



Nairobi, Kenya
25 March 2022

News release

Kenyans see government failing on their top priorities – the economy and corruption, Afrobarometer survey shows

Kenyans see the economy and corruption as the most important problems facing the country, and most say the government is doing a poor job on both, the latest Afrobarometer survey findings show.

Management of the economy and corruption top the list of problems that Kenyans want the government to address, ahead of unemployment, health, and crime/security.

But most survey respondents give the government a failing grade on these priority issues.

As the country gears up for elections in August 2022, these findings suggest that the government's ability to address economic problems and corruption may be a key issue for voters.

Key findings

- Management of economy tops the list of important problems that Kenyans want their government to address, followed by corruption, health, unemployment, and crime/security (Figure 1).
- Management of the economy climbed from sixth place on citizens' priority list in 2014-2019 to the No. 1 spot in 2021. Corruption has ranked as one of the top two priorities for the past six years (Table 1).
- Very few Kenyans say the government is performing "fairly well" or "very well" on job creation (14%), improving living standards of the poor (16%), managing the economy (17%), and fighting corruption (22%) (Figure 2).
- Citizens' ratings of the government's performance in addressing the economy, fighting corruption, and creating jobs have declined sharply over the past six years (Figure 3).

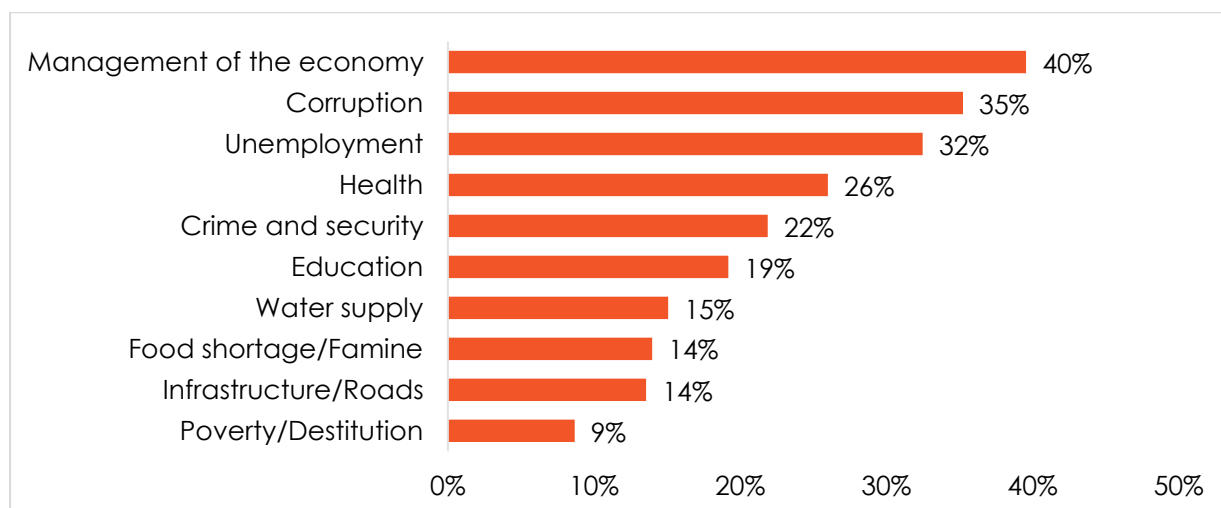
Afrobarometer surveys

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. Eight survey rounds in up to 39 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 9 surveys (2021/2022) are currently underway. Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Kenya, based at the Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi, interviewed 2,400 adult Kenyans in November-December 2021. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-2 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys were conducted in Kenya in 2003, 2005, 2008, 2011, 2014, 2016, and 2019.

Charts

Figure 1: Most important problems facing the country | Kenya | 2021



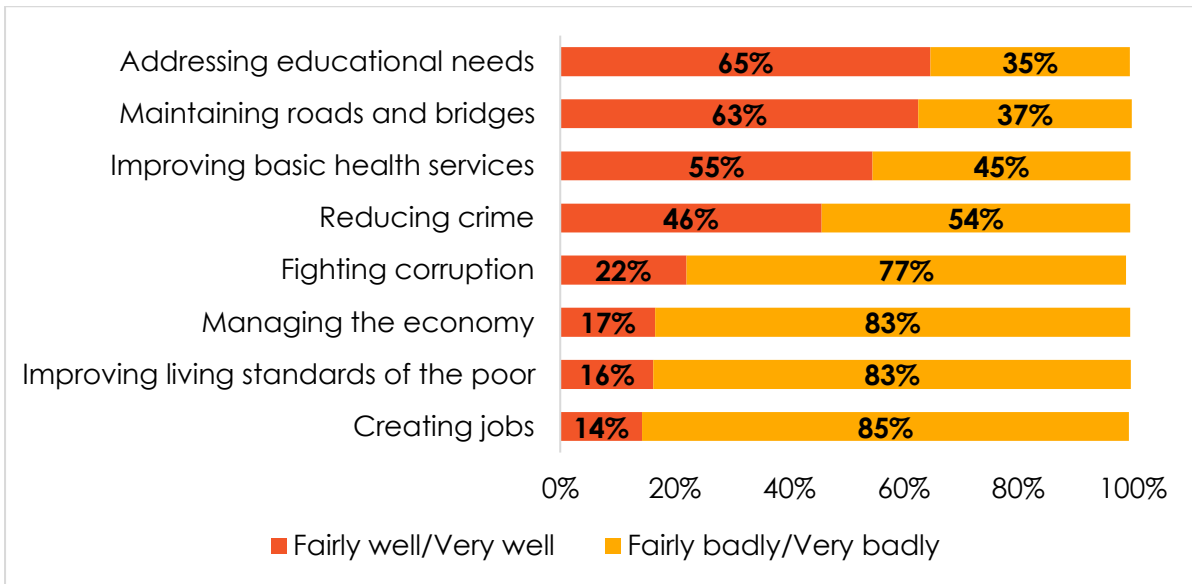
Respondents were asked: In your opinion, what are the most important problems facing this country that government should address? (Respondents could give up to three responses. Chart shows % of respondents who identified each issue as one of Kenya's three most important problems.)

