



Harare, Zimbabwe
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News release

Zimbabweans endorse government's COVID-19 response but voice concerns about corruption and lack of assistance

A new Afrobarometer survey shows that even though almost half of Zimbabwean households lost a primary source of income during the COVID-19 pandemic, most citizens approve of the government's overall management of the pandemic. Most Zimbabweans endorse lockdowns and school closures as painful but necessary.

But very few report receiving pandemic-related assistance from the government, and a majority believe that COVID-19 resources were lost to government corruption.

A majority doubt the government's ability to ensure that COVID-19 vaccines are safe, and fewer than half say they are likely to try to get vaccinated.

Key findings

- Even though almost half (47%) of Zimbabweans say their household lost a primary source of income during the pandemic and more than three-fourths (77%) say it was difficult to comply with lockdown/curfew restrictions, most citizens (81%) support the restrictions as necessary (Figure 1).
- The same majority (81%) agree with the government's decision to close the schools, although most (85%) say they should have reopened sooner (Figure 2).
- Only one in 10 citizens (10%) say their household received pandemic-related assistance from the government (Figure 3). More than four in 10 (43%) say the distribution of government assistance was unfair.
- More than eight in 10 Zimbabweans approve of the government's performance in managing the pandemic (81%) and keeping the public informed (84%). But a majority (54%) believe that "some" or "a lot" of the resources available for responding to the pandemic were lost to government corruption (Figure 4).
- Only four in 10 citizens (42%) say they trust the government to ensure that COVID-19 vaccines are safe, and only about half (47%) say they are likely to try to get vaccinated (Figure 5).

Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Seven rounds of surveys were conducted in up to 38 countries between 1999 and 2018. Round 8 surveys (2019/2021) cover 34 countries. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Zimbabwe, led by the Mass Public Opinion Institute (MPOI), interviewed 1,200 adult citizens of Zimbabwe in April 2021. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/- 3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous standard Afrobarometer surveys were conducted in Zimbabwe in 1999, 2004, 2005, 2009, 2012, 2014, and 2017.

