

Afrobarometer SDG Scorecards

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

What is Afrobarometer?

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Seven rounds of surveys have been conducted in up to 38 countries between 1999 and 2018. Round 8 surveys (2019/2021) are expected to be completed in about 35 countries. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples of 1,200-2,400, which yield country-level results with margins of error of +/-2 to +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.

What are the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by all United Nations member states in 2015, as part of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). The SDGs are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. These goals are expected to drive national and global development agendas for the next 15 years. The 17 SDGs are linked to 169 targets, to be tracked by a proposed 230 individual indicators.

What are the Afrobarometer SDG Scorecards?

The newly developed Afrobarometer SDG Scorecards highlight citizens' experiences and evaluations of their country's performance on democracy and governance, poverty, health, education, energy supply, water and sanitation, inequality, gender equity, and other priorities reflected in 12 of the 17 SDGs. These citizen assessments can be compared to official UN tracking indicators. They present both summary assessments for each SDG – via blue, green, yellow, and red “stoplights” – as well as the data behind these assessments.

How can the Afrobarometer SDG Scorecards contribute to the measurement of progress toward the SDGs?

The SDGs are intended as a tool to improve the lives of real people. Numerous important indicators and scorecards are being used to track progress. The Afrobarometer SDG Scorecards are unique in highlighting the perspectives of ordinary citizens – the intended beneficiaries of the SDGs.

The Afrobarometer SDG Scorecards are not intended to replace the many official indicators tracking progress toward the SDGs. Rather, they provide an additional perspective – one that is usually missing from other sources – that can be compared and contrasted with other indicators and thus enrich the discussion, help identify gaps, and support action to move forward in each country.

Afrobarometer data relevant to the SDGs are especially valuable because of the frequency of collection (in survey rounds every two to three years) and the independence, quality, and reliability of the data. They can offer an independent check, from a grassroots perspective, on the data points reported by government statistics offices and other sources

Which SDGs do the Scorecards track?

The Scorecards track 12 of the 17 SDGs. With Afrobarometer's signature focus on democracy and governance, Afrobarometer data are especially relevant to SDG #16: "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels." Afrobarometer also produces data on poverty, health, education, energy supply, water and sanitation, infrastructure, inequality, work and economic growth, corruption, climate action, gender issues and other topics.

From the many AB data points that are relevant to the SDGs, we have selected one or two indicators that best capture the key objectives of each SDG. AB indicators used in the Afrobarometer SDG Scorecards are shown in the table below.

SDG	Official SDG target or indicator	Afrobarometer indicator
Goal 1: No poverty End poverty in all its forms everywhere	Proportion below poverty line	Lived Poverty Index ¹ (% with moderate or high lived poverty)
Goal 2: Zero hunger End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture	Prevalence of undernourishment	Frequency of going without enough food during the previous year
Goal 3: Good health and well-being Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all ages	Achieve universal access to quality essential health-care services	Frequency of going without medicine or medical treatment during the previous year
Goal 4: Quality education Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Ensure all have access to quality primary and secondary education	Proportion with secondary/post-secondary education
	Eliminate gender disparities	Gap between men's and women's educational attainment
Goal 5: Gender equality Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex	How often do you use: A mobile phone? The Internet? (by gender)
		What is the main way that decisions are made about how to use money? (by gender)

¹ Proportion who frequently went without basic necessities in the previous year (enough food to eat, enough clean water for home use, medicines or medical treatment, enough fuel to cook your food, a cash income).

<p>Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all</p>	<p>Universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all</p>	<p>Frequency of going without enough clean water during the previous year.</p>
	<p>Access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all</p>	<p>Location of main water source and toilet in the house, in the compound, or outside the compound</p>
<p>Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all</p>	<p>% of population with access to electricity</p>	<p>% who have reliable electricity supply (i.e. electricity that works most/all of the time) vs. % who have no electric connection.</p>
<p>Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all</p>	<p>Unemployment rate, by sex,</p>	<p>% unemployed, by gender</p>
<p>Goal 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation</p>	<p>Proportion of rural population living within 2 km of all-season road</p> <p>Proportion of population covered by a mobile network, by technology</p>	<p>Presence of cell phone service, school, electric grid, paved/tarred road, and health clinic in the enumeration area</p>
<p>Goal 10: Reduced inequalities Reduce inequality within and among countries</p>	<p>Proportion of people living below 50 percent of median income</p>	<p>% with moderate/high lived poverty and % with low/no lived poverty</p>
	<p>Proportion of the population reporting having felt personally discriminated against or harassed within the previous 12 months on the basis of an identity or group</p>	<p>% who say their ethnic group is often/always treated unfairly by the government and % who say this never happens</p>
<p>Goal 13: Climate action Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</p>	<p>Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning</p>	<p>% who have heard of climate change</p> <p>% who say that climate change is making life in the country worse</p>

<p>Goal 16: Peace, justice, and strong institutions</p> <p>Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p>	Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all	% who trust police, courts, and Parliament somewhat/a lot
	Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms	% who say most/all police, judges and magistrates, and MPs are corrupt % who say they paid a bribe in exchange for selected public services during the previous year
	Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels	Trust, corruption, and bribe-paying (see above)

Why were these AB indicators selected?

