Regional integration for Africa: Could stronger public support turn 'rhetoric into reality'?

Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 91 | Markus Olapade, Edem E. Selormey, and Horace Gninafon

Summary

Regional integration has been a development strategy for Africa for decades. The African Economic Community's founding treaty in 1991 provided a framework targeting full political and economic integration by 2019. Many African countries have signed on to foster political and economic cooperation. The promotion of social and cultural development, economic integration and trade, and free movement of persons and goods are fundamental principles for continental and regional organisations, including the African Union (AU), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and regional economic communities (RECs), with the ultimate goal of creating a unified continental market.

Despite this emphasis, Africa's record on regional integration has not been impressive. Fragmented regulations, high trade tariffs, complicated customs procedures, and disjointed transport and energy infrastructure continue to prevent the continent from turning "rhetoric into reality" in a powerful pan-African market (Ibrahim, 2016).

As calls to action, the AU's Agenda 2063 (African Union Commission, 2015)) and the AfDB's Regional Integration Policy and Strategy 2014-2023 (African Development Bank Group, 2015) lay out blueprints for moving forward on integration, with an initial focus on trade and market integration, free movement of people, and infrastructure development. A new Africa Regional Integration Index, launched in 2016 by the AU Commission, the AfDB, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, is designed to jumpstart progress and track it through independent, high-quality data (African Union Commission, 2016).

If progress depends in part on public support for integration, survey data on public attitudes might make a useful contribution on this issue. In its latest round of surveys, Afrobarometer asked citizens in 36 countries four relevant questions: whether they prefer free or restricted cross-border movement of people and goods, how easy or difficult cross-border movement currently is, whether governments should assume a regional role in protecting democracy and human rights or instead respect their neighbours' sovereignty, and how helpful they think the AU and RECs are to their countries.

Findings suggest limited support for integration, with wide variations by country and region. On average across 36 countries, a majority of Africans favour free cross-border movement of people and goods, but this is not the majority view in 15 of those countries. Meanwhile, only one in four citizens say it's easy to cross international borders.

When asked to choose between respecting national sovereignty vs. a regional role for states in protecting free elections and human rights in neighbouring countries, most Africans emphasize national sovereignty. And while a majority of Africans consider the AU and RECs at least "a little bit" helpful to their countries, this is not the case in all countries, and about three in 10 citizens don't know enough about these organisations to have an opinion.

Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues across more than 30 countries in Africa. Five rounds of surveys were conducted between 1999 and 2013, and findings from Round 6 surveys (2014/2015) are currently being released. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples that yield country-level results with margins of error of +/-2% (for samples of 2,400) or +/3% (for samples of 1,200) at a 95% confidence level.

This dispatch uses data from almost 54,000 interviews completed in 36 countries (see Appendix Table A.1 for a list of countries and fieldwork dates). Interested readers should visit http://globalreleases.afrobarometer.org for previous and upcoming Round 6 releases.

Key findings

- On average across 36 countries, a majority (56%) of Africans say they should be able to move freely across international borders in order to trade or work in other countries. But in 15 countries, less than half of citizens support free cross-border movement. Support is strongest in West and East Africa and weakest in North Africa.[1]

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

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

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

- Many citizens still know little about what these organisations are doing: About three in 10 citizens say they don't know enough about the AU (30%) or their respective RECs (28%) to assess their helpfulness. But access to information makes a difference: Citizens who often listen to radio news are more likely to consider the AU and regional organisations helpful than are those who consume radio news less frequently.

Support for free cross-border movement of people and goods

A majority of Africans favour free movement across international borders. On average across 36 countries, 56% of respondents "agree" or "agree very strongly" that they should be able to move freely across borders in order to trade or work in other countries. But about one-third (37%) of respondents say governments should restrict cross-border movement of people and goods to protect their citizens from foreign migrants who take away jobs and foreign traders who sell their goods at low prices (Figure 1).

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[1] Afrobarometer regional groupings are: Central Africa (Cameroon, Gabon, São Tomé and Principe), East Africa (Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda); North Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia), Southern Africa (Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe), West Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo).

Citizens' views on regional integration in Africa
36 countries | 2014/2015

North Africa

- 38% 24% 25%
- 43% 43%

West Africa

- 66% 24% 40%
- 62% 64%

East Africa

- 64% 27% 36%
- 58% 59%

Central Africa

- 44% 17% 23%
- 70% 71%

Southern Africa

- 51% 32% 33%
- 58% 62%

36-country average

- **56%** Favour free cross-border movement of people and goods
- **26%** Say it's easy to move across borders
- **34%** States should help protect elections/rights in neighbouring countries
- **58%** African Union helps their country
- **61%** Regional economic community helps their country

Figure 1: Support for free movement across borders | 36 countries| 2014/2015
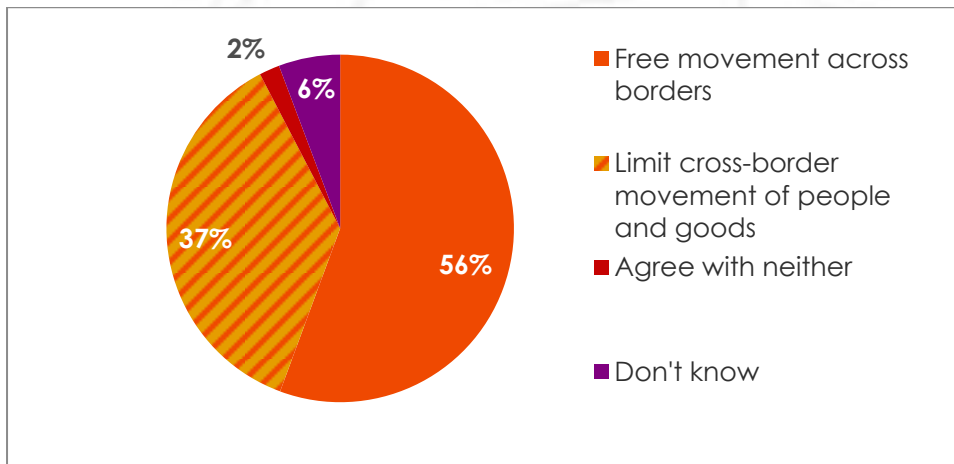
Free movement across borders

Limit cross-border movement of people and goods

Agree with neither

Don't know

2%
6%
37%
56%

Respondents were asked: *Which of the following statements is closest to your view?*
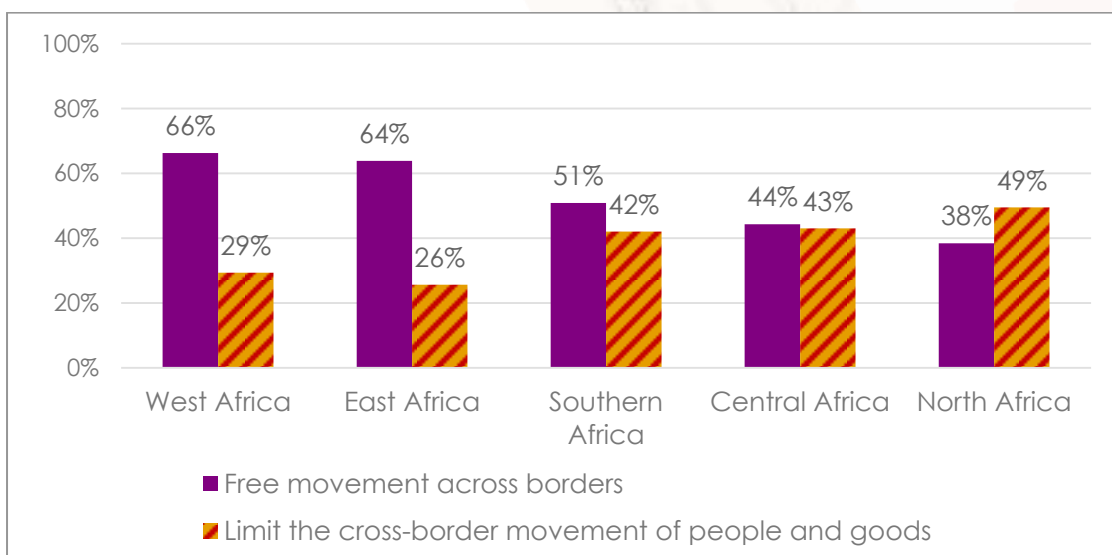*Statement 1: People living in [region] should be able to move freely across international borders in order to trade or work in other countries.*
Statement 2: Because foreign migrants take away jobs and foreign traders sell their goods at very cheap prices, governments should protect their own citizens and limit the cross-border movement of people and goods.
(% who "agree" or "agree very strongly" with each statement)

