

Accra, Ghana
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News release

International Youth Day: Majority of Africans – even of youth – consider the ideas of young people secondary to the wisdom of the elders

Almost six in 10 Africans think it is more important to listen to the wisdom of the elders than to the fresh ideas of the youth, Afrobarometer's analysis of data from 34 African countries shows.

The need to pay more attention to the youth is a minority view across key socio-demographic groups – even among youth themselves. Two striking exceptions are Tunisia and Morocco, where about seven in 10 citizens say the country should pay greater attention to the ideas of young people.

Although the survey shows that Africans are grappling with youth unemployment and do not think their governments are doing enough to address the needs of the youth, African youth tend to participate less in most forms of civic action and political engagement.

On International Youth Day, these findings point to the need to intensify advocacy for youth inclusion in policy making.

Key findings

- Almost six in 10 respondents (57%) – including 54% of youth – “agree” or “strongly agree” that in order for their country to do well, “we should listen more to the wisdom of our elders” (Figure 1). Only 38% instead prioritise listening more “to fresh ideas from young people.”
 - Respondents with post-secondary education (52%) and men (40%) and are more likely to emphasise listening to youth than are citizens without formal education (41%) and women (36%).
- Among the 34 countries surveyed between late 2019 and 2021, Tunisia (71%), Morocco (67%), South Africa (56%), Lesotho (56%), Botswana (53%), and Cameroon (51%) are the only countries where a majority of respondents prioritise ideas from the youth (Figure 2).
- Young Africans are, on average, more educated than their elders. A majority (62%) of 18- to 35-year-olds have at least some secondary school, compared to 46% and 31%, respectively, of the middle and senior age brackets.
 - But African youth are also considerably more likely than their elders to be out of work and looking for a job (34% of youth vs. 22% of 36- to 55-year-olds and 12% of those above age 55) (Figure 3).
- Only a minority of Africans say their governments are doing a good job of meeting the needs of youth (28%), creating jobs (21%), and addressing educational needs (46%) (Figure 4).
- The youth are less likely than older citizens to have voted in the last national election (63% among the youth vs. 83% among those over age 55), attended a community

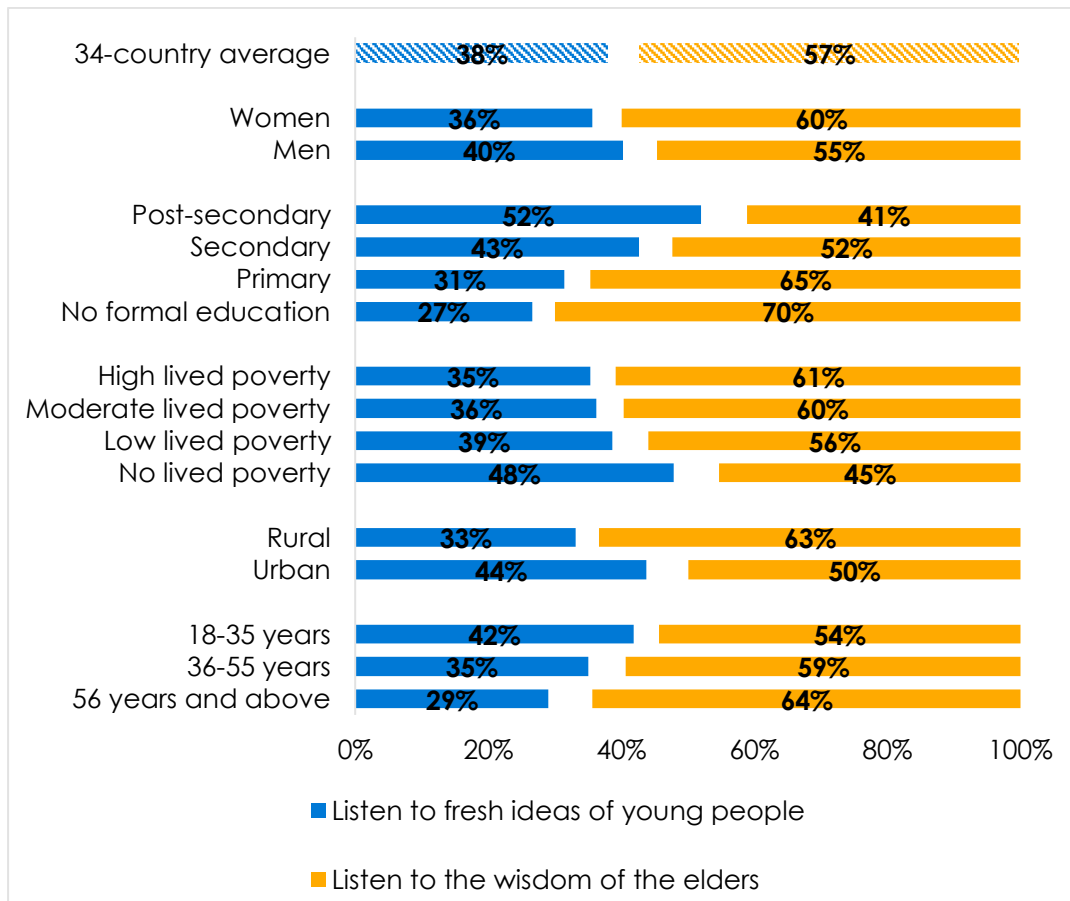
meeting (55% vs. 67%), gotten together with others to raise an issue (51% vs. 60%), and contacted leaders during the previous 12 months (Figure 5).

