rejected "one-man rule," a view still shared by a resounding 79% in 2021/2023 (Figure 2). And rejection of one-party rule has remained unchanged at 78%.

Figure 2: Trends in support for democracy and rejection of authoritarian rule | 30 countries* | 2011-2023
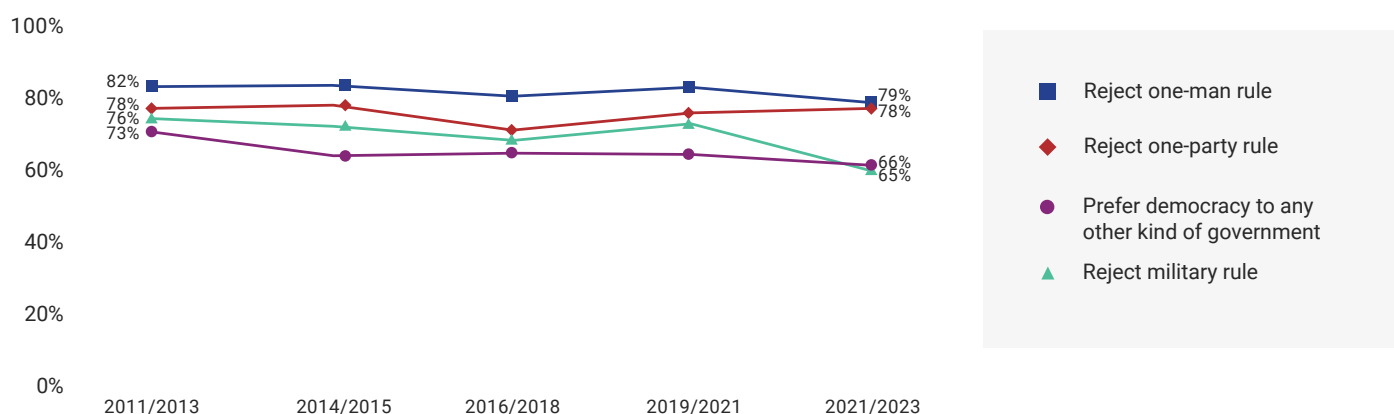
* *Results for one-man rule include 29 countries as the question was not asked in Eswatini in all rounds.*

The other two indicators, however, show signs of slippage. Support for democracy as the preferred system of government registered at 73% in 2011/2013. In 2021/2023, this view is still shared by a robust 66% of respondents, but this reflects a decline of 7 percentage points in this core indicator of popular democratic commitment.[1] The drop in rejection of military rule is sharper, from 76% to 65%, This 11-point decline has been both more recent and more abrupt: Rejection of military rule fell 10 points just between Round 8 surveys in 2019/2021 and Round 9 surveys in 2021/2023.

Examining support for democratic norms, we again see evidence of both positive and modestly negative change. Support is strong and generally steady for a wide range of democratic norms, from presidential term limits to accountability and rule of law. Across 30 countries, support does not fall below 60% for any of these norms in the most recent survey (Figure 3).

Effective checks and balances among the branches of government are a critical feature of a functioning democracy, and African citizens appear to recognise this. Support for presidential accountability to Parliament has remained steady over the past decade, registering at 66% in 2011/2013 and 67% in 2021/2023.

African citizens are also committed to multiparty competition to ensure robust debate, innovation, and accountability within the political landscape. Support for multiparty competition has been strong and steady (63% in 2011/2013, 64% in 2021/2023).

Presidential term limits, which face frequent challenges from leaders intent on hanging on to power, remain consistently popular, with levels of support fluctuating between 72% and 77% over the past decade. And over the last two survey rounds, citizens have expressed robust support (64%) for media freedom, another vital tool for holding governments accountable.

Other indicators show substantial gains. Popular support for the rule of law in the form of presidential compliance with court decisions has increased from 67% in 2011/2013 to 73% in 2021/2023.

Even more notable are the gains in preference for government accountability, which has increased from 52% a decade ago to 61% in the most recent survey. This finding is particularly striking considering the profound needs for more effective public service delivery in many countries. Prior to the democratic transitions of the 1990s, governments were largely unaccountable to citizens, and questioning leaders was a risky venture. Today, in sharp contrast, we find that six in 10 citizens are not willing to trade away government accountability, even for the prize of faster decision making and "getting things done."

Declining support for elections, on the other hand, presents a challenging counterpoint. The importance of elections as a cornerstone of democracy has been summed up succinctly by Michael Bratton (1998), who argues that "while you can have elections without democracy, you cannot have democracy without elections. If nothing else, the convening of scheduled multiparty elections serves the

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1   The margin of sampling error for Afrobarometer country-level findings is between +/-2 percentage points (for countries with N=2,400) and +/-3 percentage points (for countries with N=1,200) at a 95% confidence level.

Figure 3: Trends in support for democratic norms | 30 countries* | 2011-2023
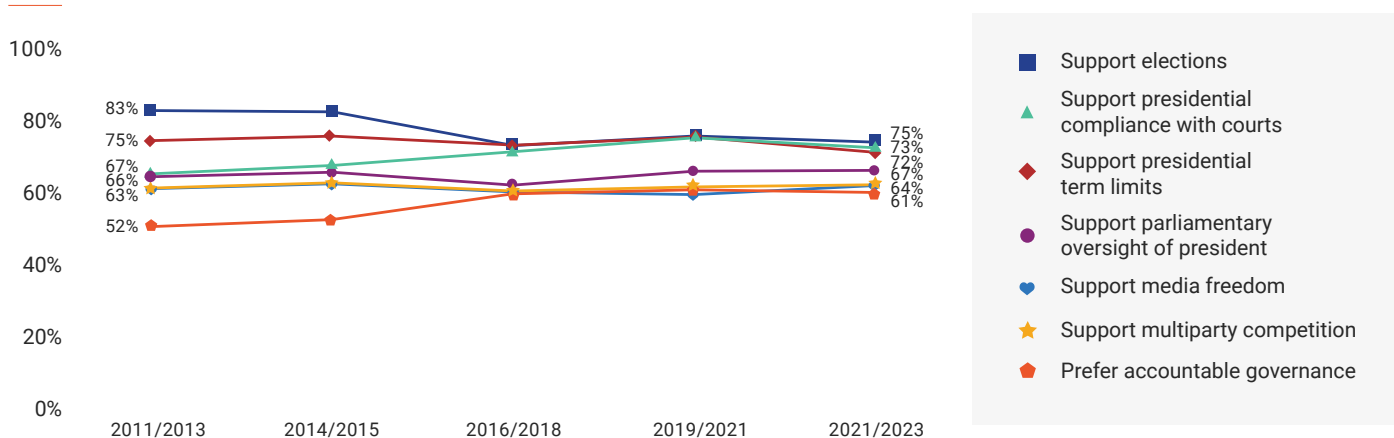
* Results for three questions do not include countries in which these questions were not asked in all survey rounds: on elections (Morocco), presidential compliance with courts (Sudan, Guinea, and Eswatini), and parliamentary oversight of president (Sudan, Guinea, and Burkina Faso).

minimal function of marking democracy's survival." Yet we observe a troubling drop in support for elections as the best way to choose leaders, which is down 8 points over the past decade. Even so, fully three out of four Africans see elections as the best option, and support has remained steady at this level across several recent survey rounds after a sharp drop between Round 6 (2014/2015) and Round 7 (2016/2018) (see sidebar on elections on Page 19). Nonetheless, in combination with the decline in support for democracy as the preferred system of governance and increasing tolerance for military rule, these trends in critical indicators warrant closer examination.

Country-level changes in key indicators

Country-level measures for all of these indicators of democratic commitment can be found in Table A.1 in the Appendix. Here we take a closer country-level look at those that have been in decline: support for democracy, rejection of military rule, and commitment to elections. The variations in both magnitude and change across countries are substantial in all cases.

Support for democracy

As of 2023, support for democracy ranges from a high of 87% in Zambia to less than half this number – just 39% – in Mali. Preference for democracy now falls short of a majority opinion in five countries – Mali, South Africa (43%), Angola (47%), Mozambique (49%), and Lesotho (49%).

But our primary concern is how this indicator has been changing over time across the 30 countries that have been tracked since 2011/2013. The average 7-percentage-point decline in support for democracy over the past decade

reflects startling changes in attitudes in several countries, including several countries currently or previously ranked among the handful of "free" polities on the continent. Figure 4 shows the proportions of respondents in 39 countries who say democracy "is preferable to any other kind of government" in 2021/2023 (in dark-blue circles), compared, for the 30 countries studied over time, to 2011/2013 (in light-blue diamonds).

> " The average 7-percentage-point decline in support for democracy over the past decade reflects startling changes in attitudes in several countries, including several countries currently or previously ranked among the handful of "free" polities on the continent.

Preference for democracy dropped a remarkable 29 percentage points in South Africa and 23 points in Mali (see sidebars on pages 27 and 28), 18 points in both Malawi and Tunisia, and 17 points in Burkina Faso. We see decreases of 4 points or more in 19 of the 30 countries, while only four countries show significant increases, led by Eswatini (+10 points) and Sierra Leone (+8). Although several of these countries – most notably South Africa – remain democratic and free, waning public support for the system, if left unchecked, could spell potential problems in years to come. On a more promising note, Zambia (87%) and Senegal (84%) (see sidebar on Page 30) as well as Cabo Verde (84%), Uganda (81%), and Benin (79%) reveal both very strong and

Figure 4: Preference for democracy | 39 countries | 2011-2023

◆ 2011/2013 ● 2021/2023

Country	2021/2023	2011/2013	Change
Zambia	87	90	-3
Ethiopia	86		
Senegal	84	88	-4
Cabo Verde	84	81	+3
Sierra Leone	84	76	+8
Uganda	81	79	+2
Benin	79	76	+3
Tanzania	79	84	-5
Kenya	78	73	+5
Mauritania	77		
Ghana	76	82	-6
Zimbabwe	75	79	-4
Botswana	75	82	-7
Liberia	74	81	-7
Gabon	71		
Côte d'Ivoire	70	83	-13
Mauritius	70	85	-15
Nigeria	70		+1
Congo-Brazzaville	70		
Togo	68	77	-9
Guinea	67	77	-10
Morocco	66	63	+3
Gambia	64		
Niger	61	66	-5
Seychelles	60		
Malawi	58	76	-18
Cameroon	55	64	-9
Eswatini	55	46	+9
Burkina Faso	55	72	-17
Namibia	55	64	-9
Sudan	55	51	+4
Tunisia	53	71	-18
Madagascar	52		
São Tomé and Príncipe	52		
Lesotho	49	55	-6
Mozambique	49	63	-14
Angola	47		
South Africa	43	72	-29
Mali	39	62	-23
30-country average	66	73	-7
39-country average	66		

Figure shows percentage of respondents who say democracy "is preferable to any other kind of government" in 2011/2013 (light blue diamonds) and 2021/2023 (blue circles).
Percentages by country for all five survey rounds are shown in Figure A.1 in the Appendix.

very steady support for democracy over the past decade, despite recent political challenges in all of these countries.

In the section "Politics or economics: What drives Africans' support for democracy?" we will explore these patterns further to identify factors that may be driving these changes in preference for democracy.

Rejection of military rule

We see similar patterns in rejection of military rule, both with respect to the wide range of responses across countries and in terms of the stark declines in some of them.

Zambia once again tops the chart, with a resounding 90% rejecting the prospect of military government, followed closely by Uganda (87%), Eswatini (85%), and Seychelles (85%) (Figure 5). The contrast with Mali and Burkina Faso – both countries that have experienced recent coups and are currently under military rule – could not be sharper: Fewer than one in five Malians (18%) and just one in four Burkinabè (25%) reject this authoritarian alternative. It is also a minority position in Niger (44%) and Tunisia (42%), two other countries that have experienced recent coups or major democratic setbacks.

It was not always so. A decade ago, majorities in all 30 countries rejected military leadership. After drops of 40 and 37 percentage points, respectively, Mali and Burkina Faso now stand as the most accepting of military rule. But we see double-digit declines in 14 other countries as well, including Côte d'Ivoire (-27 points), Cameroon (-19 points), and even Ghana (-18 points). Overall, 23 of the 30 countries dropped by 4 points or more. Morocco is the lone exception, recording an increase of 12 points over the past decade.

Further concerns about popular perceptions of military rule are raised by responses to a question asked for the first time in Afrobarometer Round 9 about whether military intervention in politics is ever appropriate. Across 39 countries, 53% are willing to countenance the military taking control of government "when elected leaders abuse power for their own ends," while a minority of 42% instead say the military should never intervene in politics. Moreover, although Africa's youth differ little from their elders in their support for democracy, they express a greater willingness to tolerate military intervention. These attitudes toward military rule suggest that a combination of trust in the military, frustration with poor governance, and waning (or lacking) memories of the harsh realities experienced during a

previous era of military governments may be chipping away at resistance to this particular form of authoritarian rule. (See sidebar on military rule on Page 17.)

Commitment to elections

These patterns are repeated yet again when it comes to support for elections, although even after an 8-percentage-point drop over the decade, a robust three-fourths (75%) of Africans continue to view elections as the best option for choosing leaders. Nonetheless, we see declines of 4 points or more in 26 of 30 countries, led by drops of 24 points in Tunisia and 15 points or more in Cameroon, Mali, Lesotho, and Burkina Faso. Sierra Leone, with a 13-point increase in commitment to elections, is the only exception. (See sidebar on elections on Page 19.)

Supply of democratic governance

We now shift our attention to the question of how much democracy Africans think they are getting from their governments, and in particular whether they are satisfied with the level of democracy they enjoy.

Afrobarometer analyses over the past two decades have consistently shown that while large majorities prefer democracy and reject non-democratic alternatives, perceived levels of supply of democracy and accountable governance lag behind popular aspirations.

> " **Afrobarometer analyses over the past two decades have consistently shown that while large majorities prefer democracy and reject non-democratic alternatives, perceived levels of supply of democracy and accountable governance lag behind popular aspirations.**

On average across 39 countries surveyed in 2021/2023, fewer than half (45%) of respondents describe their countries as "a full democracy" or "a democracy with minor problems," and only 37% say they are "fairly satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the way democracy works in their countries.

A review of trends over time reveals a pattern of modest but steady decline on all of the indicators of democratic supply shown in Figure 6. Across the 30 countries tracked for the

Figure 5: Rejection of military rule | 39 countries | 2011-2023

◆ 2011/2013　　● 2021/2023

Country			
Zambia	90 ◀ 96		-6
Uganda	87 89		-2
Eswatini	85		-1
Seychelles	85		
Kenya	83		0
Mauritius	82 ← 96		-14
Botswana	82 ← 90		-8
São Tomé and Príncipe	80		
Tanzania	80		+1
Sierra Leone	77 ← 83		-6
Gambia	76		
Malawi	75 ← 86		-11
Morocco	62 → 74		+12
Nigeria	73 77		-4
Liberia	71 ← 80		-9
Senegal	71 ← 81		-10
Benin	71 ← 81		-10
Zimbabwe	70 ← 79		-9
Gabon *	70		
Cabo Verde	70 ← 79		-9
Lesotho	69 ← 82		-13
Ghana	68 ← 86		-18
Congo-Brazzaville	67		
Angola	66		
Mauritania	65		
Namibia	64 ← 77		-13
Mozambique	61		+1
Ethiopia	61		
Madagascar	60		
Côte d'Ivoire	58 ← 85		-27
Guinea *	57 ← 70		-13
Cameroon	55 ← 74		-19
South Africa	54 ← 69		-15
Togo	53 ← 62		-9
Sudan *	50		-1
Niger *	44 ← 58		-14
Tunisia	42 ← 56		-14
Burkina Faso *	25 ← 62		-37
Mali *	18 ← 58		-40
30-country average	65 ← 76		-11
39-country average	66		

Countries that have experienced recent military coups
Figure shows percentage of respondents who "disapprove" or "strongly disapprove" of the idea that "the army comes in to govern the country" in 2021/2023 (purple circles) compared to 2011/2013 (light purple diamonds).

