

# AFRO BAROMETER

Working Paper No. 41

**SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY  
AND PERFORMANCE OF THE NEW  
DEAL GOVERNMENT: ATTITUDES  
AND PERCEPTIONS OF ZAMBIANS**

by Chileshe L. Mulenga, Annie Barbara  
Chikwanha and Mbiko Msoni

**A comparative series of national public  
attitude surveys on democracy, markets  
and civil society in Africa.**



The Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA)  
6 Spin Street, Church Square  
Cape Town 8001, South Africa  
27 21 461 2559 • fax: 27 21 461 2589  
Mattes (bob@idasact.org.za)

Ghana Centre for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana)  
14 West Airport Residential Area  
P.O. Box 404, Legon-Accra, Ghana  
233 21 776 142 • fax: 233 21 763 028  
Gyimah-Boadi (cdd@ghana.com)

Michigan State University (MSU)  
Department of Political Science  
East Lansing, Michigan 48824  
517 353 3377 • fax: 517 432 1091  
Bratton (mbratton@msu.edu)

[afrobarometer.org](http://afrobarometer.org)

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Chileshe L. Mulenga, Ph.D., is with the Development Research Group, Lusaka, Zambia. Annie Barbara Chikwanha is Project Manager for the Afrobarometer with the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa).

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report, drawing on the second round of the Afrobarometer survey, analyses satisfaction with democracy and perceived performance of the New Deal government in Zambia, which took the reins of power after the heavily contested tripartite elections of December 2001. The 2003 Afrobarometer survey in Zambia was carried out in May 2002, about one year and three months into the rein of this “New Deal” government. The survey is based on a representative national sample of 1200 Zambian citizens aged 18 years and above.

The 2003 Afrobarometer survey results show that satisfaction with democracy has remained rather static, but modest, with 54 percent of Zambians aged 18 years and above expressing satisfaction with the way democracy works in the country in 2003. This is slightly less than the 59 percent who were satisfied with democracy in 1999. The commitment of Zambians to democracy, however, remains strong. Demand for democracy continues to be strongly even though the supply seems to have dwindled considerably. The rest of the key findings are highlighted below:

- 1) Although satisfaction with democracy in Zambia has remained modest at 59 percent in 1999 and 54 percent in 2003, it is very variable across the nine provinces. Northern Province reports the lowest level of satisfaction at 42 percent, followed by two other predominantly rural provinces, Western (47 percent), and Luapula (48 percent). Lusaka Province records a moderate level of satisfaction with democracy at 52 percent, while Southern Province reports a marginally higher level at 57 percent. The rest of the provinces report moderate levels of satisfaction with the way democracy worked in the country.
- 2) Twice as many Zambians (40 percent) now feel that they live in a democracy with major problems compared to 1999, when just 20 percent expressed the same feelings. At the same time, the proportion of Zambians who think that they live in a full democracy has gone down from 29 percent in 1999, to 10 percent in 2003.
- 3) Support for democracy is, however, strong with 60 percent stating their preference for a government that is elected by the people, as opposed to non-democratic forms of government ranging from one-party rule (rejected by 73 percent), to rule by chiefs or elders (rejected by 74 percent), one-man rule (rejected by 90 percent) and military rule (rejected by 95 percent). Zambians are thus adamant that they should choose their leaders through regular, honest elections (75 percent). However, nearly one-quarter (22 percent) were willing to consider alternative means of selecting political leaders because they feel that elections are fraught with many problems.
- 4) A multiparty political system also seems to have gone a long way to allowing citizens to enjoy their civil liberties. A large proportion (92 percent) expresses the view that they enjoy more freedom of association now than they did under UNIP’s one-party rule. An equally high percentage (82 percent) feel that they have more freedom of speech, while 88 percent believe they have more freedom to vote for the party of their choice. The possibility of an arbitrary arrest, however, still worries two-thirds (67 percent) of citizens, while 50 percent expressed anxiety about their freedom to say what they like about politics in public.
- 5) Trust in key state and social institutions is very low. The army enjoys the highest level of trust at 52 percent. Traditional leaders (50 percent), the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (49 percent) and the courts of law (48 percent) follow closely. The relatively high level of trust in the army is surprising given the failed coup attempts of 1991 and 1997. The army may nonetheless be trusted to execute its constitutional mandate to defend the state. The courts of law also received a trust rating of 48 percent in 2003, compared to 54 percent in 1999. This decline may be due to the recent allegations of corruption within the judiciary. The ZNBC is more trusted than other media institutions, including the public

newspapers (32 percent), independent newspapers (33 percent), and independent broadcasting services (36 percent).

Trust in the President is low; less than half of the citizens (46 percent) trust him. However, President Mwanawasa is trusted by more citizens than his predecessor, President Fredrick Chiluba, who was trusted by only 38 percent of Zambian citizens in 1999. Local authorities and District Commissioners receive extremely low ratings of trust at 16 percent each.

6) Community activism, such as drawing attention to public problems, has improved since 1999, when only 31 percent reported attending a community meeting. In 2003 this had doubled to 62 percent. Similarly, joining with others to raise an issue rose from 39 percent in 1999 to 48 percent in 2003.

7) Government performance is praised on several fronts. Highest ratings are for the government's efforts at combating malaria (78 percent "fairly well" or "very well"), addressing education needs (68 percent), combating HIV/AIDS (66 percent), and improving basic health services (59 percent). Basic health services (37 percent positive ratings in 1999) and education (43 percent in 1999) are the most improved sectors. The proportion of Zambian citizens satisfied with the government's handling of crime also increased from 35 percent in 1999 to 54 percent in 2003. It is, however, surprising that the fight against corruption, for which the government has received international attention and recognition, was rated fairly well or very well by only 52 percent of Zambian citizens.

8) Zambians are, however, very unhappy with their personal and the country's economic conditions. Their assessments are all negative. However, 50 percent expected their living conditions to be better or much better in 12 months time. This is not surprising as nearly four in ten Zambians aged 18 years and above were seeking greener pastures by looking for new jobs. Only 50 percent of the Zambian citizens thought the government was doing fairly well or very well in managing the economy.

## SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY AND PERFORMANCE OF THE NEW DEAL GOVERNMENT: ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF ZAMBIANS

### Introduction

This report draws on the second Afrobarometer survey in Zambia.<sup>1</sup> Afrobarometer surveys are carried out every two years in more than a dozen African countries that have, since the early 1990s, sought to reform their political and economic institutions, transitioning from one-party regimes and state-controlled economies to democratic regimes with market-led economies. Afrobarometer surveys are based on nationally representative samples of adults aged 18 years and above. These surveys collect data on attitudes toward democracy and markets amongst citizens of “aspiring democracies” who are eligible to vote. It is important to track the evolution of attitudes to democracy and markets in aspiring democracies, because the process cannot be accomplished in a few years. Above all, transitions to democracy in societies that had previously promoted intolerant political attitudes under one-party autocratic regimes cannot be achieved in a few years, because some of the autocratic attitudes and behaviors may have become entrenched and cannot change, or disappear, over night. As a result, the outcome of regime transformation is at best unknown, particularly at the start, because as Mishler and Rose (2001) observed, “not everyone in society wants the process to culminate in democracy.” There is, therefore, no certainty regarding the direction these transitions might ultimately take.