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. Eight survey rounds in up to 39 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 9 surveys (2021/2022) are currently underway. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples of 1,200 to 2,400 that yield country-level results with margins of error of +/-2 to +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.

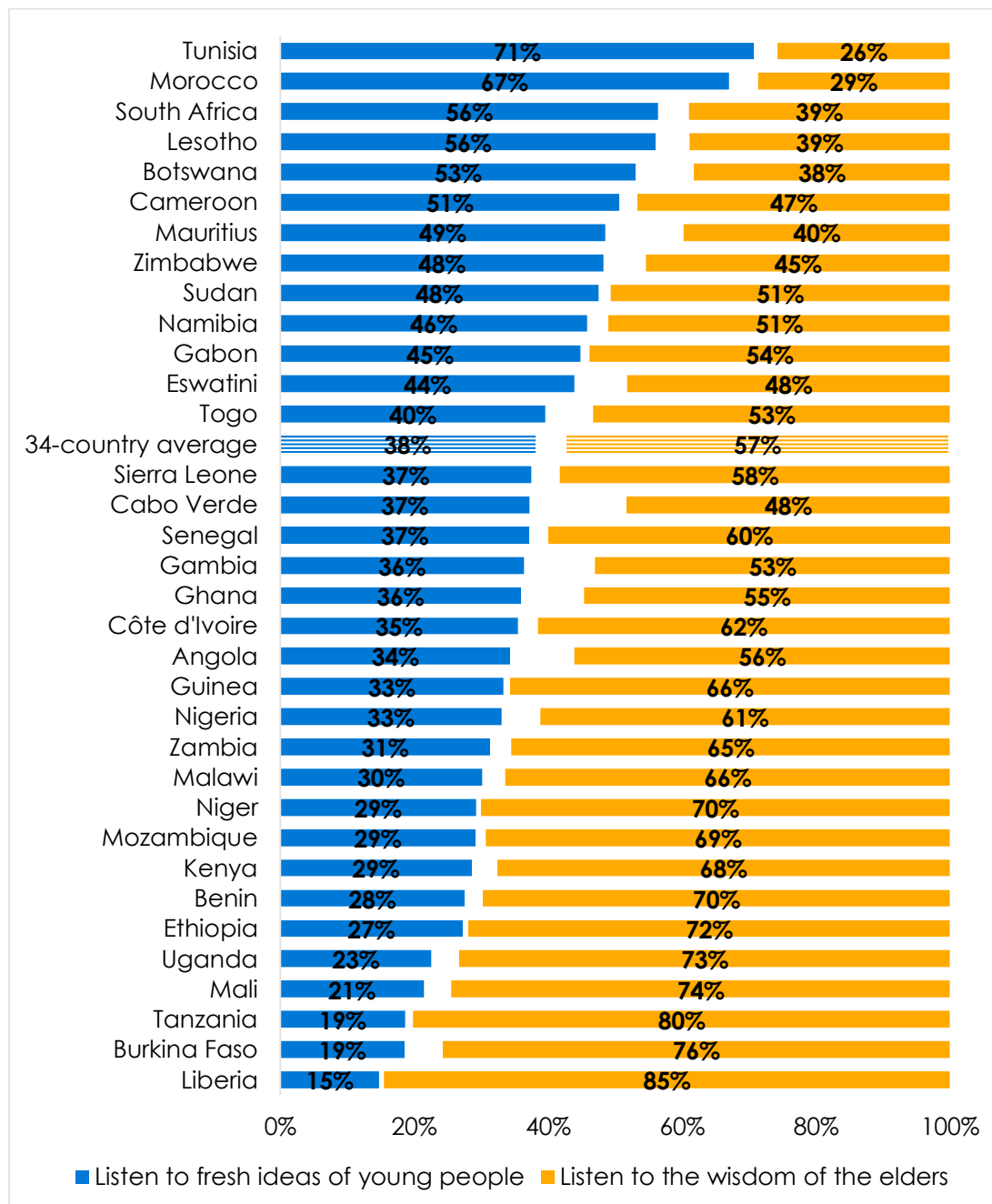
Charts

Figure 1: Fresh ideas of youth vs. wisdom of the elders | by demographic group
| 34 countries | 2019/2021



