

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
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News release

Ethiopians dissatisfied with government economic performance, new Afrobarometer study shows

Ethiopians are overwhelmingly dissatisfied with their government's performance with regard to keeping prices stable, narrowing gaps between rich and poor, and other economic issues, a new Afrobarometer analysis shows.

While citizens provide mixed assessments of the country economic situation and their personal living conditions, significant proportions of the population frequently went without a cash income, enough clean water, medical care, and other basic necessities of life during the year preceding the survey. More than half experienced moderate or high levels of lived poverty.

Despite enjoying impressive economic growth, Ethiopia remains one of the poorest countries in the world, with a per capita annual income that the government estimates at \$883. Moreover, economic growth is forecast to slow due to recent civil conflict and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key findings

- Ethiopians are evenly divided in their assessments of the country's economic conditions: 45% say they are "fairly good" or "very good," while 44% describe them as bad (Figure 1).
 - Negative assessments of the economy are particularly common among the poorest citizens (58%) and among residents of Tigray regional state (72%) and Addis Ababa (71%).
- Half (49%) of Ethiopians say economic conditions have worsened over the past year. But half (50%) also believe they will improve over the next 12 months
- Citizens who describe their personal living conditions as "fairly good" or "very good" outnumber those who see them as bad (51% vs. 38%) (Figure 2).
- Significant proportions of the population experienced lived poverty (shortages of basic life necessities). More than eight in 10 respondents (86%) say they went without a cash income at least once during the previous year, including 40% who did so "often" or "always" (Figure 3).
 - Many also frequently went without enough clean water (32%), medical care (24%), enough food (10%), and enough cooking fuel (13%).
- Based on the frequency of these shortages, a majority (54%) of Ethiopians suffered moderate or high levels of lived poverty during the previous year, while four in 10 (39%) experienced lower levels of deprivation. Only 7% avoided any experience of lived poverty (Figure 4).

- By large majorities, citizens say the government is doing a “fairly bad” or “very bad” job of keeping prices stable, helping the poor, and handling other economic issues (Figure 5).

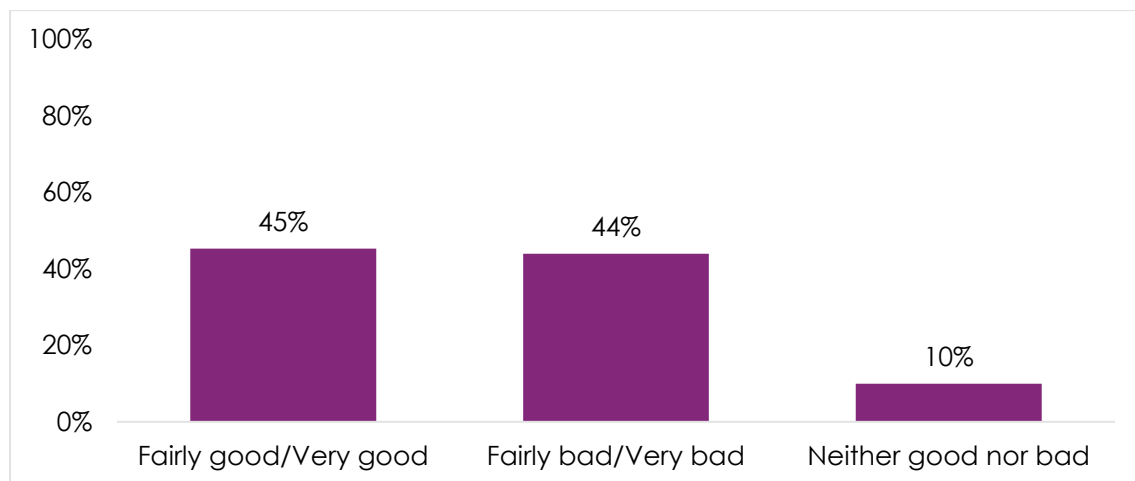
Afrobarometer surveys

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.

These findings are drawn from a survey of 2,400 adult citizens conducted in December 2019-January 2020 by ABCON Research & Consulting with financial support from Freedom House. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. A previous survey was conducted in Ethiopia in 2013.