According to Mishler and Rose, there are at least three possible outcomes of political transitions. They could end up in some form of democracy, in a different type of undemocratic regime, or in the re-emergence of something resembling the old undemocratic regime. Transitions to democracy thus depend on the support citizens render to the regime managing the transition, and on the commitment of such regimes to democracy. The present report examines Zambian citizens’ satisfaction with democracy, their assessments of government performance, and their perceptions of key political, social and state institutions. Focusing on Zambians’ satisfaction with democracy is expected to throw some light on the prospects for democratic consolidation in this African country, which led the way to democratic reform in the early 1990s. It is also important to focus on Zambians’ satisfaction with democracy, because assessments of Zambia’s attempt to establish a democratic society since the second multiparty elections suggest that the journey towards a democratic society has stalled. Bratton and Posner (1999), for example, observed that even though Zambia had held “model founding” elections in 1991, its 1996 elections revealed “the clearest example of the trend of declining quality of second elections in Sub-Saharan Africa” (p. 388).

Other commentators have even labeled Zambia a pseudo-democracy on account of the country’s failure to move beyond holding regular elections in its efforts to establish a democratic society (Carothers, 2002, and van de Walle, 2001). The Zambian government and the civil society have, by and large, admitted the country’s failure to move the democratic consolidation agenda forward. To this end, the “New Deal” government<sup>2</sup> elected in 2001 has appointed another Constitution Review Commission to come up with a

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<sup>1</sup> The Afrobarometer is a comparative series of national public attitude surveys on democracy, markets, civil society and other issues. The Afrobarometer is produced collaboratively by social scientists in 16 African countries; it is coordinated by the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa), the Centre for Democratic Development in Ghana (CDD-Ghana), and Michigan State University. Round 1 surveys were conducted between 1999 and 2001 in 12 African countries: Botswana, Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Round 2 surveys were conducted between mid-2002 and November 2003 in these same countries (excluding Zimbabwe), as well as Cape Verde, Kenya, Mozambique and Senegal. Information and publications are available at [www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org).

<sup>2</sup> The incumbent president coined the term, “New Deal” to distance his new government from the inadequacies and problems associated with the Chiluba Administration. President Mwanawasa was former President Chiluba’s

new, more democratic, constitution. In addition, an Electoral Review Committee has been appointed by President Mwanawasa to review electoral regulations to ensure that Zambia avoids the electoral irregularities that happened during the 2001 elections. Civil society has welcomed both the Constitutional Review Commission and the Electoral Review Committee, but insists that the new constitution, unlike previous ones (1991 and 1996), should not be approved by the government, but by a constituent assembly made up of a cross-section of the adult population. The government, however, wants to be responsible for the adoption of the new constitution, because constituting a constituent assembly could be too expensive. Thus, how the new Republican Constitution, expected to be in place before the next general elections in 2006, will be adopted remains a contested issue.

Problems of democratic consolidation in Zambia have been due in part to an inappropriate constitutional framework, and in part to lack of commitment to democratic consolidation on the part of the political leadership, and especially the Kaunda and Chiluba regimes, which both failed to address the constitutional inadequacies of the one-party state constitution. As a result, the Republican Constitution was not sufficiently changed when Zambia reverted to a multiparty democracy in 1991. Similarly, the revised constitution of 1996 failed to address the critical issues of balancing power between the three arms of government. In consequence, most of the state's power has been left in the presidency, just as it was during the era of the one-party state. It is thus widely recognised that Zambia has failed to produce a constitution that can support and promote democratic consolidation and stand the test of time. By vesting most state power in the presidency, the Zambian constitution undermines the capacity of other wings of government to check the actions of the President in particular. In consequence, most institutions of restraint cannot function effectively without the active or open support and blessings of the president. Hence, institutions such as the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Auditor General's Office, and even the judiciary seem to tread carefully on matters in which the presidency might have an interest. The situation is worsened by lack of constitutional safeguards against institutional failure in any of the institutions of restraint.

Furthermore, little has been done to enhance political participation of the citizenry since Zambia reverted to a multiparty political system. The Public Order Act, for example, which prohibits public meetings and protests not sanctioned by the police, which has been left on the statute books since the era of the colonial government, still remains in place, despite clear rulings by the judiciary to the effect that it has no place in a democratic society. Not surprisingly, levels of citizen participation in political, economic and social affairs leave a lot to be desired.

To obtain insights into Zambia's stalled transition to democracy, this Afrobarometer report draws on the findings of the Round 2 Afrobarometer survey to analyse satisfaction with democracy among adult Zambians. Perceptions of how transparent and trustworthy the key state and social institutions are, and an assessment of the performance of the New Deal government in a number of sectors, are also reported. The extent to which Zambians demand democracy and the amount supplied by the system, as well as individuals' perceptions of the well being and management of the economy by the New Deal government, are the other issues examined in this report.

### **Organisation of the Report**

The rest of the report begins with a discussion of the research techniques that were used to collect the data. This discussion is followed by a presentation of survey findings relating to satisfaction with democracy among Zambians. Citizens' assessments of the performance of the New Deal government, which had only been in office for about one year and three months at the time the survey was conducted, are then presented and discussed. The report, particularly, focuses on how democratic Zambia is

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preferred successor, a fact that annoyed many senior members of Chiluba's party, the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), as Mwanawasa had supposedly "retired" from active politics.

considered to be by its citizens, and how satisfaction with democracy influences attitudes to authoritarian rule and commitment to democracy. Trust in key state and social institutions, perceptions and experience of corruption, and performance of the New Deal government in terms of managing the economy and key social sectors are the other issues analysed and discussed.

### **Research Techniques Employed in the Zambia Afrobarometer Survey**

This section describes the research techniques and steps taken to select a nationally representative random sample of 1200 of Zambians aged 18 years and above.<sup>3</sup> The sample was selected through a multi-stage process based on the sampling frame used by the Central Statistical Office (CSO), the institution mandated to collect official social and economic statistics. The sampling frame used by the CSO is based on division of the country into nine political regions, called provinces, which are further subdivided into districts. The latter are further sub-divided into wards. The CSO has in turn subdivided wards into Census Supervisory Areas (CSAs). These are areas considered convenient units for purposes of population-based data collection. The CSAs are further sub-divided into Standard Enumeration Areas (SEAs). The primary sampling unit adopted for the Afrobarometer survey was thus the SEA.

The number of respondents selected from any district took into account the population in the SEA and its location in terms of whether an SEA was rural urban. This sampling procedure resulted in the survey coverage shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Coverage of the Second Round Afrobarometer Survey**

<b>Province</b>	<b>Provincial Headquarters</b>	<b>Other District covered in the Survey</b>
Central	Kabwe	Serenje
Copperbelt	Ndola	Luanshya
Eastern	Chipata	Petauke
Luapula	Mansa	Kawambwa
Lusaka	Lusaka	Kafue
Northern	Kasama	Mpika
North Western	Solwezi	Kasempa
Southern	Livingstone	Monze
Western	Mongu	Kaoma

The respondents were selected from 150 SEAs that were all selected randomly with the help of a random number table. This was essential particularly for the questions in the questionnaire that sought to establish the performance or perceived performance of the locally elected officials, such as Councillors and Members of Parliament. Although the SEAs were pre-selected, the Field Supervisors could substitute SEAs, for example, in cases where the pre-selected SEAs were inaccessible due to floods, impassable roads or were too distant from the nearest service stations where fuel for the vehicles could be purchased. The latter was imposed on the field teams, because the second Afrobarometer Survey coincided with a major fuel shortage in the country, which placed limitations on how far out the field teams could venture from major transport corridors. In consequence, very remote areas without motor vehicle service stations were avoided to avert the possibility of some field research teams being stuck in rather remote parts of the country.

