

Kampala, Uganda  
29 March 2021

## News release

---

### **Ugandans perceive increase in corruption level, give government low marks on fighting graft, Afrobarometer study shows**

A majority of Ugandans think that corruption is getting worse in their country and that their government is doing a bad job of fighting it. Most say ordinary people risk retaliation if they report corruption to the authorities, findings from a recent Afrobarometer survey show.

Among key public institutions, the Uganda police are most widely seen as corrupt, followed by civil servants and tax officials. Paying bribes is a common part of daily life in Uganda: More than half of respondents who accessed police services during the previous year say they had to pay a bribe.

Uganda ranks in the worst-performing quarter (142th out of 180 countries) on Transparency International's [2020 Corruption Perceptions Index](#).

#### **Key findings**

- Six in 10 Ugandans (62%) say corruption in the country increased “somewhat” or “a lot” during the year preceding the survey, a slight improvement compared to citizens' perceptions in 2015 and 2017 (69%) (Figure 1).
- Almost three-fourths (73%) of Ugandans say the government is performing poorly in its fight against corruption. Dissatisfaction with government efforts to reduce corruption has grown significantly since 2005 (52%) (Figure 2).
- More than three-quarters (77%) of Ugandans believe that citizens who report corruption to the authorities risk retaliation or other negative consequences (Figure 3).
- More than two-thirds (67%) of citizens say “most” or “all” police officials are corrupt. Almost half see widespread corruption among civil servants (48%) and tax officials (45%) (Figure 4).
- Among Ugandans who had contact with key public services during the previous year, three-quarters (75%) say they had to pay bribes to obtain police assistance. Four in 10 say they had to pay bribes to obtain medical care (42%) or to get a government document (40%) (Figure 5).

#### **Afrobarometer surveys**

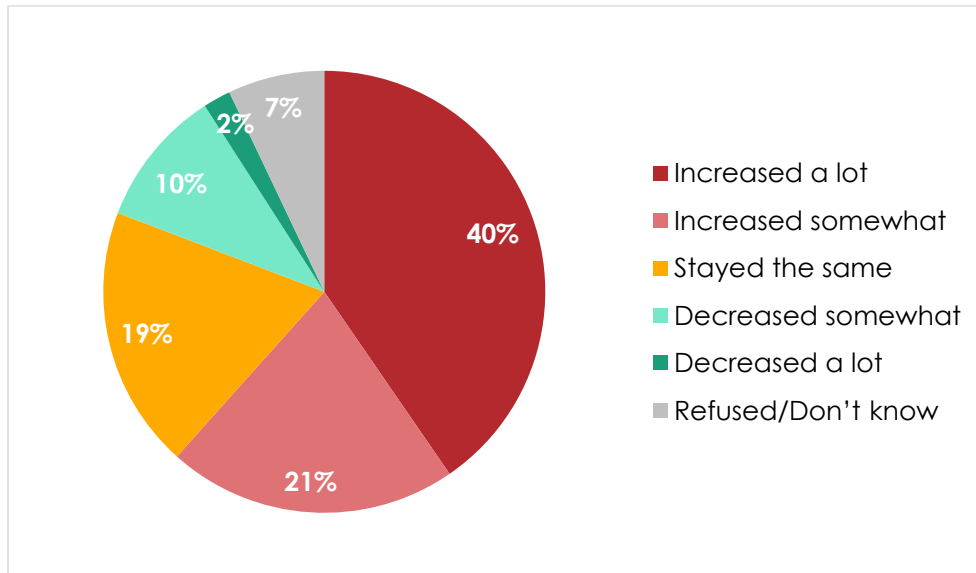
Afrobarometer is a pan-African, nonpartisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Seven rounds of surveys were completed in up to 38 countries between 1999 and 2018. Round 8 surveys in 2019/2021 are planned in at least 35 countries. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples.

The Afrobarometer team in Uganda, led by Hatchile Consult Ltd., interviewed 1,200 adult Ugandans between 30 September and 31 October 2019. A sample of this size yields country-

level results with a margin of error of +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys in Uganda were conducted in 1999, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2015, and 2017.