Figure 6: Supply of democratic norms and institutions | 30 countries* | 2011-2023
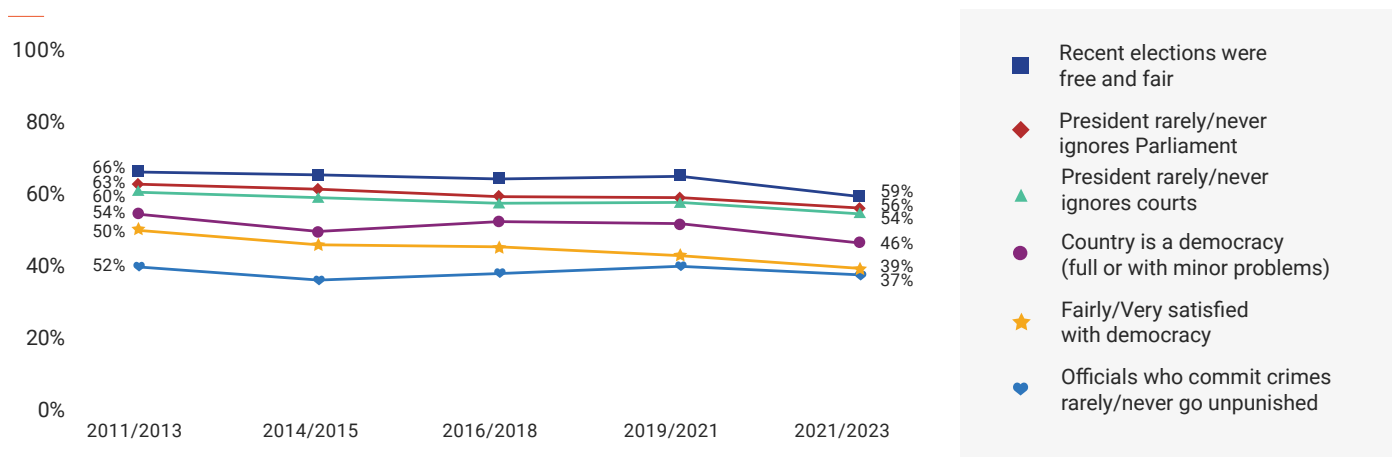
* Results for two questions do not include countries in which these questions were not asked
in all survey rounds: on Parliament (Sudan and Burkina Faso) and on courts (Sudan).

past decade, the proportion who think their country is mostly or completely democratic has dropped by 8 percentage points, from 54% to 46%, while the decline in satisfaction has been an even sharper 11 points, falling from 50% to 39%.

Similarly, we see modest declines in the perceived quality of elections (-7 points) and the president's perceived accountability to Parliament (-7 points) and to the courts (-6 points). The sense that officials do not enjoy legal impunity, always low, has fallen another 3 points, to just 37%.

Declining satisfaction with democracy
Country-level measures for all of these indicators of delivery of democracy can be found in tables A.2 and A.3 in the Appendix. Here we focus on the decline in satisfaction with democracy (Figure 7).

The average 11-percentage-point decrease over the past decade encompasses a remarkable collapse in satisfaction with democracy in a number of countries, including Botswana (-40 points), Mauritius (-40 points), South Africa (-35 points), Ghana (-23 points), and Namibia (-12 points) – all considered democratic stalwarts on the continent. Satisfaction also declined by at least 20 points in Eswatini (-25 points), Lesotho (-24 points), and Senegal (-20 points).

In all, 16 countries experienced double-digit declines in democratic satisfaction, while just two, Togo (+12 points) and Zimbabwe (+15 points), record similarly large gains. Only six countries register improvements of at least 4 points. The least satisfied countries now are Gabon (7%) and

Congo-Brazzaville (15%) (neither of which was included in Round 5) along with Eswatini (11%). At the positive extreme, Tanzania and Zambia are exceptions: Both have recorded some of the highest levels of satisfaction in Round 5 and Round 9, and they are the only two countries that continue to record levels of satisfaction of at least 60% in 2021/2023 (compared to 11 countries in 2011/2013). We note that Zambia's current high level of satisfaction represents a sharp recovery from a fall to just 37% in Round 8 (2019/2021), before the most recent election reversed the country's seeming slide toward more authoritarian rule.

We will explore these patterns of declining democratic satisfaction further in the section titled "Politics or economics: What drives Africans' support for democracy?" to evaluate whether they are associated with economic or political factors, or both.

Summary: Cause for optimism and concern
Most Africans still prefer democracy to any other system of government, reject non-democratic alternatives, and endorse core democratic norms, institutions, and practices. But some cracks are showing in the bulwark of democratic support.

Over the past decade, popular support for democracy has declined sharply in several countries, including some of the continent's current or former democratic leaders. And popular opposition to military rule has weakened across the continent; more than half of Africans say military intervention is acceptable "when elected leaders abuse power for their own ends."

Figure 7: Satisfaction with democracy | 39 countries | 2011-2023

◆ 2011/2013   ● 2021/2023

Country		
Tanzania	75 → 80	+5
Zambia	68 71	+3
Sierra Leone	56 ← 61	-5
Mauritania	54	
Niger *	53 ← 65	-12
Morocco	45 → 53	+8
Ghana	51 ← 74	-23
Namibia	50 ← 62	-12
Senegal	48 ← 68	-20
Kenya	47	0
Zimbabwe	31 → 46	+15
Liberia	45 ← 59	-14
Uganda	44 ← 52	-8
Benin	44 ← 60	-16
Mozambique	35 → 42	+7
Ethiopia	41	
Seychelles	41	
Malawi	40 ← 53	-13
Gambia	38	
Tunisia	38 40	-2
Côte d'Ivoire	30 34	+4
Burkina Faso *	33 ← 50	-17
Togo	21 → 33	+12
Mauritius	32 ← 72	-40
Botswana	30 ← 70	-40
Sudan *	29 ← 38	-9
Cameroon	29 30	-1
São Tomé and Príncipe	28	
Cabo Verde	27 ← 45	-18
Madagascar	26	
Lesotho	26 ← 50	-24
Mali *	25 ← 31	-6
South Africa	25 ← 60	-35
Angola	24	
Nigeria	21 ← 32	-11
Guinea *	20 ← 39	-19
Congo-Brazzaville	15	
Eswatini	11 ← 36	-25
Gabon *	7	
30-country average	38 ← 50	-12
39-country average	37	

Figure shows percentage of respondents who say they are "fairly satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the way democracy is working in their country in 2011/2013 (light red diamonds) and 2021/2023 (red circles). Percentages by country for all five survey rounds are shown in Figure A.1 in the Appendix.

But the primary "democratic problem" for many African countries continues to be not a demand-side failure of popular support, but a supply-side failure to to deliver on the norms and practices of democracy. The proportion of citizens rating their country as a democracy has declined between 2011 and 2023, including steep drops in several countries long regarded as democratic mainstays. Citizen satisfaction with the way democracy works has declined in a majority of countries. And citizen ratings of the performance of elected leaders in delivering democratic and accountable norms and institutions have either been worsening over time, as in the case of presidential respect for the courts and Parliament, or have remained stagnant at very low levels, as in the case of equal treatment before the law.

These setbacks overshadow some democratic gains over the years, fuelling dire warnings from stakeholders that democracy is losing ground on the continent. Beginning on Page 22, we explore factors that help explain these trends – and offer important clues as to how democracy advocates might help to reverse them.
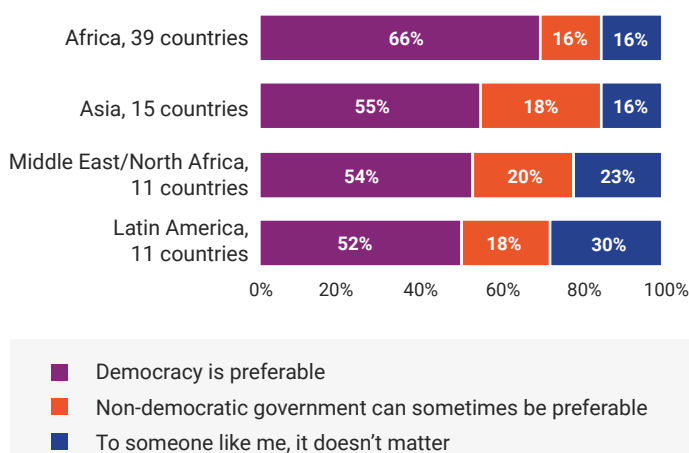
Global perspectives

Concerns in recent years about threats to democracy have by no means been limited to Africa. Democratic backsliding and the resurgence of authoritarian rule have been headline topics for democracy monitors across all regions of the world.

How do Africans' attitudes about democracy compare to popular perspectives in other global regions?

When it comes to support for democracy, Africa is ahead of the game. Two-thirds (66%) of Africans across 39 countries say democracy is preferable to any other system of government, reflecting significantly higher commitment than the slim majorities that prefer democracy in Asia (55%), the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (54%), and Latin America (52%) (Figure 8).
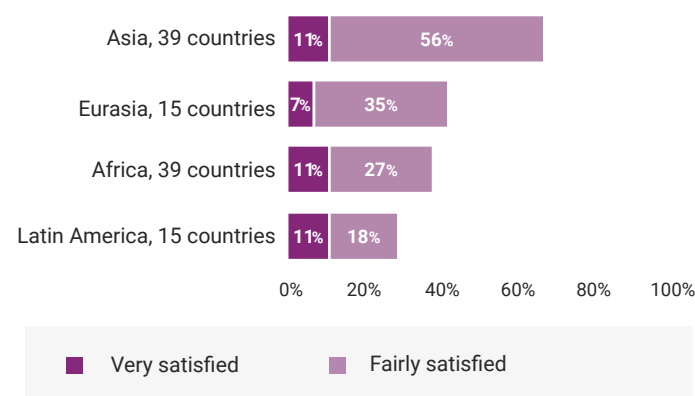
Also notable: Africans have a stronger belief in their own agency and the importance of the kind of political system they live under: They are only about half as likely as Latin American respondents, for example, to say that "for someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have" (16% vs. 30%).

When it comes to democratic satisfaction, however, Africans are considerably more critical than many of their global counterparts (Figure 9): Only 37%[2] of Africans say they are "fairly" or "very" satisfied with the way their democracy is working, compared to 67% of Asians and 42% of Eurasians. While Latin Americans enjoy more democracy and freedom than Africans or Asians, according to average Freedom House (2024b) Global Freedom scores, they are less satisfied (29%).

Figure 8: Preference for democracy around the world

	Democracy is preferable	Non-democratic government can sometimes be preferable	To someone like me, it doesn't matter
Africa, 39 countries	66%	16%	16%
Asia, 15 countries	55%	18%	16%
Middle East/North Africa, 11 countries	54%	20%	23%
Latin America, 11 countries	52%	18%	30%

■ Democracy is preferable
■ Non-democratic government can sometimes be preferable
■ To someone like me, it doesn't matter

Figure 9: Satisfaction with democracy around the world

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied
Asia, 39 countries	11%	56%
Eurasia, 15 countries	7%	35%
Africa, 39 countries	11%	27%
Latin America, 15 countries	11%	18%

■ Very satisfied   ■ Fairly satisfied

Sources: Afrobarometer Round 9, Arab Barometer Wave VII, Asian Barometer Wave 5, Latinobarómetro 2023
Note: MENA averages include four countries that are also part of Afrobarometer Round 9 (Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan, and Tunisia).

2   Rounded proportions of 11% "very satisfied" and 27% "fairly satisfied" sum to 37% "satisfied."

African ambivalence about the military

Like Europeans and Americans (Johnson, 2018), Africans have long expressed high levels of trust in their militaries. Six in 10 Africans (61%) across 39 countries say they trust the armed forces "somewhat" or "a lot," far ahead of the courts (47%), the president (46%), the police (46%), and other institutions.
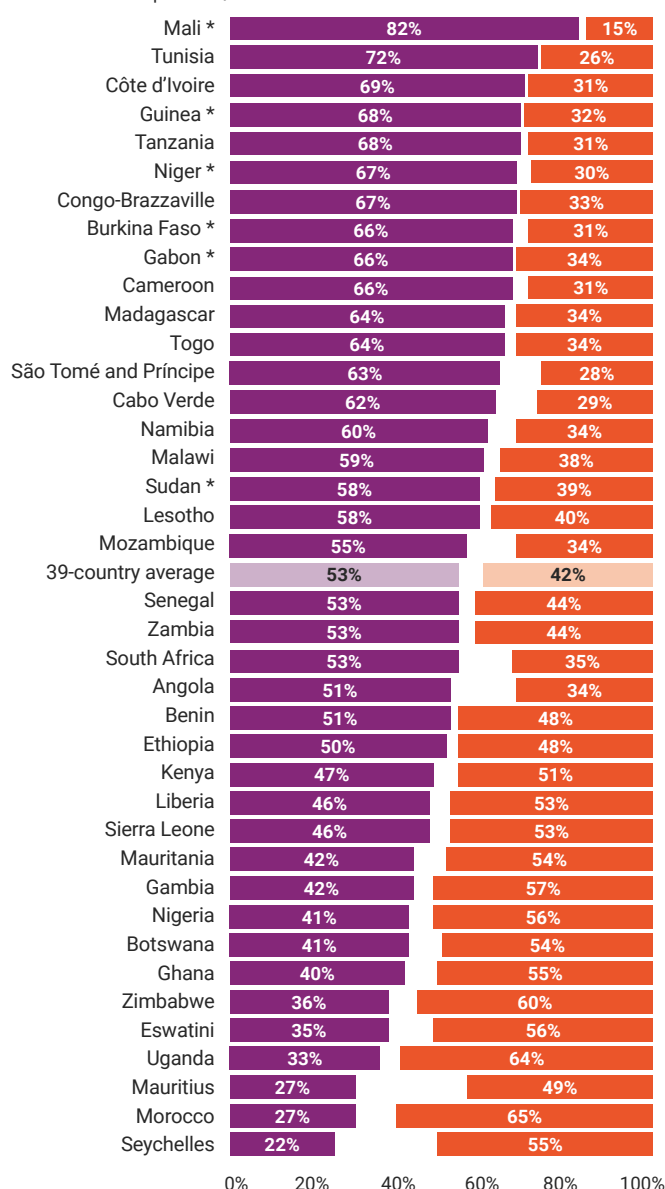
That doesn't mean they want the military to govern their country: Two-thirds (66%) reject this idea (see Figure 5).

But that opposition is weakening – down by 11 percentage points over the past decade, on average across 30 countries – perhaps suggesting that 30 years after Africa's transition away from authoritarian rule began, the hard-earned lesson that military rulers rarely prove effective at meeting public needs may no longer be top of mind.

Another finding seems to confirm this possibility: More than half (53%) of Africans are willing to tolerate military intervention in politics if "elected leaders abuse power for their own ends," while just 42% say the army should never intervene. Young people (18-35 years) express the greatest tolerance (56%) for this hypothetical intervention, while their elders, who in many countries may still have personal memories of living under military rule, are considerably less open to this option (47%, still a significant minority). Overall, 20% of all respondents both tolerate military intervention and are in favour of military rule, while 30% tolerate military intervention but would oppose continued military rule.