The households from which respondents were drawn were not pre-selected. Instead, interviewers selected households based on strict guidelines to ensure a random sample was also achieved at this stage of the

<sup>3</sup> A sample of this size is sufficient to yield a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3 percent with a 95 percent confidence interval.

selection process. The same was true for selection of an individual respondent within the selected household. To ensure that men and women were equally represented in the sample, the interviewers alternated interviews in each succeeding household between men and women. At times this necessitated multiple visits to a household in order to find the selected respondent. Men, in particular, were not generally found at homes, because they tended to work away from homes, while women tended to work around their homes.

The urban and rural areas accounted for 37 and 63 percent of the sample, respectively. This is in accordance with the current distribution of the urban and rural population in Zambia (CSO, 2003). The proportion of respondents drawn from each of the nine provinces was also drawn in accordance with each of the province's proportion in the national population. This is evident from Table 2, which shows the provincial populations, the share of each in the national population, and the consequent number of respondents selected in the province.

**Table 2: Number of Respondents Drawn from each of the Provinces**

Province	Population	Proportion of National Pop.	Number of Respondents	Sample Proportion
Central	1 012 257	10	117	10
Copperbelt	1 581 221	16	194	16
Eastern	1 306 173	13	132	11
Luapula	775 353	8	103	9
Lusaka	1 391 329	14	165	14
Northern	1 258 696	13	173	14
North-Western	583 350	6	71	6
Southern	1 212 124	12	153	13
Western	765 088	8	92	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>9 885 591</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1200</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: CSO (2002) Zambia Census of Population and Housing, Preliminary Summary Report 2000 Census, and Zambia Afrobarometer Survey, 2003..

Note that Eastern Province was slightly under-represented in the sample, while Northern Province was slightly over-represented, but the data was weighted to correct for these imbalances.

The questionnaire was translated into seven main local languages – Bemba, Kaonde, Lozi, Lunda, Luvale, Nyanja, and Tonga – and interviews were conducted in the language of the respondent's choice. To ensure that the same questions were asked across the seven languages, the questionnaire was translated into the seven main local languages before conducting the actual survey. The translated questionnaires were also pre-tested to ensure that the responses were consistent with the questions that were being asked. The interviewers were also trained in the sampling procedures and interviewing techniques and public relations before the beginning of data collection.

The data were coded, entered, processed and interpreted by the local research team and the authors, respectively, with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

### **Satisfaction with Democracy Under the New Deal Government**

In the run up to the 2001 tripartite elections, most Zambians seem to have assumed that a new president from the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), which led and championed the transition from one-party rule to a multiparty system of government, would not bring about any change in the quality of governance. As a result, 71 percent voted for presidential candidates from other political parties that had not been in office since Zambia reverted to a multiparty system of government. However, due to the use

of the first past the post electoral system and the 1996 constitutional amendment that required the winning presidential candidate to win only by a simple majority, the MMD not only remained the governing party, but its presidential candidate, Levy Mwanawasa, also won with only 29 percent of the votes cast. Moreover, he defeated his closest rival, Anderson Mazoka of the United Party for National Development (UPND), by only 2 percent of the vote. Under these circumstances, it was understandable that the President Elect was received with a lot of mistrust, particularly in circles that sought a change of government. This was true in part because it was assumed that the new president, coming from the same political party that had been in office for 10 years, was more likely to follow in the footsteps of his immediate predecessor rather than bring about much needed change in the quality of governance.

To find out what Zambians thought about their experiences with democracy under the “New Deal” government, we asked them: *“Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in Zambia?”* The responses to this question are given in Table 3. They reveal that Zambians have maintained a relatively stable level of satisfaction with democracy since the first survey in 1999, when 59 percent reported being fairly satisfied or very satisfied. The 2003 survey results show that 54 percent of Zambians are satisfied with the way democracy works in their country; the difference between the two surveys is within the margin of error. This suggests that there has been no improvement in the conduct and management of elections even under the “New Deal” government, led by President Mwanawasa, which came into office in January 2002. Dissatisfaction with the way democracy works has also remained at the same level; 36 percent were unhappy in 1999, and 39 percent in 2003. The rather static economy, poor political and economic management, as well as the survival or retention of many basic traits of the one-party rule, all probably contribute to the ambivalent evaluations of democracy in the country by its citizens. The excessive power vested in the President has not helped either. The transition from one-party to multiparty rule was not accompanied by corresponding constitutional changes that should have reduced presidential powers to a level where other constitutional offices could operate independently or without relying on the benevolence of the President.

The election results also caused general dissatisfaction with the way democracy works in Zambia, because even though the winning presidential candidate won by just two percent of the votes cast, the opposition political parties’ pleas for a recount of the presidential ballots, despite being supported by independent election monitors, were refused. The chief justice, who was the returning officer for the presidential election, turned down the pleas for a recount of the presidential ballots on the grounds that it was not provided for in the constitution. Instead, he advised the contestants to petition the election results within 14 days of their announcement in accordance with the law prevailing at the time. More than two years down the line, however, the high court is yet to rule on the presidential election petition.

**Table 3: Satisfaction with Democracy (percent)**

	2003	1999
Zambia is not a democracy	1	1
Not at all satisfied	14	12
Not very satisfied	26	24
Fairly satisfied	41	43
Very satisfied	14	16
Don’t know	6	4

*Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in Zambia?*

Table 4 shows that there is no major difference in aggregate levels of satisfaction with democracy between the urban (52 percent “fairly” or “very” satisfied) and the rural residents (56 percent). This is surprising given that the political agenda in Zambia tends to be set by urban-based social groups. For example, candidates for rural parliamentary seats predominantly come from urban areas. Thus, the rural

residents may in essence not be organised to champion their own agendas. There are also few differences based on gender or educational differences.

**Table 4: Satisfaction With Democracy, by Urban-Rural Location (percent)**

	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Rural</b>
Very satisfied	10	16
Fairly satisfied	42	40
Not very satisfied	32	22
Not at all satisfied	13	14
Zambia is not a democracy	1	1
Don't know	3	7

The level of satisfaction with democracy in Zambia, at 54 percent, compares moderately favorably with 15 other African countries that were part of the survey. The country displaying the highest levels of satisfaction is Kenya (79 percent), and the least is Cape Verde (33 percent). The majority range between 54 percent and 69 percent, and the mean for all countries is 54 percent. Thus, Zambia's level of satisfaction with the way democracy works is average in comparison to other aspiring African democracies.

### **How Democratically is Zambia Governed?**

Levels of satisfaction with democracy are affected in part by how much democracy people think they experience. Table 5 shows responses to a question that asked respondents to state how much democracy there is in Zambia.

**Table 5: How Democratic is Zambia (percent)**

	<b>2003</b>	<b>1999</b>
Not a democracy	4	7
A democracy, but with major problems	42	20
A democracy, but with minor problems	38	38
A full democracy	10	25
Do not understand question/democracy	3	-
Don't know	4	9

*In your opinion how much of a democracy is Zambia today?*

Many Zambians (42 percent) rate their country as a democracy, but one facing major problems. This is a steep rise from the 20 percent who gave the same rating in 1999. Similarly, only 10 percent in 2003 think that they live in a full democracy, compared to 25 percent who said the same in 1999. These increasingly pessimistic evaluations can be explained by the problems surrounding the 2001 elections. The problems ranged from poor organization to electoral irregularities and an uneven playing field for the contestants (see Carter Centre, 2002; and FODEP, 2002). For example, the public media, which dominates in Zambia, was reportedly biased towards the ruling party (see Mwalongo and Lwando, 2003).