West Africans (66%) and East Africans (64%) show strong support for free movement across international borders (Figure 2), while a plurality of North Africans oppose it (49% against, vs. 38% in favour). Southern and Central Africans are more evenly divided on the issue.
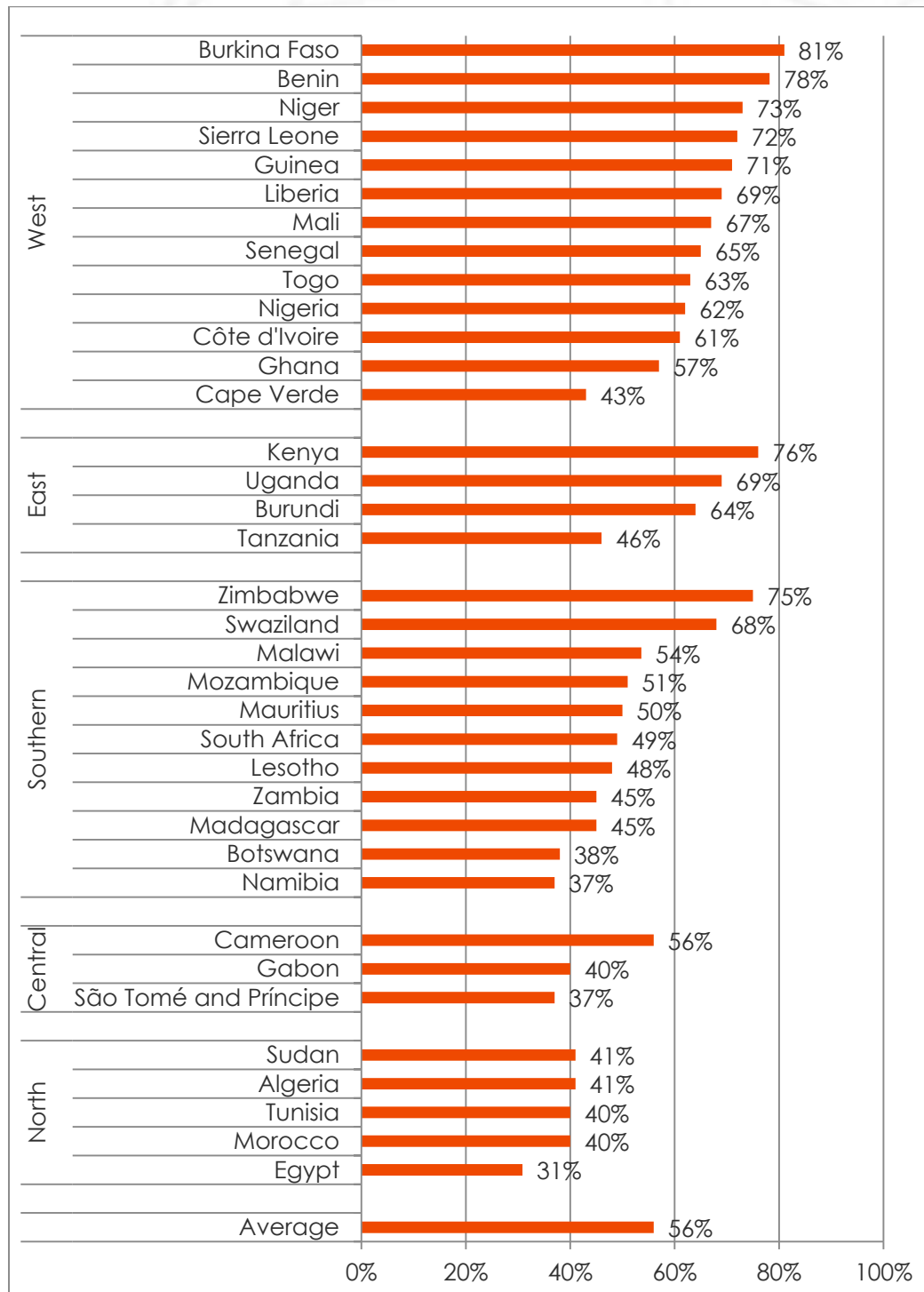
Figure 2: Support for free movement across borders | by region | 36 countries | 2014/2015

(% who "agree" or "agree very strongly" with each statement)

Support for free movement across borders varies widely among countries, ranging from less than four in 10 citizens in Egypt (31%), São Tomé and Principe (37%), Namibia (37%), and Botswana (38%) to more than three-fourths in Burkina Faso (81%), Benin (78%), and Kenya (76%) (Figure 3). In 15 countries, fewer than 50% support free movement.

Figure 3: Support for free movement across borders | by country | 36 countries | 2014/2015

	Country	Percentage
West	Burkina Faso	81%
	Benin	78%
	Niger	73%
	Sierra Leone	72%
	Guinea	71%
	Liberia	69%
	Mali	67%
	Senegal	65%
	Togo	63%
	Nigeria	62%
	Côte d'Ivoire	61%
	Ghana	57%
	Cape Verde	43%
East	Kenya	76%
	Uganda	69%
	Burundi	64%
	Tanzania	46%
Southern	Zimbabwe	75%
	Swaziland	68%
	Malawi	54%
	Mozambique	51%
	Mauritius	50%
	South Africa	49%
	Lesotho	48%
	Zambia	45%
	Madagascar	45%
	Botswana	38%
	Namibia	37%
Central	Cameroon	56%
	Gabon	40%
	São Tomé and Príncipe	37%
North	Sudan	41%
	Algeria	41%
	Tunisia	40%
	Morocco	40%
	Egypt	31%
	Average	56%

Respondents were asked: *Which of the following statements is closest to your view?*
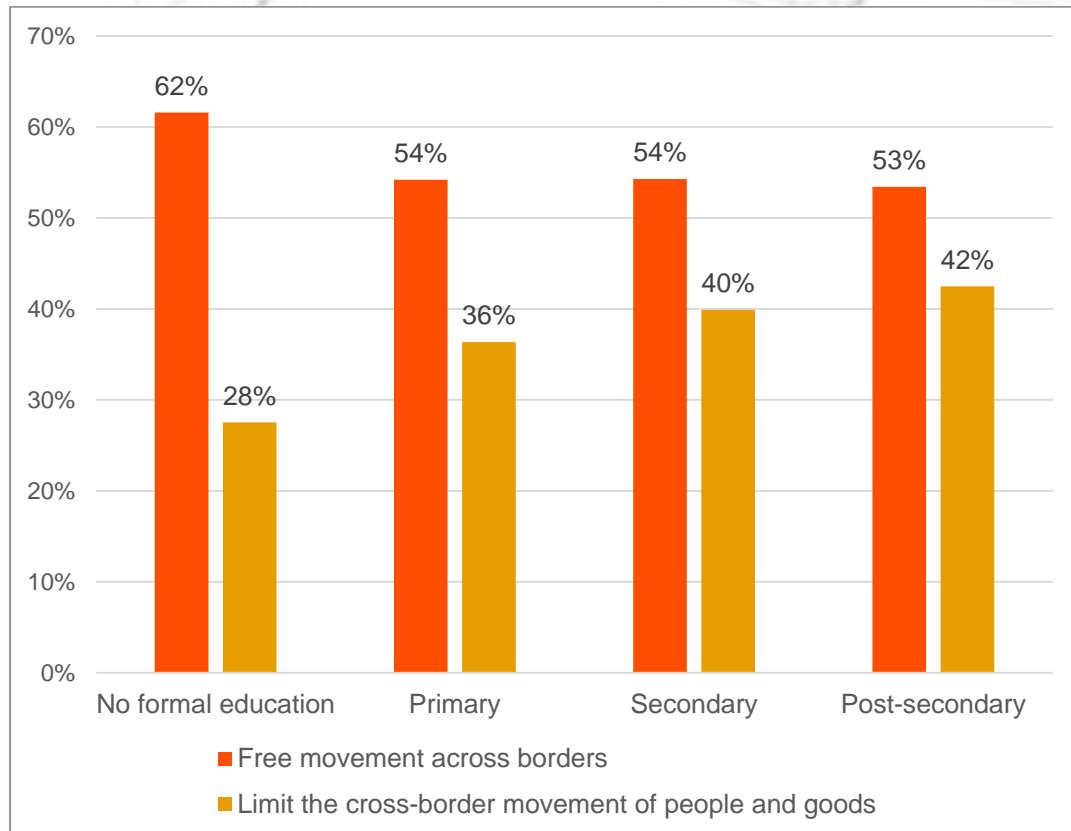*Statement 1: People living in [region] should be able to move freely across international borders in order to trade or work in other countries.*
Statement 2: Because foreign migrants take away jobs and foreign traders sell their goods at very cheap prices, governments should protect their own citizens and limit the cross-border movement of people and goods.
(% who "agree" or "agree very strongly" that people should be able to move freely across borders)

Support for free movement of people and goods decreases with education, while a preference for restricted movement increases, from 28% among citizens with no formal education to 42% among those with post-secondary education (Figure 4). Men are slightly more likely to favour free movement than women, 57% vs. 54%, while views vary only slightly across different age groups.

Figure 4: Support for free movement across borders | by level of education | 36 countries | 2014/2015

Respondents were asked: *Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement 1 or Statement 2.*
Statement 1: People living in [region] should be able to move freely across international borders in order to trade or work in other countries.
*Statement 2: Because foreign migrants take away jobs and foreign traders sell their goods at very cheap prices, governments should protect their own citizens and limit the cross-border movement of people and goods.*
(% who "agree" or "agree very strongly" that people should be able to move freely across borders)