**Charts**

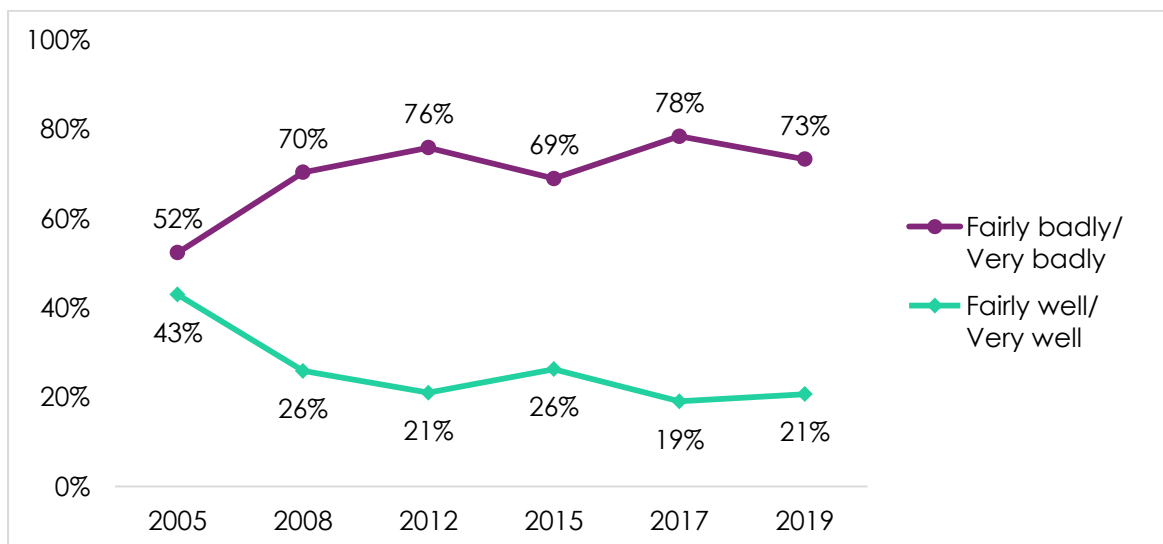
**Figure 1: Perceived level of corruption | Uganda | 2019**



**Respondents were asked:** In your opinion, over the past year, has the level of corruption in this country increased, decreased, or stayed the same?

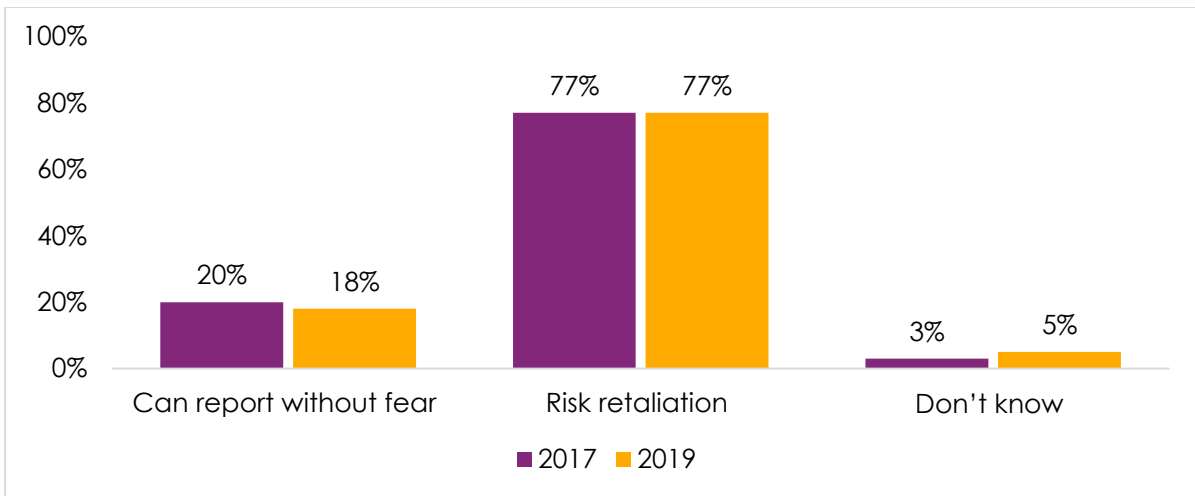
Note: Due to rounding, reported totals may differ by 1 percentage point from the sum of subtotals.

**Figure 2: Government performance in fighting corruption | Uganda | 2019**



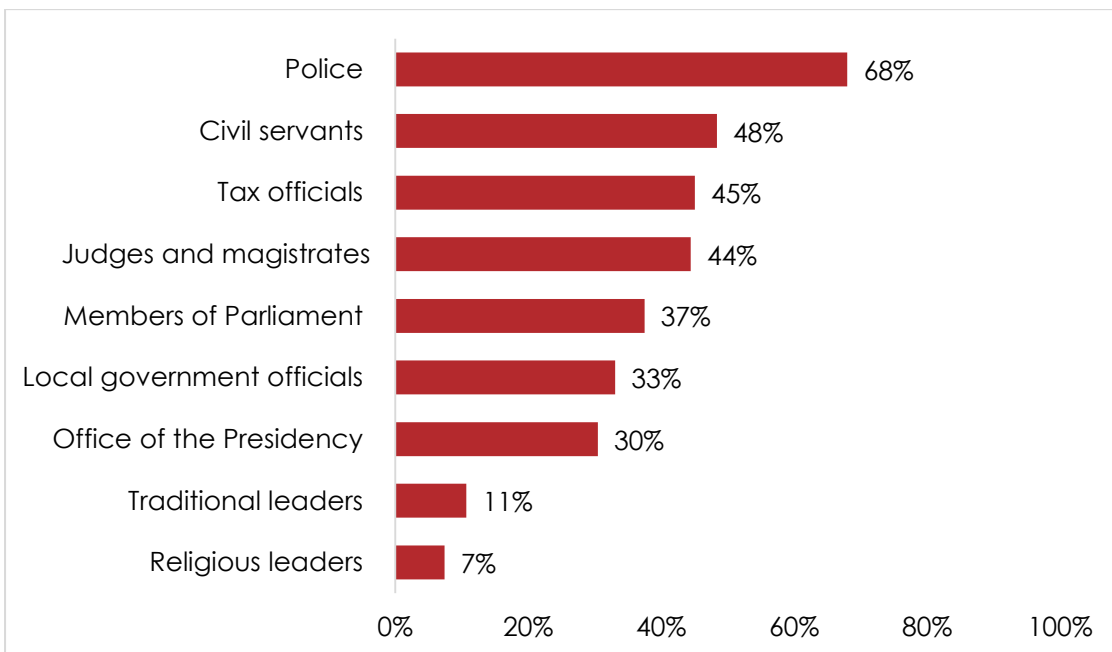
**Respondents were asked:** How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Fighting corruption in government?