In comparison to other countries, Zambians rank fairly low with respect to the perceived extent of democracy. With just 10 percent saying that the country is a full democracy, Zambia is in the same league as Cape Verde, Nigeria, Uganda and Tanzania, which are all in the 7 percent to 13 percent range. In Ghana, Mozambique, Mali and Namibia, on the other hand, between 29 and 30 percent of respondents rate their country as fully democratic.

## Support for Democracy

Although satisfaction with democracy in Zambia is moderate, there are several indicators that the commitment to democracy as a system of government is strong. For example, 50 percent say that democracy is worth having because it gives everyone opportunities to express themselves freely and to participate in decision-making, compared to a smaller proportion (32 percent) that finds democracy worthy only if it can address basic economic needs. The latter view is not surprising, however, considering the grinding poverty many Zambians live in. A 1998 Living Conditions Monitoring Survey carried out by the Central Statistical Office, for example, showed that 80 percent of the population was poor and lived below the poverty datum line. And an opinion poll conducted before the 2001 elections revealed that 22 percent of respondents cited poverty as one of the key issues the new government was expected to tackle.<sup>4</sup>

Support for democracy is also evident from the fact that 70 percent agree that democracy is always preferable to any other system of government, compared to just 15 percent who believe that in some circumstances a non-democratic system of government may be preferable (although another 10 percent indicate that the system of government simply does not matter to them, and 5 percent “don’t know” what system of government they prefer). These individuals are probably either disillusioned with political processes in the country, or are too preoccupied with other things such as earning livelihoods in an economy with limited employment and economic opportunities. Further, although the 2001 elections were marred by irregularities, Zambians are adamant that they should always choose their leaders through regular honest elections (75 percent); less than one-quarter (22 percent) are prepared to consider alternative ways of selecting political leaders on account of elections being fraught with many problems.

Although there are problems with the way democracy works and how much democracy there is in the country, it is evident from Table 6 that Zambians clearly reject all forms of authoritarian rule. Military rule has the highest rejection rate at 95 percent, followed by one-man rule at 90 percent. One party and traditional/hereditary rule are also strongly rejected by 73 and 74 percent of the respondents respectively. Similar, ratings were obtained in the 1999 survey.

**Table 6: Rejection of Authoritarian Rule (percent)**

	<b>Disapprove/ Strongly disapprove</b>	<b>Neither Approve nor Disapprove</b>	<b>Approve/ Strongly approve</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
One-party rule	73	2	24	2
Rule by chiefs or elders	74	3	19	5
Military rule	95	<1	4	1
One-man rule	90	1	7	2

*There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives?*

Support can also be read from the 52 percent who were of the opinion that having many political parties is essential to allow freedom in the choice of leaders. It is rather unsettling, however, that nearly half (45 percent) of respondents found it unnecessary to have many political parties participating in elections. These blamed proliferation of political parties for the 2001 electoral outcomes, which they did not like. In this regard, it should be noted that 11 candidates from 11 political parties contested the 2001 presidential elections. In consequence, even though 71 percent of the voters clearly indicated their desire for a change of government by voting for candidates from opposition political parties, the presidential

<sup>4</sup> See Chileshe Mulenga, *A Glimpse into Critical Issues, Voting Intentions and the Relative Popularity of Presidential Candidates and Political Parties in the 2001 Zambian Elections: Findings of a National Opinion Poll*, Institute of Economic and Social Research, 2003.

candidate from the ruling party nonetheless won with only 29 percent of the vote, as the 1996 Republican Constitution only requires the winning candidate to obtain a simple majority.

Another indication of strong support for democratic principles and practices is evident from the fact that 86 percent of respondents expect the president to honor the two-term limit provided for in the Constitution. Above all, 61 percent of respondents prefer to give the system of elected government time to deal with problems from the past, although one-third (34 percent) feel that the political system should be changed if it cannot produce expected results soon. These findings signal teething problems for the eventual consolidation of democracy.

There may, however, be some confusion among Zambians about what exactly democracy means. It is perhaps disappointing that when asked “In Zambia, is there a difference between a political party and a government, or are they the same thing?” more than one-third (38 percent) of respondents cannot distinguish between the two more than 10 years after change of the political system from a one-party to a multiparty state. On a brighter note, 56 percent of the respondents do make a distinction between the two.

### Enjoyment of Civil Liberties Under Democracy

The 2003 survey results also suggest that a multiparty political system has allowed the majority of Zambian citizens to increasingly enjoy their civil liberties. This is evident from Table 7, which compares enjoyment of different civil liberties under the current system of government and under the one-party state that preceded it.

**Table 7: Comparing the Current Multiparty System with the Former One-Party System (percent)**

	<b>Worse/ Much Worse</b>	<b>Same</b>	<b>Better/ Much Better</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
Freedom to say what you think	7	5	87	1
Freedom to join any organisation	3	4	92	1
Freedom from unjust arrest	12	13	67	9
Voting freedom	4	6	88	2
Ability to influence government	15	18	54	13
Safety from crime and violence	27	17	48	9
Equal treatment for all	21	20	47	12

*We are going to compare our present system of government with the former one-party system of government under UNIP. Please tell me if the following things are worse or better now than they used to be, or about the same.*

As shown in the table, 92 percent of respondents express the view that they enjoyed more freedom of association now than they did during the reign of the one-party regime under the United National Independence Party (UNIP). Nearly as many believe that they have more freedom of speech (87 percent) and greater freedom to vote for the party of their choice (88 percent) under the current political dispensation than during one-party rule. Arbitrary arrests, however, seem to still worry some Zambian citizens; just over two-thirds (67 percent) feel that the situation is better or much better now than during the rein of the one-party state. Moreover, despite the positive indicators here with respect to freedom of speech, on another question fully half of the respondents (50 percent) nonetheless expressed their anxiety when they reported that one still has to be careful about what one says in public.

The multiparty system also records fewer gains with respect to increasing the ability of citizens to influence government, improving public safety, and ensuring equal treatment for all citizens. In all of these instances, just about half of respondents (54, 48 and 47 percent, respectively) report improvements. This suggests that the “New Deal” government has not succeeded in opening up the policy-making process and that it is not as responsive to the views of the citizens as many would like it to be.

Perceptions of unequal treatment of citizens may persist because of failure to use an open system based on merit in the selection of managers to run key public institutions, such as the state-owned companies and senior public service management positions. In consequence, some citizens with no genuine motivations may join the ruling party in a bid to enhance their chances of being appointed to such managerial positions. Although President Mwanawasa appeared to try to break with this tradition by appointing some key members of opposition political parties to senior managerial positions in state-owned companies and even his cabinet, such appointments have been perceived by many as serving selfish purposes, rather than arising out of a genuine desire to represent all sections of the Zambian population. This perception arises in part out of the fact that the President did not consult with his opposition counterparts before making these appointments. Furthermore, it is generally believed that the President has continued with the tradition of giving preference to officials from the ruling MMD when making the most important appointments. More recently, the President has even been accused of showing a preference for members of the legal profession and those from the two ethnic groups he is closely associated with, the Lamba and Lenje, when making appointments to senior managerial positions.

### Legitimacy of the State

Given the criticisms that have been leveled at the New Deal government, we sought to establish the perceived levels of its legitimacy and trust ascribed to different state and social institutions. We asked respondents whether they disagreed or agreed with several statements about key state institutions, such as whether the constitution expresses the values and aspirations of the Zambian people, and whether the courts have the right to make decisions that people always must obey.