Table 1: Most important problems over time | Kenya | 2014-2021

	2014		2016		2019		2021	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Management of the economy	20%	6	23%	6	20%	6	40%	1
Corruption	15%	10	34%	1	34%	2	35%	2
Unemployment	31%	2	28%	2	29%	3	32%	3
Health	22%	5	25%	4	35%	1	26%	4
Crime and security	40%	1	26%	3	19%	8	22%	5
Education	25%	3	20%	7	26%	4	19%	6
Water supply	20%	7	25%	5	21%	5	15%	7
Food shortage/Famine	20%	8	16%	8	19%	9	14%	8
Infrastructure/Roads	23%	4	15%	9	20%	7	14%	9
Poverty/Destitution	15%	9	14%	10	10%	10	9%	10

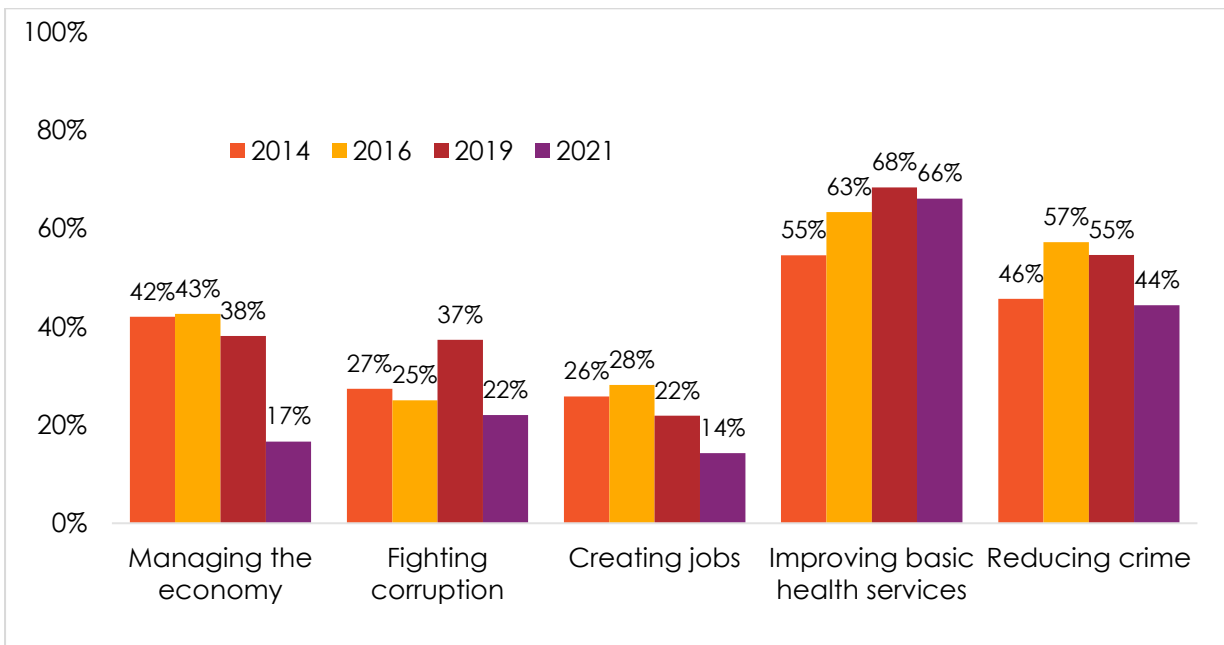
Respondents were asked: In your opinion, what are the most important problems facing this country that government should address? (Respondents could give up to three responses. Table shows % of respondents who identified each issue as one of Kenya's three most important problems.)

Figure 2: Government performance on issues important to Kenyans | Kenya | 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 3: Government performance on issues important to Kenyans | Kenya | 2014-2021



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



For more information, please contact:

Institute for Development Studies (IDS), University of Nairobi
Simon Templer Kodiaga
Afrobarometer communications coordinator, Eastern Africa Region
Tel.: +254 724 434 667
Email: skodiaga@afrobarometer.org | simon.kodiaga@uonbi.ac.ke

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