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News release

Zambians divided on the economy and the country's direction, Afrobarometer survey shows

Only about half of Zambians approve of the country's overall direction and are satisfied with the way the "new dawn" government is managing the economy, a new Afrobarometer survey shows.

About half of citizens describe the country's economic condition and their personal living conditions as bad, although a majority expect things to get better during the coming year.

Management of the economy and health top the list of problems that Zambians want the government to address, ahead of infrastructure/roads, water supply, and agriculture.

While President Hakainde Hichilema's "new dawn" government won the 2021 election by a landslide, these findings suggest that the government's ability to address economic problems and provide quality public services may be a key to sustaining the support it has enjoyed from Zambians.

Key findings

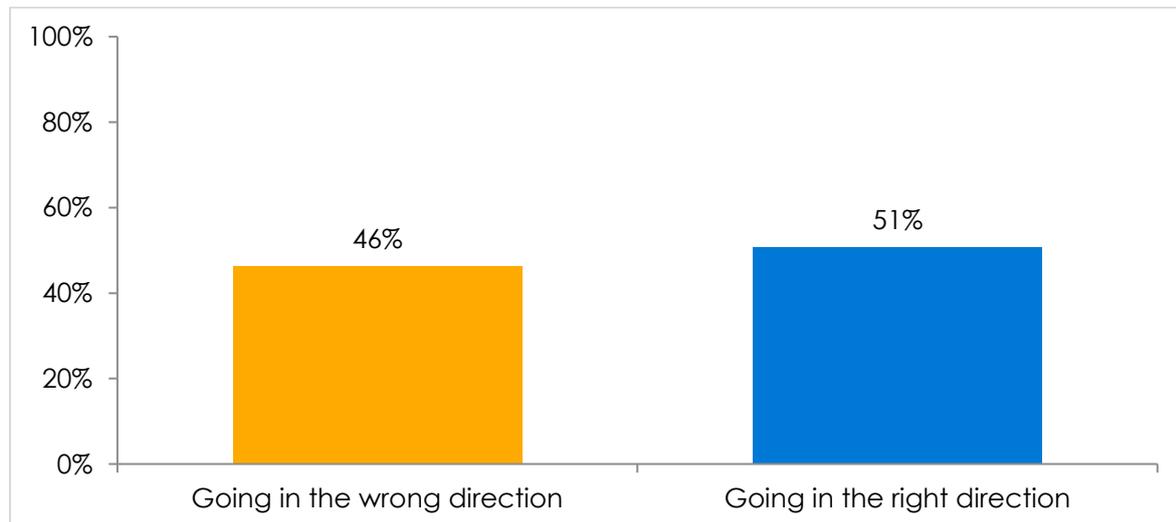
- Only half (51%) of Zambians say the country is going in the right direction (Figure 1). This perception increases sharply with respondents' education level and economic status (Figure 2).
- About half (52%) of Zambians say economic conditions in the country are "fairly bad" or "very bad," and almost as many (48%) say the same about their personal living conditions (Figure 3).
 - But almost two-thirds (63%) think the economic situation will get better during the coming year (Figure 4).
- Management of the economy tops the list of important problems that Zambians want the "new dawn government" to address, followed by health, infrastructure/roads, water supply, agriculture, and unemployment (Figure 5).
- Very few Zambians say the "new dawn" government is performing "fairly well" or "very well" on keeping prices stable (20%), maintaining roads and bridges (28%), narrowing income gaps (33%), providing water and sanitation services (40%), and improving basic health services (42%) (Figure 6).
 - About half (51%) of citizens are happy with the way the government is managing the economy.
 - Six in 10 say they are satisfied with the fight against corruption (61%) and crime (60%).
 - Citizens give the government high marks on addressing educational needs (82%) and creating jobs (72%).

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. Eight rounds of surveys have been conducted in up to 39 countries since 1999. Round 9 surveys are being completed in early 2023. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

