

Kampala, Uganda
22 April 2021

News release

Despite hydropower surplus, most Ugandans report lack of electricity, Afrobarometer survey shows

Only about half of Ugandans live in zones served by the electric grid, and only a quarter live in households that are connected to the grid, Afrobarometer survey findings show.

More households use solar energy than electricity from the national grid. Lack of access and connection to the national electric grid is especially common for the poorest citizens, rural residents, and those in the Northern and Western regions. Even so, citizens' ratings of the government's performance on providing reliable electricity have improved significantly.

These findings, presented in greater detail in Afrobarometer [Dispatch No. 441](#), suggest that the government's plans, policies, and programs, while appreciated by citizens, require accelerated implementation to achieve widespread access and lower electricity costs.

Key findings

- The proportion of Ugandans who live in zones served by the national electric grid has doubled since 2005, from 24% to 49% (Figure 1).
- Only one in four Ugandans (26%) live in households that are connected to the national power grid (Figure 2). Poor citizens and residents in rural areas and in the Northern region are least likely to be connected.
- Among those who are connected to the grid, more than two-thirds (68%) say their electricity works "most of the time" or "all the of time" (Figure 3).
- About four in 10 citizens (38%) live in households that use electric power from sources other than the national grid (Figure 4). More households use solar energy (33%) than electricity from the national grid.
- Despite low rates of connection to the electric grid, citizens' assessments of the government's performance continue to climb: A majority (58%) of Ugandans say the government is doing a good job of providing a reliable supply of electricity (Figure 5).

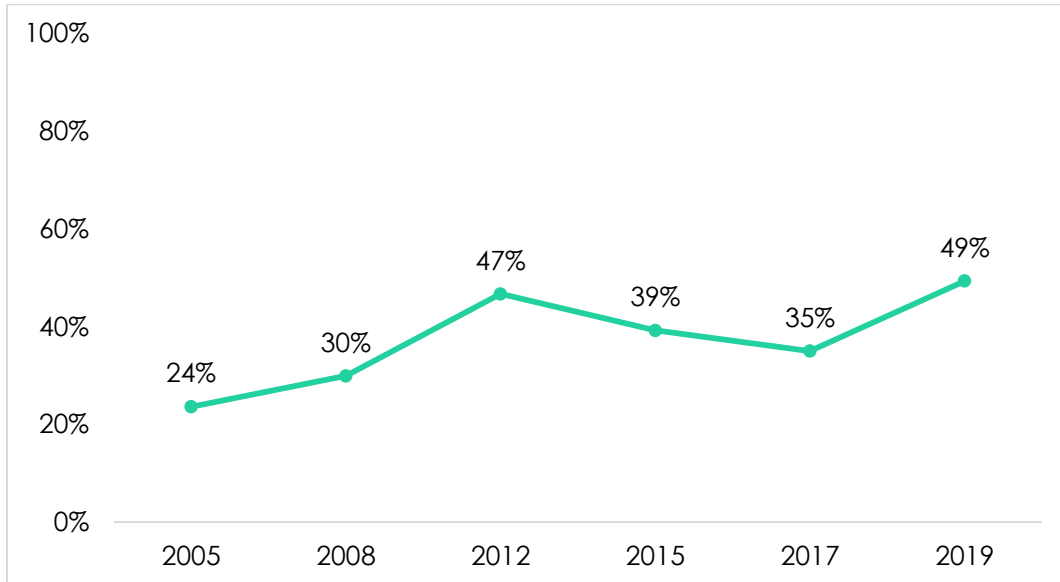
Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, nonpartisan survey research network that has provided reliable data on experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life in 38 African countries since 1999. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples.

This dispatch draws mainly on findings from a survey in September-October 2019 led by Hatchile Consult, which interviewed a nationally representative, random, stratified probability sample of 1,200 adult Ugandans. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.

