

Kampala, Uganda
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News release

Many Ugandans question value of elections in ensuring representation and accountability, Afrobarometer survey shows

Substantial proportions of Uganda's electorate don't see voting as an effective way to ensure that their views are represented and to hold leaders accountable, the latest Afrobarometer survey shows.

And almost half say that communities that don't vote for the ruling party may suffer negative consequences.

While the share of citizens who say elections enable voters to remove non-performing leaders has grown to a majority, almost four in 10 still disagree.

Ahead of the 2021 general elections, how voters perceive the impact of their vote is of paramount importance to the electoral exercise as well as its outcomes.

Key findings

- A majority (58%) of Ugandans say that elections work “well” or “very well” to enable voters to remove non-performing leaders, a 9-percentage-point increase from 2005 (Figure 1). But almost four out of 10 (37%) disagree.
- Only about half (49%) of Ugandans think that elections work well to ensure that people's views are represented in Parliament. The perception that elections ensure representation is lowest in the Central (32%) and Eastern (42%) regions, in urban areas (39%), and among supporters of opposition political parties (45%) (Figure 2).
- More than four in 10 Ugandans (44%) say that communities that do not vote for the ruling party “sometimes,” “often,” or “always” suffer negative consequences, such as lack of government support for local services or development projects (Figure 3). This view is strongest in the Central (54%) and Eastern (50%) regions, in urban areas (51%), among the youth (50%), and among opposition supporters (58%) (Figure 4).

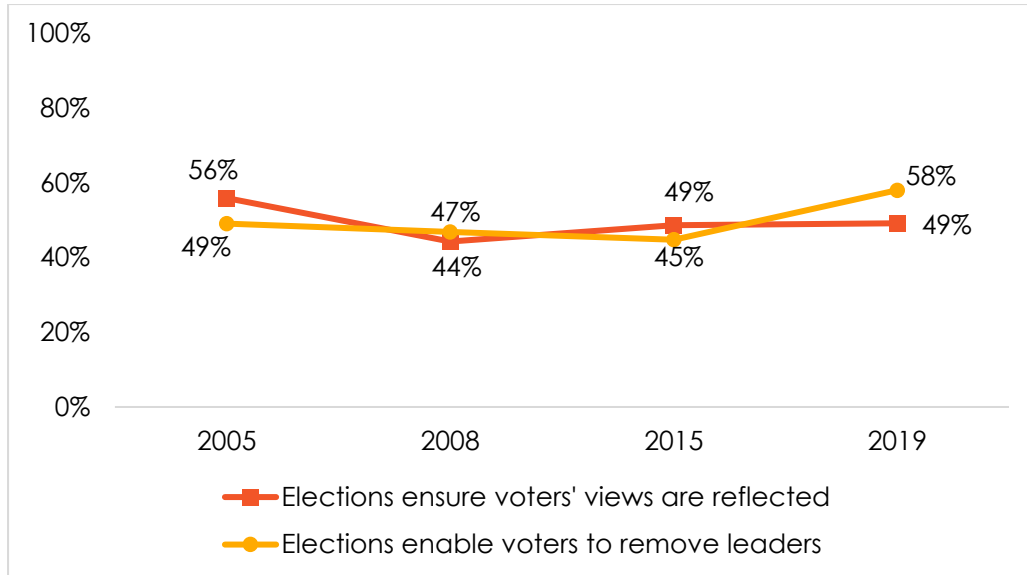
Afrobarometer surveys

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 Limited, 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, 2014, and 2017.

