

Advison Lesotho
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News release

Most Basotho say government bungled teacher strike, is failing on education and youth

Most Basotho say the government is doing a poor job on education and youth, including mishandling its protracted dispute with public school teachers, the latest Afrobarometer survey shows.

Citizens overwhelmingly support the teachers, who were on intermittent strike for much of 2019 and continue to demand better salaries and working conditions.

The survey also shows that a majority of Basotho expect more effective government action to address the needs of youth and would willingly pay more taxes if that would mean funding for initiatives to help young people, especially through job creation.

These findings suggest that Basotho want a less intransigent government response that will end the long-running dispute with teachers and address critical education and youth development needs of the population.

Key findings

- Seven in 10 Basotho (71%) believe the government has handled the dispute with teachers badly (Figure 1).
- An overwhelming majority (81%) of Basotho support the teachers' action, including 70% who say they "strongly support" it (Figure 2).
- About eight in 10 Basotho see the government's efforts in addressing educational needs (77%) and the needs of youth (81%) as inadequate (Figure 1).
- Six in 10 citizens (60%) say they would favour paying higher taxes in order to support programs to help young people (Figure 3).
- If the government could increase its spending on programs to help young people, job-creation initiatives would be citizens' highest priority (Figure 4).

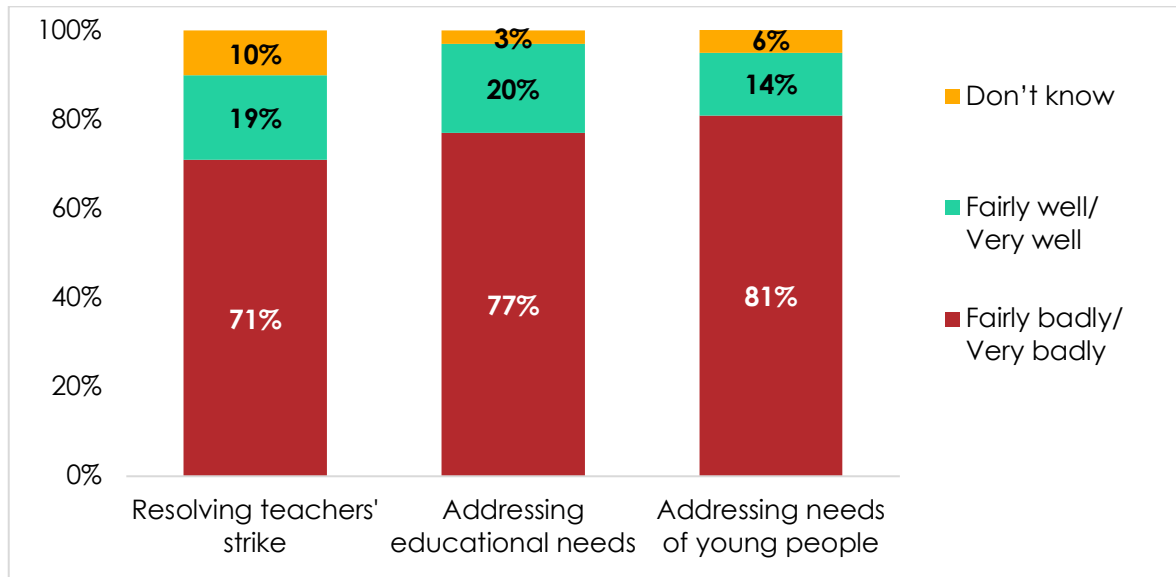
Afrobarometer surveys

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 are planned in at least 35 countries in 2019/2020. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples.

The Afrobarometer team in Lesotho, led by Advison Lesotho, interviewed 1,200 adult Basotho in February-March 2020. 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 were conducted in Lesotho in 2000, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, and 2017.