**Figure 3: Can people report corruption without fear of retaliation? | Uganda**  
 | 2017-2019



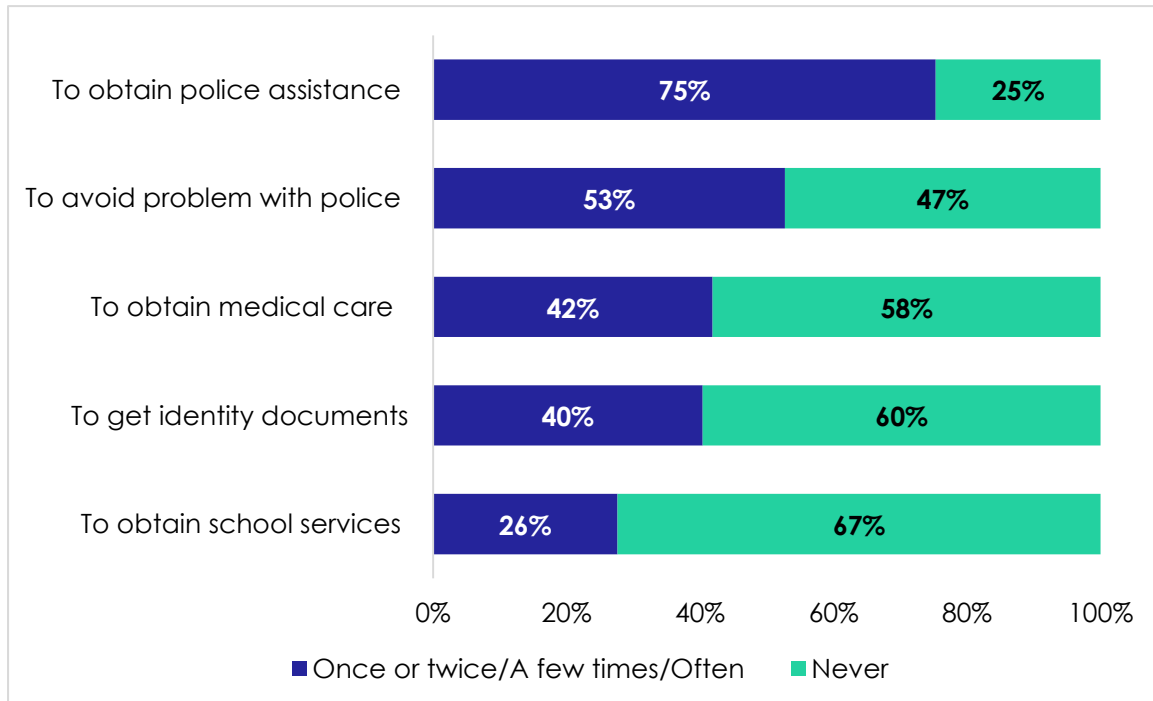
**Respondents were asked:** In this country, can ordinary people report incidents of corruption without fear, or do they risk retaliation or other negative consequences if they speak out?

**Figure 4: Perceived corruption among public officials and leaders | Uganda | 2019**



**Respondents were asked:** How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? (% who say "most" or "all")

**Figure 5: Paid bribe to obtain public services | Uganda | 2019**



**Respondents who said they had contact with key public services were asked:** How often, if ever, did you have to pay a bribe, give a gift, or do a favor for:

A police officer in order to get the assistance you needed?

A police officer in order to avoid a problem?

A health worker or clinic or hospital staff in order to get the medical care you needed?

A government official in order to get the document you needed?

A teacher or school official in order to get the services you needed from the schools?

(Note: Respondents who said they had no contact with these services during the previous year are excluded.)

**For more information, please contact:**

Frederick Golooba-Mutebi  
 National investigator  
 Tel +256 782 673 107  
[golooba@hatchileconsult.com](mailto:golooba@hatchileconsult.com), [fgmutebi@gmail.com](mailto:fgmutebi@gmail.com)

Francis Kibirige  
 Telephone: +256 414 233 847, +256 771 756 465, +256 751 932 082  
[fkibirige@afrobarometer.org](mailto:fkibirige@afrobarometer.org), [francis@hatchileconsult.com](mailto:francis@hatchileconsult.com)

Visit us online at:  
[www.hatchileconsult.com](http://www.hatchileconsult.com)  
[www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org)

Follow our releases on #Voices Africa.