**Table 8: Legitimacy of the State (percent)**

	<b>Disagree/ Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree/ Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
Our constitution expresses the values and hopes of the Zambian people	25	5	56	15
The courts have the right to make decisions that people always have to abide by	27	2	69	2
The police always have the right to make people obey the law	20	2	78	1
The tax department always has the right to make people pay taxes	21	3	70	7

*For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you disagree or agree?*

Table 8 shows that just over half (56 percent) of Zambians agree that the Republican Constitution expresses their values and aspirations. Thus, nearly half (45 percent) have no confidence that the Constitution expresses their values and aspirations. This is probably not surprising in view of the controversy that surrounded the adoption of the 1996 Constitution. In particular, the 1996 Constitution has generally been described as defective because it left the concentrated state power enjoyed by the president under the authoritarian one-party state largely intact and thereby undermined the operation of checks and balances, which are essential in any healthy democracy. It is, therefore, not surprising that one out of five of Zambian citizens (21 percent) feel that the President often or always ignores the Constitution, while 33 percent believe that he rarely does so. The 1996 Constitution may also be said to be defective in the sense that it introduced rather discriminatory clauses regarding qualifications for contesting the presidency.

## Trust in State and Social Institutions

Assessing levels of public trust in major state and social institutions is important because higher levels of trust indicate higher levels of social capital and suggest better prospects for collective action, which are critical to consolidation of democracy. Levels of trust in state institutions are also likely to have a bearing on satisfaction with democracy; citizens who have low levels of trust in major state institutions are unlikely to be satisfied with the way democracy works. To obtain more insight into citizens' attitudes toward state and social institutions, we asked how much they trusted a number of these institutions. Their responses are shown in Table 9.

**Table 9: Trust in Institutions (percent)**

	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	A very great deal	Don't know	1999 (Trust somewhat or a lot)
The army	17	29	32	19	3	54
Traditional leaders	17	29	27	23	3	-
Government Broadcasting Service	9	33	33	16	9	58
Courts of law	14	36	34	15	2	54
Public Corporations	12	30	29	18	12	-
The President	13	37	26	20	4	38
The police	20	36	29	13	2	38
Parliament	20	36	26	14	4	-
Independent Broadcasting Services	15	29	25	12	19	-
Independent Newspapers	14	29	21	12	23	-
Government Newspapers	16	32	22	10	21	-
The ruling party	23	43	22	9	3	-
Big Private Corporations	22	36	20	8	14	-
Traders in Local Markets	25	45	19	8	4	-
Small Businesses/Shopkeepers	22	50	17	7	3	-
Independent Electoral Commission	31	36	14	7	12	45
District Commissioners	41	35	12	5	8	-
Local Council	39	37	12	5	7	-
Opposition political parties	42	39	11	5	4	-

*How much do you trust each of the following or haven't you heard enough about them to say? In 1999 the response categories were somewhat different, as noted.*

It is evident from Table 9 that Zambians show rather low levels of trust in their state and social institutions. The army enjoys the highest levels of trust, with 51 percent indicating they trust the army "a lot" or "a very great deal." This is despite a failed coup attempt in 1991 and allegations of another attempt in 1997. For a citizenry that rejects military rule outright (95 percent) this is puzzling. However, the relative peace and stability in the country and the fact that citizens do not frequently come into contact with the army may explain this higher level of trust. Equally puzzling is the finding that half of the citizens trust the traditional leaders whose rule they also reject (74 percent). This should perhaps not be surprising, as traditional leaders are not generally involved in any controversial political activities; instead their roles are confined largely to presiding over cultural ceremonies.

The most striking finding with regard to trust in state and social institutions is that the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC), the national broadcaster, is one of the three most trusted institutions in the country with 49 percent of the citizens trusting it, making it the most trusted media institution. It was more trusted than the independent broadcasters (37 percent), independent newspapers (33 percent) and government newspapers (32 percent). On the basis of these findings, the ZNBC seem to have a track

record of reporting the truth and maintaining a clearly non-political stance even though it often has to cover trivial activities being undertaken by the ruling political party more than those of opposition political parties. The lower trust rating for the independent broadcasters perhaps stem from being perceived as being more interested in propagating their beliefs than in disseminating news and information.

Courts of law also received some of the highest trust ratings, although at 48 percent they are down several points from their 1999 levels (54 percent). This decline is probably due to allegations of corruption within the judiciary. The immediate former Chief Justice was forced to resign his position on account of alleged receipt of gifts and favors from former President Chiluba at a time when the nationality of the President was being contested in the courts.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the local court justices have been accused of making unjust rulings, which have sown mistrust in the local courts.

The reported trust in the President is relatively low, with less than half of citizens (46 percent) expressing significant confidence in him. This can perhaps be explained by the fact that he was elected by a minority of voters, and also because he was nominated as successor by an out-going president who had made himself extremely unpopular by attempting to remain in office beyond the constitutionally-mandated two terms. Accusations of bias towards members of the legal profession and some ethnic groups have also clearly undermined trust in the President. All the same, President Mwanawasa is trusted by more citizens than his immediate predecessor, President Fredrick Chiluba, who was trusted by only 38 percent of the citizens in 1999. The Zambian President's trust ratings surpass those of the president in only four other countries covered in Round 2 of the Afrobarometer: the Nigerian president (17 percent); the president of Cape Verde (22 percent), the South African president (37 percent) and the president of Botswana (44 percent). Malawian President, Bakili Muluzi (48 percent), is the only additional president who is trusted by less than half of his citizens.

The Zambian parliament receives even lower trust ratings of around 40 percent, but in this case the ratings are more comparable to those received by parliaments in other countries.

Similarly, the low trust rating received by the Zambian Independent Electoral Commission (21 percent) is not unique, or isolated, as the citizens of three other countries, Nigeria (11 percent), Cape Verde (16 percent) and Uganda (20 percent) also had very low trust in their electoral commissions. In fact, only 3 countries had a positive rating for their electoral institutions: Kenya (51 percent); Mozambique (51 percent); and Tanzania (60 percent). More significant is the fact that trust in the Independent Electoral Commission has plummeted since 1999, when more than twice as many Zambians (45 percent) expressed trust in it. This marked shift is not, however, surprising since the Electoral Commission was accused of incompetence and bias during the 2001 elections. In particular, its Chairman was accused of being arrogant and biased towards the MMD by both the opposition parties and the head of the European Union Election Monitoring Unit (see Carter Centre, 2002; FODEP, 2002).

Local authorities and District Commissioners (formerly District Administrators) also received very low ratings of trust at 16 percent each. The low levels of trust in the local authorities should not be surprising, because they hardly deliver any services, but demand rates, taxes and many other charges. The District Commissioners, on the other hand, are seen as unnecessary and a sheer waste of public resources, because they are perceived to have no clear role to play in the administration of the state.

Table 10 also shows that opposition political parties are among the least trusted institutions, with only 16 percent of respondents expressing significant trust in them. To some extent this finding need not be

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<sup>5</sup> The former President and some of his closest aides have since been formally charged with theft of state resources and with abuse of office.

surprising, because about 61 percent of the respondents do not affiliate themselves with any political party, and of those who do, the majority link themselves to the ruling MMD. Thus, the opposition political parties seem to have an extremely low support base. But respondents accused the opposition political parties of only being active during elections and only seeking public offices for private personal gain.

These trust ratings suggest that the “New Deal” government has a mammoth task of building confidence and trust in key state institutions, including the presidency. The effects of the generally low levels of trust in Zambian state and social institutions may be evident in the level of satisfaction with democracy revealed above. Though the level of satisfaction in Zambia, at 54 percent, is comparable to that in other countries (it matches the 15-country mean) this is nonetheless quite a low level for a country that has been an aspiring democracy for more than 10 years. In the next section, we turn to perceptions and experiences of corruption. Could the moderate levels of satisfaction with democracy and the low trust ratings be due to high perceptions and experiences of corruption?