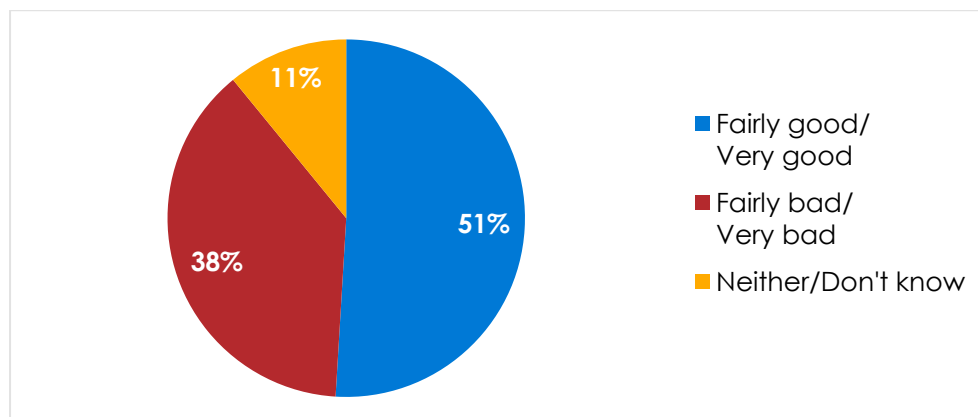
Charts

Figure 1: Country’s economic conditions | Ethiopia | 2020



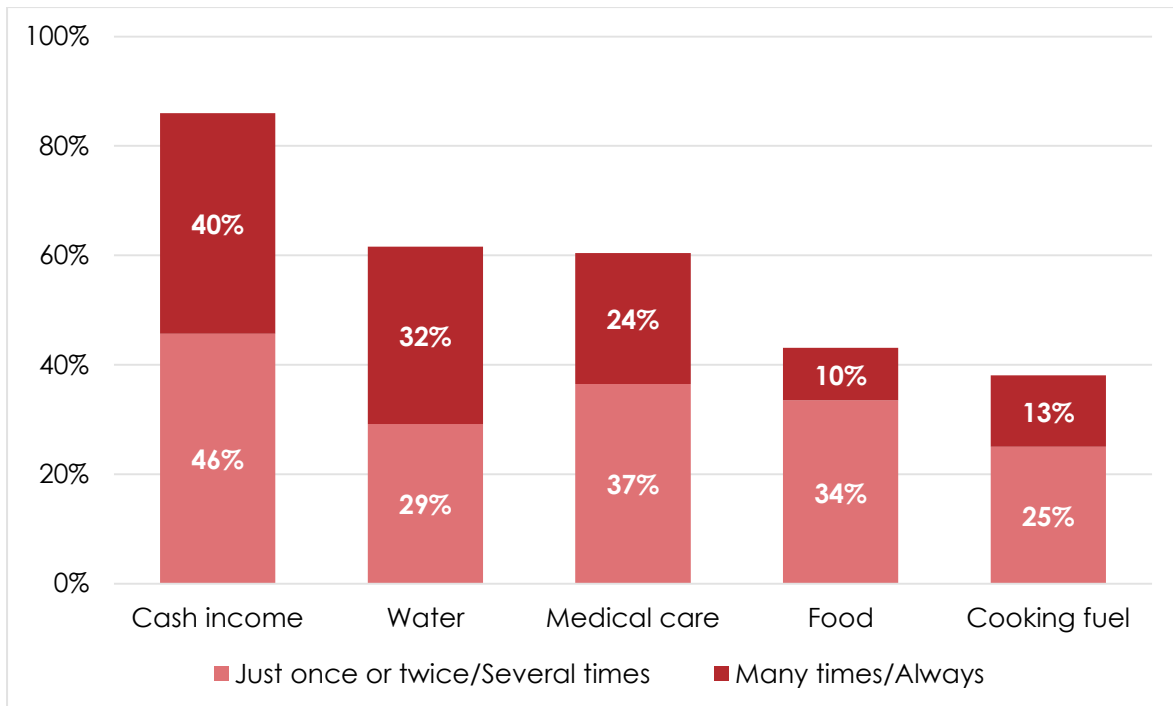
Respondents were asked: *In general, how would you describe the present economic conditions of the country?*

Figure 2: Personal living conditions | Ethiopia | 2020



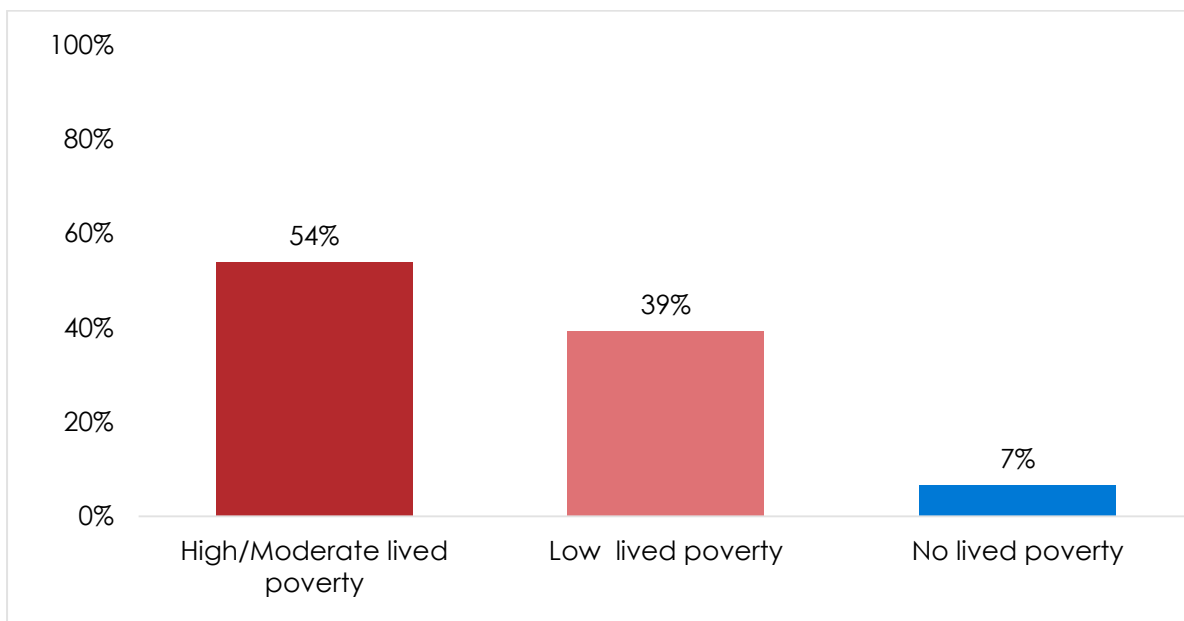
Respondents were asked: *In general, how would you describe your own present living conditions?*