Difficulty of crossing international borders

While a majority of Africans favour free movement across borders for work and trade, more than half (51%) currently find it "difficult" or "very difficult" to cross international borders in order to work or trade in other countries. Only one-quarter (26%) of respondents say it is "easy" or "very easy" to do so. About one-quarter say they "never try" (13%) or "don't know" (10%) (Figure 5).
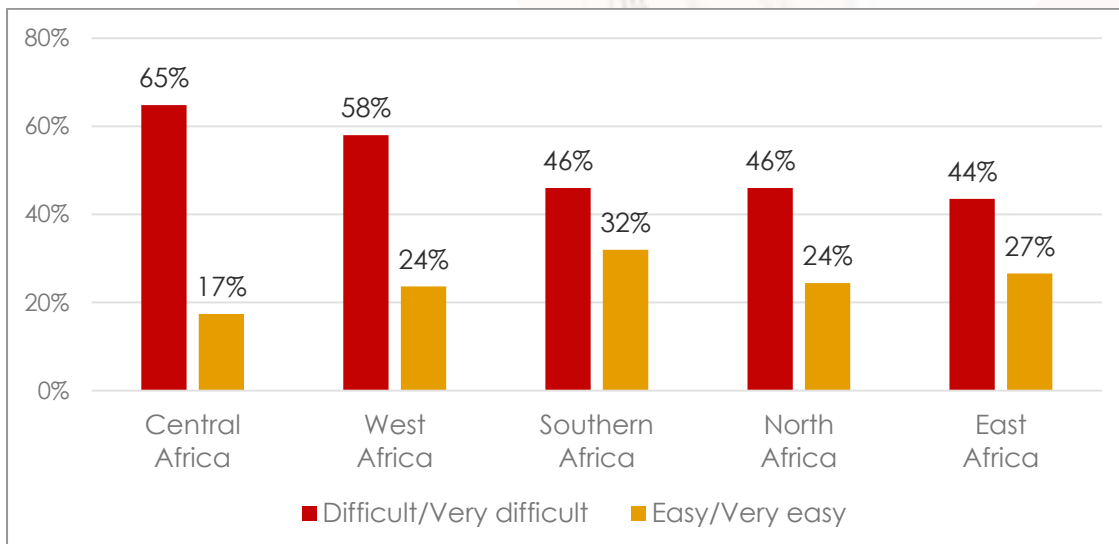
Figure 5: Perceived difficulty of crossing international borders | 36 countries
| 2014/2015
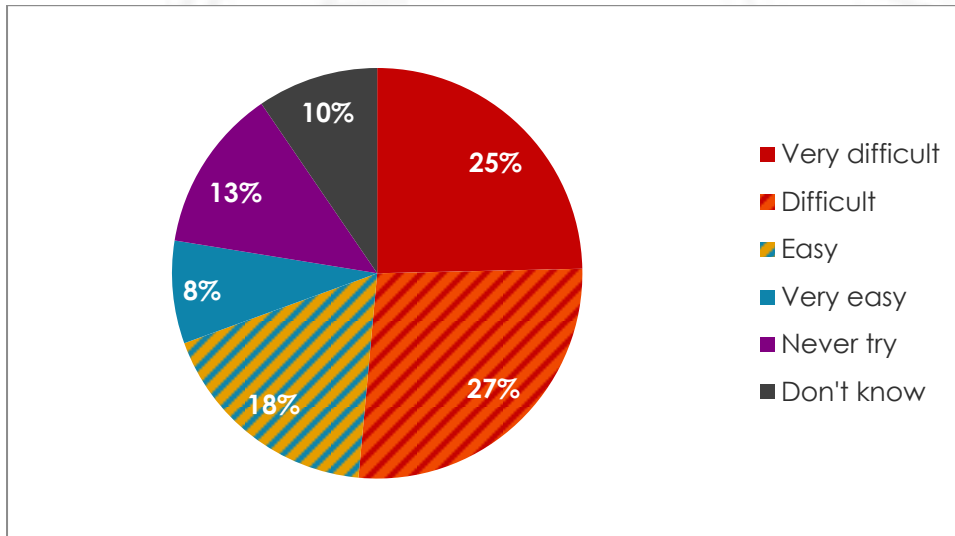
Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, how easy or difficult is it for people in [region] to cross international borders in order to work or trade in other countries, or haven't you heard enough to say? (Note: Due to rounding, reported totals may differ slightly from the sum of subcategories.)*

Central Africans are most likely to say it is difficult to cross borders (65%), followed by West Africans (58%). Pluralities find it difficult in Southern Africa (46%), North Africa (46%), and East Africa (44%) (Figure 6).
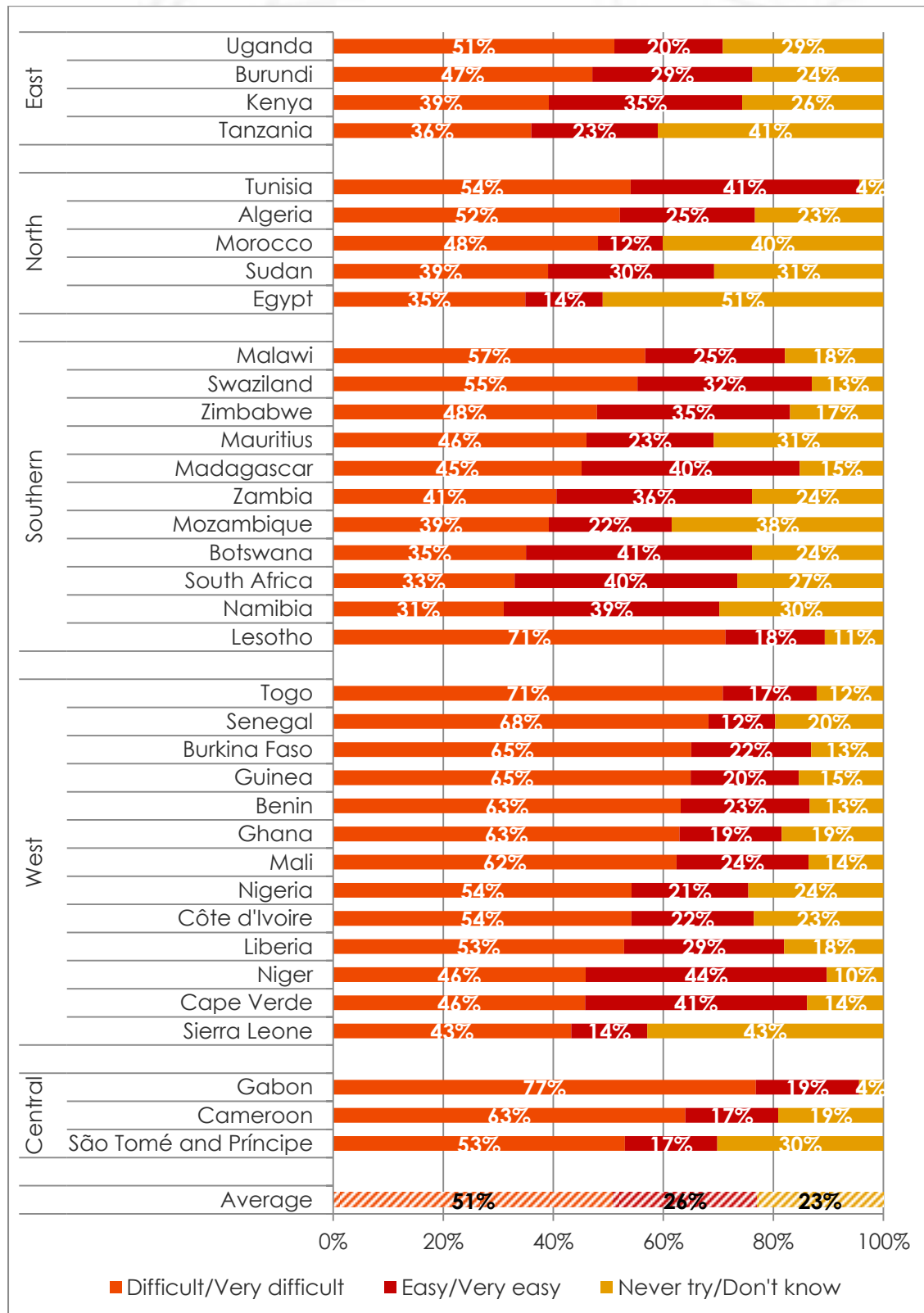
Figure 6: Perceived difficulty of crossing international borders | by region
| 36 countries | 2014/2015

Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, how easy or difficult is it for people in [region] to cross international borders in order to work or trade in other countries, or haven't you heard enough to say? (% who say "difficult" or "very difficult")*

Again, countries vary widely in their perceptions of the difficulty of crossing borders. More than seven in 10 citizens say it is "difficult" or "very difficult" in Gabon (77%), Lesotho (71%), and Togo (71%), compared to one-third in Namibia (31%) and South African (33%) (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Perceived difficulty of crossing regional borders | by country | 36 countries | 2014/2015

Region	Country	Difficult/Very difficult	Easy/Very easy	Never try/Don't know
East	Uganda	51%	20%	29%
East	Burundi	47%	29%	24%
East	Kenya	39%	35%	26%
East	Tanzania	36%	23%	41%
North	Tunisia	54%	41%	4%
North	Algeria	52%	25%	23%
North	Morocco	48%	12%	40%
North	Sudan	39%	30%	31%
North	Egypt	35%	14%	51%
Southern	Malawi	57%	25%	18%
Southern	Swaziland	55%	32%	13%
Southern	Zimbabwe	48%	35%	17%
Southern	Mauritius	46%	23%	31%
Southern	Madagascar	45%	40%	15%
Southern	Zambia	41%	36%	24%
Southern	Mozambique	39%	22%	38%
Southern	Botswana	35%	41%	24%
Southern	South Africa	33%	40%	27%
Southern	Namibia	31%	39%	30%
Southern	Lesotho	71%	18%	11%
West	Togo	71%	17%	12%
West	Senegal	68%	12%	20%
West	Burkina Faso	65%	22%	13%
West	Guinea	65%	20%	15%
West	Benin	63%	23%	13%
West	Ghana	63%	19%	19%
West	Mali	62%	24%	14%
West	Nigeria	54%	21%	24%
West	Côte d'Ivoire	54%	22%	23%
West	Liberia	53%	29%	18%
West	Niger	46%	44%	10%
West	Cape Verde	46%	41%	14%
West	Sierra Leone	43%	14%	43%
Central	Gabon	77%	19%	4%
Central	Cameroon	63%	17%	19%
Central	São Tomé and Príncipe	53%	17%	30%
	Average	51%	26%	23%