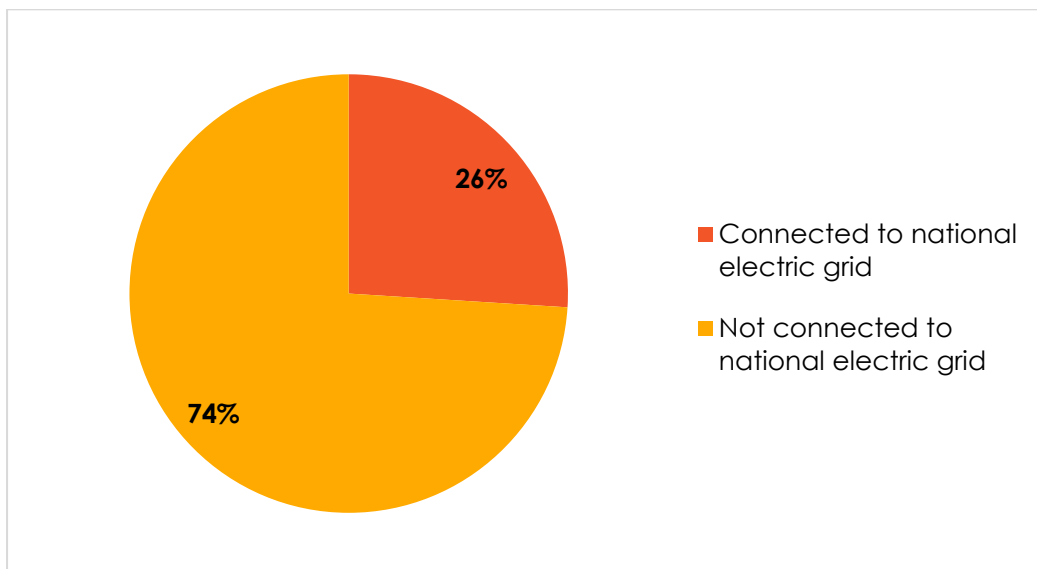
Charts

Figure 1: Presence of electricity grid | Uganda | 2005-2019



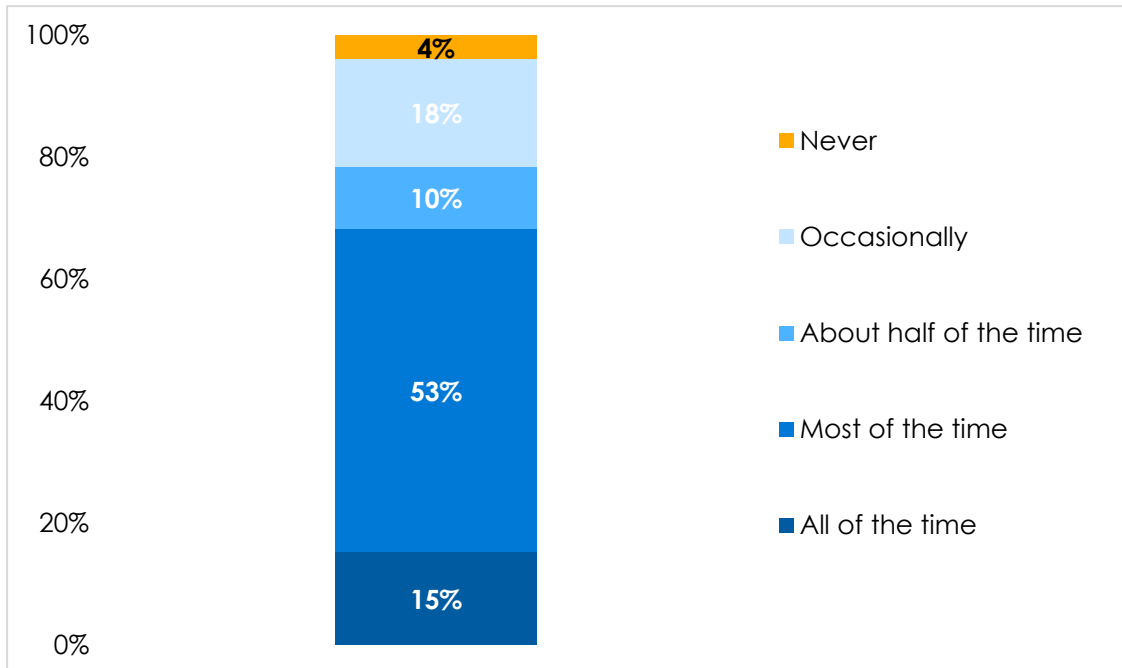
Survey enumerators were asked to record: Are the following services present in the primary sampling unit/enumeration area: Electricity grid that most houses can access? (% "yes")

