

Kampala, Uganda
30 March 2021

News release

COVID-19 impact? Ugandans grow more discontent with economic and living conditions, Afrobarometer study shows

Ugandans' assessments of the country's economy and their personal living conditions worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic, wiping out gains between 2017 and 2019, according to the most recent Afrobarometer survey in Uganda.

Poor and older citizens, rural residents, and those living in the Northern and Eastern regions were more affected than their counterparts.

More than half of citizens said the pandemic caused a household member to lose a job, a business, or a primary source of income. Overall, a majority of Ugandans gave their government poor marks on improving the living standards of the poor and job creation, and most saw its economic policies as harmful rather than beneficial.

Key findings

- Ugandans' economic outlook worsened during the year of the pandemic (Figure 1):
 - A majority (58%) described the country's economic condition as "fairly" or "very" bad, a 12-percentage-point increase from 2019.
 - Half (51%) described their personal living conditions as fairly/very bad, a 10-percentage-point increase from 2019.
- More than half (54%) of Ugandans reported that someone in their household lost a job, a business, or a primary source of income as a result of the pandemic (Figure 2).
- Six in 10 Ugandans (62%) experienced moderate or high levels of lived poverty (shortages of basic necessities) during the previous year (Figure 3).
- Majorities rated the government's performance on job creation (72%) and improving the living standards of the poor (59%) as "fairly bad" or "very bad" (Figure 4).
- And three-fourths (75%) of Ugandans said the government's economic policies have hurt most people and benefited only a few (Figure 5).

Afrobarometer surveys

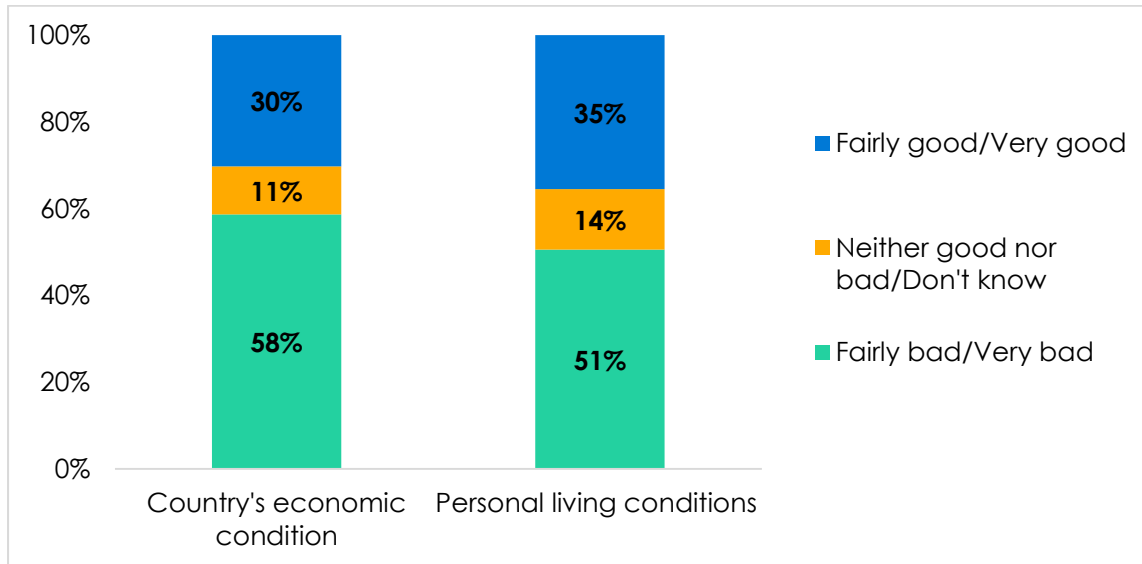
Afrobarometer is a pan-African, nonpartisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Seven rounds of surveys were completed in up to 38 countries between 1999 and 2018. Round 8 surveys in 2019/2021 are planned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

With financial support from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Uganda, the Afrobarometer team in Uganda, led by Hatchile Consult Limited, interviewed 2,400 adult Ugandans between 22 December 2020 and 7 January 2021. A sample of this size yields

country-level results with a margin of error of +/-2 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. This was the 11th Afrobarometer survey in Uganda since 1999.