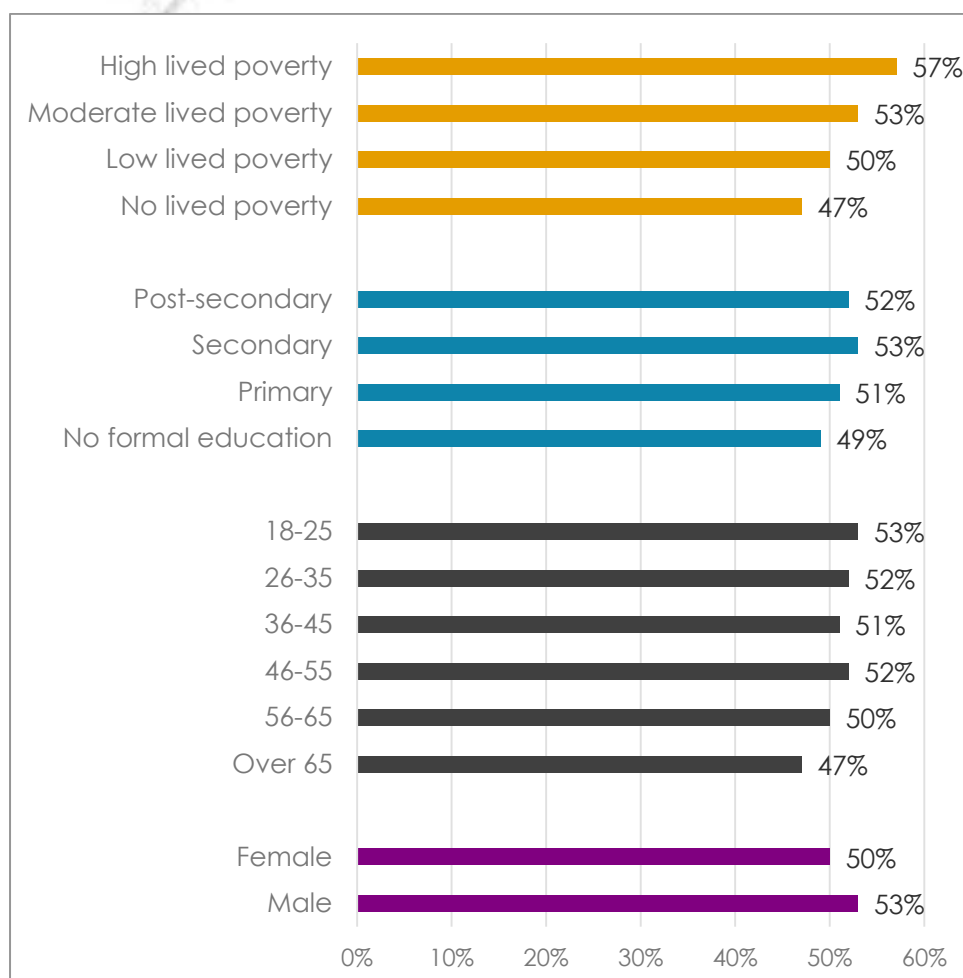■ Difficult/Very difficult ■ Easy/Very easy ■ Never try/Don't know

Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, how easy or difficult is it for people in [region] to cross international borders in order to work or trade in other countries, or haven't you heard enough to say?*

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On average across 36 countries, poorer respondents are more likely to report that it is difficult to cross borders than their wealthier counterparts.[2] Among citizens with high lived poverty (i.e. citizens who frequently experienced shortages of basic essentials), 57% describe crossing borders as "difficult" or "very difficult," compared to 47% of those with no lived poverty (Figure 8).

Differences by other demographic factors are small, with men, the youngest respondents (aged 18-25), and those with at least secondary education slightly more likely to complain of difficulties.

Figure 8: Perceived difficulty of crossing regional borders | by lived poverty level, education, age, and sex | 36 countries | 2014/2015

Respondents were asked: In your opinion, how easy or difficult is it for people in [region] to cross international borders in order to work or trade in other countries, or haven't you heard enough to say? (% of citizen who say it is "difficult" or "very difficult")

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[2] Afrobarometer calculates a Lived Poverty Index score based on how often, during the previous 12 months, respondents or their family members went without certain basic necessities (enough food, medicine or medical treatment, enough clean water, enough fuel for cooking, and/or a cash income).

Regional role in protection of democracy and human rights

If Africa's political integration seems remote from today's realities, one small step in that direction might be regional frameworks for political interaction. One Afrobarometer question explores citizens' attitudes regarding regional political interdependence and national sovereignty by asking them to choose between two scenarios:

1. *The governments of each country in [this region] have a duty to try to guarantee free elections and prevent human rights abuses in other countries in the region, for example by using political pressure, economic sanctions, or military force.*

2: *Each country in this region should respect the independence of other countries and allow them to make their own decisions about how their country should be governed.*

Across 36 countries, a majority (58%) of citizens prefer the second scenario emphasizing national sovereignty. Only one-third (34%) favour regional integration to the point where countries exert political, economic, or military pressure on their neighbours in support of free elections and human rights (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Regional responsibility vs. national sovereignty | 36 countries | 2014/2015
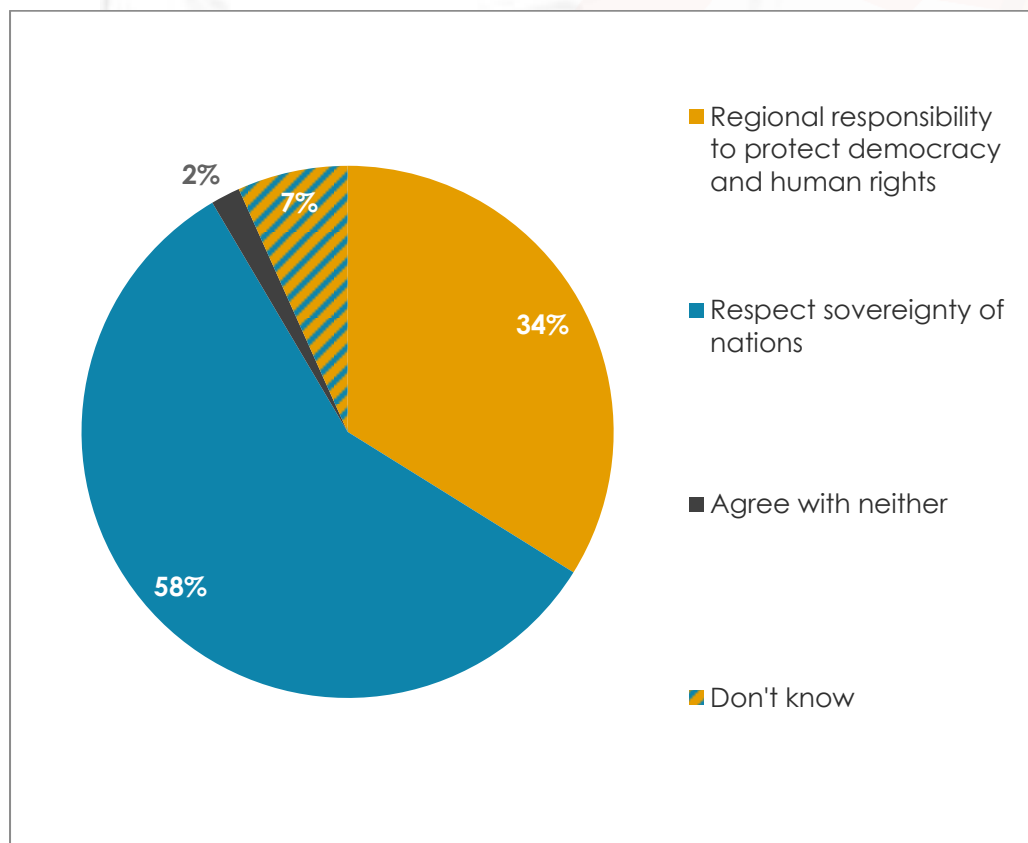
Respondents were asked: *Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement 1 or Statement 2.*
Statement 1: The governments of each country in [this region] have a duty to try to guarantee free elections and prevent human rights abuses in other countries in the region, for example by using political pressure, economic sanctions or military force.
Statement 2: Each country in this region should respect the independence of other countries and allow them to make their own decisions about how their country should be governed.