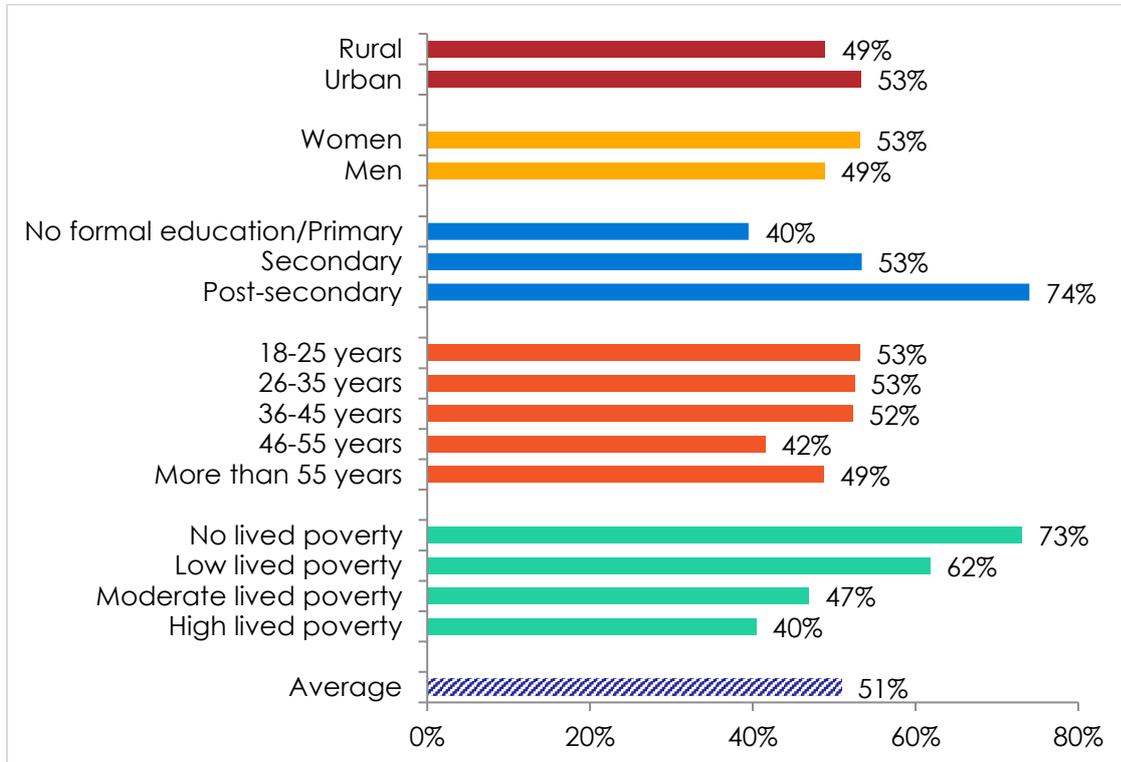
The Afrobarometer team in Zambia, led by the Institute of Economic and Social Research (INESOR), a research wing of the University of Zambia, interviewed a nationally representative, random, stratified probability sample of 1,200 Zambian adults between 3 August and 7 September 2022. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys have been conducted in Zambia in 1999, 2003, 2005, 2009, 2013, 2013, 2017, and 2020.

Figure 1: The country's direction | Zambia | 2022



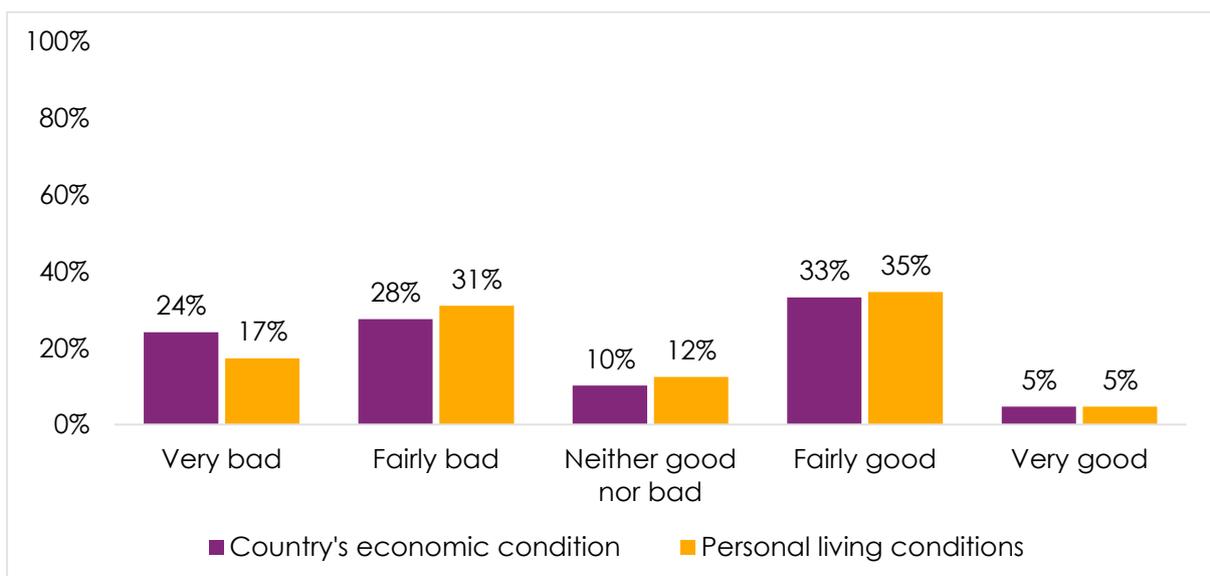
Respondents were asked: *Would you say that the country is going in the wrong direction or going in the right direction?*