The continent is quite divided on this issue (Figure 10). Majorities in 13 of 39 countries say militaries should never intervene in politics, led by 65% of Moroccans, 64% of Ugandans, and 60% of

Country	Coups	Afrobarometer Round 9 data collection
Burkina Faso	30 September 2022 23-24 January 2024	September-October 2022
Gabon	30 August 2023	November-December 2021
Guinea	5 September 2021	August 2022
Mali	18 August 2020 24 May 2021	July 2022
Niger	26 July 2023	June 2022
Sudan	25 October 2021	November-December 2022

Figure 10: Should the military intervene in politics?
| 39 countries | 2021/2023

Legend:
- ■ (purple) Armed forces can intervene when leaders abuse power
- ■ (orange) Armed forces should never intervene in politics

Countries that have experienced recent military coups

Zimbabweans. Some of the strongest support for intervention is voiced in the continent's new military dictatorships, including Mali (82%), Guinea (68%), Burkina Faso (66%), and, in surveys conducted before their coups, Niger (67%) and Gabon (66%). If the military rulers in these countries fail to keep the promises that all have made (and several have already postponed) to hand power back to civilians in the near future, democracy advocates will likely be monitoring, and reporting, how they perform in meeting their countries' vast economic and social needs, and how many freedoms their citizens have to give up in the process.

Corruption: A growing hurdle for democracy

Given the corrosive effects of official corruption on popular support for and satisfaction with democracy (see figures 22 and 25), the news from recent findings about corruption trends is not good: In the eyes of ordinary Africans, the problem is getting worse.

On average across 39 countries, nearly six in 10 citizens (58%) say corruption levels in their countries increased over the past year, including 82% in South Africa (see sidebar on Page 27) and 87% in Eswatini (Figure 11). Only three countries record majorities who say corruption decreased: Benin (70%), Mali (64%), and Zambia (53%).

Levels of perceived corruption among political leaders paint a similar picture: Across up to 30 countries for which we have complete data, 38% of respondents say "most" or "all" officials in their president's office are corrupt, up by 13 percentage points since 2011/2013 (Figure 12). Perceptions of widespread corruption show similar increases for members of Parliament (+11 points) and the judiciary (+8 points), with marginal increases of 3 points for local government councillors and civil servants.

Two-thirds (67%) of Africans say their governments are failing in the fight against corruption, and 71% say people who report corruption to the authorities risk retaliation (Dulani, Asiamah, & Zindikirani, 2023).

Figure 11: Level of corruption increased
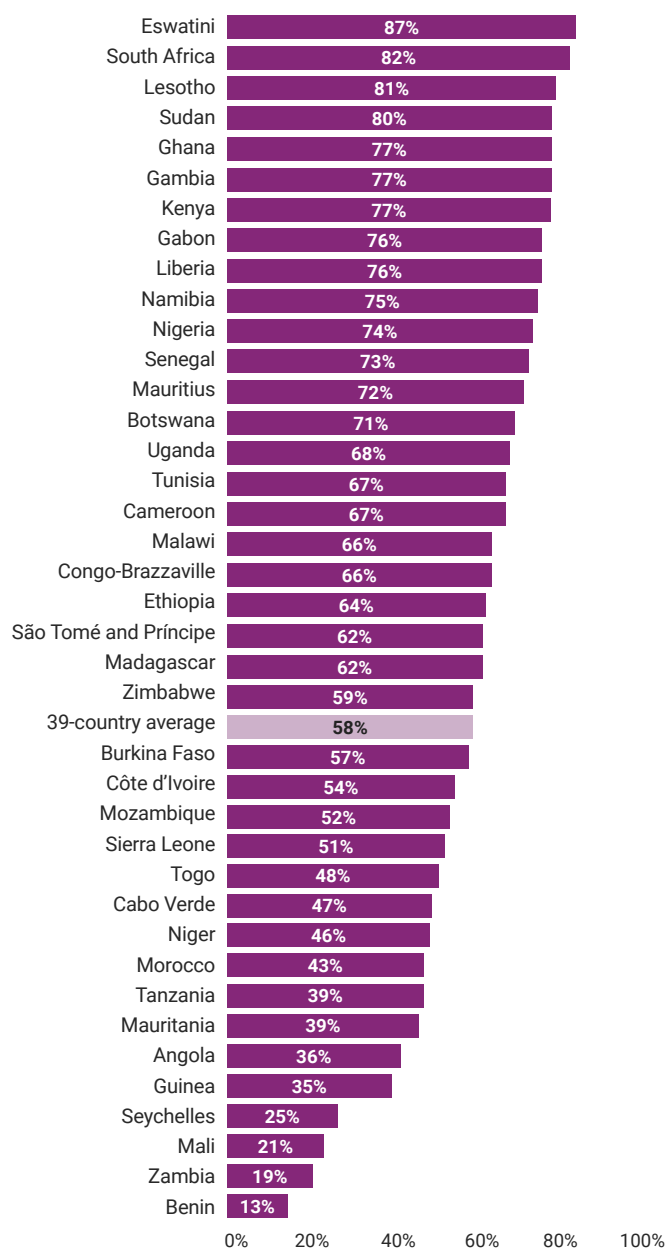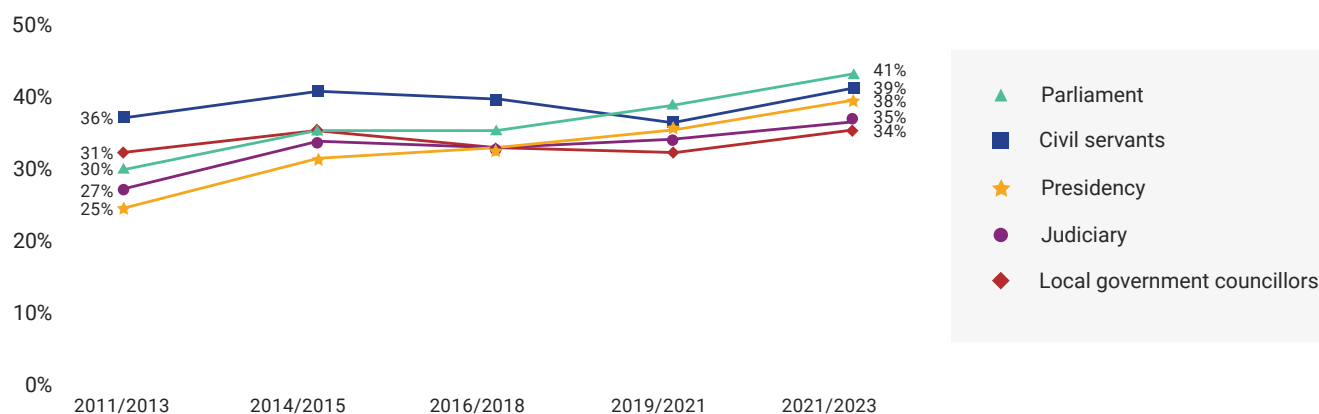| 39 countries | 2021/2023

Figure 12: Most/All seen as corrupt in key public institutions | 30 countries* | 2011-2023

Because not all questions were asked in all countries in all survey rounds, averages reflect 30 countries for the judiciary and civil servants, 29 countries for the Presidency, 28 countries for local government councillors, and 26 countries for Parliament.

# Quality of elections takes centre stage in 2024

In a year packed with 23 national elections on the continent, the quality and legitimacy of these high-stakes contests will be front and centre.

Most Africans (75%) believe in elections as the best way to choose their leaders; more than six in 10 citizens support elections in all surveyed countries except Lesotho (44%) (see Table A.1 in the Appendix). And nearly two-thirds (64%) of Africans want multiparty competition to ensure that voters have real choices in who governs them, although only one-third of Tunisians (32%) and Basotho (34%) agree (Akinocho, 2024).

But as we have seen (Page 10), weakening support for elections – a decline of 8 percentage points over the past decade – is one of the troubling trends in popular commitment to democratic norms and practices. This may reflect some disillusionment after too many elections marred by low quality, disputes, and/or violence, or a recognition that elections by themselves don't guarantee accountable governance or reliable public services. Citizens' assessment of their most recent national elections as largely free and fair is down by 7 points since 2011/2013, from 66% to 59%.
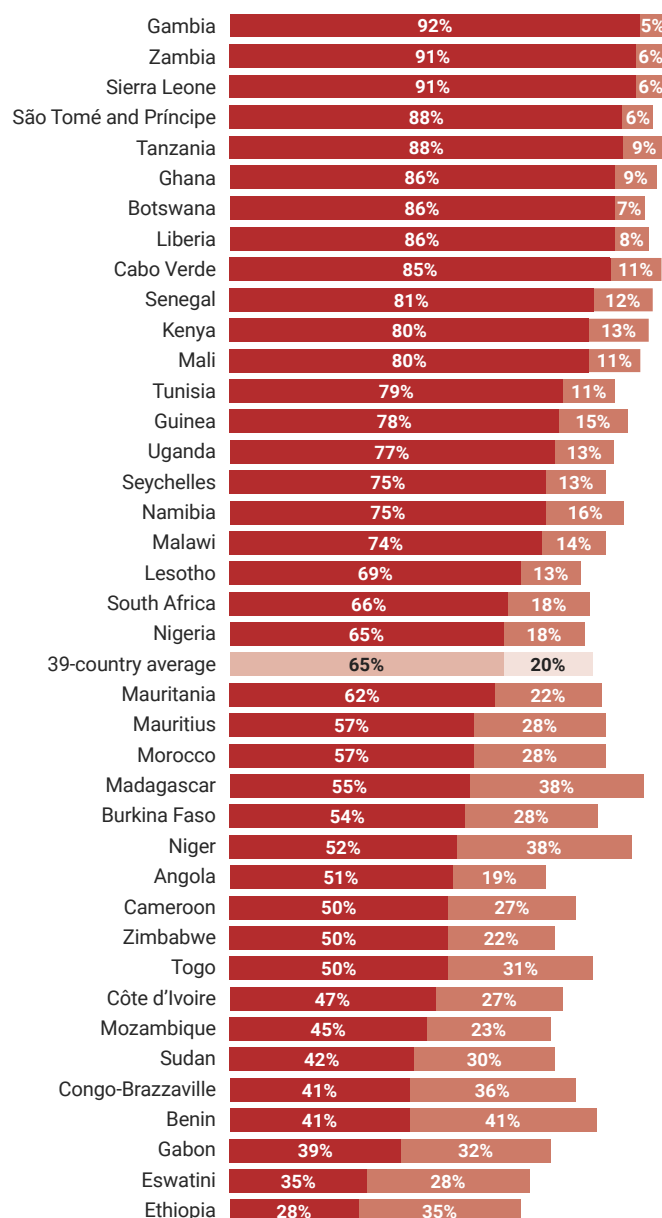
And fewer than half of Africans think their countries' elections ensure that members of Parliament (MPs) represent the views of voters (42%) or enable voters to remove leaders who fail to do what the people want (45%) (Figure 13). Moreover, only four in 10 citizens (39%) say they trust their national electoral commission "somewhat" or "a lot," while 57% express little or no trust.

Figure 13: Efficacy of elections | 39 countries* | 2021/2023
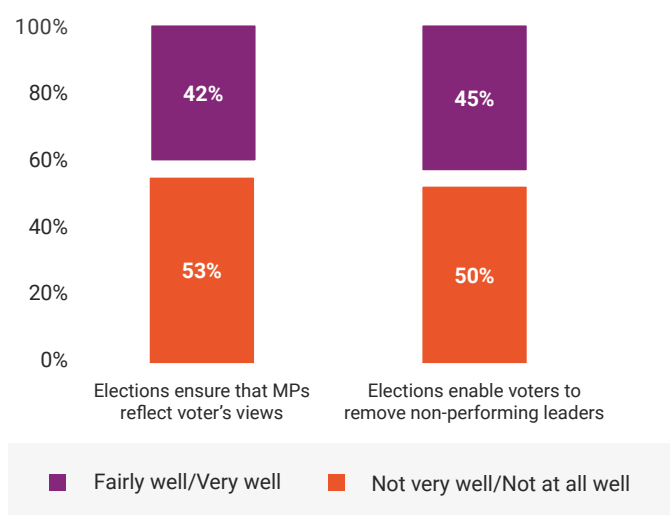
* Results for the question about MPs do not include Burkina Faso, where this question was not posed to the full sample.

Figure 14: Free to vote without pressure
| 39 countries | 2021/2023

	Completely free	Somewhat free
Gambia	92%	5%
Zambia	91%	6%
Sierra Leone	91%	6%
São Tomé and Príncipe	88%	6%
Tanzania	88%	9%
Ghana	86%	9%
Botswana	86%	7%
Liberia	86%	8%
Cabo Verde	85%	11%
Senegal	81%	12%
Kenya	80%	13%
Mali	80%	11%
Tunisia	79%	11%
Guinea	78%	15%
Uganda	77%	13%
Seychelles	75%	13%
Namibia	75%	16%
Malawi	74%	14%
Lesotho	69%	13%
South Africa	66%	18%
Nigeria	65%	18%
39-country average	65%	20%
Mauritania	62%	22%
Mauritius	57%	28%
Morocco	57%	28%
Madagascar	55%	38%
Burkina Faso	54%	28%
Niger	52%	38%
Angola	51%	19%
Cameroon	50%	27%
Zimbabwe	50%	22%
Togo	50%	31%
Côte d'Ivoire	47%	27%
Mozambique	45%	23%
Sudan	42%	30%
Congo-Brazzaville	41%	36%
Benin	41%	41%
Gabon	39%	32%
Eswatini	35%	28%
Ethiopia	28%	35%

One bright light shining across these challenges is that almost nine in 10 Africans say they are "somewhat free" (20%) or "completely free" (65%) to vote for the candidate of their choice without feeling pressured (Figure 14). This sense of freedom reaches 97% in the Gambia, Zambia, and Sierra Leone, and exceeds six in 10 citizens even in the worst-performing countries – Ethiopia (62%) and Eswatini (63%).

How Africans and their government use and respect this freedom will make 2024 a year to watch.

How would African youth shape their democracy?

At 44, Senegal's new president, Bassirou Diomaye Faye, is the youngest elected executive on a continent ruled largely by elderly men. Some analysts see his victory as offering hope to a youthful population that is frustrated with government failures to address its priorities (Akuamoah, 2024; Booty, 2024).

Given their dominance in numbers – the continent has a median age of 19 – how might young Africans choose to shape their countries' governance and policy choices? Afrobarometer survey findings from 39 countries offer some clues.

African youth (aged 18-35) rank unemployment and management of the economy as their top priorities for urgent government action, and large majorities see their governments as failing on these issues (Sanny, van Wyk-Khosa, & Asunka, 2023).

On average, almost two-thirds (64%) of youth prefer democracy over any other kind of government (Figure 15). They join older cohorts in rejecting dictatorship (80%) and military rule (65%) but are more

likely to accept military takeovers "when elected leaders abuse power for their own ends" (56% of youth vs. 47% of those over age 55).

Youth are more likely than their elders to see "most" or "all" officials in the Presidency as corrupt (40%) and to be dissatisfied with the way democracy is working in their country (60%).

But like young citizens throughout the world, young Africans are significantly less likely than their elders to express their dissatisfaction and preferences at the ballot box: 63% of those old enough to vote in their country's last election say they did so, compared to 78%-84% of older cohorts (Figure 16). They also trail by 7-12 percentage points in other forms of political engagement, such as joining others to raise an issue and contacting a local government councillor. Taken together, these deficits suggest that the voices of young Africans are not yet fully heard in the continent's policy processes.