West Africans are most likely to favour a regional role for countries (40%), but a preference for national sovereignty is the majority view in all regions, reaching 63% in North and Central Africa (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Regional responsibility vs. national sovereignty | by region | 36 countries | 2014/2015
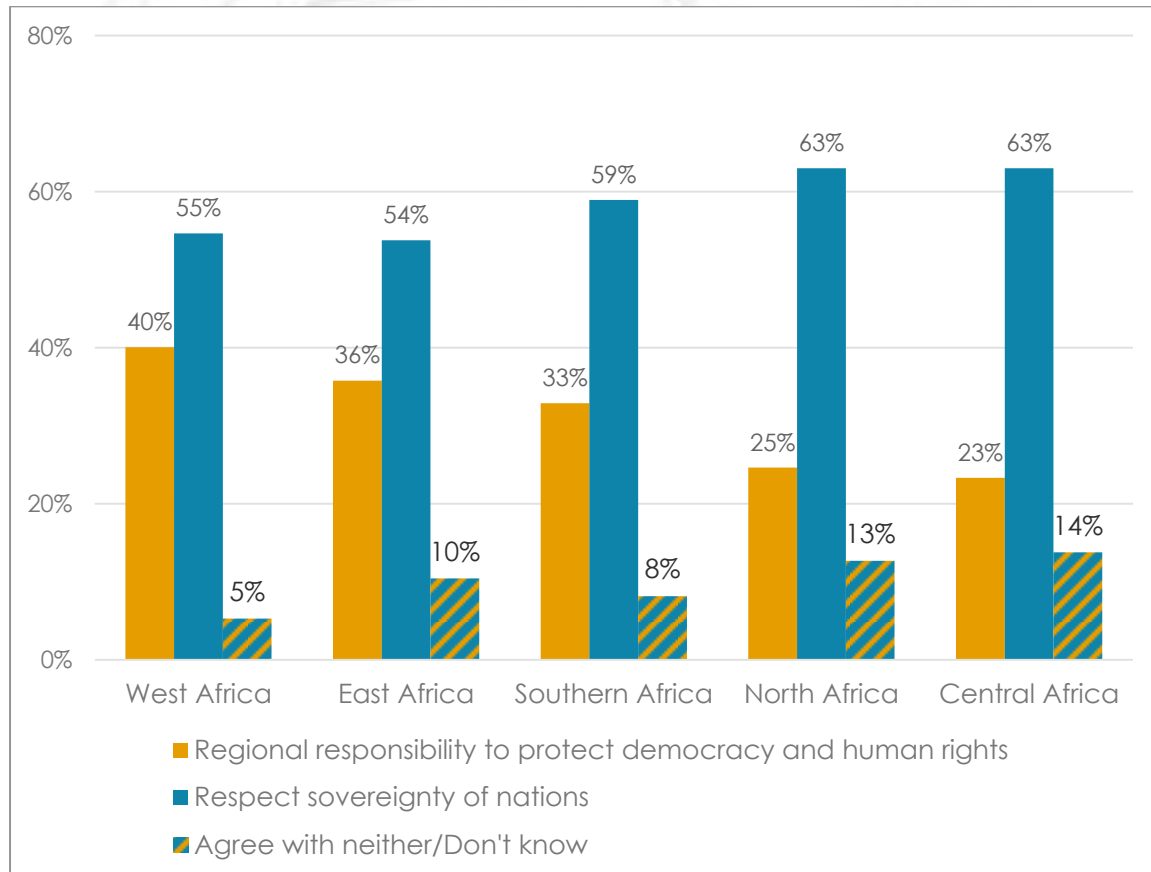
Respondents were asked: *Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement 1 or Statement 2.*
Statement 1: The governments of each country in [this region] have a duty to try to guarantee free elections and prevent human rights abuses in other countries in the region, for example by using political pressure, economic sanctions or military force.
Statement 2: Each country in this region should respect the independence of other countries and allow them to make their own decisions about how their country should be governed.
(% who "agree" or "agree very strongly" with each statement)

At the national level, support for regional responsibility is the majority view only in Burkina Faso (66%), where in 2015 pressure from the AU, ECOWAS, the UN, and leaders of other West African countries helped resolve a crisis during the country's post-Compaoré transition. Fewer than one in five citizens favour such regional roles in São Tomé and Principe (14%), Tunisia (18%), and Madagascar (19%) (Figure 11).

A preference for respecting national sovereignty over regional responsibility is strongest among the best-educated, ranging from 51% among those with no formal education to 63% among those with post-secondary education (Figure 12). However, less educated respondents are more likely to say that they "don't know," rather than to express support for intervention. Younger adults are no more likely than their elders to favour regional responsibilities over national sovereignty.

Figure 11: Support for regional role to protect democracy and human rights
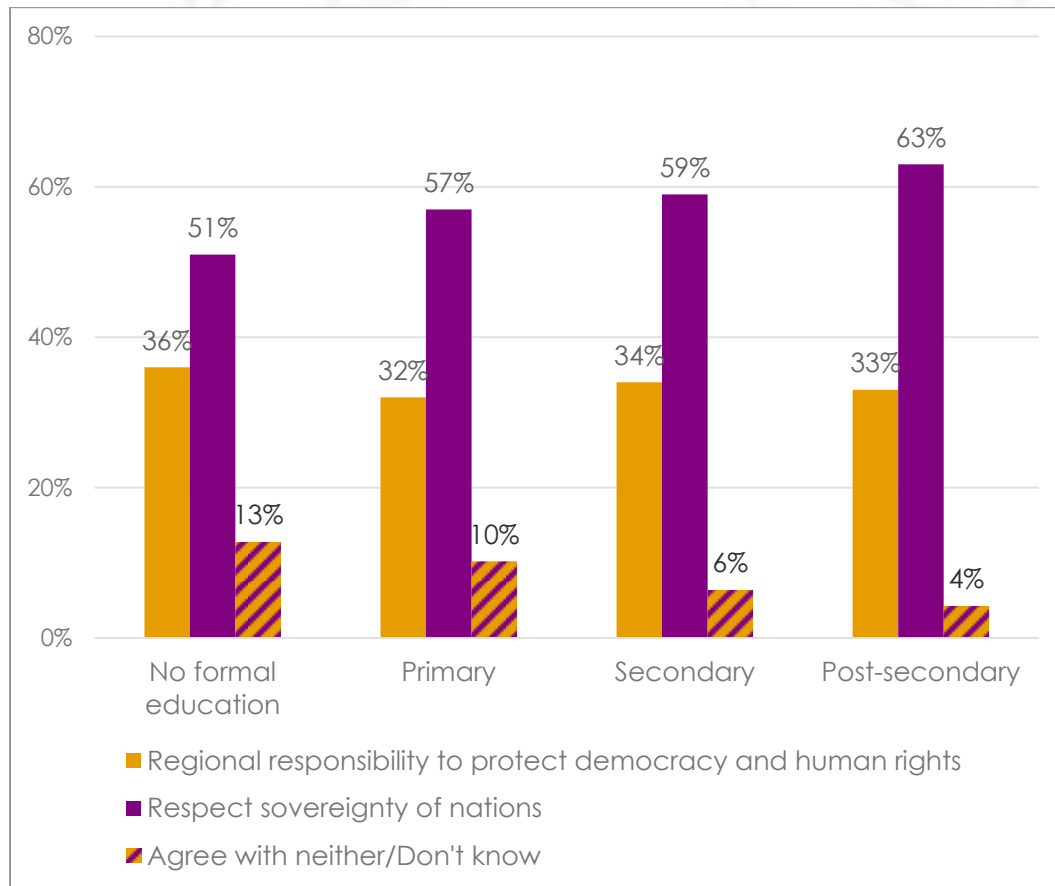| by country | 36 countries| 2014/2015
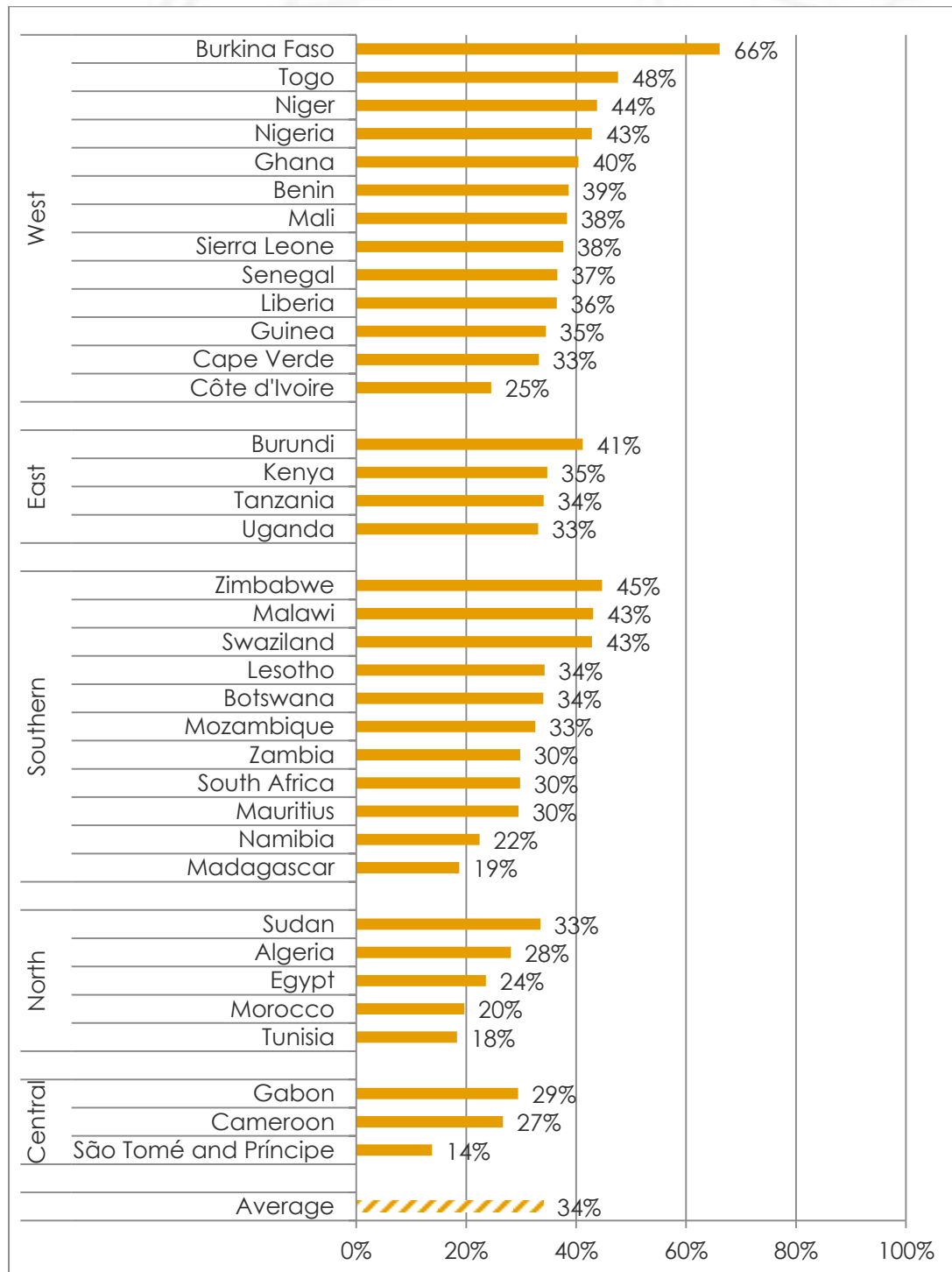
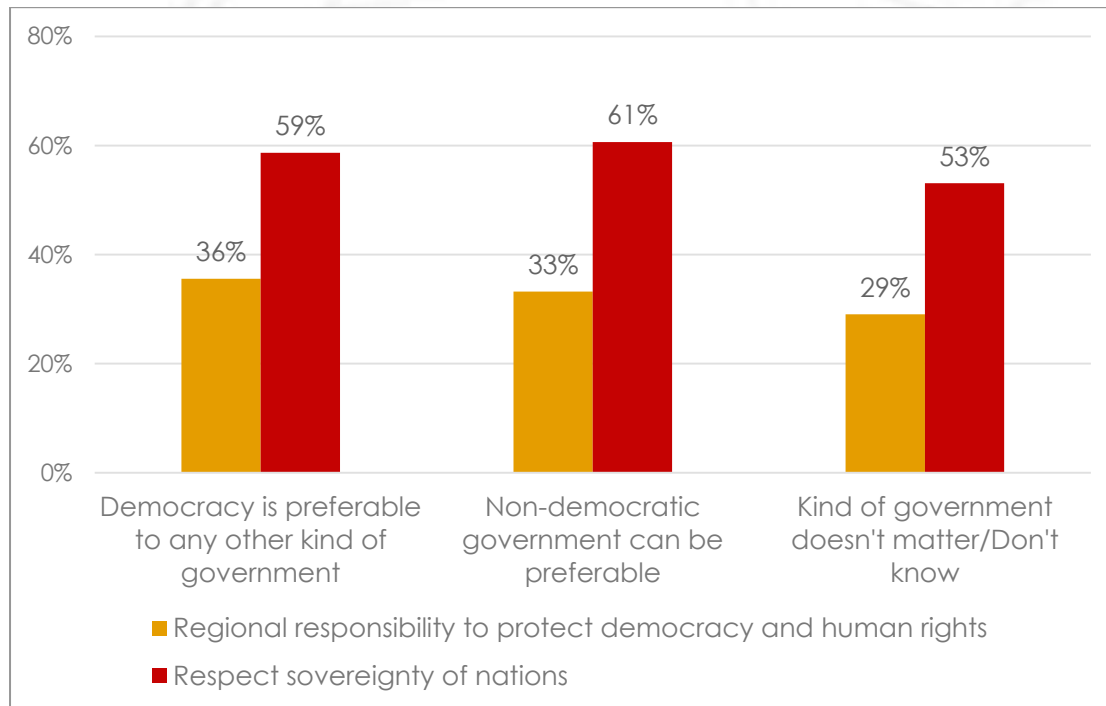**Respondents were asked:** *Which of the following statements is closest to your view?*
Statement 1: The governments of each country in [Region] have a duty to try to guarantee free elections and prevent human rights abuses in other countries in the region, for example by using political pressure, economic sanctions or military force.
Statement 2: Each country in this region should respect the independence of other countries and allow them to make their own decisions about how their country should be governed.
(% who "agree" or "agree very strongly" with Statement 1)