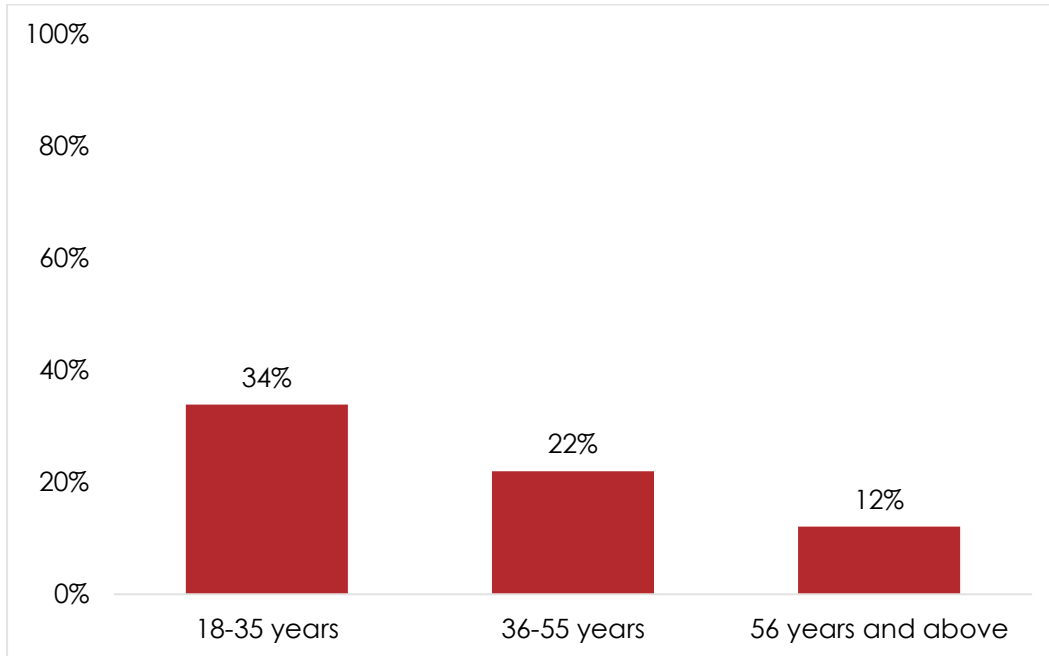
Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 Statement 1: In order for our country to do well, we should listen more to the wisdom of our elders.
 Statement 2: In order for our country to do well, we should listen more to fresh ideas from young people.
 (% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with each statement)

Figure 2: Fresh ideas of youth vs. wisdom of the elders | 34 countries | 2019/2021



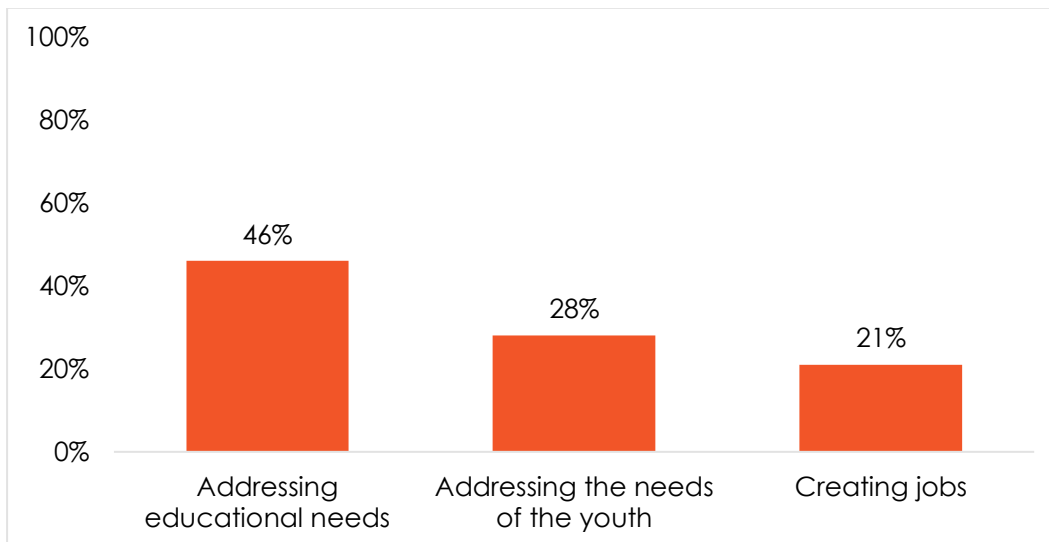
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Figure 3: Not employed and looking for a job | by age group | 34 countries
 | 2019/2021