Figure 15: Views on democracy and governance
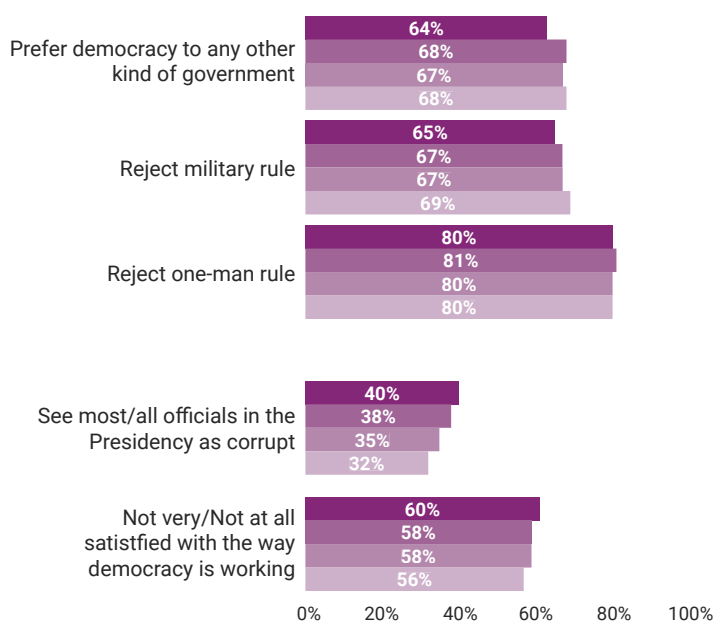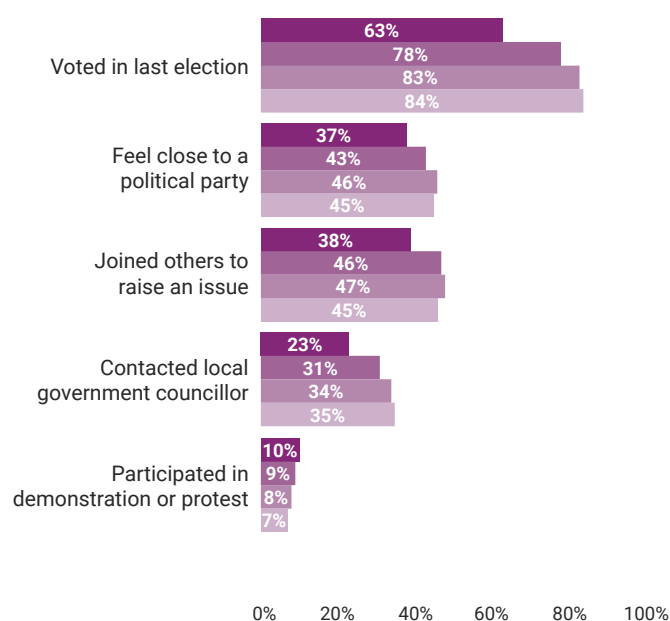| by age group | 39 countries | 2021/2023

Figure 16: Political participation
| by age group | 39 countries | 2021/2023

Legend: 18-35 years | 36-45 years | 46-55 years | 56 years and above

Gender gaps still mark democratic participation

If women's full participation in governance and public policy making is essential to democratic and sustainable development, Africa is falling short: While women make up about half of the continent's adult population, they hold only 27.3% of parliamentary seats (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2023).

Popular support for doing better seems to be in place: On average across 39 countries, three-fourths (75%) of citizens say women should have the same chance as men of being elected to public office. That includes 70% of men and solid majorities of citizens in all surveyed countries except Sudan (44%). And support for gender fairness in politics is inching upward, gaining 4 percentage points compared to 2011/2013 across 30 countries for which time-series data exist (Figure 17).

But public attitudes also point to a possible barrier: More than half (52%) of Africans say women who run for public office are "somewhat" or "very" likely to be criticised, called names, or harassed by others in the community (Twum & Logan, 2023). In Tunisia, 85% expect such negative reactions.

Women differ little from men in their attitudes regarding democracy: They trail men by just 2-4 percentage points in preference for democracy and rejection of authoritarian alternatives, and are equally dissatisfied with the way democracy is working in their countries.

But while levels of engagement vary by country, on average women are less likely than men to engage in political activities (Figure 18). For instance, fewer women than men say they voted in their most recent national elections (66% vs. 72%), and wider gaps separate the two genders when it comes to discussing politics (53% vs. 69%), joining others to raise issues (35% vs. 49% for men), and contacting local government councillors (19% vs. 31%).

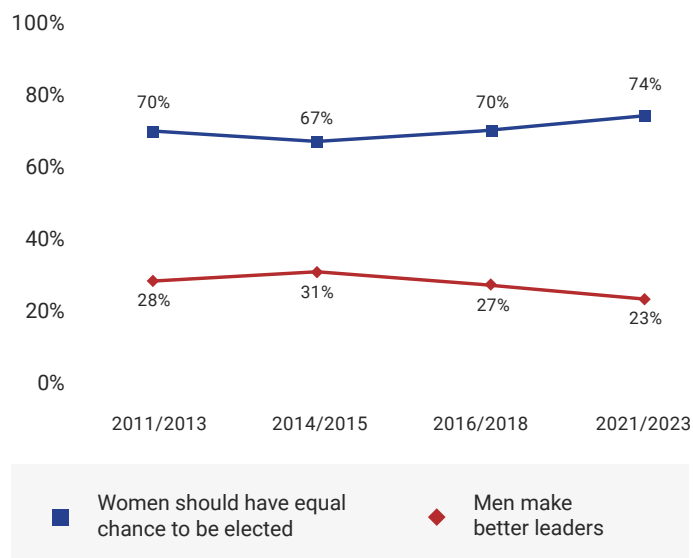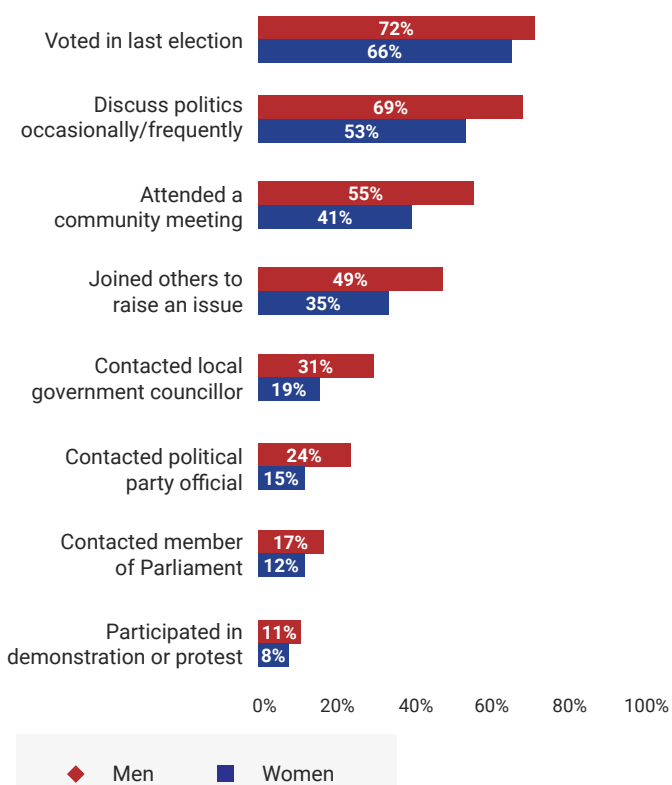**Figure 17: Should women have an equal chance to be elected?** | 30 countries | 2011-2023

Figure 18: The participation gap | by gender | 39 countries | 2021/2023

Politics or economics: What drives Africans' support for democracy?

Afrobarometer findings highlight two important patterns in Africans' attitudes toward democracy. First, the supply of democracy that citizens receive from their governments has both lagged behind the level of popular demand for democracy and, on most indicators, has been in a slow but steady decline over the past decade or more. We take the 11-percentage-point decline in satisfaction with democracy since 2011/2013 as a signature indicator of this trend.

Second, while support for democratic norms and institutions remains strong – some indicators are even improving – we find several troubling trends on that side of the ledger as well. In addition to increasing tolerance for military rule as an alternative to democracy, and some decrease in support for elections, we take the 7-point decline since 2011/2013 in expressed preference for democracy as the best system of government to be a key indicator.

What explains these trends? Has deteriorating economic or political performance in African countries driven the increase in dissatisfaction with democracy? Do these conditions help to explain the less pronounced, but still concerning, decline in the popular preference for democratic governance?

This section examines these questions using national-level data from the 30 countries that Afrobarometer surveyed in both 2011/2013 and 2021/2023. Our analysis points to two key findings:

1. Deepening citizen dissatisfaction with democracy is strongly associated with perceptions of declines in both socioeconomic and political performance.
2. In contrast, Africans' preference for democracy remains resilient to deterioration on many indicators of socioeconomic performance. Instead, shifts in popular support over the past decade are related to changes in political conditions such as declining election quality, increasing levels of corruption, and failure to promote the rule of law.

These findings are consistent with results from Afrobarometer's first round of surveys more than two decades ago, which concluded that across Africa, popular

support for democracy "depends more on the delivery of political rights than on economic performance" (Bratton, Mattes, & Gyimah-Boadi, 2005).

Understanding the drivers of weakening support for democracy is particularly important because of the critical role that citizen commitment plays in the sustenance of the democratic project – not only in Africa, but around the world. Leading theorists of democracy have argued that unconditional support for democratic institutions – that is, a strong majority preference for democracy over alternative political systems, even in the face of economic turmoil and dissatisfaction with incumbent leadership – is a key condition of democratic consolidation (Claassen, 2020; Linz & Stepan, 1996).
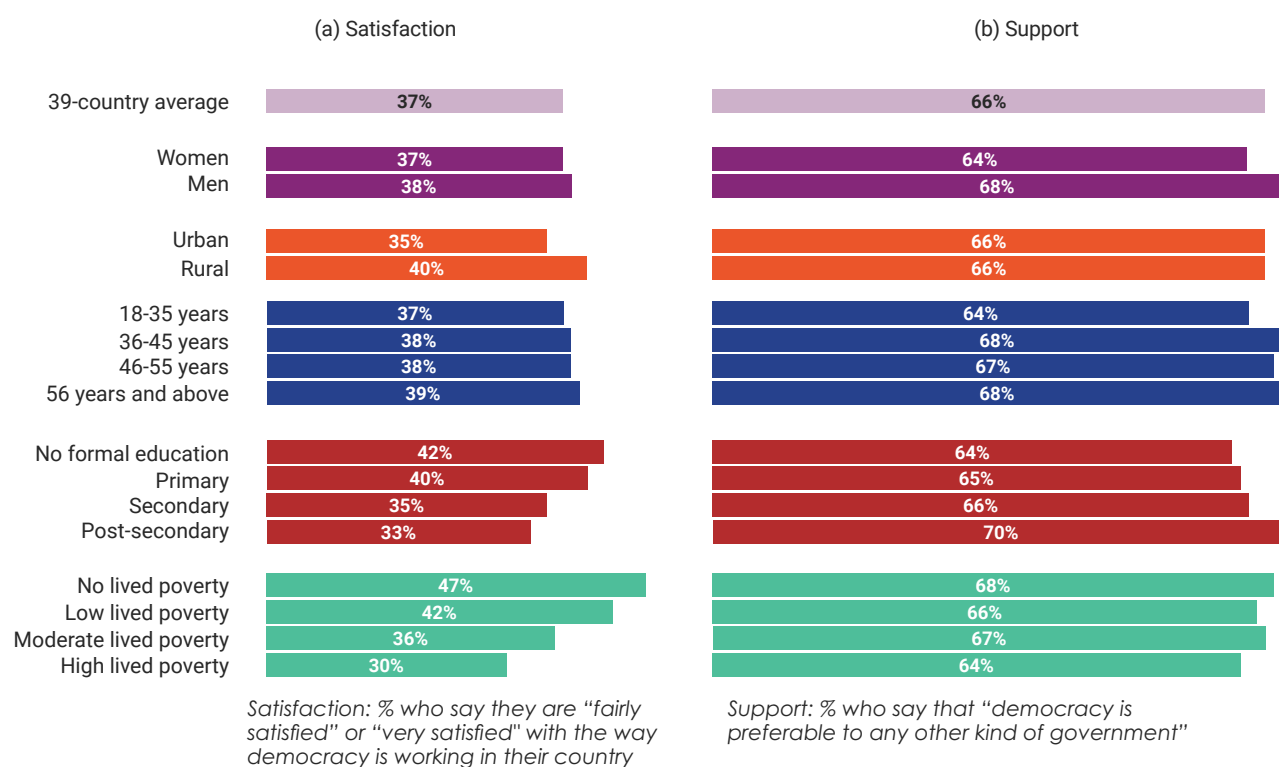
> **Our findings underscore the importance of restoring faith in African governments' ability to deliver accountable, democratic governance.**

Our findings underscore the importance of restoring faith in African governments' ability to deliver accountable, democratic governance via high-quality elections, concerted efforts to fight corruption, and consistent respect for the rule of law.

Demography and democracy in Africa

Before examining national-level trends, we note patterns in citizen attitudes toward democracy at an *individual* level, i.e. specific demographic groups that are more or less likely to express satisfaction with and support for democracy.

Data from Afrobarometer's 2021/2023 surveys in 39 African countries show that citizen satisfaction with democracy varies in association with a number of individual-level factors (Figure 19). For example, while there is no difference between men and women, rural residents are modestly more likely to be satisfied than their urban counterparts (40% vs. 35%). Satisfaction levels decrease more substantially with increasing educational attainment. Citizens with

Figure 19: **Democratic attitudes** | by demographic group | 39 countries | 2021/2023
—

(a) Satisfaction

(b) Support

Satisfaction: % who say they are "fairly satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the way democracy is working in their country

Support: % who say that "democracy is preferable to any other kind of government"

post-secondary education may be more critical of their democracies because of greater awareness of and interest in politics (Croke, Grossman, Larreguy, & Marshall, 2016; Mattes, 2019). But the largest differences are associated with economic insecurity: those who experience high levels of poverty are much less likely to be satisfied with the way democracy is performing (30%) than the most economically secure (47%), suggesting a link between economic performance and democratic satisfaction that we will explore further below.

In contrast, differences in preference for democracy associated with the same demographic indicators are generally much smaller. Men are slightly more supportive of democracy than women (68% vs. 64%), as are Africans with post-secondary education compared to those with less schooling. Most notably, the differences based on economic well-being are quite modest – just a 4-point gap in support between the most economically secure (68%) and the least (64%).

Drivers of dissatisfaction with democracy

Turning to the 11-percentage-point average drop in satisfaction with democracy (see trends for all countries in Figure A.1 in the Appendix), what drives this decline? Our analysis shows that country-level shifts in satisfaction – ranging up to 40-point drops in Botswana and Mauritius –

are strongly associated with Africans' assessments of government performance across a wide range of indicators, especially those related to the delivery of socioeconomic goods.

Figure 20 illustrates the relationship between country-level changes in perceptions of economic performance and changes in satisfaction with democracy. The horizontal axis reports the percentage-point difference between 2011/2013 and 2021/2023 in the share of citizens who say their national economic conditions are "fairly good" or "very good," while the vertical axis plots shifts in public satisfaction with democracy during the same period.

The upward trajectory of the dotted trend line shows that there is a positive association between changes in socioeconomic factors and satisfaction levels. That is, improvements in perceptions of national economic conditions tend to correspond to increases in satisfaction with democracy. Conversely, deteriorating conditions are associated with deepening dissatisfaction, as seen in the positions of Botswana, Mauritius, and South Africa on the plot.