Figure 12: Regional responsibility vs. national sovereignty |by education level
| 36 countries | 2014/2015

Respondents were asked: *Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement 1 or Statement 2.*
Statement 1: The governments of each country in [your region] have a duty to try to guarantee free elections and prevent human rights abuses in other countries in the region, for example by using political pressure, economic sanctions or military force.
Statement 2: Each country in this region should respect the independence of other countries and allow them to make their own decisions about how their country should be governed.
(% who "agree" or "agree very strongly" with each statement)

Citizens' views on regional responsibility to protect free elections and human rights appear to be at best weakly related to their support for democracy in general. Afrobarometer asks respondents whether they prefer democracy over any other political system. Respondents who say they do are slightly more likely to favour regional responsibility (36%) than those who say that non-democratic government can sometimes be preferable (33%) and those who say it doesn't matter what kind of government they have or they don't know (29%) (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Regional responsibility vs. national sovereignty | by support for democracy | 36 countries | 2014/2015

Respondents were asked:
1. 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.
2. *Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement 1 or Statement 2.*
   Statement 1: The governments of each country in [Region] have a duty to try to guarantee free elections and prevent human rights abuses in other countries in the region, for example by using political pressure, economic sanctions or military force.
   Statement 2: Each country in this region should respect the independence of other countries and allow them to make their own decisions about how their country should be governed.
(Figure shows % who "agree" or "agree very strongly" with regional responsibility vs. respect for sovereignty of nations, disaggregated by level of support for democracy)

Perceived utility of African Union and RECs

Solidarity, cooperation, and coordination among member countries are high on the agendas of the African Union and the regional economic communities (RECs) that cover the continent. All have endorsed some degree of integration in order to promote stability and economic development. How do citizens view the contributions that these organisations make to their country's development?

On average across 36 countries, a majority (58%) of Africans say the AU helps at least "a little bit," including 18% who say it helps "a lot" and 20% who say it is "somewhat" helpful (Figure 14). Only 12% of respondents say the AU does nothing to help their country.

Similarly, six of 10 respondents (61%) say that a regional economic community to which their country belongs is at least "a little bit" helpful, with 19% saying it helps "a lot."

Significantly, on both questions, about three of 10 respondents say they don't know enough about the AU (30%) or the regional organisation (28%) to be able to say whether they are helpful to their countries.

Figure 14: Perceived helpfulness of African Union and regional organisations
| 36 countries[3] | 2014/2015
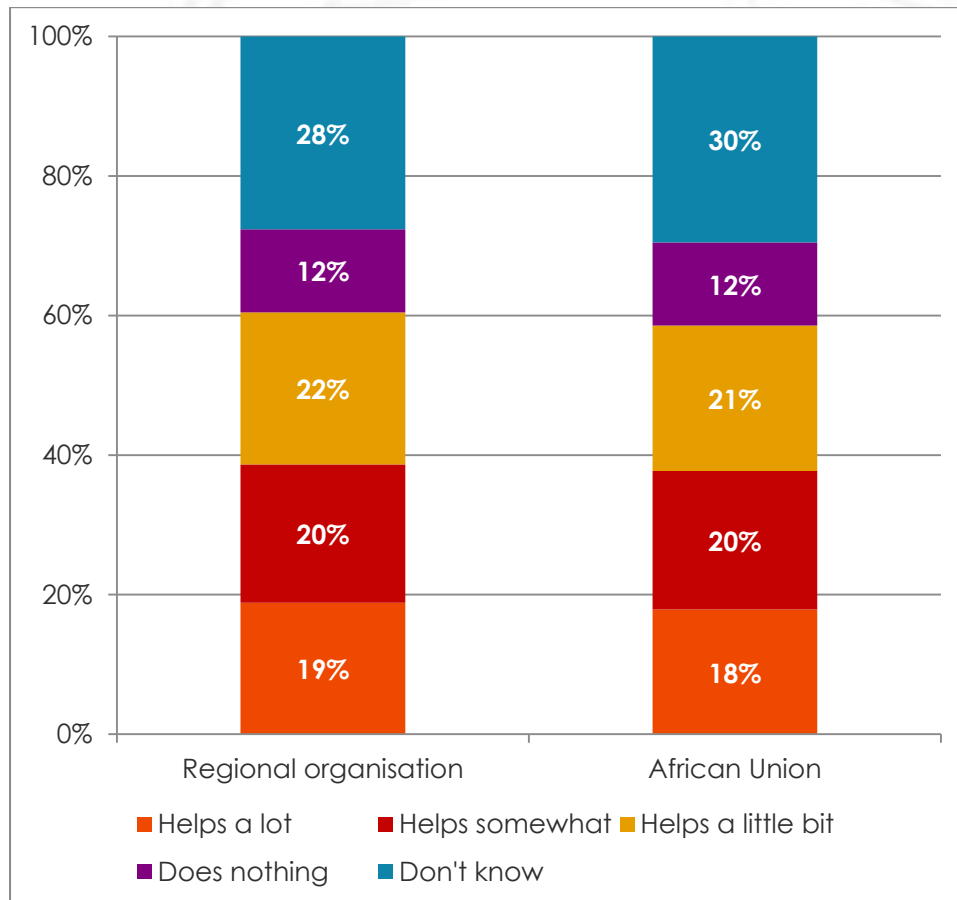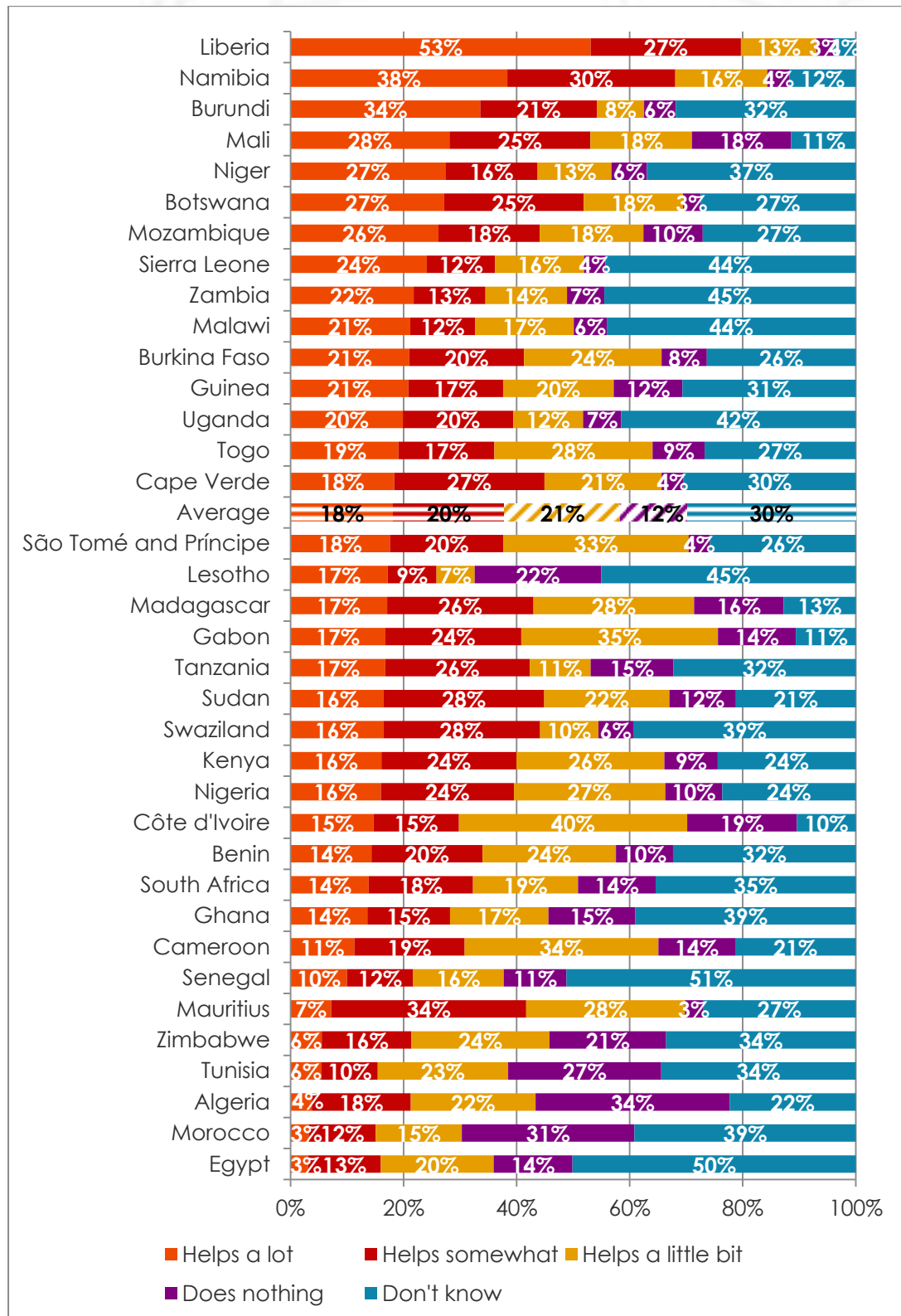