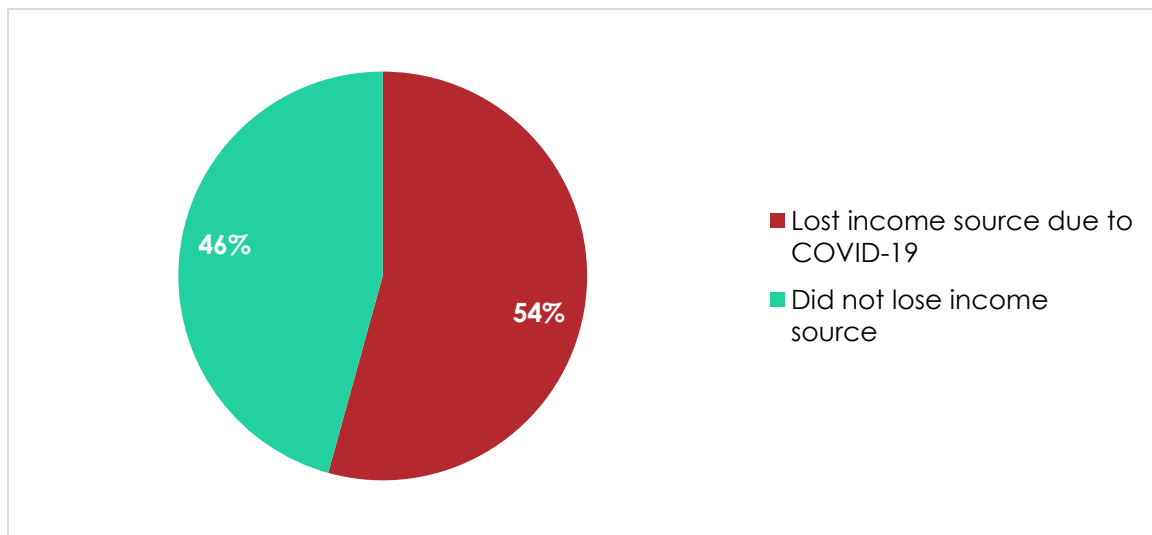
Charts

Figure 1: Personal living and country's economic condition | Uganda | 2021



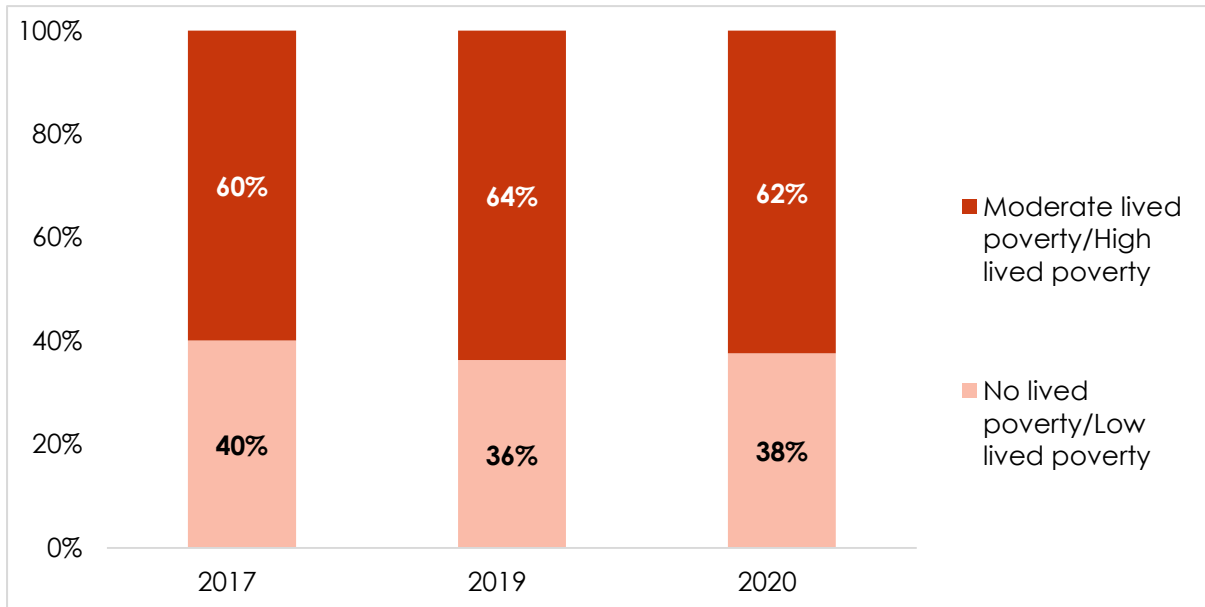
Respondents were asked: In general, how would you describe: The present economic condition of this country? Your own present living conditions?