Charts

Figure 1: Efficacy of elections | Uganda | 2005-2019



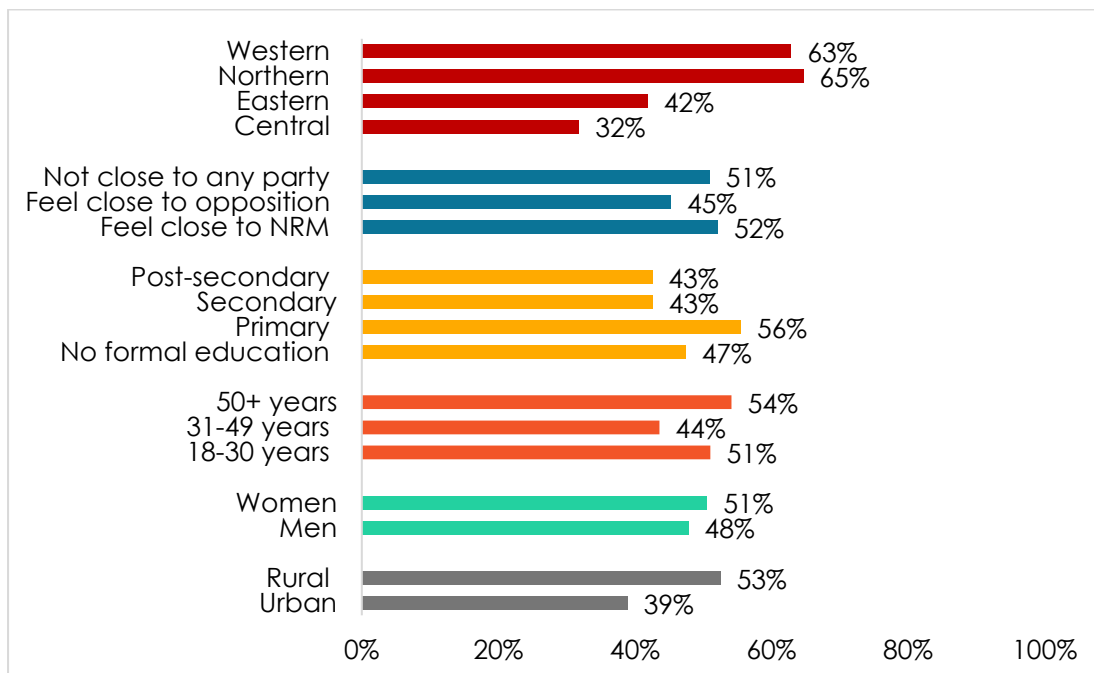
Respondents were asked: Think about how elections work in practice in this country. How well do elections:

Ensure that representatives to Parliament reflect the views of voters?

Enable voters to remove from office leaders who do not do what the people want?

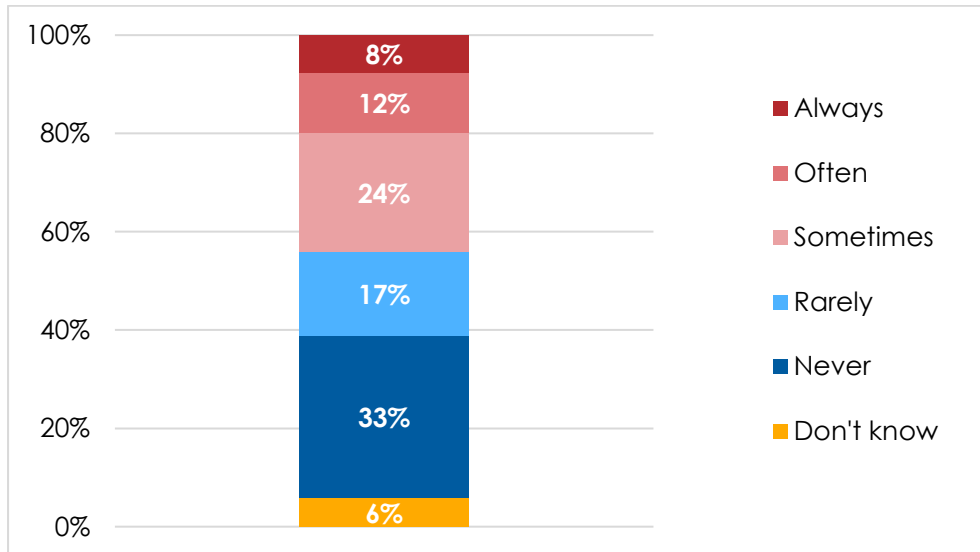
(% who say "well" or "very well")

Figure 2: Elections ensure representation | by socio-demographic group | Uganda | 2019