Respondents were asked:
- *In your opinion, how much does [the regional organisation for your region] do to help your country, or haven't you heard enough to say?*
- *In your opinion, how much does the African Union do to help your country, or haven't you heard enough to say?*

Perceptions of the AU's helpfulness vary widely across countries (Figure 15). At the top of the spectrum is Liberia, where 93% of respondents say the AU helps at least "a little bit," including 53% who say it helps "a lot" and 27% "somewhat." Namibia (84%) and Gabon (76%) also have overwhelmingly favourable views of the AU's impact on their countries. At the other extreme, countries where less than half of all citizens see the AU as even "a little bit" helpful include four of the five North African countries – Morocco (30%), Egypt (36%), Tunisia (39%), and Algeria (43%) – along with Lesotho (33%) and Senegal (38%).

The two most populous anglophone West African countries have quite different views on the AU. In Nigeria, 66% of the population think the AU is at least a little helpful; in Ghana, this share is only 46%. The small island states of Mauritius (70%), São Tomé and Principe (70%), and Cape Verde (66%) all give the AU favourable ratings.

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[3] The question about the AU was asked in 36 countries. The question about the regional organisation was not asked in Egypt.

Figure 15: Perceived helpfulness of the African Union | by country | 36 countries | 2014/2015

Country	Helps a lot	Helps somewhat	Helps a little bit	Does nothing	Don't know
Liberia	53%	27%	13%	3%	2%
Namibia	38%	30%	16%	4%	12%
Burundi	34%	21%	8%	6%	32%
Mali	28%	25%	18%	18%	11%
Niger	27%	16%	13%	6%	37%
Botswana	27%	25%	18%	3%	27%
Mozambique	26%	18%	18%	10%	27%
Sierra Leone	24%	12%	16%	4%	44%
Zambia	22%	13%	14%	7%	45%
Malawi	21%	12%	17%	6%	44%
Burkina Faso	21%	20%	24%	8%	26%
Guinea	21%	17%	20%	12%	31%
Uganda	20%	20%	12%	7%	42%
Togo	19%	17%	28%	9%	27%
Cape Verde	18%	27%	21%	4%	30%
Average	18%	20%	21%	12%	30%
São Tomé and Príncipe	18%	20%	33%	4%	26%
Lesotho	17%	9%	7%	22%	45%
Madagascar	17%	26%	28%	16%	13%
Gabon	17%	24%	35%	14%	11%
Tanzania	17%	26%	11%	15%	32%
Sudan	16%	28%	22%	12%	21%
Swaziland	16%	28%	10%	6%	39%
Kenya	16%	24%	26%	9%	24%
Nigeria	16%	24%	27%	10%	24%
Côte d'Ivoire	15%	15%	40%	19%	10%
Benin	14%	20%	24%	10%	32%
South Africa	14%	18%	19%	14%	35%
Ghana	14%	15%	17%	15%	39%
Cameroon	11%	19%	34%	14%	21%
Senegal	10%	12%	16%	11%	51%
Mauritius	7%	34%	28%	3%	27%
Zimbabwe	6%	16%	24%	21%	34%
Tunisia	6%	10%	23%	27%	34%
Algeria	4%	18%	22%	34%	22%
Morocco	3%	12%	15%	31%	39%
Egypt	3%	13%	20%	14%	50%

Legend: ■ Helps a lot ■ Helps somewhat ■ Helps a little bit ■ Does nothing ■ Don't know

Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, how much does the African Union do to help your country, or haven't you heard enough to say?*

With regard to regional economic communities, perceptions align in a similar pattern. The AU recognizes eight RECs: Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Southern African Development Community (SADC), and Arab Maghreb Union (UMA). Most African countries are members of more than one REC; some belong to three or (in the case of Kenya) even four regional organisations (African Union Commission, 2016). In some countries, the Afrobarometer survey asked separate questions about more than one REC; findings presented here focus on one REC per country, which generally align with Afrobarometer's regional groupings (Table 1).

To further explore this data, please visit Afrobarometer's online data analysis facility at www.afrobarometer.org/online-data-analysis.

As they did with regard to the AU, Liberians offer the most favourable assessments of an REC: 95% see ECOWAS as at least "a little bit" helpful, including 63% who see it as helping "a lot." Liberians' ratings of AU and ECOWAS helpfulness might be related to support received during the Ebola crisis (although similar levels of positive response are not seen in Guinea or Sierra Leone) and its civil wars.

Again, Namibia follows in second place overall (with 85% who say that SADC is at least "a little bit" helpful, including 39% who say it helps "a lot") while Moroccans are by far the least likely to consider their regional organisation helpful (26% say UMA is at least "a little bit" helpful, and only 1% say it helps "a lot").

For both the AU and the RECs, the North Africa region is significantly less likely than the other regions to perceive these organisations as helpful, while views are the most positive in Central Africa (Figure 16).

Considering that about three in 10 respondents say they don't know enough about the AU or the regional organisations to assess how helpful they are, does access to more information make a difference in public assessments?

Taking the frequency of radio news consumption as a proxy for access to information, we find that respondents' perceptions of the African Union and their regional organisations do indeed correlate with the level of information that an individual receives.

Among citizens who never listen to radio news, less than half consider the AU (47%) and the regional organisation (49%) at least "a little bit" helpful. This proportion increases steadily with the frequency of radio news consumption, reaching about two-thirds (64% for the AU, 67% for the regional organisation) among those who get radio news every day (Figure 17). At the same time, the proportion of "don't know" responses decreases sharply for daily listeners compared to those who never listen to the radio news.

Table 1: Perceived helpfulness of regional economic communities | by country
| 35 countries | 2014/2015

Afrobarometer region	Country	REC	Helps a lot	Helps some-what	Helps a little bit	Does nothing	Don't know
Central	São Tomé/Príncipe	ECCAS	14%	19%	37%	5%	25%
	Gabon		14%	21%	41%	11%	14%
	Cameroun		11%	21%	34%	12%	22%
West	Liberia	ECOWAS	63%	20%	11%	2%	3%
	Niger		32%	18%	14%	6%	30%
	Mali		30%	25%	18%	17%	10%
	Sierra Leone		28%	12%	16%	3%	41%
	Togo		24%	16%	26%	9%	24%
	Burkina Faso		21%	23%	23%	7%	25%
	Cape Verde		21%	27%	21%	3%	28%
	Guinea		20%	17%	20%	13%	31%
	Nigeria		18%	24%	27%	8%	22%
	Côte d'Ivoire		16%	13%	40%	21%	10%
	Benin		15%	20%	24%	9%	31%
	Ghana		13%	15%	18%	16%	39%
	Senegal		11%	12%	16%	12%	50%
Southern	Namibia	SADC	39%	30%	16%	4%	11%
	Botswana		30%	25%	19%	2%	24%
	Mozambique		28%	19%	21%	7%	25%
	Lesotho		24%	9%	10%	21%	35%
	Zambia		24%	13%	14%	6%	42%
	Malawi		21%	11%	18%	7%	43%
	Swaziland		20%	29%	13%	5%	34%
	Madagascar		15%	24%	29%	19%	13%
	Mauritius		12%	36%	28%	2%	22%
	South Africa		10%	19%	20%	14%	37%
	Zimbabwe		9%	19%	26%	18%	29%
East	Burundi	ECCAS/EAC*	21%	22%	11%	7%	39%
	Uganda	EAC	20%	21%	15%	7%	37%
	Kenya		16%	28%	27%	8%	20%
	Tanzania		16%	28%	13%	16%	28%
North	Sudan	IGAD	11%	26%	22%	13%	28%
	Tunisia	UMA	8%	12%	25%	26%	29%
	Algeria		3%	13%	24%	38%	22%
	Morocco		1%	6%	19%	34%	39%
	Egypt		Not asked				

Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, how much does [the regional organisation for your region] do to help your country, or haven't you heard enough to say? (* Note: In Burundi, the question asked about "ECCAS/International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (CIRGL)/AEC/COMESA.")*

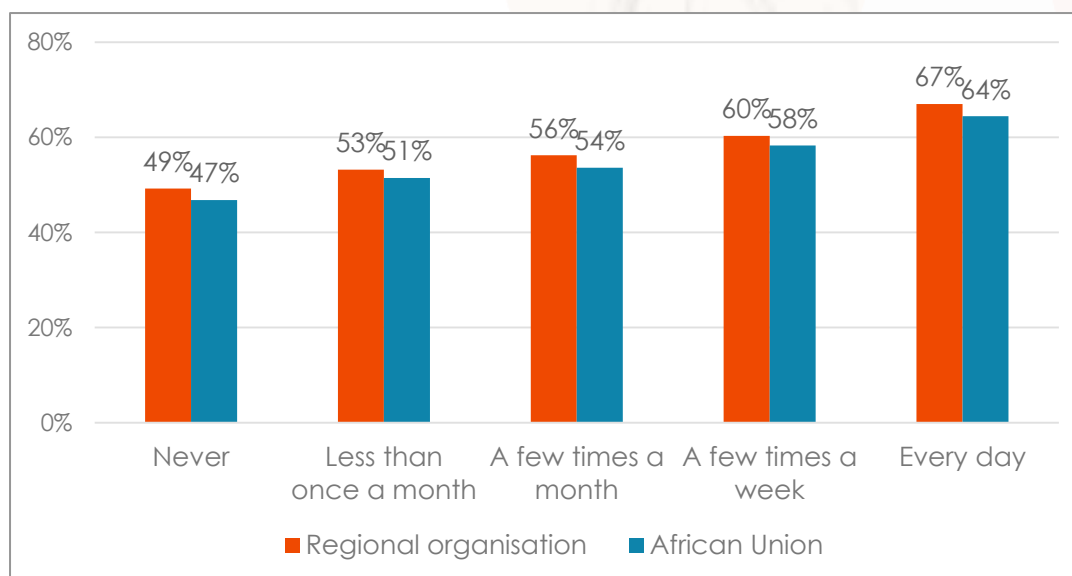**Figure 16: Perceived helpfulness of African Union and regional organisations** | by region | 2014/2015
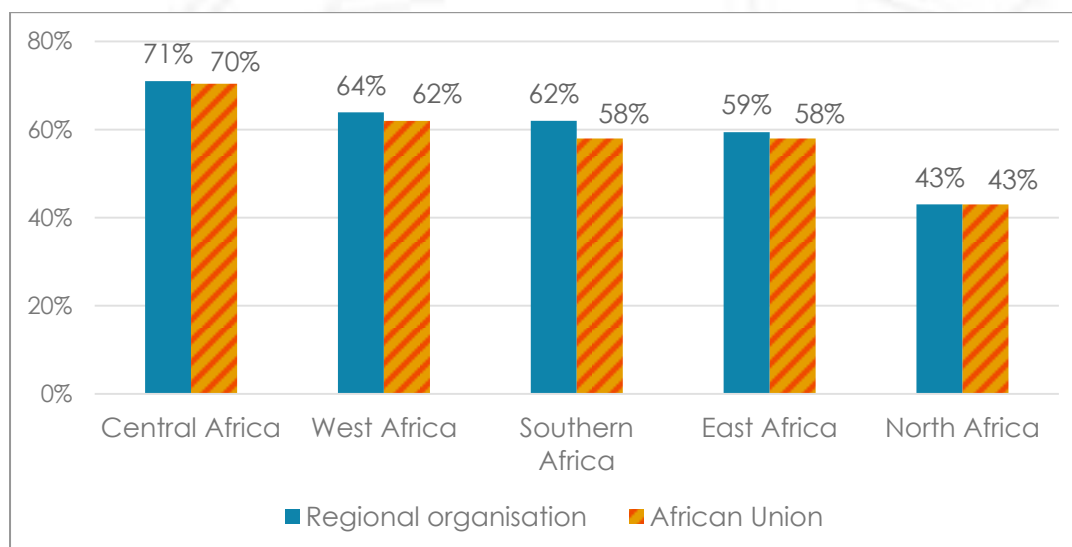
Respondents were asked:
In your opinion, how much does [the regional organisation in your region] do to help your country, or haven't you heard enough to say?
In your opinion, how much does the African Union do to help your country, or haven't you heard enough to say?
(% who say they help "a little bit," "somewhat," or "a lot")

Figure 17: Perceived helpfulness of African Union and regional organisations | by frequency of radio news consumption | 36 countries | 2014/2015

Respondents were asked:
- *In your opinion, how much does [the regional organisation] do to help your country, or haven't you heard enough to say?*
- *In your opinion, how much does the African Union do to help your country, or haven't you heard enough to say?*
- *How often do you get news from the following sources: Radio?*

(Figure shows % who say the AU and regional organisation help "a little bit," "somewhat," or "a lot," disaggregated by how often respondents get news from the radio.)

Conclusion

If public support is important for progress toward regional integration, citizens' perceptions suggest that more needs to be done to convince them of the benefits of integration. While a majority of Africans favour free cross-border movement of people and goods, support is weak in some countries, and most citizens say it is still difficult to cross borders. When it comes to steps toward political integration, respect for national sovereignty far outpolls regional intervention in support of free elections and human rights. The AU and regional economic communities are generally seen as helpful among those who know enough to have an opinion, and findings suggest that a better informed citizenry might improve these perceptions further.

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Appendix

Table A.1: Afrobarometer Round 6 fieldwork dates and previous survey rounds

Country	Months when Round 6 fieldwork was conducted	Previous survey rounds
Algeria	May-June 2015	2013
Benin	May-June 2014	2005, 2008, 2011
Botswana	June-July 2014	1999, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012
Burkina Faso	April-May 2015	2008, 2012
Burundi	September-October 2014	2012
Cameroon	January-February 2015	2013
Cape Verde	November-December 2014	2002, 2005, 2008, 2011
Côte d'Ivoire	August-September 2014	2013
Egypt	June-July 2015	2013
Gabon	September 2015	N/A
Ghana	May-June 2014	1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2012
Guinea	March-April 2015	2013
Kenya	November-December 2014	2003, 2005, 2008, 2011
Lesotho	May 2014	2000, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012
Liberia	May 2015	2008, 2012
Madagascar	December 2015-January 2015	2005, 2008, 2013
Malawi	March-April 2014	1999, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012
Mali	December 2014	2001, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2013
Mauritius	June-July 2014	2012
Morocco	November 2015	2013
Mozambique	June-August 2015	2002, 2005, 2008, 2012
Namibia	August-September 2014	1999, 2003, 2006, 2008, 2012
Niger	April 2015	2013
Nigeria	December 2014-January 2015	2000, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2013
São Tomé and Principe	July-August 2015	N/A
Senegal	November-December 2014	2002, 2005, 2008, 2013
Sierra Leone	May-June 2015	2012
South Africa	August-September 2015	2000, 2002, 2006, 2008, 2011
Sudan	June 2015	2013

Country	Months when Round 6 fieldwork was conducted	Previous survey rounds
Swaziland	April 2015	2013
Tanzania	August-November 2014	2001, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012
Togo	October 2014	2012
Tunisia	April-May 2015	2013
Uganda	May 2015	2000, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2012
Zambia	October 2014	1999, 2003, 2005, 2009, 2013
Zimbabwe	November 2014	1999, 2004, 2005, 2009, 2012

Other Round 6 global releases

- **Where to start? Aligning sustainable development goals with citizen priorities.** (2015). Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 67. Available at http://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/publications/Dispatches/ ab_r6_dispatchno67_african_priorities_en.pdf.

- **Building on progress: Infrastructure development still a major challenge in Africa.** (2016). Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 69. Available at www.afrobarometer.org/publications/ad69-building-progress-infrastructure-development-still-major-challenge-africa.

- **Africa's growth dividend? Lived poverty drops across much of the continent.** (2016). Afrobarometer Policy Paper No. 29. Available at http://www.afrobarometer.org/publications/pp29-africas-growth-dividend-lived-poverty-drops-across-the-continent.

- **Good neighbours? Africans express high levels of tolerance for many, but not for all.** (2016). Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 74. Available at http://afrobarometer.org/publications/tolerance-in-africa.

- **Off-grid or 'off-on': Lack of access, unreliable electricity supply still plague majority of Africans.** Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 75. Available at http://afrobarometer.org/publications/ad75-unreliable-electricity-supply-still-plague-majority-of-africans.

- **Lack of safe water, sanitation spurs growing dissatisfaction with government performance.** Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 76. Available at http://afrobarometer.org/publications/ad76-lack-of-safe-water-and-sanitation-spurs-growing-dissatisfaction.

- **Despite gains, barriers keep health care high on Africa's priority list.** Afrobarometer Policy Paper No. 31. Available at http://www.afrobarometer.org/publications/pp31-despite-gains-barriers-keep-health-care-high-on-africas-priority-list.

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