



Zomba, Malawi  
7 February 2023

## News release

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### **Climate change making life worse in Malawi; citizens demand more action from all stakeholders**

A majority of Malawians say climate change is making life in the country worse and requires urgent government action, the latest Afrobarometer survey shows.

About three-fourths of Malawians say they have heard of climate change, though awareness is somewhat lower among women and less educated respondents.

Among those who have heard of climate change, a majority see addressing it as a collective responsibility, and they want greater engagement on the issue by business and industry, developed nations, and ordinary citizens as well as the government.

Taking into consideration that the Malawi economy is dependent on agriculture, which contributes about one-third of gross domestic product and about 80% of export revenue, the country is extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

#### **Key findings**

- Almost three in every four Malawians (74%) say they have heard of climate change (Figure 1).
  - Awareness of climate change is higher among urbanites (87%) and men (79%) than among rural residents (72%) and women (69%) (Figure 2). More educated citizens are more likely to be aware of climate change than those with less education.
- Among Malawians who are aware of climate change:
  - Almost nine in every 10 (86%) say it is making life in Malawi “somewhat worse” (14%) or “much worse” (72%) (Figure 3).
  - Eight in 10 (82%) believe that ordinary citizens can help curb climate change, while close to three in four (73%) want the government to take immediate action to limit climate change, even if it is expensive, causes job losses, or takes a toll on the economy (Figure 4).
  - Only very small minorities are satisfied with efforts by the government (12%), developed countries (12%), ordinary citizens (11%), and business and industry (8%) to fight climate change (Figure 5).
  - Most assign primary responsibility for fighting climate change and reducing its impact to the government (41%) and ordinary citizens (39%) (Figure 6).
- Only four in 10 Malawians (39%) think the government is doing a good job of addressing climate change, while 52% say it is handling the issue “fairly badly” or “very badly.”

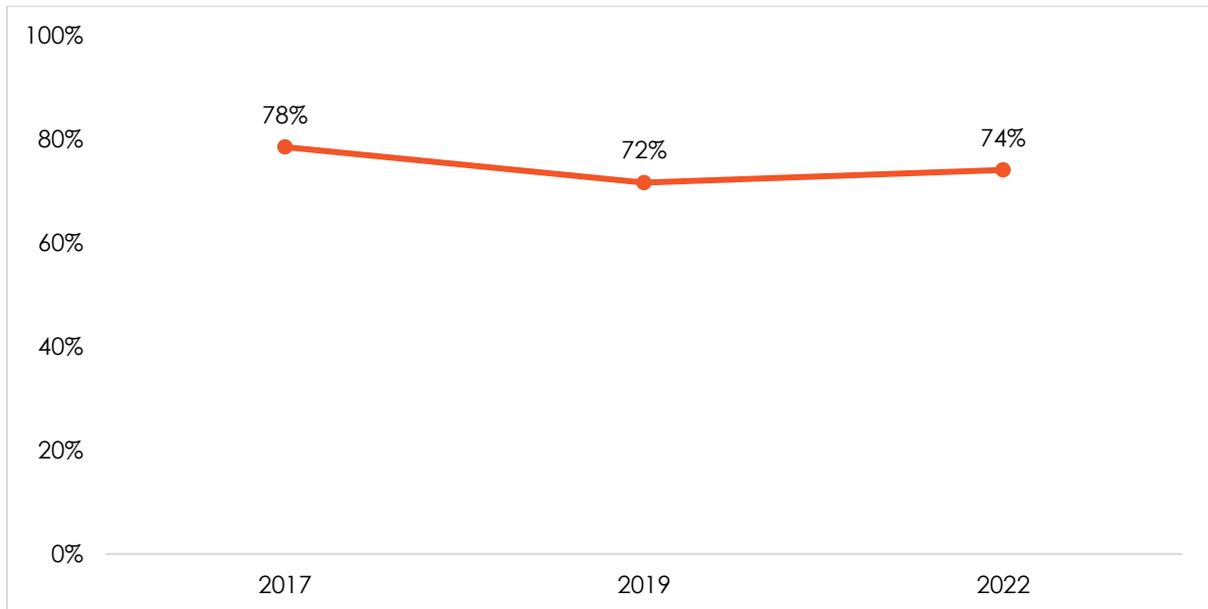
## Afrobarometer surveys

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 conducted since 1999. Round 9 surveys are being completed in early 2023. Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Malawi, led by the Centre for Social Research, interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,200 adult Malawians in February 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 were conducted in Malawi in 1999, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, and 2019.