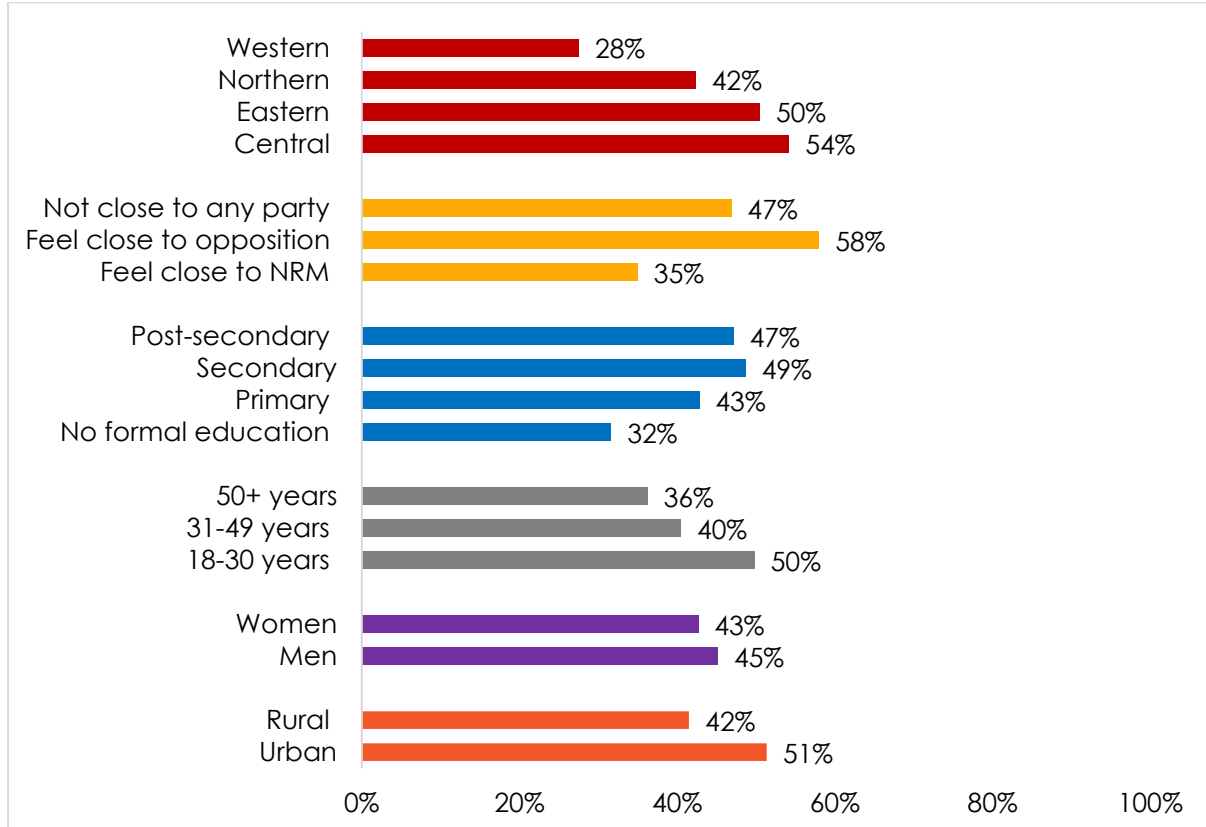
Respondents were asked: Think about how elections work in practice in this country. How well do elections ensure that representatives to Parliament reflect the views of voters? (% who say "well" or "very well")

Figure 3: Vote choice and consequences | Uganda | 2019



Respondents were asked: How often do you think that communities that do not vote for the ruling party suffer negative consequences, such as lack of government support for local services or development projects?

Figure 4: Vote choice and consequences | by socio-demographic group | Uganda | 2019



Respondents were asked: How often do you think that communities that do not vote for the ruling party suffer negative consequences, such as lack of government support for local services or development projects? (% who say "sometimes," "often," or "always")

For more information, please contact:

Frederick Golooba-Mutebi
National investigator
Tel +256 782 673 107
golooba@hatchileconsult.com, fgmutebi@gmail.com

Francis Kibirige
Telephone: +256 414 233 847, +256 771756465, +256 751 932 082
fkibirige@afrobarometer.org, francis@hatchileconsult.com

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