Similarly, we see a positive relationship between changing perceptions of political performance and satisfaction with democracy. Figure 21 demonstrates this trend using shifts

Figure 20: Changes in perceived economic conditions and satisfaction with democracy | 30 countries | 2011-2023

Change in good economic conditions, 2011-2023

Change in good economic conditions: percentage-point difference between 2011/2013 and 2021/2023 in the proportion of respondents who say their country's economic condition is "fairly good" or "very good"

Figure 21: Changes in perceived election quality and satisfaction with democracy | 30 countries | 2011-2023
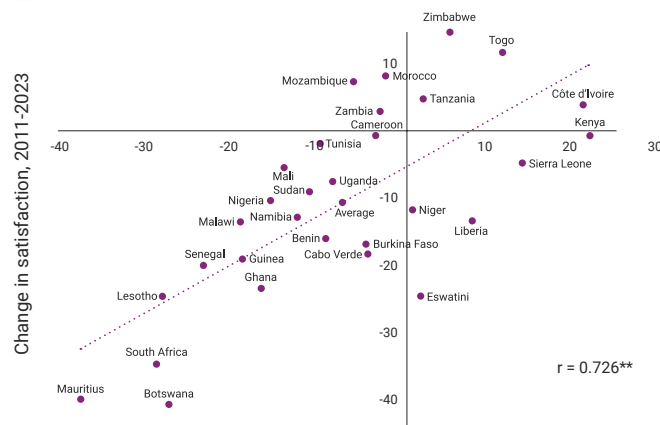
Change in perceived election quality, 2011-2023

Change in perceived election quality: percentage-point difference between 2011/2013 and 2021/2023 in the proportion of respondents who say their country's last national election was "free and fair with minor problems" or "completely free and fair"

in the proportion of citizens who perceive their country's most recent election to have been either "completely free and fair" or "free and fair with minor problems." Again, the trend among Batswana, Mauritians, and South Africans is illustrative of a broader relationship between declining political performance – in this case deteriorating election quality – and heightened citizen dissatisfaction.

Figures 20 and 21 show the relationship between satisfaction levels and two examples of citizen perceptions of their country's socioeconomic and political performance.

How do these compare to other variables?

The steepness of the line in charts like these indicates the strength of the relationship – steeper means stronger. This relationship is also captured in a "correlation coefficient" (shown in the lower right of figures 20 and 21): A steeper line means a larger coefficient. Figure 22 shows the comparative strength and direction of these relationships from a subset of Afrobarometer indicators, where longer bars indicate stronger relationships.[3] As the left panel illustrates, economic factors are generally positively

Figure 22: Drivers of change in democratic satisfaction | 30 countries* | 2011-2023
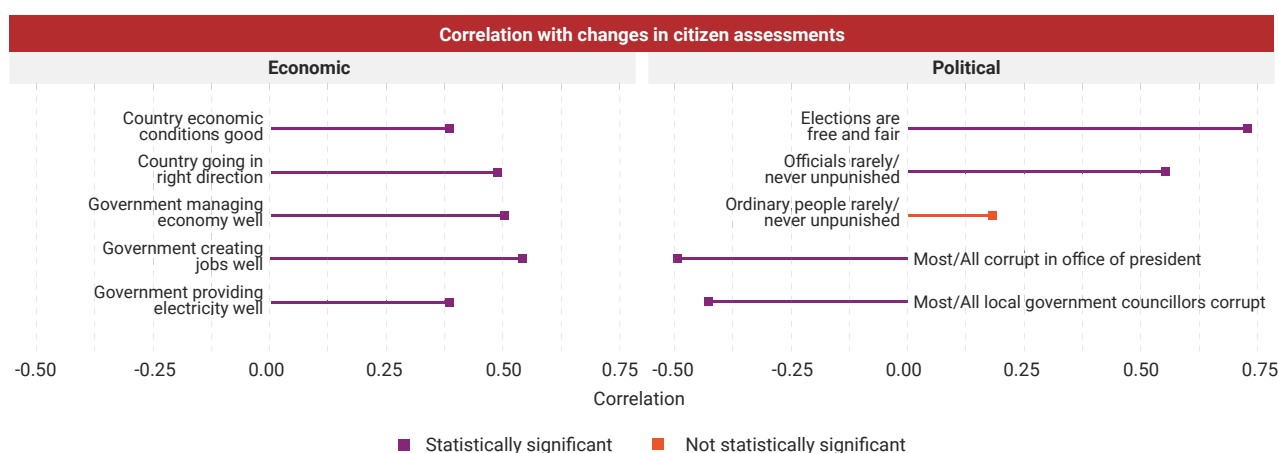
*Results for two questions do not include countries in which these questions were not asked in all survey rounds: on Parliament (Sudan and Burkina Faso) and on courts (Sudan).

3   Each plot illustrates the Pearson's correlation coefficient, which measures a linear relationship between two variables, such as perceived corruption in the Presidency and satisfaction with democracy. This metric indicates both the strength and direction of the relationship. Larger numbers – or steeper slopes to the dotted lines shown in Figures 20 and 21 – represent a stronger relationship, while the sign (+ or -) indicates whether the relationship is positive (when one variable changes, the other changes in the *same* direction) or negative (when one variable changes, the other changes in the *opposite* direction). A value of 0 indicates no relationship, while 1 corresponds to a perfect positive relationship and -1 to a perfect negative relationship.

associated with satisfaction levels, regardless of whether we look at overall assessments (e.g. country going in the right direction) or evaluations of specific areas (e.g. job creation or electricity provision). The right panel shows that citizen satisfaction also tends to increase with positive evaluations of political conditions, such as low levels of impunity for officials who commit crimes, and that elections of high quality are particularly important. In addition, satisfaction with democracy is *negatively* associated with perceived corruption (i.e. satisfaction decreases as perceived corruption increases).

In sum, these results demonstrate that Africans' evaluations of democratic performance are responsive to changes in both their economic and political environments. Any further deficits in these areas are therefore likely to spur further dissatisfaction in the future.

Drivers of support for democracy

Socioeconomic factors

Unlike their effects on satisfaction, changing socioeconomic conditions over the past decade play a minimal role in shaping observed shifts in support for democracy. When we plot changes in economic delivery against changes in popular preference for democracy, we find no relationship, positive or negative, between the two across numerous indicators. In other words, the dotted line on this plot would be nearly flat. A comparison of Eswatini and South Africa helps to demonstrate the absence of an association: While the two countries experienced similar levels of decline in the share of citizens who say the economy is doing "fairly well" or "very well" (-16 and -17 percentage points), citizen support for democracy increased in Eswatini while it fell dramatically in South Africa.

Political factors

But when we turn to political factors, we do find evidence of important relationships. Declining support for democracy appears to be driven largely by deteriorating political conditions. We find that changes in citizens' perceptions of their country's performance on key indicators of democracy and accountable governance are related to shifts in overall levels of support for democratic institutions. This occurs in several key areas, including election quality, adherence to the rule of law, and perceived corruption. However, not all political indicators are associated with popular support for democracy.

Figure 23 tracks country-level changes in perceptions of adherence to the rule of law via the share of citizens who say government officials "rarely" or "never" avoid punishment for committing crimes. We see a positive relationship between shifts in these attitudes and corresponding changes in support for democracy. This suggests that citizens' belief in their government's ability to enforce the rule of law – a central pillar of accountable governance – influences their support for democracy.

Figure 23: Changes in perceived rule of law and support for democracy | 30 countries | 2011-2023

Change in rule of law, 2011-2023
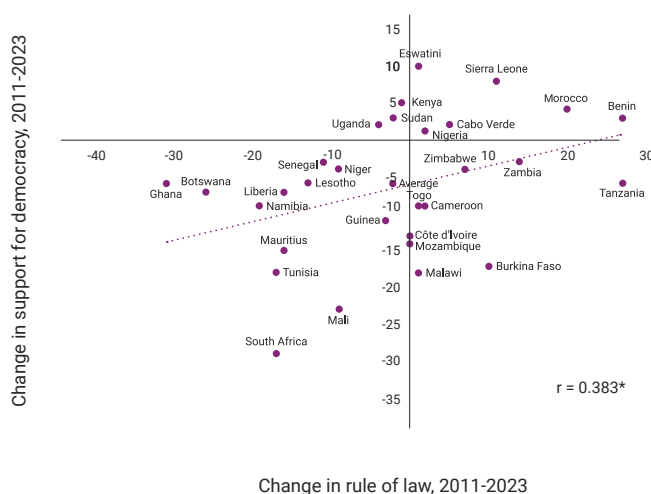
Change in rule of law: percentage-point difference between 2011/2013 and 2021/2023 in the proportion of respondents who say officials who commit crimes "rarely" or "never" go unpunished

Figure 24 shows the association with corruption perceptions by plotting the change in the proportion of citizens who say that "most" or "all" local government councillors are corrupt against change in support for democracy. Here we see a negative relationship between corruption perceptions and democratic support: Increases in perceived corruption between 2011/2013 and 2021/2023 are associated with decreases in popular preference for democracy.

The relationship between perceived adherence to the rule of law and democratic support is similar in strength and direction to that for election quality (Figure 25). Furthermore, patterns are similar for lack of impunity for government officials and for ordinary citizens, suggesting that they are equally important in explaining recent national level changes in democratic support. This contrasts with our earlier finding that a lack of impunity among officials is substantially more important for explaining shifts in satisfaction (Figure 22).

Figure 25 also shows that democratic support is more strongly related to perceived corruption in local government than to perceived corruption in the office of the president.[4][5]

Nevertheless, the finding that corruption in local government is particularly corrosive for democratic support across the full set of countries is an important one given its physical proximity, and thus high visibility, to citizens.

In sum, Afrobarometer data show that popular support for democratic governance is largely responsive to shifts in political, rather than economic, conditions. Given the importance of citizens' support for democracy for the overall survival of a democratic project, it is critical that democracy stakeholders pay attention to the delivery of political goods – notably clean elections, the rule of law, and an effective fight against corruption.

Figure 24: Changes in perceived corruption in local government and support for democracy | 30 countries | 2011-2023
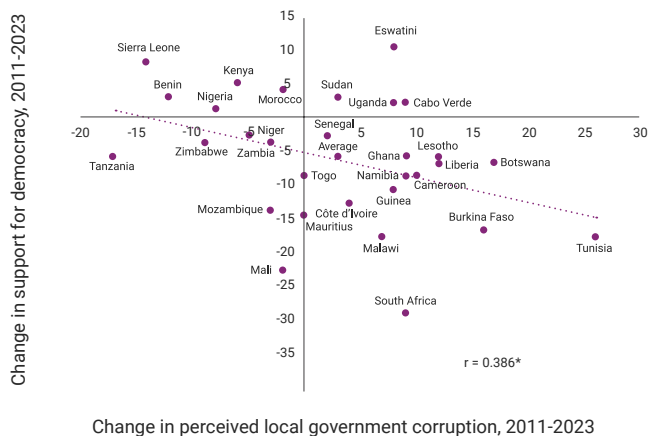
Change in perceived local government corruption: percentage-point difference between 2011/2013 and 2021/2023 in the proportion of respondents who say "most" or "all" local government councillors are involved in corruption

Figure 25: Drivers of change in support for democracy | 30 countries* | 2011-2023
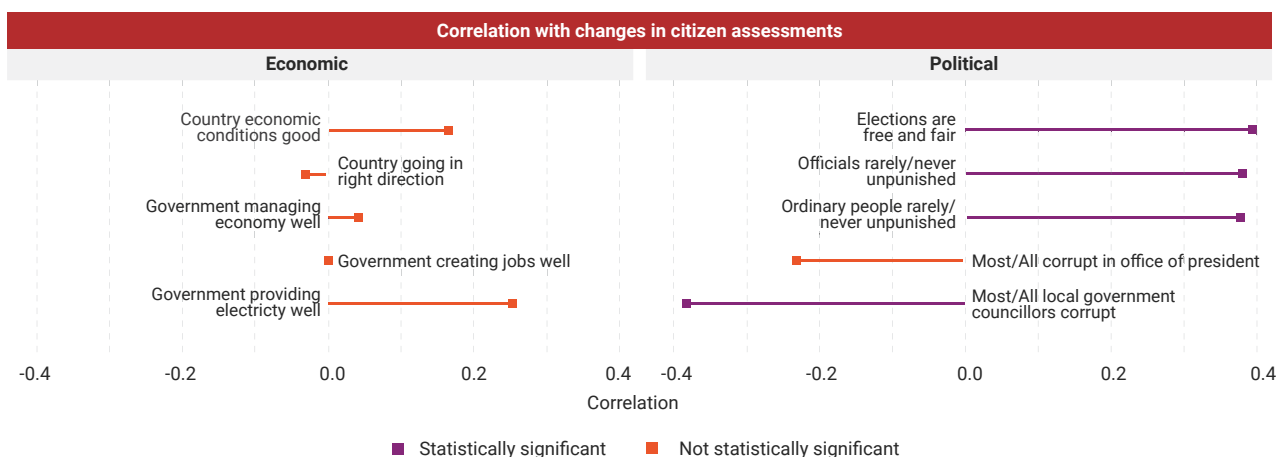
*Results for two questions do not include countries in which these questions were not asked in all survey rounds: on Parliament (Sudan and Burkina Faso) and on courts (Sudan).

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4   As the figure shows, the correlation coefficient for corruption in the presidency is lower than that for local government, and it also is not "statistically significant." This means that based on statistical tests, the relationship does not meet the conditions necessary to be considered meaningful.

5   As corruption perceptions in the two spheres of government are highly related, this finding suggests that the discrepancy may be due to the existence of outlier cases, namely Mali and South Africa. While South Africans' perceptions of corruption in the Presidency increased by 30 percentage points over the past decade, these perceptions declined in Mali (-22 points). Both countries experienced large declines in support for democracy. Once we drop these cases, we also observe a negative and statistically significant relationship between corruption in the Presidency and democratic support among the remaining countries.

Country case study

South Africa: Steep decline in democratic support and satisfaction amid rising corruption

South Africa is one of Africa's most admired democracies, having consistently maintained a Freedom House (2024a) rating of "free" since transitioning to a multi-racial democracy in 1994. While the country has a robust civil society and strong constitutional protections for political freedoms and human rights, it has faced a range of economic and political problems over the past decade. Poverty, unemployment, and inequality remain persistent obstacles to improving many South Africans' quality of life (Chatterjee, Czajka, & Gethin, 2021; Zizzamia, Schotte, & Leibbrandt, 2019), and a series of major corruption scandals in the government and private sector have strained the country's accountability mechanisms (Holden & van Vuuren, 2011; Pauw, 2017).

Afrobarometer has documented sharp declines in South Africans' support for democracy (-29 percentage points) and satisfaction with democracy (-35 points) since 2011 amid growing disillusionment with the government's inability or unwillingness to address corruption (e.g. Dryding, 2020; Felton, van Wyk-Khosa, & Mpani, 2023). During this period, the share of citizens who say the government is doing "fairly well" or "very well" on fighting corruption dropped from one-third (33%) in 2011 to one in 10 (10%) in 2022 (Figure 26). The large majority who see corruption as having increased during the previous year dropped from 83% to 64% during a brief period of optimism at the start of President Cyril Ramaphosa's term in 2018 but then shot back up to 82% in 2022.

The data suggest that such a pattern of collapsing democratic satisfaction linked to growing perceptions of corruption also holds among other respected Southern African democracies such as Botswana, Mauritius, and Namibia. As Figure 27 shows, at least 70% of citizens in all three countries report that corruption increased in the past year. In contrast, these perceptions are shared by only 19% of Zambians, a context in which support for democracy has remained a strong majority over the past decade and in which satisfaction rebounded in 2021/2023 (see Page 30).