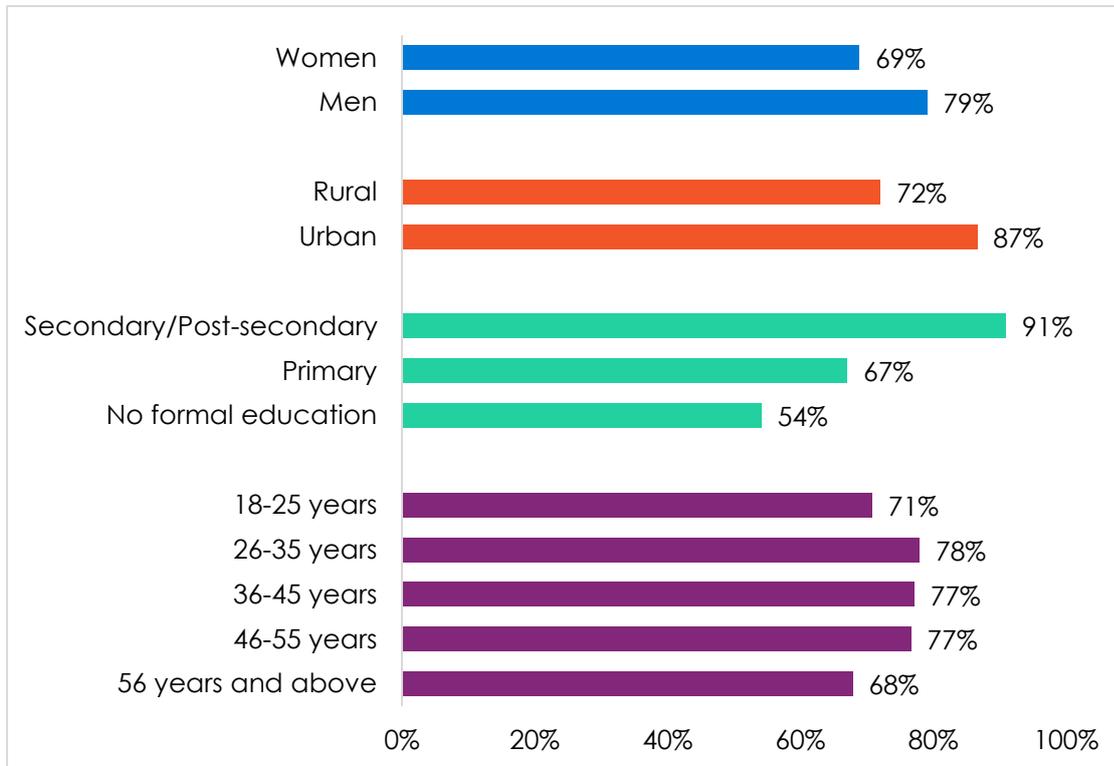
## Charts

**Figure 1: Awareness of climate change | Malawi | 2017-2022**



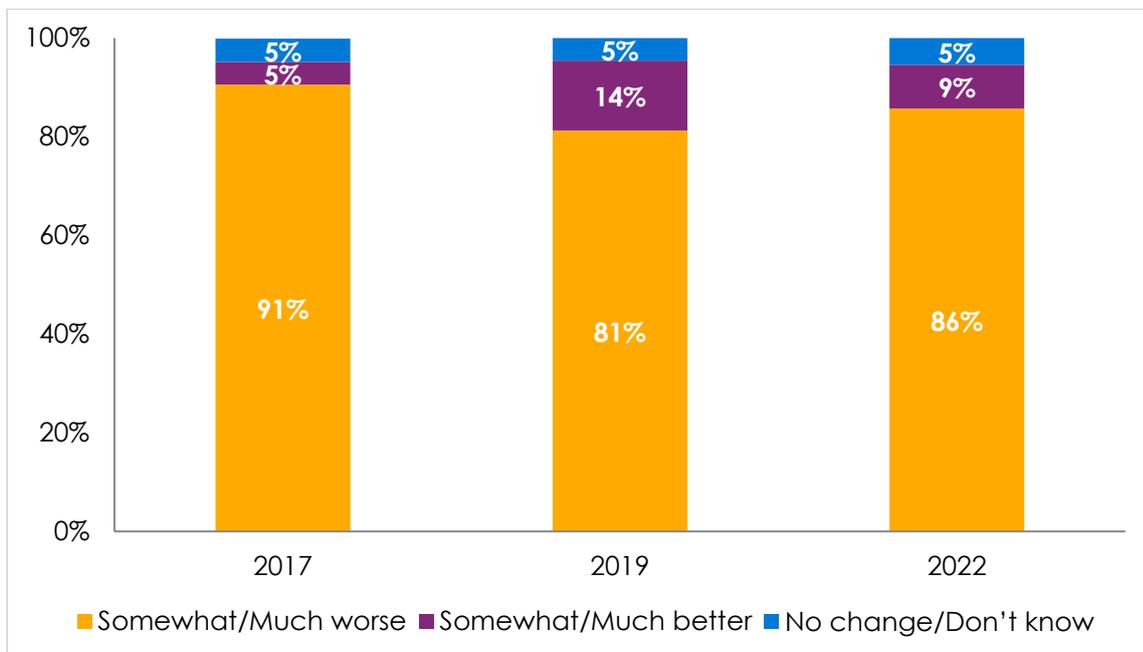
**Respondents were asked:** Have you heard about climate change, or haven't you had the chance to hear about this yet?