Figure 3: Went without basic necessities in the past year | Ethiopia | 2020



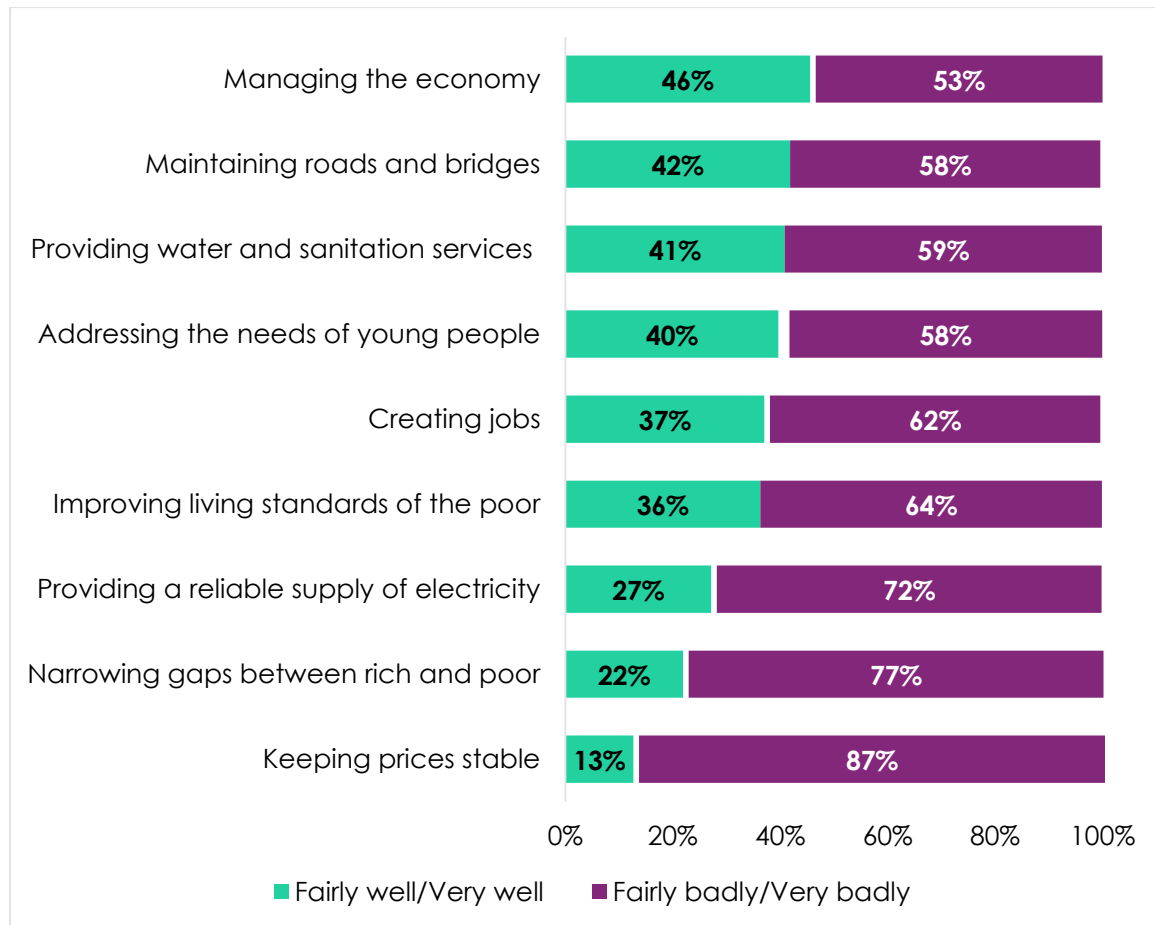
Respondents were asked: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family gone without: Enough food to eat? Enough clean water for home use? Medicines or medical treatment? Enough fuel to cook your food? A cash income?

Figure 4: Lived Poverty Index (LPI) | Ethiopia | 2020



The Lived Poverty Index is calculated based on the frequency with which respondents and their families went without enough food, enough clean water, medical care, enough cooking fuel, and a cash income during the previous year.

Figure 5: Government performance on economic issues | Ethiopia | 2020



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?

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