Figure 26: Trends in democratic attitudes and perceived corruption | South Africa | 2011-2022
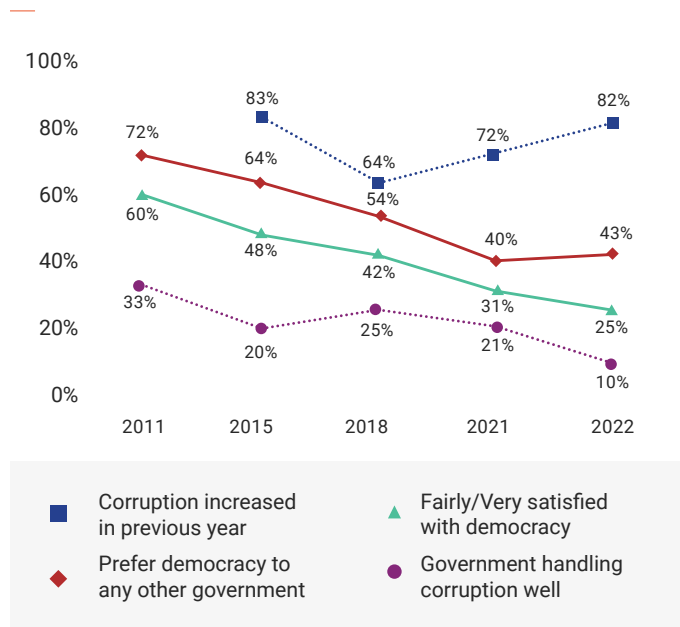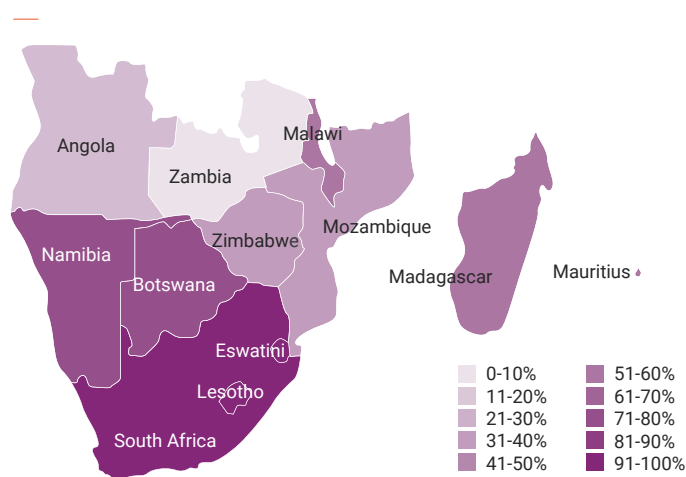

Figure 27: Perceptions of increased corruption | Southern Africa | 2021/2023

% who say corruption has increased "somewhat" or "a lot" in the past year

Country case study

Mali: Collapse in support for democracy amid long-standing insecurity

Mali's transition from democratic governance coincides with the onset of the most recent Tuareg rebellion in 2012 (Freedom House, 2024). The country is at the epicentre of a decade-long security crisis in the wider Sahel. Multiple regional and Western-led military interventions have failed to restore stability to regions under the control of armed bandits, Islamist militant groups, and self-defence militias (Badi & Klute, 2022; International Crisis Group, 2020). The conflict has created a humanitarian crisis, exacerbated by climate change and intercommunal violence (Tarif, 2021; OCHA, 2024).

In August 2020 and May 2021, factions within Mali's armed forces staged coups amid increasing public frustration with the civilian government's inability to address economic challenges and corruption and to restore full control of the national territory (Bester, 2020; Melly, 2020). The military-led government has imposed an increasing number of restrictions on political freedoms, culminating in the indefinite delay of elections that were due to be held in March 2024 (Freedom House, 2024).

In Afrobarometer surveys throughout this period, citizen support for democracy has declined sharply, from a strong majority of 75% in 2014 to 39% in 2022 (Figure 28). Much of this change (-23 percentage points) occurred in the immediate aftermath of the coups, between the 2020 and 2022 surveys. Rejection of military rule collapsed at the same time, from 70% to 18%, in parallel to a drop (from 76% to 21%) in public perceptions that corruption in the country was getting worse. In contrast, public confidence in the government's ability to prevent or resolve violent conflict has doubled since the shift from civilian rule, from 27% to 58%, despite evidence that the number of conflict events remained largely the same (ACLED, 2024).

Interestingly, in both pre- and post-coup surveys, confidence in the government's response to violence is lowest, and support for democracy highest, in the northern and central regions most affected by the security crisis (Figure 29). It remains to be seen whether public confidence in the military junta's ability to address insecurity and other challenges will remain a majority view, and whether it will translate into continued erosion of citizen support for democracy.

Figure 28: Trends in democratic attitudes, rejection of military rule, corruption, and government performance on addressing insecurity | Mali | 2013-2022
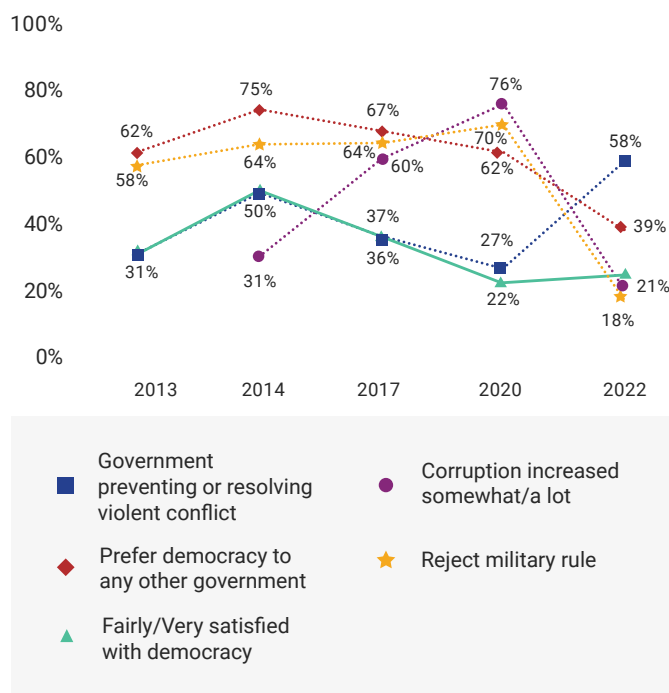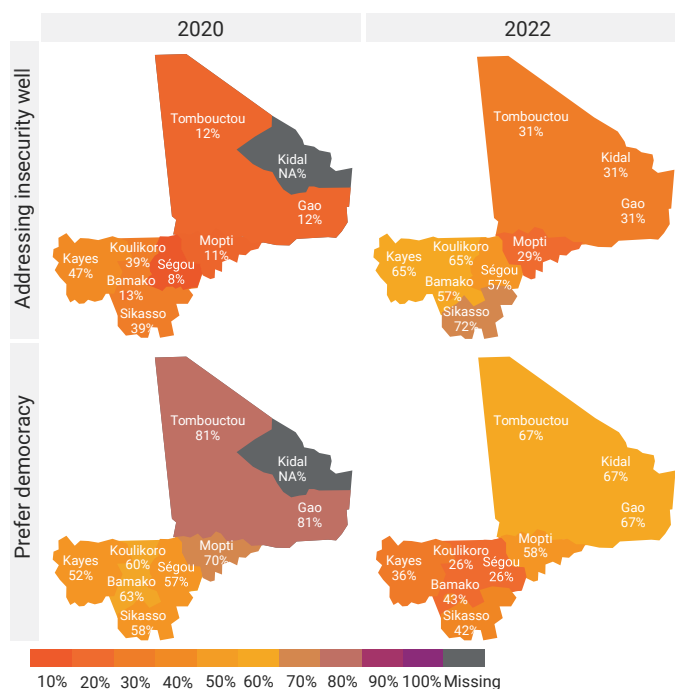

Figure 29: Trends in support for democracy and government performance on addressing insecurity | by region | Mali | 2020-2022

Note: Results for Gao, Kidal, and Tombouctou report combined figures because of the small sample sizes in each region. No interviews took place in Kidal in 2020 because of insecurity.

Country case study

Kenya: Support for democracy on the rise, but supply is faltering

Kenya experienced a remarkable political moment after its August 2017 election, when the country's Supreme Court annulled the results due to widespread irregularities, the first time an opposition court challenge had led to such a radical court decision in Africa (BBC, 2017).

This move may have played some role in reinvigorating Kenyans' democratic commitment (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2018). Most indicators of demand for democracy have seen gains over the past decade, especially since 2017 (Figure 30). Rejection of one-party rule is up by 13 percentage points, and we see significant increases in demand for multiparty competition (+17 points), presidential accountability to courts (+12 points) and Parliament (+19 points), as well as in preference for a government that is accountable over one that "gets things done" (+21 points). Kenyans' growing demand for democracy constitutes one of the brightest spots in the democratic firmament on the continent over the past decade.

On the supply side, the story is a bit more uncertain. Several indicators have seen important gains compared to 2011, especially assessments of the extent of democracy in the country (+16 percentage points), but satisfaction with democracy has dropped back to its 2011 level (47%). And while most indicators saw a bump after the 2017 rerun of the election, they have lost that ground since 2019 (Figure 31).

Kenya continues to face challenges in delivering democracy to its people, but rising popular demand will put mounting pressure on the government to make democratic governance a reality.

Figure 30: Growing support for democracy
| Kenya | 2011-2021

Legend:
- ■ Reject one-man rule
- ◆ President must obey laws and courts
- ▲ Reject one-party rule
- ● President must be accountable to Parliament
- ⬠ Support democracy
- ★ Many parties needed
- ♥ Prefer accountable governance
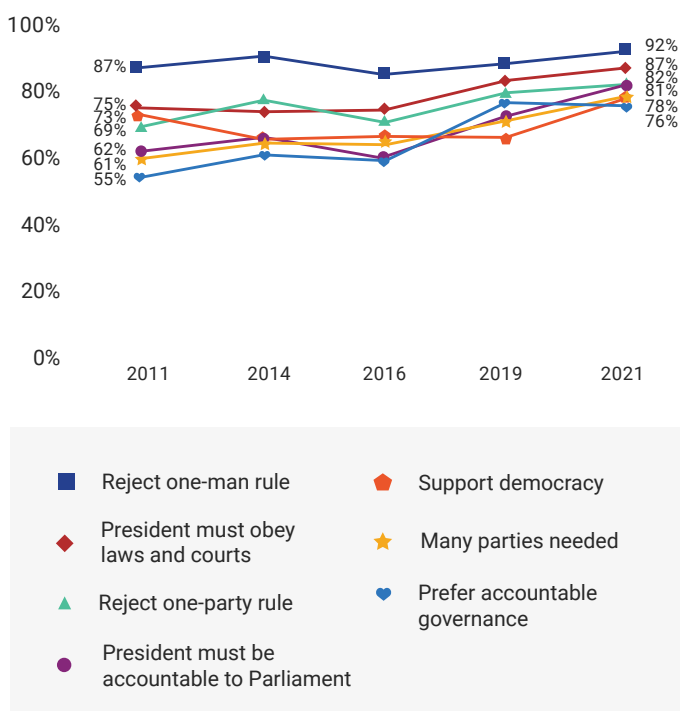
Figure 31: Faltering supply of democracy | Kenya | 2011-2021

Legend:
- ■ President never/rarely ignores Parliament
- ◆ President never/rarely ignores laws/courts
- ▲ Country is a democracy (full or with minor problems)
- ● Fairly/Very satisfied with democracy
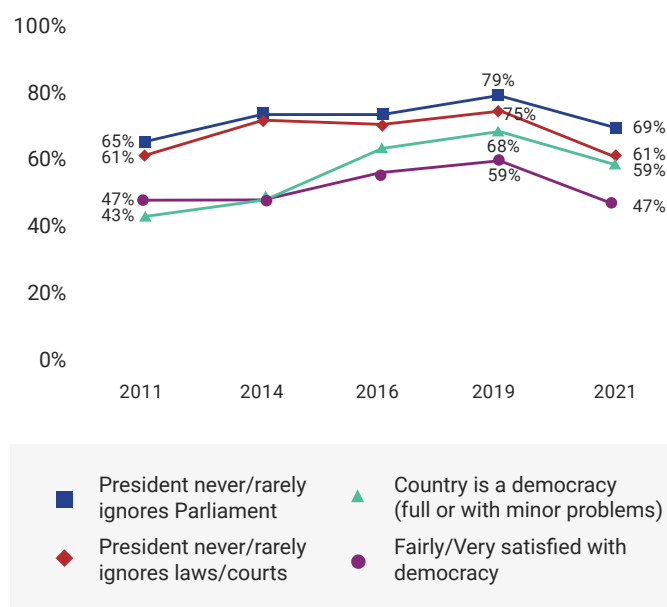
Country case study

Zambia and Senegal:
A tale of two rebounds?

Zambia's democratic trajectory over the past few years has been a lesson in the power of resilience. After succeeding to the presidency on the death of President Michael Sata in 2014, Edgar Lungu was declared the winner of the disputed 2016 election. But things quickly turned sour as Lungu arrested his main opponent, restricted media freedoms, suspended Parliament, and declared a state of emergency. Zambia's democracy appeared to be on the ropes, as analysts bemoaned the country's "slide into authoritarianism" (Allison, 2017).

Zambians never wavered, consistently demonstrating some of the highest levels of democratic commitment on the continent (Figure 32, solid lines). But they could see their democracy was faltering: Satisfaction with democracy fell to just 37% in Afrobarometer's 2020 survey.

In the end, democracy has prevailed – and satisfaction has rebounded (dashed lines). Although Lungu sought to use the COVID-19 pandemic as an excuse to limit his rival's ability to campaign for the 2021 election, Hakainde Hichilema won in a landslide. Zambians rejoiced, and registered their approval: In 2022, satisfaction with democracy nearly doubled, to 71%.

Could a similar rebound be in store for Senegal? As in Zambia, democratic commitment among Senegalese has generally remained strong over the past decade (with the notable exception of rejection of military rule), while many indicators of supply have been in sharp decline (Figure 33).

The country recently experienced its own flirtation with an authoritarian power grab when term-limited President Macky Sall tried to postpone the election in what analysts described as an attempt at a "constitutional coup" (Toto, 2024). But Senegal's constitutional court, like Kenya's and Malawi's before it, stood firm, reversing Sall's order (Sany, 2024), and opposition candidate Bassirou Diomaye Faye won the 24 March election by nearly 20 points. We will have to wait until the next Afrobarometer survey, scheduled for late 2024, to learn whether this outcome has renewed Senegalese confidence in democratic outcomes.

