

Accra, Ghana  
27 April 2023

## News release

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### **Food insecurity worsening across Africa, Afrobarometer surveys show**

The experience of going without enough food is becoming more frequent across much of Africa, the latest Afrobarometer surveys show, confirming United Nations warnings of worsening food insecurity.

On average across 30 African countries surveyed in 2021/2022, almost one-fifth of respondents say household members went without enough food “many times” or “always” during the previous year. More than half report experiencing a shortage of food at least once.

In 16 of the 30 countries, the share of households experiencing frequent food shortages has risen significantly over the past decade, while only three countries record improvement.

United Nations agencies warned last week that food insecurity and malnutrition are worsening in West and Central Africa and are expected to reach a 10-year high by June.

### **Key findings**

- On average across 30 African countries, more than half (57%)<sup>1</sup> of respondents say they went without enough food at least once during the previous year. Almost one-fifth (18%) report experiencing shortages of food “many times” or “always” (Figure 1).
- Frequent food shortages were most common in Niger (40%) and Malawi (35%). Six countries report double-digit increases over the past decade in the share of the population who went without enough food “many times” or “always”: Nigeria (+21 percentage points), Namibia (+18), Niger (+15), Zimbabwe (+11), Kenya (+10), and Eswatini (+10) (Figure 2).
- Frequent shortages of food were more common in rural areas than in cities (23% vs. 15%) and among citizens without formal schooling (28%) compared to their more educated counterparts (10%-23%) (Figure 3).

### **Afrobarometer surveys**

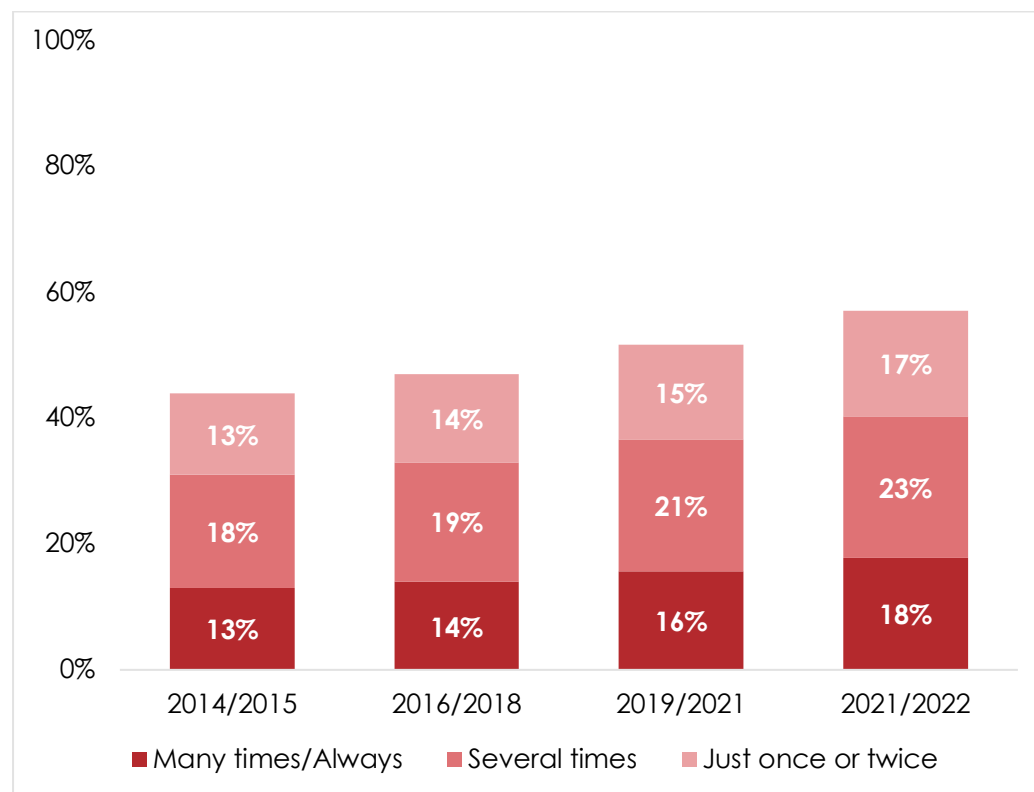
Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Eight survey rounds in up to 39 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 9 surveys (2021/2023) are currently underway. Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples of 1,200-2,400 adult citizens. Sample of this size yield country-level results with margins of error of +/-2 to +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.

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<sup>1</sup> Due to rounding, percentages for combined categories reported in the text may differ slightly from the sum of sub-categories shown in figures.