**Figure 2: Awareness of climate change** | by demographic group | Malawi | 2022



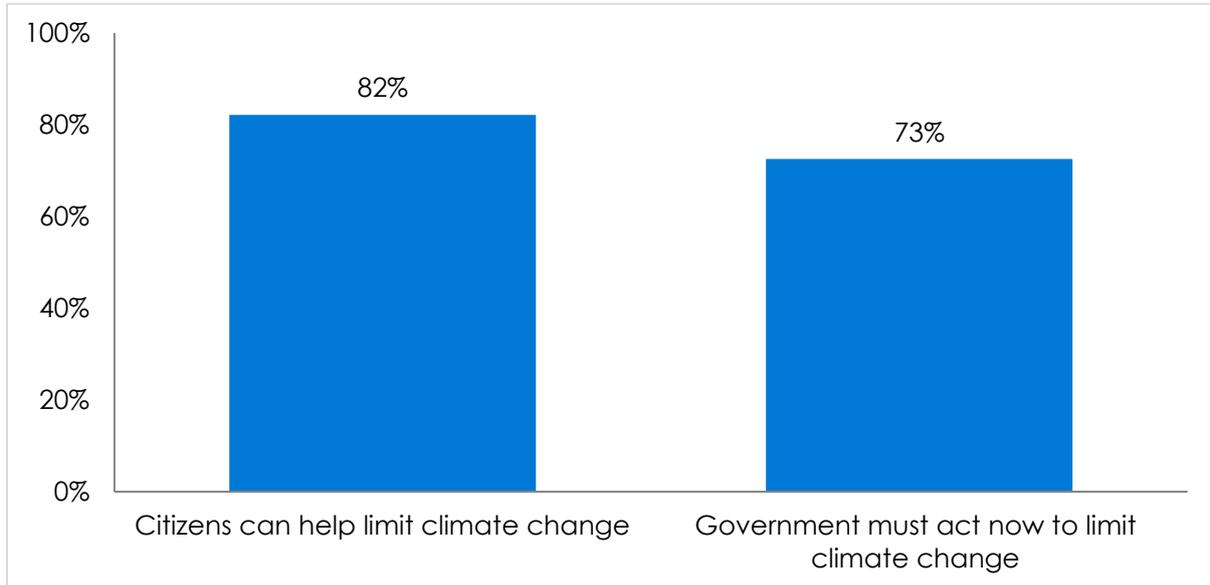
**Respondents were asked:** Have you heard about climate change, or haven't you had the chance to hear about this yet? (% who say "yes")