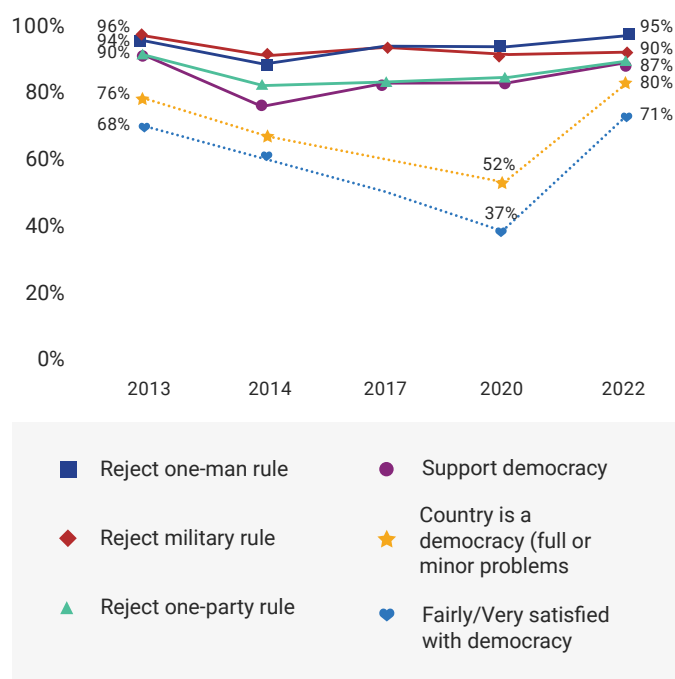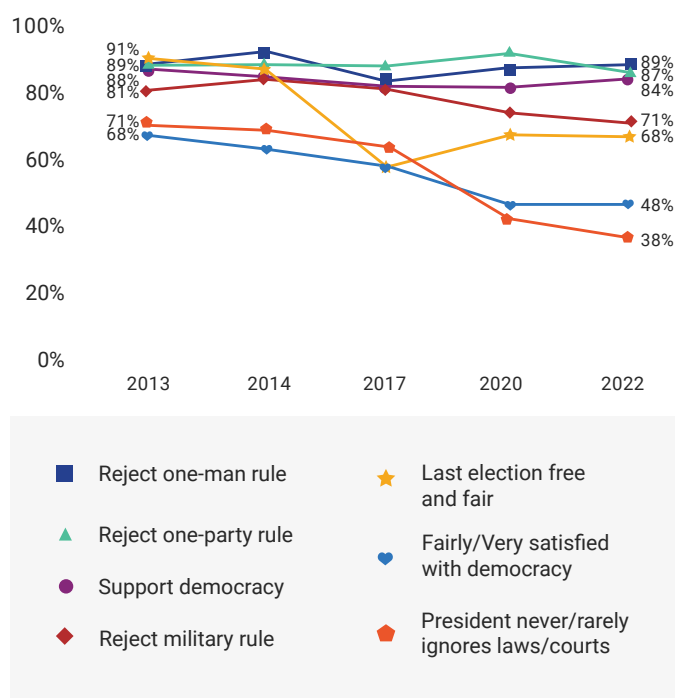**Figure 32: Zambia: Resilient support, rebounding satisfaction** | 2013-2022

Figure 33: Senegal: (Relatively) resilient support; will satisfaction rebound? | 2013-2022

Conclusion:
A well of resilience, but not a bottomless one

Since Africa's renewed turn toward democracy began with Benin's 1990 national conference, analysts have questioned whether democracy could survive amid the continent's daunting economic and social challenges. Would democracy fail if elected governments were unable to deliver in the face of persistent poverty, joblessness, inequality, and wide gaps in delivery of social services and infrastructure? Would citizens reconsider their calls for democracy if it could not guarantee that their basic needs were met?

In critical respects, it turns out that these concerns were unfounded.

Most Africans continue to voice strong support for democratic governance. As detailed in this report, majorities prefer democracy to any other system of government and reject non-democratic alternatives, including military rule. They also strongly endorse norms, institutions, and practices associated with democratic governance, such as choosing political leaders through the ballot box, constitutional limits on presidential tenure, presidential compliance with court rulings, parliamentary oversight of the executive, media freedom, and multiparty competition. Most reassuringly, for a continent marked by large gaps in government services, a clear – and growing – majority say it is more important for a government to be accountable to the people than to "get things done."

These commitments appear to be relatively resilient even in the face of often disappointing government performance in the delivery of economic progress, more equitable and accessible social services, and improved infrastructure. To be clear, delivery of economic and social goods does matter: Popular *satisfaction* with democracy, which has witnessed a steady decline over the past decade, is highly susceptible to poor economic and social performance. This constitutes a major problem for governments, especially when they face their electorates. Yet these shortcomings do not appear to undermine popular *support* for democracy, as many analysts once feared.

But democratic commitment is starting to show some cracks as well, trends that portend danger for the continent's democratic development. Over the past decade, popular support for democracy has declined sharply in several countries, including some of the continent's current or former democratic leaders. And popular opposition to military rule has weakened across the continent, to the extent that more than half of Africans express a willingness to tolerate military intervention "when elected leaders abuse power for their own ends."

What drives these declines? The evidence points not to economic failures, but to political ones: Rising corruption in local government, poor-quality elections, impunity for lawbreakers, and a lack of presidential accountability all appear to undermine popular support for democracy. This suggests that declining resistance to military rule and significant tolerance of military intervention may be primarily a reaction to the failure of leaders to meet citizens' democratic aspirations rather than an attraction to military rule per se.

The data consistently reveal that while there is still a deep well of democratic support on the continent, it is not a bottomless one. Failure to deliver democratic and accountable governance threatens to undermine Africa's democratic project and leave citizens increasingly disappointed in, and at odds with, political authorities in the coming years. The fact that even long-standing democracies such as Botswana and Mauritius are failing to live up to their citizens' expectations must be marked as an important early warning signal. Countering these political failings – nurturing democracy, strengthening integrity and accountability, curbing impunity, and ensuring the quality of elections – should be a priority for African governments, as well as for regional, pan-African, and international actors committed to strengthening democracy on the continent.

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Country democracy scorecards

Afrobarometer country democracy scorecards present graphic illustrations of our latest survey findings and over-time trends on key indicators of democratic demand and supply, from support for democratic norms and practices to satisfaction, freedoms, and perceptions of official corruption.

See more examples and links to 39 country scorecards on pages 34-35.

Democracy scorecards

Democracy in Ghana | The people's perspective

Demand for democracy

Support democracy, reject authoritarian alternatives
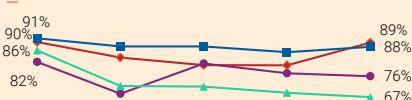
| 2012 | 2014 | 2017 | 2019 | 2022 |

- ◆ Reject one-party rule
- ■ Reject one-man rule
- ● Prefer democracy to any other kind of government
- ▲ Reject military rule

Views on democratic norms and practices

Prioritise accountable over efficient government	**78%**
Support presidential term limits	**76%**
Media should be free from government control	**74%**
Support multiparty competition	**72%**
Armed forces should never intervene in politics	**55%**

Supply of democracy

Extent of and satisfaction with democracy
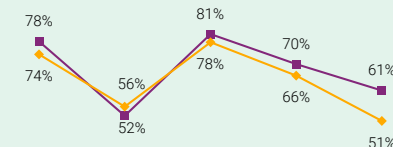
| 2012 | 2014 | 2017 | 2019 | 2022 |

- ■ Country is a democracy (full or with minor problems)
- ◆ Fairly/Very satisfied with how democracy is working

Rule of law
President rarely/never ignores ...

Laws and courts **65%**

Parliament **64%**

Elected officials often/always listen to citizens

MPs 14%

Local government councillors 35%

Corruption in the Presidency

2% 4%
55%
40%

- ■ None
- ■ Some of them
- ■ Most/All of them
- ■ Don't know/Refused
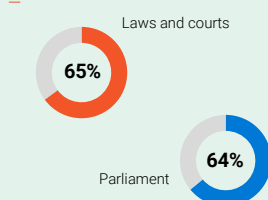
Political freedoms (somewhat/completely free)

Free to choose whom to vote for	Free to join any political organisation	Free to say what you think	Last national election was free and fair
96%	95%	84%	64%
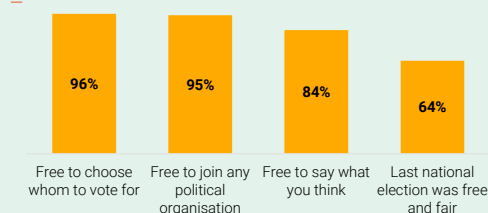
In Round 9, national partner Ghana Center for Democratic Development interviewed 2,400 adult Ghanaians in April 2022. Results have a margin of error of +/-2 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. More at www.afrobarometer.org.

Data for Governance Alliance
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Let the people have a say

Country democracy scorecards

Click on country links below or scan the QR code at right to see democracy scorecards for all 39 African countries surveyed in Round 9 (2021/2023) on the Afrobarometer website.

Democracy scorecards

- Angola
- Benin
- Botswana
- Burkina Faso
- Cabo Verde
- Cameroon
- Congo-Brazzaville
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Eswatini
- Ethiopia
- Gabon
- Gambia
- Ghana
- Guinea
- Kenya
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Mali

- Mauritania
- Mauritius
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Namibia
- Niger
- Nigeria
- São Tomé and Príncipe
- Senegal
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- South Africa
- Sudan
- Tanzania
- Togo
- Tunisia
- Uganda
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

La démocratie en Tunisie | Le point de vue du peuple

Demande de démocratie

Soutien à la démocratie, rejet des alternatives autocratiques

- 78%
- 71%
- 57%
- 56%
- 54%
- 53%
- 47%
- 42%

2013 2015 2018 2020 2022

- ◆ Rejettent le régime de parti unique
- ◆ Préfèrent la démocratie à tout autre système
- ■ Rejettent la dictature
- ▲ Rejettent le régime militaire

Opinions sur les normes et pratiques démocratiques

Responsabilité du gouvernement plus importante que l'efficacité	**68%**
Médias devraient être libres du contrôle du gouvernement	**60%**
Soutien à la limitation du mandat présidentiel	**57%**
Soutien à la compétition multipartite	**32%**
Armée ne devrait jamais intervenir en politique	**26%**

Offre de démocratie

Niveau et satisfaction avec la démocratie

- 40%
- 58%
- 46%
- 54%
- 38%
- 27%
- 38%
- 33%
- 46%
- 27%

2013 2015 2018 2020 2022

- ◆ Assez/Très satisfaits avec le fonctionnement de la démocratie
- ■ Pays est une démocratie (pleine ou avec problèmes mineurs)

Etat de droit
Le président ignore rarement/jamais ...

- Les lois et tribunaux **49%**
- Le Parlement **40%**

Les élus écoutent souvent/toujours les citoyens

- Députés 6%
- Conseillers locaux 8%

Corruption à la Présidence

- 30% ■ Aucun
- 33% ■ Certains
- 22% ■ La plupart/Tous
- 15% ■ Ne sait pas/Refus

Libertés politiques (assez/entièrement libre)

Libre de voter sans pression	Libre d'exprimer son opinion	Libre d'adhérer à une organisation politique de son choix	Dernières élections étaient libres et transparentes
90%	83%	73%	57%
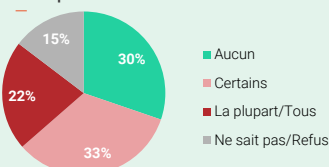
Lors du Round 9, le partenaire national One to One for Research and Polling a interrogé 1.200 adultes tunisiens en février-mars 2022. Les résultats ont des marges d'erreur de +/-3 points de pourcentage à un niveau de confiance de 95%. Plus d'informations sur www.afrobarometer.org.

Data for Governance Alliance — African voices for African policy

AFRO BAROMETER — Donner une voix au peuple
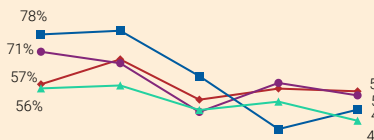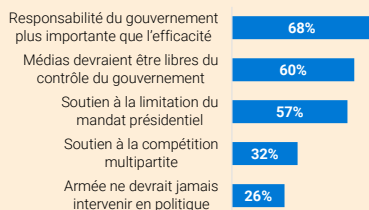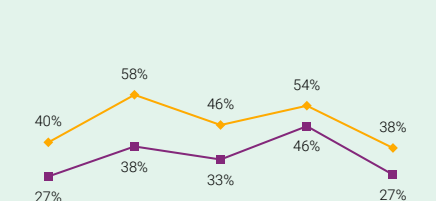

Democracia em Cabo Verde | Visão popular

Exigência da democracia

Apoio da democracia, rejeição das alternativas autoritárias

- 86%
- 81%
- 79%
- 90%
- 84%
- 70%

2011 2014 2017 2019 2022

- ◆ Rejeição do governo de partido único
- ■ Rejeição do governo de um líder forte
- ◆ Prefere a democracia do que outra forma de governo
- ▲ Rejeição de governo militar

Visão sobre as normas e práticas da democracia

A imprensa deve ser livre do controlo governamental	**75%**
Apoia eleições multipartidárias	**75%**
A responsabilidade do governo é mais importante do que a eficiência	**68%**
Apoio a limitação dos mandatos do presidente	**63%**
As forças armadas nunca devem intervir nos assuntos políticos	**29%**

Oferta da democracia

Extensão e satisfação com a democracia

- 63%
- 55%
- 50%
- 57%
- 53%
- 45%
- 26%
- 22%
- 23%
- 27%

2011 2014 2017 2019 2022

- ■ O país é uma democracia (completa ou com pequenos problemas)
- ◆ Razoavelmente/Muito satisfeito com a forma como a democracia funciona
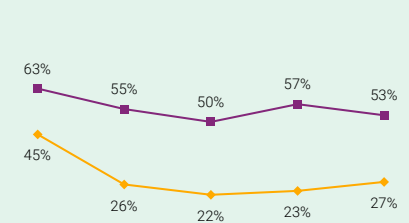
Estado de direito
O presidente raramente/nunca ignora ...

- As leis e os tribunais **66%**
- O Parlamento **72%**

Os funcionários eleitos ouvem frequentemente/sempre os cidadãos

- Os deputados 9%
- Os membros da assembleia municipal 13%
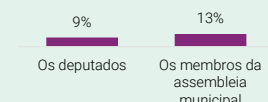
Corrupção no Gabinete do Primeiro Ministro

- 17% ■ Nenhum
- 37% ■ Alguns deles
- 22% ■ A maioria deles/Todos eles
- 23% ■ Não sabe/Recusou

Liberdades políticas (um pouco/completamente livre)

Liberdade para escolher em quem votar	Liberdade para dizer o que pensa	Liberdade para aderir/filiar-se a uma organização política	As últimas eleições nacionais foram livres e justas
96%	86%	86%	72%
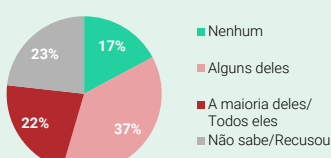
Na 9ª Ronda do Afrobarometer, o parceiro nacional Afrosondagem entrevistou 1,200 Caboverdianos adultos em Julho-Agosto de 2022. Os resultados têm uma margem de erro de +/-3 pontos percentuais a um nível de confiança de 95%. Veja mais em www.afrobarometer.org. www.afrobarometer.org.