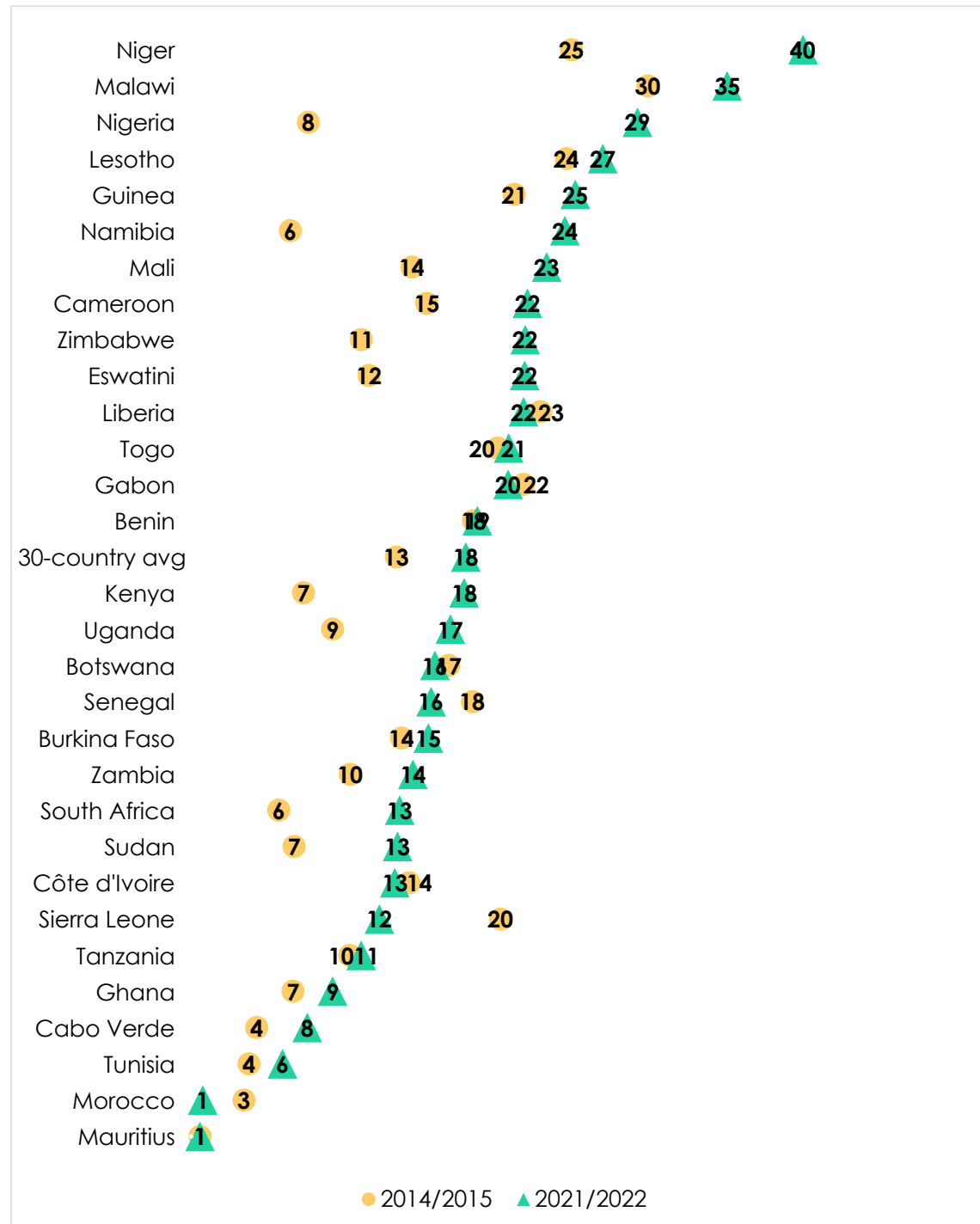
## Charts

**Figure 1: Went without enough food** | 30 African countries | 2014-2022



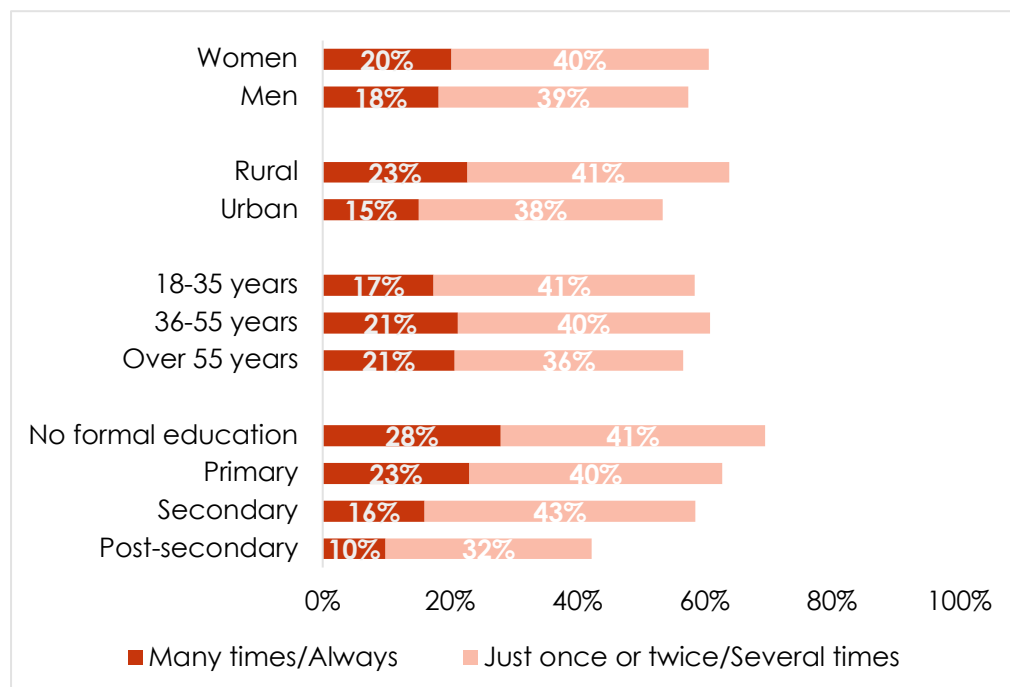
**Respondents were asked:** Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family gone without enough food to eat?

**Figure 2: Went without enough food many times/always (%) | 30 African countries**  
| 2014-2022



**Respondents were asked:** Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family gone without enough food to eat? (% who say "many times" or "always")

**Figure 3: Went without enough food** | by demographic group | 30 African countries  
| 2021/2022



**Respondents were asked:** Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family gone without enough food to eat?

**For more details on human security in Africa, please see Revisiting human security in Africa in the post-COVID-19 era, Afrobarometer Policy Paper No. 86.**

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