### Perceptions and Experiences of Corruption

We asked respondents to indicate how many people they thought were involved in corruption in a number of different state and social institutions. Their responses are given in Table 10.

**Table 10: Perceptions of Corruption (percent)**

	None	Some of them	Most of them/All of them	Don't know/haven't heard enough
Religious leaders	36	43	8	13
NGO leaders	18	52	11	19
Office of the President	11	55	19	15
Teachers and school administrators	13	57	21	10
Elected leaders	7	57	23	13
Local businessmen	9	52	28	12
Foreign businessmen	7	46	28	19
Government officials	5	56	28	11
Judges and magistrates	8	52	29	12
Border officials	5	42	40	14
Police	4	41	47	9

*How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption?*

Consistent with common insinuations in the press, the police and border officials are rated as the most corrupt among 11 institutions. Nearly half (47 percent) believe that most or all police are corrupt, and another 41 percent believe that at least some of them are. In contrast, religious leaders and NGO leaders get the best ratings, with just about one in ten respondents (8 and 11 percent, respectively) suggesting that most of them are corrupt, although substantial numbers (43 and 52 percent, respectively) believe that at least some of these leaders are corrupt. Nearly three-quarters (74 percent) believe that at least some of those working in the office of the president are corrupt, with one in five (19 percent) arguing that most or all are. Elected leaders and government officials score somewhat worse, as do judges and magistrates.

The high proportion of citizens who perceive corruption among government and elected officials perhaps attests to the poor service delivery obtained in public institutions arising from both inadequate resources and poor capacity of the public institutions as a result of the loss of skilled and experienced staff.

To establish how widespread corruption was in Zambian life, we asked how often they were forced to actually engage in corrupt practices themselves. Specifically, the respondents were asked to state how often (if ever) they had had to pay a bribe, give a gift, or do a favour to government officials in order to obtain a number of services. Table 11 shows the responses.

**Table 11: Experiences of Corruption (percent)**

	Never	Once or twice	A few times/often	Don't know/haven't heard enough
Obtain a document or permit	87	6	6	1
Obtain a school placement	88	6	6	1
Get household service	93	2	5	1
Cross a border	90	3	6	1
Avoid a problem with police	88	5	7	<1
Anything else	97	2	1	1

*In the past year, how often (if ever) have you had to pay a bribe, give a gift, or do a favour to government officials in order to:*

Considering the perceptions of high levels of corruption discussed above, it is surprising that relatively few Zambians report having personal experiences with corruption. Only 12 percent of respondents admitted engaging in corrupt practices at least once. Most of these corrupt practices were related to paying for services, such as obtaining an identity document or permit or securing a school place for a child, or to avoid a problem with the police. Perhaps many respondents did not wish to report their own misdeeds, but were willing to accuse those responsible for delivery of public services of corruption.

### Participation in Politics

Levels of political participation can be an important indicator, because satisfied citizens may be more likely to participate in politics in order to express support for the political system or to make demands, especially when they are not satisfied. To assess the extent to which Zambians participate in politics, we asked four questions that sought to measure two forms of political participation: communal activism and protest behaviour. Both forms of participation are aimed at mobilising support and drawing the attention of public officials to particular interests or issues regarded as important by a particular social or interest group. Table 12 summarizes the responses.

**Table 12: Political Activism**

	No, would never do this	No, but would if had the chance	Yes, once or twice	Yes, several times / often	Don't know
Attend a community meeting	13	25	19	43	1
Join others to raise an issue	20	31	18	30	1
Attend a demonstration or protest march	62	28	6	3	1
Used force or violence for political cause	85	12	1	1	1

*For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during past one year:*

It is evident from Table 12 that 62 percent and 48 percent of the respondents reported attending community meetings and joining with others to raise an issue in the past year, respectively. This is in stark contrast to 1999, when just 31 percent and 39 percent reported attending community meetings and joining with others to raise an issue, respectively. Participation in community meetings thus improved two-fold between 1999 and 2003, while joining with others to raise issues also improved by at least 10 percent. These improvements can largely be attributed to the civic education programs that have been introduced by such non-governmental organizations as the Civic Education Association and the Anti-Voter Apathy project, to mention just a few. The civic education programs have focused on encouraging people to participate in politics. Many have also learned the value of cooperating through participation in self-help schemes for housing provision (see Bratton et al., 1999).

On the other hand, very few Zambians report participating in protest politics. Only 9 percent report attending a demonstration, and just 2 percent admit being prepared to use violence to attain political objectives. Two reasons could explain the low levels of participation in protests. First, there is lingering fear of police reprisals that goes back to the days of the one-party state when “independent” or “unofficial” public demonstrations were more often than not violently disrupted by the police, especially under the state of emergency declared in the run up to independence in July 1964 which gave the police extensive power of detention without trial and use of extreme force (see Hudson, 1999). In fact, Zambians lived under a state of emergency throughout Kenneth Kaunda’s 27 year reign as president of Zambia. The pre-independence state of emergency was only revoked 28 years later by Fredrick Chiluba’s administration in 1992. This state of affairs undermined the development of a culture of peaceful protests. Moreover, public demonstrations still require informing the police long in advance and obtaining their blessings.

Although the culture of peaceful protests might have been undermined in the past, it is possible that in the future many more Zambian citizens could attend demonstrations if they get the chance; 28 percent indicate that they would participate in demonstrations and public protests if they had the chance. This is very likely, because a number of peaceful, but unauthorized, public meetings did take place in the run up to the political change that culminated in the end of the one-party state. Thus, Zambian citizens have had a taste of spontaneous protests. Moreover, more recently concerned Zambians participated in spontaneous protests aimed at ensuring that President Chiluba did not succeed in changing the constitution to secure a third term of office for himself. Other peaceful protests have since followed, such as the more recent demonstration organized by the trade union leaders to lobby parliamentarians against approval of increased taxes that were proposed in the 2004 national budget.

Other forms of political participation measured in the survey include contacting elected officials and participation in or membership of political parties. Table 13 shows the extent to which Zambians contacted various officials and leaders for help to solve problems, or to give them their own views.

Table 13 shows that the majority (75-85 percent) of Zambian citizens never contact elected officials or political leaders for help to solve problems or to give them their views. In fact, Zambians contact religious (67 percent) and traditional leaders (32 percent) more often than elected leaders (18 percent) and other government officials (15 percent). Two questions arise from the low proportion of citizens that contact elected and public officials in general. First, do Zambian citizens know how to contact and lobby their elected officials and public officers in general? Secondly, does the low level of contact between the public and elected and public officials in general imply that the Zambian political system is so unresponsive that the citizens have given up trying?

**Table 13: Contacting Officials (percent)**

	Never	Only once	A few times/often	Don't know
Contact religious leader	33	13	54	1
Contact traditional ruler	68	7	25	1
Contact local government councilor	75	10	15	<1
Contact Member of Parliament	82	9	9	<1
Contact political party official	84	6	9	<1
Contact official of a government ministry	85	8	7	1
Contact some other influential person	80	9	10	2

*During the past year, how often have you contacted any of the following persons for help to solve a problem or to give them your views?*

To obtain further insight about the participation of Zambian citizens in politics, respondents were also asked to state whether they were close to any political party, and if so, which one. Table 14 summarizes the responses.