From the many AB data points that are relevant to the SDGs, we selected one or two indicators that best capture the key objectives of each SDG (see the table above).

For five of the SDGs, AB does not have compelling indicators, so these five SDGs are not part of the Afrobarometer SDG Scorecard.

What do the Scorecards show?

The Scorecards come in three parts:

First is a one-page summary that uses colored circles ("stoplights") to illustrate progress, retreat, or stagnation on each indicator over the past five years, between Afrobarometer Round 6 surveys (in 2014/2015) and Round 8 surveys (in 2019/2021).

For climate action (SDG 13) and bribes for public services (SDG 16), where Round 6 data are not available, comparisons are between Round 7 (2016/2018) and Round 8 (2019/2021).

The second part of the Scorecards contains 18 charts showing performance trends between Round 4 (2008/2009) and Round 8 (2019/2021).

The last part of the scorecard provides detailed information on the question texts used to generate each indicator.

What do the stoplights indicate?

Red means the country's performance worsened by >3 percentage points over the past five years

Yellow means change between -3 and +3 percentage points (not statistically significant)

Green means performance improved by >3 percentage points

Blue means the country is already meeting this target

What do the half-stoplights mean?

Half-circles (half-green, half-red, etc.) indicate mixed results with regard to an SDG when there is more than one indicator. For instance, on SDG 4 (quality education), if the overall level of education has improved, but the gap between men and women got wider, this reflects both progress (with respect to overall education levels) and regress (with respect to gender gaps in education). The scorecard would show a green half-stopligh to reflect the progress on one indicator and a red half-stopligh to reflect regress on the other. Another example is SDG 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure), where we track five types of infrastructure. If we see improvements in some areas, but stagnation or regression in others, this will be reflected with half-stoplighs in different colors.

Can the stoplights be used to compare countries?

The Scorecards are primarily intended to assess the **trends** in the performance of individual countries – that is, are things getting better or worse over time within that country – rather than for comparison across countries. This is because one country could be at a very low level of overall achievement, but recording progress – a green light – while another country could be at a much higher level of overall performance, but retreating – a red light. So the comparison of a green light in one country to a red light in the other does not tell the whole story. The primary focus should therefore be on 1) country-level trends, and 2) how many countries are making progress or retreating, but not on specific comparisons of overall performance across countries.

Which countries do Afrobarometer's SDG Scorecards track? Were the surveys conducted before or after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Scorecards are available or planned for all countries surveyed in Round 8 except Angola, Ethiopia, and the Gambia, where we don't have data to measure trends over at least three survey rounds.

Of the 25 countries for which findings were available as of the initial launch on 24 May 2021, 16 were surveyed before the COVID-19 pandemic forced the suspension of fieldwork in April 2020. The other nine were surveyed after Round 8 fieldwork resumed in October 2020.

Countries surveyed before COVID hiatus (16)	Countries surveyed after COVID hiatus (9)
Botswana	Benin
Burkina Faso	Cameroon
Cabo Verde	Liberia
Côte d'Ivoire	Mauritius
Gabon	Morocco
Ghana	Niger
Guinea	Senegal
Kenya	Togo
Lesotho	Zambia
Malawi	
Mali	
Namibia	
Nigeria	
Sierra Leone	

<p>Tunisia Uganda</p> <p>(No SDG Scorecards for Angola and Ethiopia)</p>	<p>(No SDG Scorecard for Gambia)</p>
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How can the Afrobarometer SDG Scorecards be accessed?

Afrobarometer will be releasing scorecards over the coming weeks, in a series of regional webinars. Scorecards may be accessed on the “Afrobarometer SDG Scorecards” page and on individual country pages of the Afrobarometer website, www.afrobarometer.org.

What should we do if we have questions about the Scorecards?

For questions about the content of the Scorecard, please email bhoward@afrobarometer.org.

For questions about plans for releasing the Scorecard, please email jappiah@afrobarometer.org.