Figure 2: Zambia going in the right direction | by demographic group | Zambia | 2022



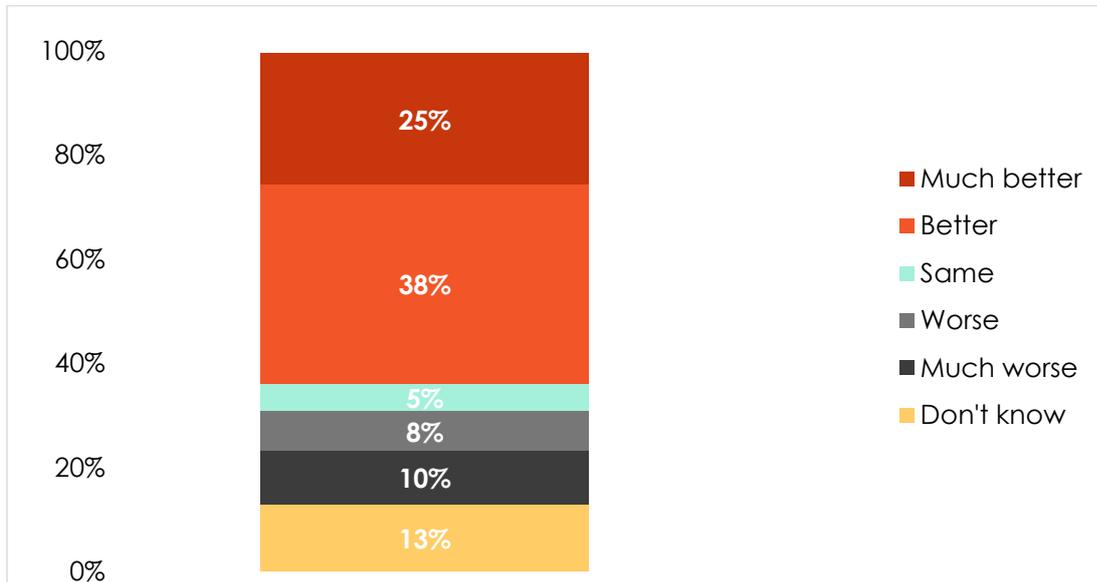
Respondents were asked: Would you say that the country is going in the wrong direction or going in the right direction? (% who say "right direction")

Figure 3: Country's economic condition and personal living conditions | Zambia | 2022



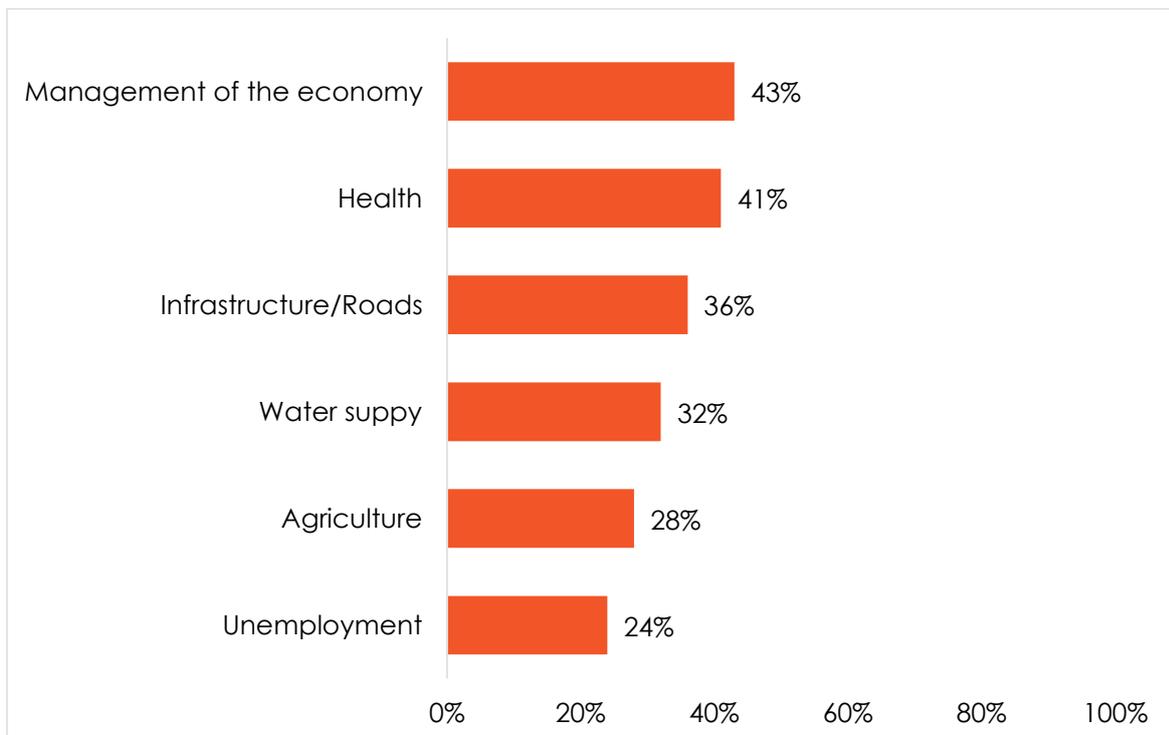
Respondents were asked: In general, how would you describe: The present economic condition of this country? Your own present living conditions?