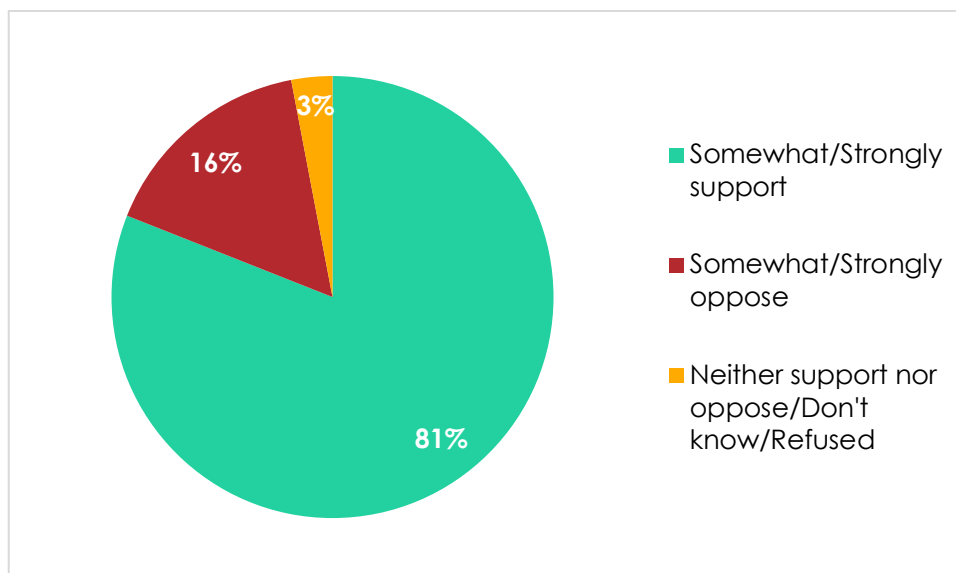
Charts

Figure 1: Government handling of teachers' strike, educational needs, and needs of youth | Lesotho | 2020



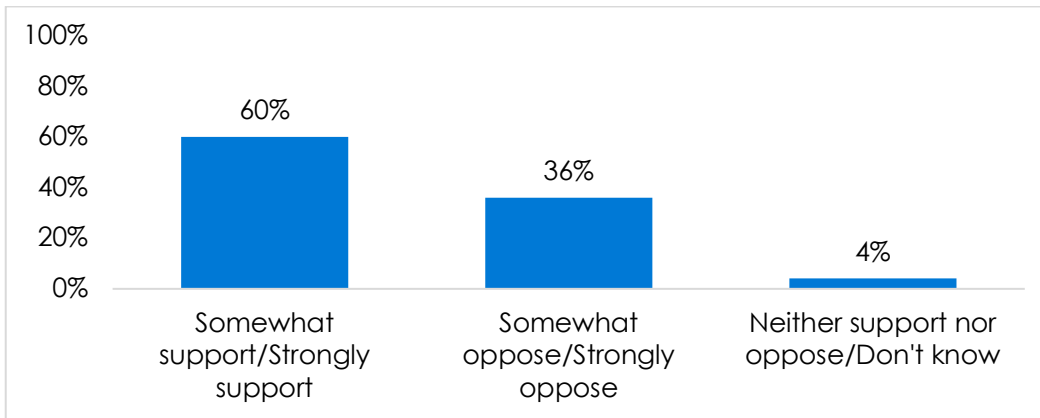
Respondents were asked: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Addressing educational needs? Addressing the needs of young people? Resolving the teachers' industrial action?

Figure 2: Support for teachers' strike | Lesotho | 2020



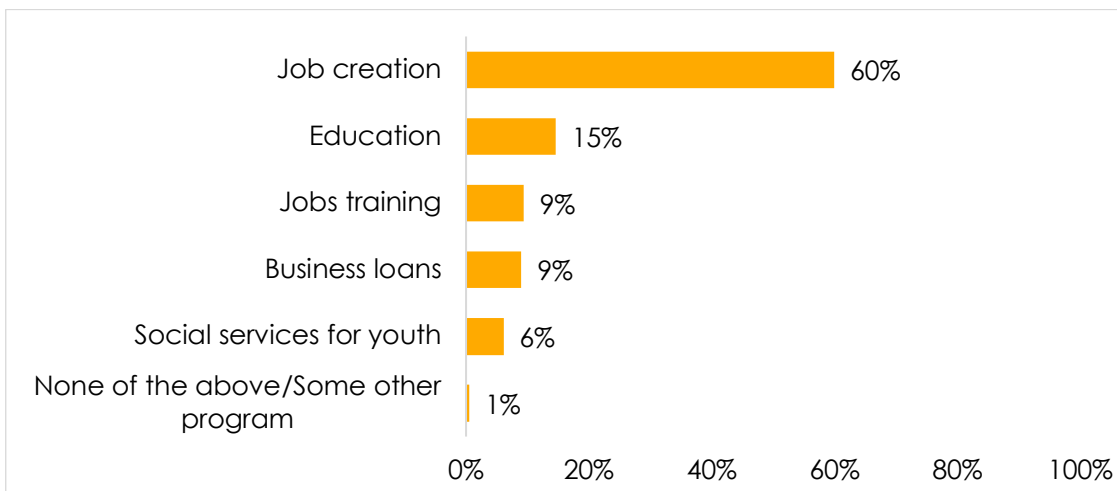
Respondents were asked: Over the past 12 months, Lesotho has experienced a long-standing industrial action by teachers demanding higher wages. Do you support or oppose this industrial action by teachers, or have you not heard enough to say?

Figure 3: Higher taxes to support youth programs? | Lesotho | 2020



Respondents were asked: *If the government decided to make people pay more taxes in order to support programs to help young people, would you support this decision or oppose it?*

Figure 4: Youth programs with highest priority for additional investment | Lesotho | 2020



Respondents were asked: *If the government could increase its spending on programs to help young people, which of the following areas do you think should be the highest priority for additional investment?*

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