Figure 2: Connection to the national electric grid | Uganda | 2019



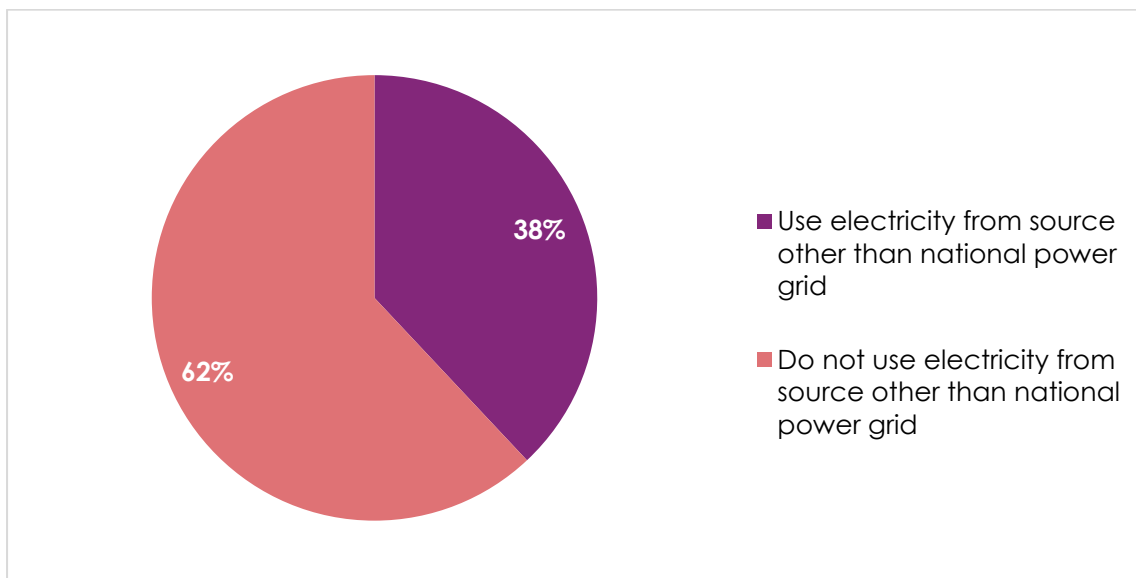
Respondents were asked: Do you have an electric connection to your home from the national power grid?

Figure 3: How often is electricity power available? | Uganda | 2019



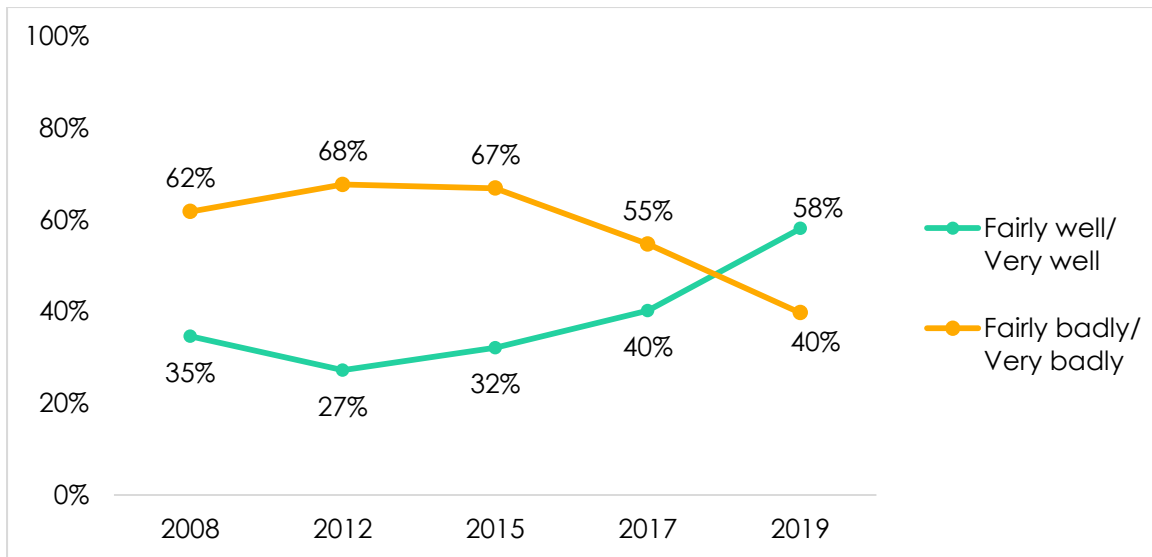
Respondents who said they have a connection to the national electric grid were asked: How often is electricity actually available from this connection? (Respondents without a connection to the national grid are excluded.)

Figure 4: Connection to other sources of electric power | Uganda | 2019



Respondents were asked: Does your house use electric power from any source other than the national power grid?

Figure 5: Government performance in provision of reliable electricity supply
 | Uganda | 2008-2019



Respondents were asked: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling providing a reliable supply of electricity, or haven't you heard enough to say?

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