**Table 14: Closeness to a Political Party**

	percent
No, not close to any party	61
Forum for Democracy (FDD)	2
Heritage Party (HP)	1
Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD)	25
Patriotic Front (PF)	1
United National Independence Party (UNIP)	2
United Party for National Development (UPND)	7
Other	<1
Refused to answer	<1

*Do you feel close to any particular political party? If so, which party is that?*

Fully 61 percent of respondents report not being close to any political party, while 39 percent report being close to one of six different parties. The bulk of these (64 percent) report being close to the MMD. The rest report being close to the UPND (19 percent), UNIP (6 percent), FDD (5 percent), Patriotic Front (3 percent) and Heritage Party (2.5 percent). Thus, the MMD seems to be supported by the bulk of politically active Zambian citizens. The low proportion of citizens that are politically active is worrying for a country that has yet to consolidate its democracy. This also probably explains the rather moderate level of satisfaction with democracy and low levels of contact between the electorate and the elected officials. The MMD's hold on power also seems to lie in its ability to command the support of the bulk of the politically active population. The low level of active political participation is thus a challenge not only for the political parties that seek to form a government, but also to the non-governmental organizations that promote civic education and consolidation of democracy.

### **Assessing the Performance of the New Deal Government**

In this section we turn to how Zambian citizens assess the performance of the New Deal government. Perceptions of government performance are another important factor that is likely to have a bearing on satisfaction with democracy. Since satisfaction with democracy has remained only moderate in Zambia,

it is important to establish whether this can in part be explained by the perception of government performance.

We asked respondents how well they felt the government was handling a number of issues ranging from managing the economy and keeping prices stable to reducing crime, and combating malaria and HIV/AIDS. The full range of issues on which government performance was assessed is given in Table 15.

**Table 15: Assessments of Government Performance (percent)**

	<b>Very badly/ fairly badly</b>	<b>Very well/ fairly well</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>1999 Very well/ Fairly well</b>
Combating Malaria	21	78	2	--
Addressing educational needs	30	68	2	43
Combating HIV/AIDS	31	66	2	--
Improving basic health services	40	59	1	37
Reducing crime	43	54	4	35
Fighting corruption in government	39	52	9	--
Resolving conflicts between communities	27	52	20	--
Managing the economy	46	50	4	--
Delivering household water	52	45	4	--
Ensuring everyone has enough to eat	59	39	2	--
Keeping prices stable	76	22	2	28
Narrowing gaps	78	19	3	--
Creating jobs	79	18	3	26

*How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following:*

Close examination of the responses given by the respondents in Table 15 suggests that 50 percent or more of the respondents feel that the New Deal government is doing fairly well or very well with regard to eight of the 13 issues in the table. The government clearly fares best with regard to provision of basic social services, particularly education (68 percent fairly/very well) and addressing health issues such as combating malaria (78 percent), combating HIV/AIDS (66 percent), and providing basic health services (59 percent) (although it gets much lower ratings for provision of potable water, at 45 percent).

In comparison to the 1999 survey, there are great improvements in the assessments of provision of basic health services and meeting educational needs – positive ratings increased by 22 and 25 points, respectively in these two sectors. The Government reversal of the cost sharing policy for the first seven years of education has undoubtedly contributed to the improved rating of the performance in the education sector, as it has allowed many children to continue or to return to school. The perception of government's handling of crime has also improved from 37 percent in 1999 to 59 percent in 2003. This could be attributed to the restructuring of the police service and the improved crime detection and prevention, as well as improved public relations through community policing, which was given a high profile in the first few months of 2002.

In the economic arena, however, the performance of the New Deal government was not as impressive. Zambians are roughly evenly split in their perceptions of the government's performance with respect to general economic management, with 50 percent saying the government has performed fairly or very well, and 46 rating performance as fairly or very bad. However, the government receives its worst ratings on a number of other economic issues, including creating jobs (18 percent fairly/very well), narrowing the gaps between rich and poor (19 percent) and keeping prices stable (22 percent); more than three out of

four Zambians feel the government has performed poorly on each of these issues. The poor rating for job creation should perhaps be expected given that the economic prospects at the time of the survey appeared very bleak, especially after Anglo-American withdrew from the Konkola Copper Mines as the equity partner in January 2002. This decision meant that the Konkola Deep Mining project, which was expected to give the Zambian economy a huge boost, would not be implemented in the foreseeable future. Above all, it meant that small investors who had planned to launch their investments in Zambia on the back of the large scale Konkola Deep Mining project had to withdraw and look elsewhere for promising economic opportunities. The poor rating for keeping prices stable is, however, somewhat surprising given that prices have been relatively stable during the period the New Deal government has been in office. This criticism may be a relic from the past when the government was expected to fix prices. The same could be said for the low rating for narrowing gaps between the rich and poor, as the only mechanism available to the government is the tax system, which also allows the government to reallocate resources.

The assessment of the performance of the New Deal government is thus rather mixed; it is rated quite highly in some sectors, but very poorly in others. Under such circumstances, how do Zambian citizens assess their own economic conditions? To address this question, we asked respondents whether their individual economic conditions and those of the country were worse/much worse or better/much better now compared to one year ago. We also asked them to compare the country's economic circumstances and their individual conditions to those of neighbouring countries and of other Zambians, respectively. Table 16 summarizes responses to questions about the economic conditions and prospects for the country and its citizens.

**Table 16: Economic Conditions (percent)**

	<b>Bad/Very bad</b>	<b>Neither good nor bad</b>	<b>Good/Very good</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
Country's present economic condition	62	6	32	1
Your present living conditions	58	9	34	0
	<b>Worse/ much worse</b>	<b>Same</b>	<b>Better/ much better</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
Country's economic condition vs. neighbors	43	10	35	13
Your living conditions vs. others	36	18	38	8
Country's economic condition 12 months ago	35	25	38	2
Your living conditions 12 months ago	30	28	42	1
Country's economic condition in 12 months	26	12	43	18
Your living conditions in 12 months	19	13	50	19

Table 16 shows that Zambians are clearly unhappy with their personal and national economic conditions. Their assessments are all negative except for the 50 percent who are hopeful for a brighter future. Table 17 further shows that more than four in ten Zambian citizens are seeking greener pastures – i.e., they are looking for jobs. This includes 22 percent who are currently employed but are also hunting for new, presumably better paid, jobs, and another 20 percent who are currently unemployed. Another 40 percent of respondents are unemployed but they are not looking for employment, but this includes many farmers, students and housewives who may not expect to find salaried employment at this time. One indicator of progress, however, is the fact that 38 percent of respondents now report that their living conditions are better than those of other Zambians, twice the proportion that reported the same situation in 1999.

**Table 17: Employment Prospects**

	<b>percent</b>
No (not looking)	40
No (looking)	20
Yes, part time (not looking)	3
Yes, part time (looking)	8
Yes, full time (not looking)	16
Yes, full time (looking)	14
Don't know	0

*Do you have a job that pays cash income? Is it full-time? And are you presently looking for a job (even if you are presently working)?*

### **Conclusions**

The 2003 Afrobarometer survey in Zambia shows that satisfaction with democracy has remained moderate since the first survey undertaken in 1999. This is not surprising, since the country has not made any significant strides towards consolidation of democracy. Commitment to democracy among Zambian citizens, however, remains high. The high level of commitment to democracy is evident from the high proportion of Zambian citizens who reject authoritarian systems of government, ranging from one-party rule to military, one-man and even the hereditary traditional forms of rule, such as by chiefs or kings. The high level of commitment to democracy can be attributed to improved enjoyment of civil liberties since the transition from one-party rule. The majority of Zambians reported enjoying more freedom of association and voting choice under the current multiparty system of government than under the previous one-party rule.