Figure 2: Loss of income due to pandemic | Uganda | 2021



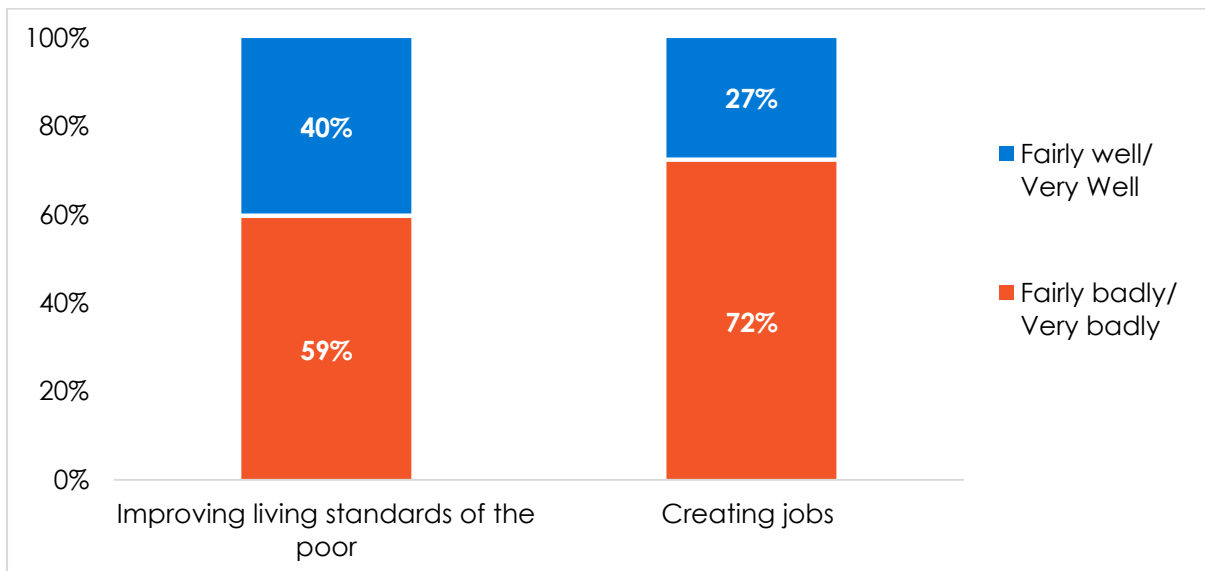
Respondents were asked: Please tell me if you personally or any other member of your household have been affected in any of the following ways by the COVID-19 pandemic: Temporarily or permanently lost a job, business, or primary source of income?

Figure 3: Going without basic necessities | Uganda | 2017-2021



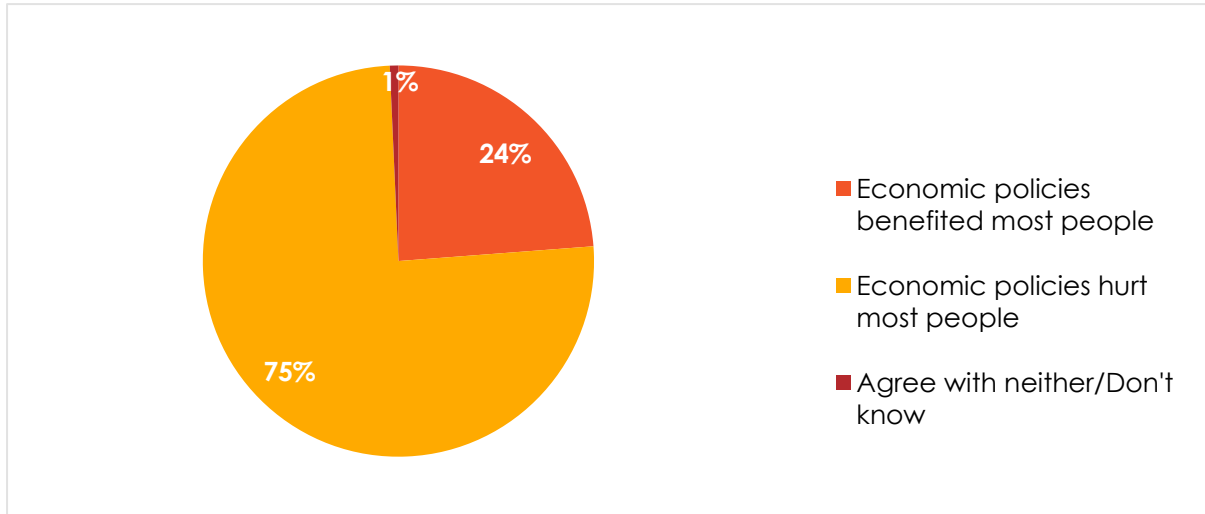
Respondents were asked: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family gone without: Enough food to eat? Enough clean water for home use? Medicines or medical treatment? Enough fuel to cook your food? A cash income?

Figure 4: Evaluation of government performance on economic issues | Uganda | 2021



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?

Figure 5: Have government's economic policies helped or hurt? | Uganda | 2021



Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 Statement 1: The government's economic policies have helped most people; only a few have suffered.
 Statement 2: The government's economic policies have hurt most people and only benefited a few.
 (% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with each statement)

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