Figure 4: Country's economic conditions 12 months from now | Zambia | 2022



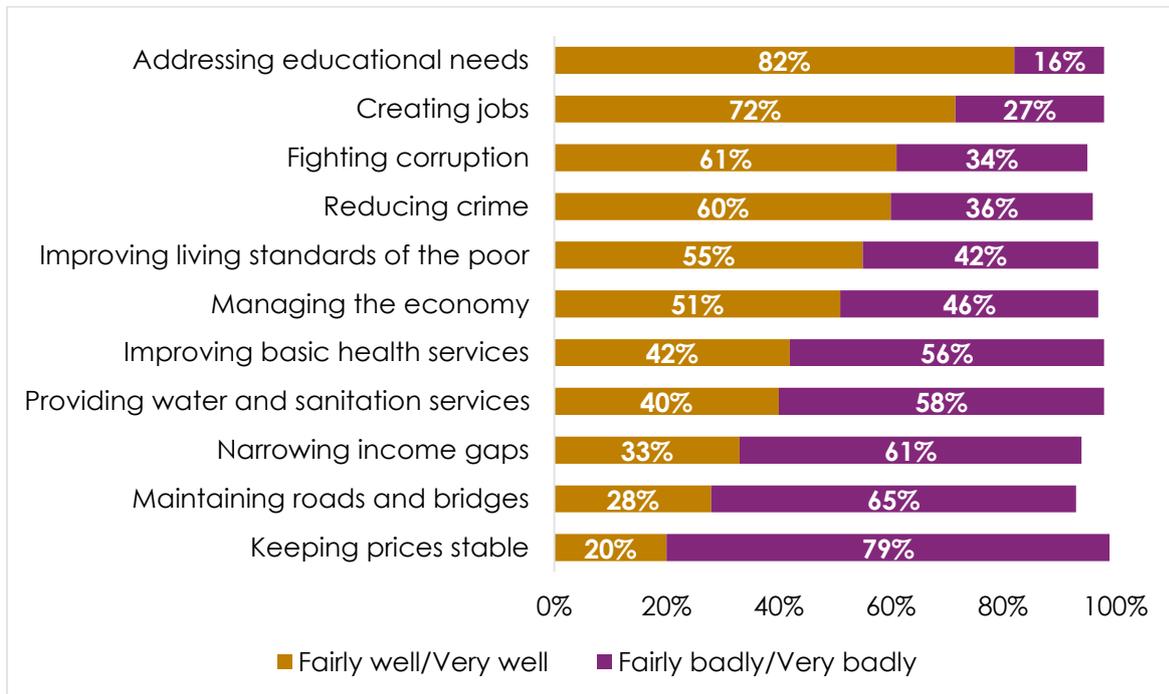
Respondents were asked: Looking ahead, do you expect economic conditions in this country to be better or worse in 12 months' time?

Figure 5: Most important problems | Zambia | 2022



Respondents were asked: In your opinion, what are the most important problems facing this country that government should address? (Up to three answers accepted per respondent. Figure shows % of respondents who cited each problem among their three priorities.)

Figure 6: Government performance | Zambia | 2022



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?

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