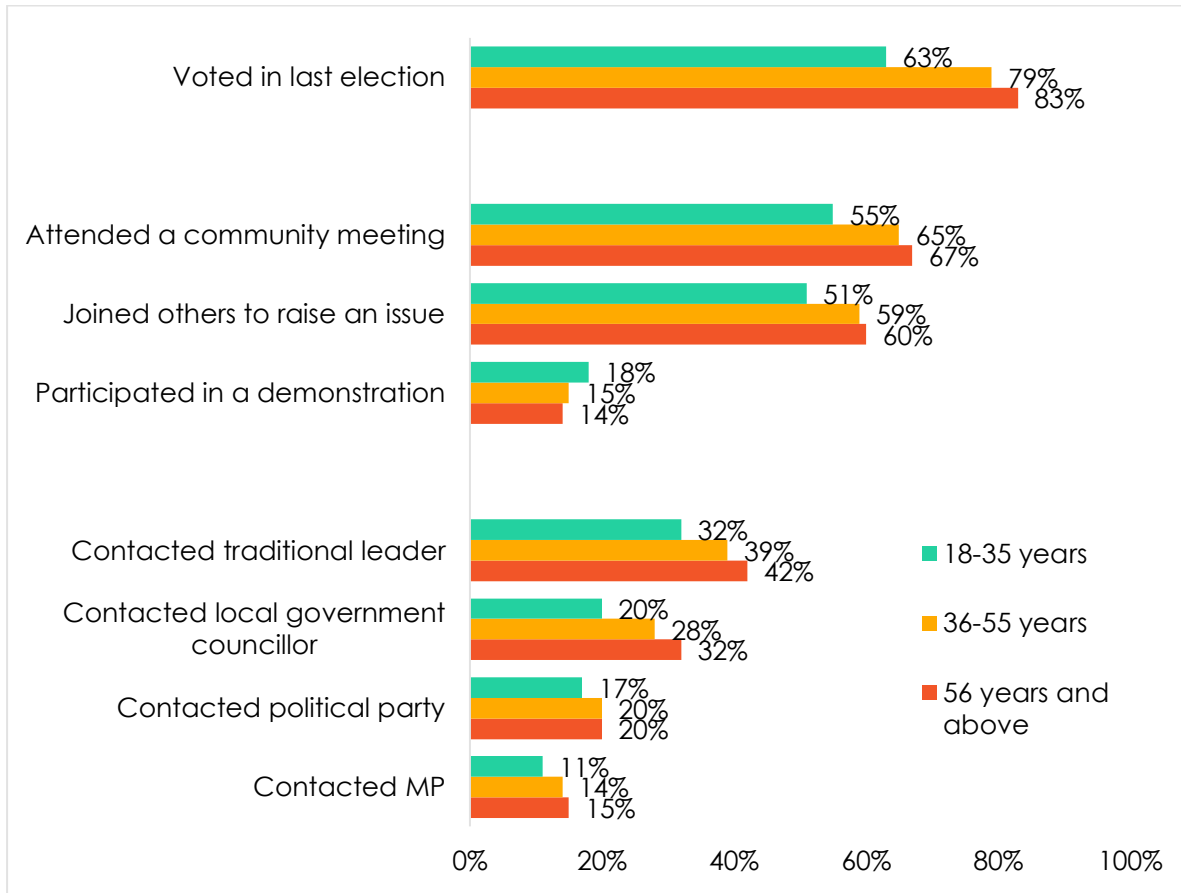
Respondents were asked: Do you have a job that pays a cash income? [If yes:] Is it full time or part time? [If no:] Are you currently looking for a job? (% who say “no, but looking”)

Figure 4: Government performance in addressing the needs of the youth
 | 34 countries | 2019/2021



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: Handling the needs of young people? Addressing educational needs? Creating jobs? (% who say “fairly well” or “very well”)

Figure 5: Political and civic participation | 34 countries | 2019/2021



Respondents were asked:

In the last national election, held in [20xx], did you vote, or not, or were you too young to vote? Or can't you remember whether you voted? (% who say "I voted," excluding respondents who were too young to vote)

Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year: Attended a community meeting? Joined others to raise an issue? Participated in a demonstration or march? (% who say "once or twice," "several times," or "often")

During the past year, how often have you contacted any of the following persons about some important problem or to give them your views? (% who say "only once," "a few times," or "often")

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