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News release

New Afrobarometer SDG Scorecard shows South Africa doing better on climate action but worse on poverty, hunger, and corruption

A new Afrobarometer Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Scorecard shows that South Africa has made progress on climate action but lost ground on poverty, hunger, and perceived corruption in institutions.

The Afrobarometer SDG Scorecard, which provides citizens' assessments of South Africa's progress over a recent five-year period on important aspects of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, also reveals that the country is doing worse on access to health care, unemployment, economic inequalities, and trust in state institutions. Access to clean water and electricity has also worsened. The country has made no progress on gender equality, increasing access to education, and reducing payment of bribe for public services.

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.

Afrobarometer, an independent pan-African survey research network, released scorecards for South Africa and six other Southern African countries as part of a series of regional webinars focusing on progress toward the SDGs in Africa.

Speaking at the webinar, Dominique Dryding, Afrobarometer project manager for Southern Africa, said the red stoplights do not necessarily mean that South Africa is performing worse than other countries on these indicators, but rather that it is performing worse than it was about five years ago.

“These scorecards aren't intended to compare countries against one another, but rather to track progress or retreat within each country over time,” she said.

All scorecards can be accessed on the Afrobarometer website's [SDG Scorecards page](#).

Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer is a non-partisan African survey research network that provides reliable data on citizens' experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Eight rounds of surveys have been completed in up to 39 countries since 1999. Round 8 surveys (2019/2021) cover 34 countries.

Afrobarometer's national partners in all regions of Africa conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice. In the most recent survey in South Africa, the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation and Plus 94 Research interviewed a nationally representative, random, stratified probability sample of 1,600 adult South Africans in May and June 2021. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-2.5 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.



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