Data for Governance Alliance — African voices for African policy

AFRO BAROMETER — Donner uma voz ao povo

Appendix

Survey questions

Demand for democracy

Prefer democracy
Which of these three statements is closest to your
own opinion?
Statement 1: Democracy is preferable to any other kind
of government.
Statement 2: In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can
be preferable.
Statement 3: For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of
government we have.
(% who say democracy is preferable)

Reject one-party rule, Reject one-man rule, Reject military rule
There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or
approve of the following alternatives:
Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office.
The army comes in to govern the country.
Elections and Parliament are abolished so that the president can
decide everything.
(% who "disapprove" or "strongly disapprove")

Support elections
Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
Statement 1: We should choose our leaders in this country through
regular, open, and honest elections.
Statement 2: Since elections sometimes produce bad results, we should
adopt other methods for choosing this country's leaders.
(% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with Statement 1)

Support presidential compliance with courts
Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
Statement 1: Since the [president] was elected to lead the country,
[he] should not be bound by laws or court decisions that [he] thinks
are wrong.
Statement 2: The [president] must always obey the laws and the courts,
even if [he] thinks they are wrong.
(% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with Statement 2)

Support presidential term limits
Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
Statement 1: The Constitution should limit the [president] to serving a
maximum of two terms in office.
Statement 2: There should be no constitutional limit on how long the
[president] can serve.
(% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with Statement 1)

Support parliamentary oversight of president
Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
Statement 1: [Parliament] should ensure that the [president] explains to
it on a regular basis how [his] government spends taxpayers' money.
Statement 2: The [president] should be able to devote [his] full
attention to developing the country rather than wasting time justifying
[his] actions.
(% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with Statement 1)

Support media freedom
Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
Statement 1: The media should have the right to publish any views and
ideas without government control.
Statement 2: The government should have the right to prevent the media
from publishing things that it disapproves of.
(% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with Statement 1)

Support multiparty competition
Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
Statement 1: Political parties create division and confusion; it is
therefore unnecessary to have many political parties in [Country].
Statement 2: Many political parties are needed to make sure that
[country's citizens] have real choices in who governs them.
(% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with Statement 2)

Turnover in political power is good for democracy
Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
Statement 1: In a democracy, it is better if power sometimes changes
hands in elections from one political party to another.
Statement 2: In a democracy, as long as a government is elected by the
people in a free and fair election, it doesn't matter if one party always
wins and continuously governs the country.
(% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with Statement 1)

Prefer accountable governance
Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
Statement 1: It is more important to have a government that can get
things done, even if we have no influence over what it does.
Statement 2: It is more important for citizens to be able to hold
government accountable, even if that means it makes decisions
more slowly.
(% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with Statement 2)

Should the military intervene in politics?
Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
Statement 1: [Country's] armed forces should never intervene in the
country's political process.
Statement 2: It is legitimate for the armed forces to take control of
government when elected leaders abuse power for their own ends.
(% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with each statement)

Delivery of democracy

Extent of democracy
In your opinion, how much of a democracy is [Country] today? Is it:
A full democracy? A democracy with minor problems?
A democracy with major problems? Not a democracy?
(% who say "a full democracy" or "a democracy with
minor problems")

Satisfaction with democracy
Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in
[Country]?
(% who say "fairly satisfied" or "very satisfied")

Recent elections were free and fair
On the whole, how would you rate the freeness and fairness of the last
national election, held in [year]?
(% who say "completely free and fair" or "free and fair with minor
problems")

Efficacy of elections
Thinking about how elections work in practice in this country, how well
do elections: Ensure that representatives to the National Assembly
reflect the views of voters? Enable voters to remove from office leaders
who do not do what the people want?

Free to vote without pressure
In this country, how free are you to choose who to vote for without
feeling pressured?

Trust electoral commission
How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't
you heard enough about them to say: [Country's electoral commission]?

President rarely/never ignores Parliament
In your opinion, how often, in this country, does the [president] ignore
[Parliament] and just do what [he] wants?
(% who say "rarely" or "never")

President rarely/never ignores courts
In your opinion, how often, in this country, does the [president] ignore the
courts and laws of this country?
(% who say "rarely" or "never")

Officials who commit crimes rarely/never go unpunished
In your opinion, how often, in this country, do officials who commit crimes go unpunished?
(% who say "rarely" or "never")

Ordinary people who commit crimes rarely/never go unpunished
In your opinion, how often, in this country, do ordinary people who break the law go unpunished?
(% who say "rarely" or "never")

Most/All corrupt
How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: The [president] and officials in [his] office? [Local government councillors]?
(% who say "most of them" or "all of them")

Other indicators

Country going in the right direction
Would you say that the country is going in the wrong direction or going in the right direction?
(% who say "right direction")

Good economic conditions
In general, how would you describe the present economic condition of this country?
(% who say "fairly good" or "very good")

Government managing economy well
How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Managing the economy?
(% who say "fairly well" or "very well")

Government creating jobs well
How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Creating jobs?
(% who say "fairly well" or "very well")

Government handling electricity well
How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Providing a reliable supply of electricity?
(% who say "fairly well" or "very well")

Lived poverty
Afrobarometer's Lived Poverty Index (LPI) measures respondents' levels of material deprivation by asking how often they or their families went without basic necessities (enough food, enough water, medical care, enough cooking fuel, and a cash income) during the preceding year. For more on lived poverty, see Mattes and Patel (2022).

Table A.1: Indicators of commitment to democracy | 39 countries | 2021/2023

	Prefer democracy over any other kind of government	Reject one-party rule	Reject one-man rule	Reject military rule	Elections are best method for choosing leaders	Country needs many political parties	Turnover in political power is good for democracy	Support term limits for president	Accountable government more important than "getting things done"	President should be accountable to Parliament	President must always obey laws/courts	Armed forces should never intervene in politics	Media should be free of government control
Angola	47%	69%	73%	66%	63%	56%	48%	64%	44%	47%	61%	34%	60%
Benin	79%	91%	90%	71%	86%	73%	65%	88%	59%	83%	76%	48%	67%
Botswana	75%	86%	94%	82%	74%	80%	44%	75%	76%	76%	84%	54%	77%
Burkina Faso	55%	79%	68%	25%	70%	39%	57%	70%	51%		62%	31%	67%
Cabo Verde	84%	90%	84%	70%	79%	75%	48%	63%	68%	85%	84%	29%	75%
Cameroon	55%	79%	75%	55%	66%	79%	54%	74%	56%	59%	67%	31%	50%
Congo-Brazzaville	70%	88%	86%	67%	75%	81%	67%	84%	59%	68%	81%	33%	80%
Côte d'Ivoire	70%	87%	82%	58%	76%	78%	54%	78%	62%	61%	82%	31%	61%
Eswatini	55%	66%	87%	85%	71%	67%	41%	70%	58%	73%	76%	56%	72%
Ethiopia	86%	62%	88%	61%	85%	66%	60%	64%	62%	69%	75%	48%	59%
Gabon	71%	93%	95%	70%	67%	77%	68%	93%	45%	74%	85%	34%	79%
Gambia	64%	88%	92%	76%	81%	57%	66%	82%	67%	88%	77%	56%	71%
Ghana	76%	89%	88%	67%	84%	72%	69%	76%	78%	82%	82%	55%	74%
Guinea	67%	77%	78%	57%	75%	43%	78%	89%	55%			32%	65%
Kenya	78%	82%	92%	83%	78%	78%	35%	84%	76%	81%	87%	51%	72%
Lesotho	49%	42%	65%	69%	44%	34%	30%	52%	58%	62%	80%	40%	71%
Liberia	74%	88%	85%	71%	92%	59%	72%	83%	67%	69%	83%	53%	67%
Madagascar	52%	80%	85%	60%	84%	71%	49%	53%	67%	45%	68%	34%	67%
Malawi	58%	69%	87%	75%	65%	73%	37%	65%	69%	59%	76%	38%	68%
Mali	39%	67%	68%	18%	67%	40%	47%	68%	61%	65%	68%	15%	41%
Mauritania	77%	70%	60%	65%	80%	52%	54%	79%	52%	47%	48%	54%	70%
Mauritius	70%	90%	91%	82%	83%	73%	58%	61%	72%	78%	88%	49%	84%
Morocco	66%	74%	70%	74%	66%	62%	56%	70%	68%	69%	58%	65%	46%
Mozambique	49%	64%	50%	61%	63%	67%	43%	56%	50%	44%	54%	34%	44%
Namibia	55%	80%	71%	64%	66%	71%	37%	71%	65%	58%	70%	34%	63%
Niger	61%	72%	65%	44%	77%	52%	52%	80%	41%	66%	67%	30%	61%
Nigeria	70%	89%	83%	73%	71%	69%	64%	86%	65%	75%	74%	55%	70%
São Tomé and Príncipe	52%	64%	81%	80%	74%	41%	28%	51%	48%	57%	73%	28%	53%
Senegal	84%	87%	89%	71%	82%	58%	49%	79%	45%	64%	76%	44%	73%
Seychelles	60%	88%	89%	85%	85%	80%	40%	66%	70%	76%	71%	54%	84%
Sierra Leone	84%	89%	93%	77%	89%	54%	60%	72%	71%	78%	71%	53%	56%
South Africa	43%	69%	67%	54%	65%	65%	44%	58%	54%	59%	75%	35%	72%
Sudan	55%	70%	57%	50%	77%	38%	53%	72%	39%	46%		39%	47%
Tanzania	79%	69%	94%	80%	86%	79%	28%	81%	56%	76%	74%	31%	49%
Togo	68%	82%	78%	53%	74%	70%	69%	82%	56%	67%	69%	34%	58%
Tunisia	53%	54%	47%	42%	70%	32%	30%	56%	68%	28%	39%	26%	60%
Uganda	81%	85%	94%	87%	84%	79%	49%	70%	70%	75%	79%	64%	73%
Zambia	87%	87%	95%	90%	83%	75%	52%	64%	76%	70%	77%	44%	63%
Zimbabwe	75%	78%	88%	70%	78%	73%	49%	75%	51%	60%	82%	59%	70%
39-country average	66%	78%	80%	66%	75%	64%	51%	72%	60%	66% *	73% **	42%	65%

37-country average; question was not asked in Burkina Faso and Guinea   **37-country average; question was not asked in Guinea and Sudan*

Table A.2: Indicators of delivery of democracy | 39 countries | 2021/2023

	Country is full democracy/ democracy with minor problems	Fairly/Very satisfied with democracy	Most recent national election was "completely free and fair" or "free and fair with minor problems"	Officials who commit crimes rarely/never go unpunished	Ordinary people who commit crimes rarely/ never go unpunished	President rarely/never ignores Parliament	President rarely/never ignores laws/courts
Angola	38%	24%	44%	40%	54%	54%	52%
Benin	61%	44%	66%	70%	85%	73%	72%
Botswana	52%	30%	56%	36%	61%	55%	56%
Burkina Faso	37%	33%	67%	37%	61%		55%
Cabo Verde	53%	27%	72%	45%	70%	72%	66%
Cameroon	39%	29%	43%	33%	49%	54%	50%
Congo-Brazzaville	25%	15%	44%	36%	61%	49%	46%
Côte d'Ivoire	40%	34%	57%	33%	53%	51%	46%
Eswatini	18%	11%	70%	31%	76%	32%	31%
Ethiopia	43%	41%	66%	63%	75%	68%	67%
Gabon	15%	7%	24%	22%	60%	34%	33%
Gambia	48%	38%	67%	38%	63%	45%	40%
Ghana	61%	51%	64%	22%	74%	64%	65%
Guinea	28%	20%	43%	37%	59%	56%	55%
Kenya	59%	47%	54%	30%	72%	69%	61%
Lesotho	28%	26%	54%	19%	55%	31%	29%
Liberia	62%	45%	85%	23%	69%	56%	56%
Madagascar	48%	26%	82%	34%	80%	65%	65%
Malawi	43%	40%	50%	51%	80%	69%	75%
Mali	25%	25%	44%	30%	40%	53%	47%
Mauritania	59%	54%	59%	36%	63%	47%	50%
Mauritius	44%	32%	53%	54%	71%	51%	52%
Morocco	46%	53%	39%	37%	75%	41%	43%
Mozambique	51%	42%	59%	49%	60%	60%	60%
Namibia	64%	50%	63%	46%	66%	64%	59%
Niger	51%	53%	77%	41%	55%	50%	45%
Nigeria	34%	21%	56%	34%	70%	39%	45%
São Tomé and Príncipe	43%	28%	71%	42%	60%	70%	62%
Senegal	47%	48%	68%	23%	52%	43%	38%
Seychelles	53%	41%	67%	41%	54%	51%	48%
Sierra Leone	69%	56%	82%	49%	74%	65%	65%
South Africa	33%	25%	49%	26%	45%	42%	37%
Sudan	23%	29%	25%	24%	46%		32%
Tanzania	83%	80%	87%	70%	86%	91%	91%
Togo	48%	33%	59%	39%	72%	63%	59%
Tunisia	27%	38%	57%	8%	56%	40%	49%
Uganda	48%	44%	56%	34%	70%	50%	49%
Zambia	80%	71%	83%	58%	66%	81%	77%
Zimbabwe	38%	46%	44%	36%	74%	49%	49%
39-country average	45%	37%	59%	38%	64%	55% *	53%

37-country average; question was not asked in Burkina Faso and Sudan

Table A.3: Other key indicators relevant to delivery of democracy | 39 countries | 2021/2023

|	Country is going in the right direction	Country is going in the wrong direction	Corruption increased somewhat/a lot in past year	Corruption decreased somewhat/a lot in past year	Most/All officials in the Presidency are corrupt	No officials in the Presidency are corrupt	Most/All local government councillors are corrupt	No local government councillors are corrupt
Angola	30%	63%	36%	30%	38%	13%		
Benin	60%	40%	13%	70%	29%	15%	28%	11%
Botswana	23%	73%	71%	7%	50%	6%	35%	8%
Burkina Faso	19%	81%	57%	18%	42%	10%	43%	11%
Cabo Verde	34%	63%	47%	11%	20%	22%	20%	15%
Cameroon	29%	69%	67%	6%	51%	5%	44%	5%
Congo-Brazzaville	20%	80%	66%	5%	57%	8%	45%	5%
Côte d'Ivoire	56%	44%	54%	21%	36%	16%	30%	11%
Eswatini	13%	84%	87%	3%	40%	5%	32%	5%
Ethiopia	43%	56%	64%	18%	27%	19%	35%	13%
Gabon	8%	91%	76%	5%	70%	3%	51%	2%
Gambia	20%	79%	77%	11%	51%	8%	33%	7%
Ghana	11%	87%	77%	6%	55%	4%	34%	8%
Guinea	31%	69%	35%	43%	29%	17%	29%	11%
Kenya	24%	74%	77%	12%	40%	6%	44%	5%
Lesotho	12%	86%	81%	6%	56%	8%	30%	17%
Liberia	25%	74%	76%	6%	62%	6%	46%	5%
Madagascar	30%	70%	62%	20%	21%	15%	12%	28%
Malawi	10%	89%	66%	15%	37%	7%	30%	10%
Mali	69%	31%	21%	64%	26%	32%	40%	16%
Mauritania	55%	44%	39%	19%	36%	20%	37%	13%
Mauritius	29%	66%	72%	3%	29%	6%	18%	5%
Morocco	57%	40%	43%	9%	44%	6%	36%	6%
Mozambique	54%	41%	52%	13%	35%	12%	30%	12%
Namibia	22%	76%	75%	8%	37%	9%	30%	8%
Niger	46%	53%	46%	29%	22%	11%	21%	13%
Nigeria	10%	89%	74%	7%	59%	4%	54%	4%
São Tomé and Príncipe	33%	61%	62%	12%	22%	19%	19%	17%
Senegal	29%	71%	73%	9%	42%	9%	25%	18%
Seychelles	43%	36%	25%	30%	13%	26%		
Sierra Leone	33%	67%	51%	33%	31%	15%	38%	6%
South Africa	14%	83%	82%	4%	65%	4%	60%	5%
Sudan	7%	92%	80%	4%	41%	13%	38%	12%
Tanzania	59%	39%	39%	35%	6%	34%	9%	27%
Togo	43%	56%	48%	26%	40%	14%	33%	11%
Tunisia	25%	72%	67%	14%	22%	30%	50%	6%
Uganda	48%	51%	68%	11%	43%	11%	38%	9%
Zambia	51%	46%	19%	53%	16%	24%	23%	11%
Zimbabwe	26%	72%	59%	7%	32%	13%	33%	6%
39-country average	32%	66%	58%	18%	38%	13%	34% *	10% *

* 37-country average; question was not asked in Burkina Faso and Sudan

Figure A.1: Trends in democratic support and satisfaction | 30 countries | 1999-2023

■ % prefer democracy   ■ % fairly/very satisfied with democracy

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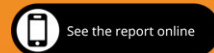
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