Although Zambians have remained committed to democracy, the transition to democracy has so far not resulted in improved living conditions and full satisfaction with democracy. Most Zambians, for example, feel that they are still not able to influence the government, while almost half feel that the problem of unequal treatment of citizens by the government remains. There is thus need for improved dialogue between Zambian citizens and their government.

Zambia's failure to advance the agenda for consolidation of democracy can in part be attributed to an inappropriate constitutional framework. This weakness is in fact recognized by nearly 50 percent of Zambian citizens, who feel that the Constitution does not express their values and aspirations. In light of these findings, the need for a new constitution that could provide effective checks and balances on all three wings of government cannot be overemphasized. Zambia's future democratic constitution should, in particular, avoid concentration of power in the President and ensure that the institutions of restraint, especially the judiciary, the anti-corruption commission, and the auditor general's office, could work independently and effectively, and without relying on the good will or benevolence of the President.

The 2003 Afrobarometer survey also shows that Zambians have very low levels of trust in state and social institutions, which may to some extent explain the lack of improvement in the level of satisfaction with democracy. This should be expected, because citizens are not likely to be satisfied with democracy when they have no trust in the key state and social institutions on which democracy depends. In this regard, it should be noted that less than 50 percent of Zambian citizens trust such critical institutions to democracy as the presidency, the independent electoral commission, and even the courts. The institutions trusted most by Zambians are the army, traditional leaders (chiefs), and the national broadcaster, the Zambian National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC). It is surprising that the ZNBC was the most trusted media institution even though it is not free from partisan political interference on the part of those who wield political power. On the whole, the low trust ratings for most state institutions suggest that the New Deal government faces a mammoth task of building the citizens' trust in key state institutions.

The magnitude of confidence building required of the New Deal government can be gleaned from citizens' perceptions of corruption. Consistent with press reports that shape much of the public opinion, the police and border officials are perceived as the most corrupt public officials. Government officials and elected leaders fare only moderately better. The high levels of perceived corruption among elected leaders and government officials are probably in part due to poor public service delivery. Equally alarming is the low proportion of Zambian citizens who own up to being involved in corrupt practices themselves, despite the fact that they report such high levels of perceived corruption. These perceptions of pervasive corrupt can also help explain the lack of improvement in the level of satisfaction with democracy among Zambian citizens.

Satisfaction with democracy among Zambian citizens is, however, not likely to improve in the immediate future, especially if the levels of participation in political activities do not improve. In this regard, it is surprising that 61 percent of Zambian citizens report not being close to any political party, while the bulk of those who are linked affiliate themselves with the MMD. The low participation of Zambians in party politics is a major challenge to the opposition political parties, non-governmental organizations involved in civic education, and indeed the government and international development agencies interested in consolidation of democracy in Zambia. Citizens' participation in political party politics has to be a major challenge, because it has a bearing on satisfaction with democracy and its consolidation. Zambian citizens are also not very active in terms of contacting elected and government officials, yet they also complain about not being able to influence the government. Thus, we cannot help but wonder whether Zambian citizens have yet to grasp all the avenues of influencing their government.

Zambians' assessments of the performance of the New Deal government are also mixed. Performance is rated quite positively in several sectors, most notably in the provision of social services. Government performance was most appreciated in combating malaria (78 percent), addressing educational needs (68 percent), combating HIV/AIDS (66 percent) and improving basic health services (59 percent). It is disappointing, but understandable, that combating corruption, President Mwanawasa's clearly stated priority, did not receive as much public appreciation (52 percent). There were considerable improvements in the ratings in some sectors, including combating crime, where public approval increased from 37 percent in 1999 to 59 percent in 2003. But government performance in the areas of creating jobs, keeping prices stable, and narrowing the gaps between the rich and poor was considered dismal. Zambians, however, appear evenly divided with respect to the government's handling of the economy. On the whole, however, perceptions of the prospects for the economy at the national and individual levels are negative, although 50 percent of respondents are nonetheless optimistic about the prospects for the economy in future. The proportion of Zambians who report themselves to be better off than other Zambians, however, doubled from 19 percent in 1999 to 38 percent in 2003. Thus, mixed economic performance may have had a limited impact on satisfaction with democracy.

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## Appendix A

**Table A1: Sample Demographics**

<b>Distribution of respondents by urban/rural location</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>percent</b>
Urban	449	37
Rural	751	63
<b>Distribution of respondents by region</b>		
Central	117	9.8
Copperbelt	194	16.2
Eastern	132	11.0
Luapula	103	8.6
Lusaka	165	13.8
North-Western	71	5.9
Northern	173	14.4
Southern	153	12.8
Western	92	7.7
<b>Gender of respondent</b>		
Male	615	51.3
Female	585	48.8
<b>Main occupation of respondent</b>		
Never had a job	203	16.9
Farmer (produces only for home consumption)	186	15.5
Farmer (produces surplus for sale)	247	20.6
Trader/Hawker/Vendor	32	2.7
Businessperson	104	8.7
Professional Worker (e.g., lawyer, accountant, nurse, etc.)	38	3.2
Supervisor/Foreman	18	1.5
Domestic Worker/Maid/Char/House help	9	0.8
Teacher	85	7.1
Government Worker	30	2.5
Armed Services/Police/ Security Personnel	15	1.3
Student	68	5.7
Housewife/Works In the Household	68	5.7
Artisan/skilled manual worker - formal sector	8	0.7
Artisan/skilled manual worker - informal sector	22	1.8
Unskilled manual worker in the informal sector	10	0.8
Other	57	4.8
<b>Was respondent head of household</b>		
No	559	46.6
Yes	641	53.4
<b>Monthly Household Income</b>		
None	477	39.8
Less than K100,000	202	16.8
K100,000-200,000	131	10.9
K200,000-300,000	57	4.8
K300,000-500,000	72	6.0
K500,000-700,000	64	5.3
K700,000-1,000,000	60	5.0
K1,000,000-2,000,000	43	3.6
K2,000,000-3,000,000	4	0.3
K3,000,000-5,000,000	3	0.3
Refused	21	1.8
Don't know	66	5.5

**Table A1: Sample Demographics (continued)**

<b>Education of respondent</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>percent</b>
No formal schooling	76	6.3
Informal schooling only	16	1.3
Some primary schooling	213	17.8
Primary school completed	183	15.3
Some secondary school/high school	380	31.7
Secondary school completed/high school	185	15.4
Post-secondary qualifications, not university	131	10.9
Some university, college/post graduate	16	1.3
<b>Religion of respondent</b>		
Protestant (Mainstream)	451	37.6
Protestant (Evangelical/Pentecostal)	324	27.0
Catholic	298	24.8
African Independent Church	43	3.6
Jehovah's Witness	18	1.5
Seventh Day Adventist/Mormon	8	0.7
Traditional religion	7	0.6
Islam	3	0.3
Other	17	1.5
None	27	2.3
Don't know	4	0.3
<b>Home Language of respondent</b>		
Bemba	415	35.0
Tonga	158	13.2
Lozi	93	7.8
Chewa	73	6.1
Kaonde	60	5.0
Nyanja	54	4.5
Senga	44	3.7
Ngoni	36	3.0
Tumbuka	35	2.9
Luvale	32	2.7
Aushi	28	2.3
Lala	19	1.6
Lunda	17	1.4
English	16	1.3
Bisa	10	0.8
Nsenga	9	0.8
Namwanga	8	0.7
Mambwe	8	0.7
Nyika	7	0.6
Lenje	7	0.6
Chikunda	3	0.3
Other	68	5.9