Charts

Figure 1: Support for lockdown | Zimbabwe | 2021

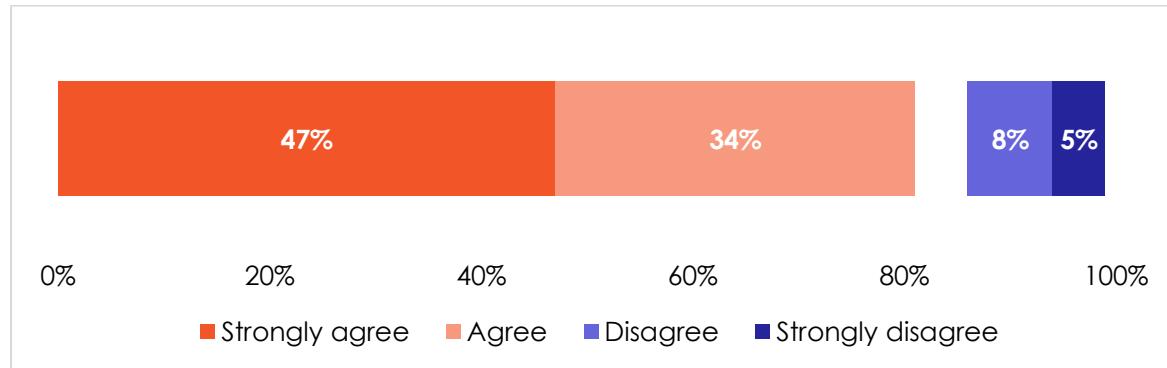


Figure 2: Length of school closure | Zimbabwe | 2021

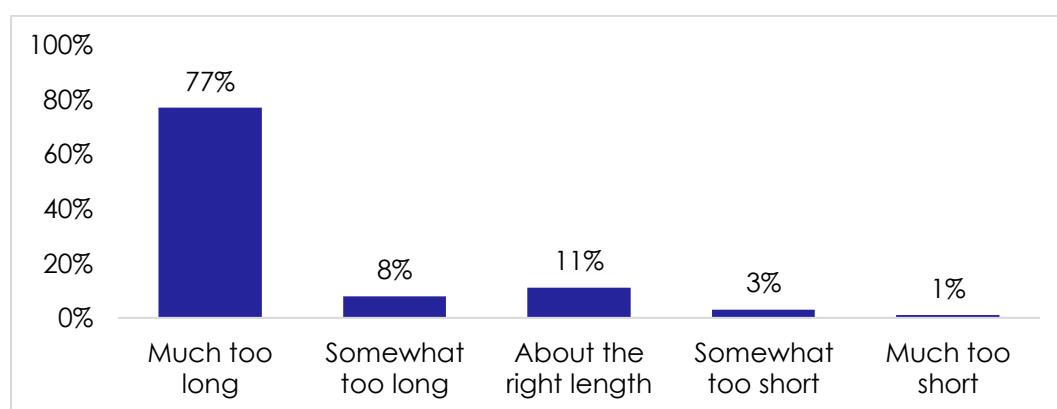


Figure 3: Received government assistance | Zimbabwe | 2021

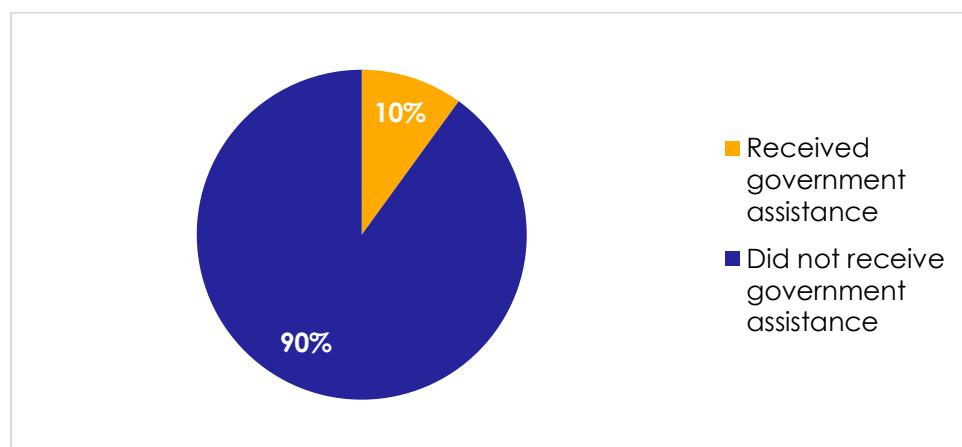
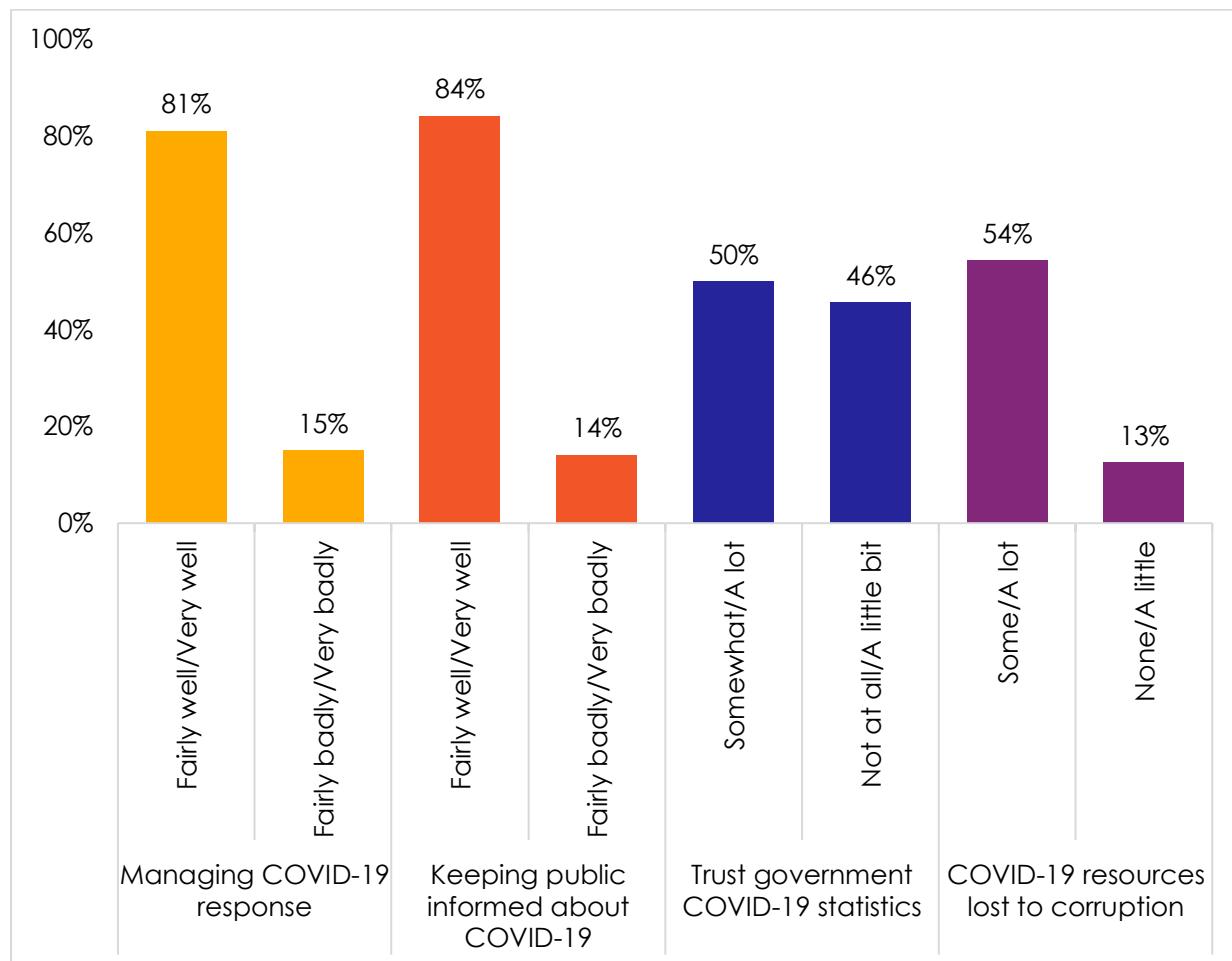