**Figure 3: Effect of climate change** | Malawi | 2017-2022



**Respondents who are aware of climate change were asked:** Do you think climate change is making life in Malawi better or worse, or haven't you heard enough to say? (Respondents who are not aware of climate change are excluded.)

**Figure 4: Government and citizens' roles in limiting climate change | Malawi | 2022**



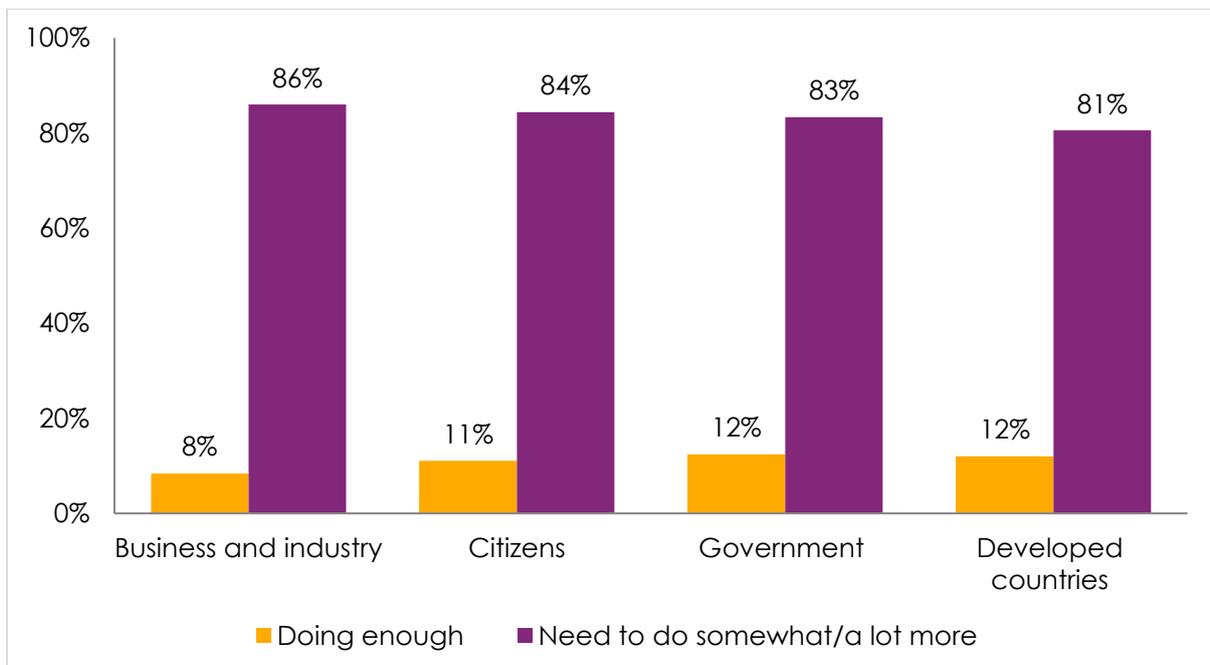
**Respondents who are aware of climate change were asked:** For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you disagree or agree:

Ordinary Malawians can play a role in limiting climate change.

It is important for our government to take steps now to limit climate change in the future, even if it is expensive or causes some job losses or other harm to our economy.

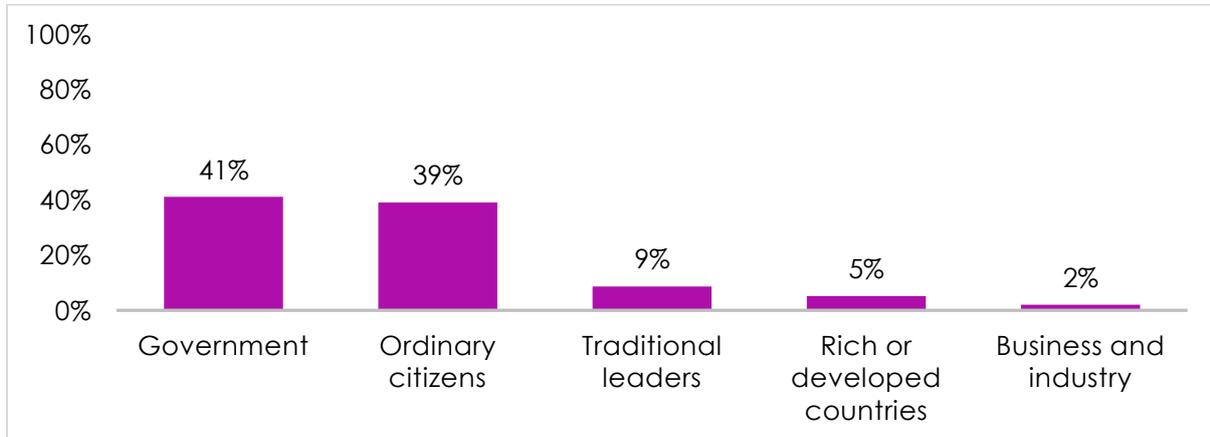
(% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with each statement. Respondents who are not aware of climate change are excluded.)

**Figure 5: Are stakeholders doing enough to limit climate change? | Malawi | 2022**



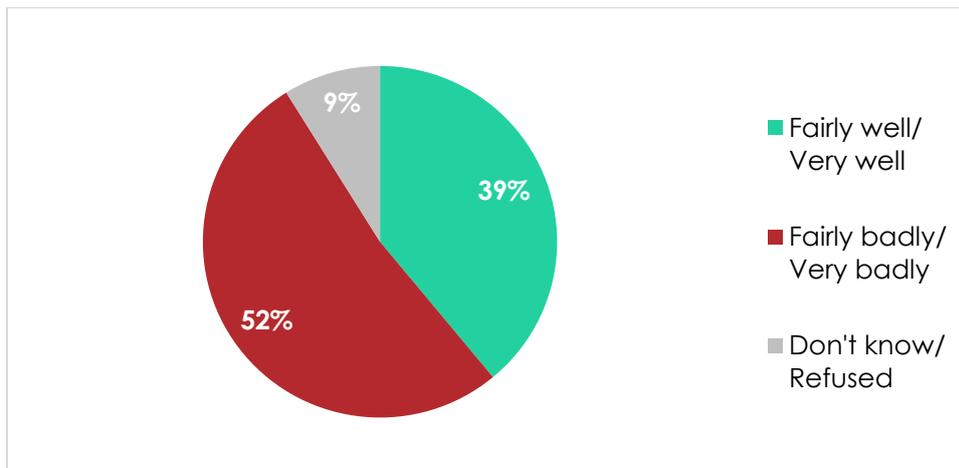
**Respondents who are aware of climate change were asked:** Do you think each of the following are doing enough to limit climate change, or do they need to do more, or haven't you heard enough to say? (Respondents who are not aware of climate change are excluded.)

**Figure 6: Who has primary responsibility for limiting climate change? | Malawi | 2022**



**Respondents who are aware of climate change were asked:** Who do you think should have primary responsibility for trying to limit climate change and reduce its impact? (Respondents who are not aware of climate change are excluded.)

**Figure 7: Government performance in handling climate change | Malawi | 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: Addressing the problem of climate change?

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