Figure 4: Assessment of government efforts during the pandemic | Zimbabwe | 2021



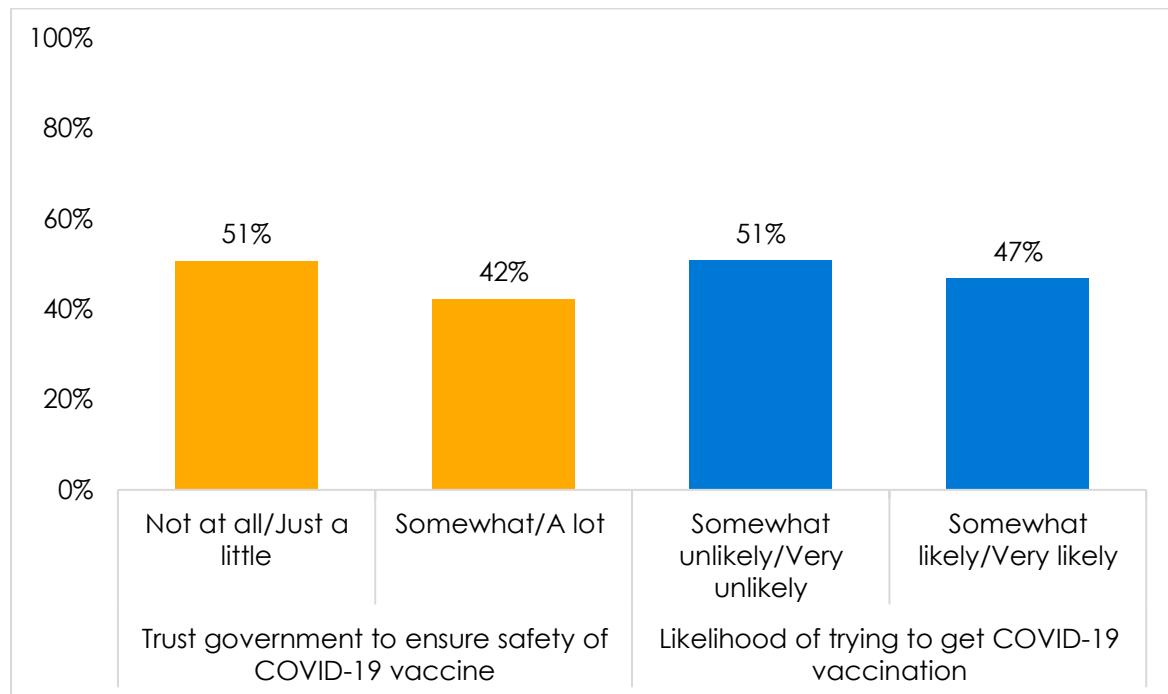
Respondents were asked:

How well or badly would you say the current government has handled the following matters since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, or haven't you heard enough to say: Managing the response to the COVID-19 pandemic? Keeping the public informed about COVID-19?

How much do you trust the official statistics provided by government on the number of infections and deaths due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Considering all of the funds and resources that were available to the government for combating and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, how much do you think was lost or stolen due to corruption among government officials?

Figure 5: Attitudes toward COVID-19 vaccines | Zimbabwe | 2021



Respondents were asked:

How much do you trust the government to ensure that any vaccine for COVID-19 that is developed or offered to Zimbabwean citizens is safe before it is used in this country?
 If a vaccine for COVID-19 becomes available and the government says it is safe, how likely are you to try to get vaccinated?

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