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News release

Liberians say the government needs to do more to protect the environment, Afrobarometer survey shows

A large majority of Liberians say pollution is a serious problem facing their communities and needs greater attention from the government, the latest Afrobarometer survey shows.

Citizens identify trash disposal, sanitation or human waste management, and air and water pollution as the most important environmental issues in their communities.

While close to half say ordinary citizens have the primary responsibility for reducing pollution and keeping communities clean, an equal proportion assign this task to their national and local governments.

Strong majorities give the government a gloomy rating for its performance on reducing pollution and protecting the environment.

Key findings

- Eight out of 10 Liberians (80%) say pollution is a “somewhat serious” or “very serious” problem in their community (Figure 1).
- Citizens cite trash disposal (31%), sanitation (27%), air pollution (16%), and pollution of water sources (15%) as the most important environmental issues in their community (Figure 2).
- More than eight in 10 citizens (82%) say plastic bags are a major source of pollution in Liberia (Figure 3).
- Almost half (46%) of Liberians say the primary responsibility for reducing pollution and keeping communities clean rests with ordinary citizens. About the same proportion assign this responsibility to their national (34%) or local (13%) governments (Figure 4).
- A large majority (80%) of citizens give the government a poor rating for its performance in reducing pollution and protecting the environment. Urban residents, economically better-off citizens, and those with higher education are particularly likely to be critical of the government's efforts (Figure 5).

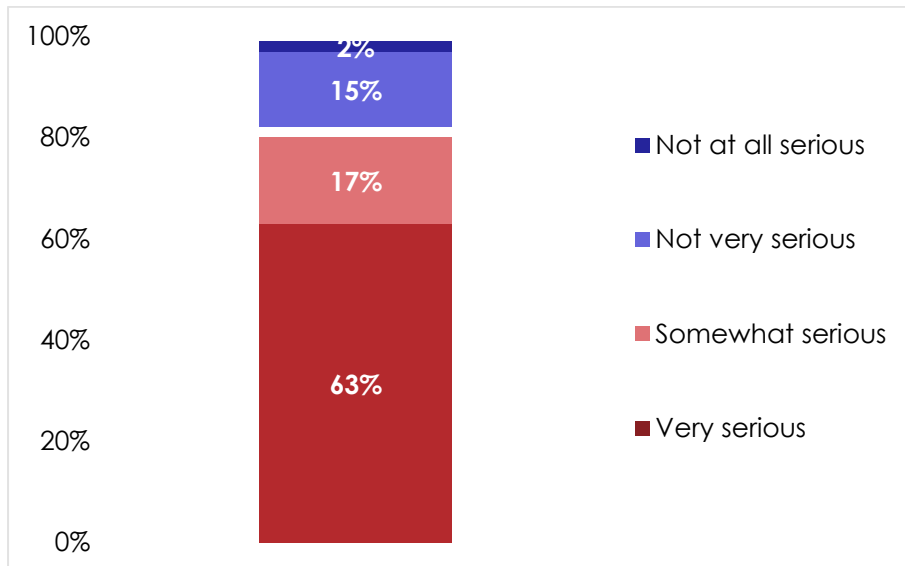
Afrobarometer surveys

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 (2021/2023) are currently underway. Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Liberia, led by the Center for Democratic Governance (CDG), interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,200 adult citizens between 25 August and 2 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 were conducted in Liberia in 2008, 2012, 2015, 2018, and 2020.

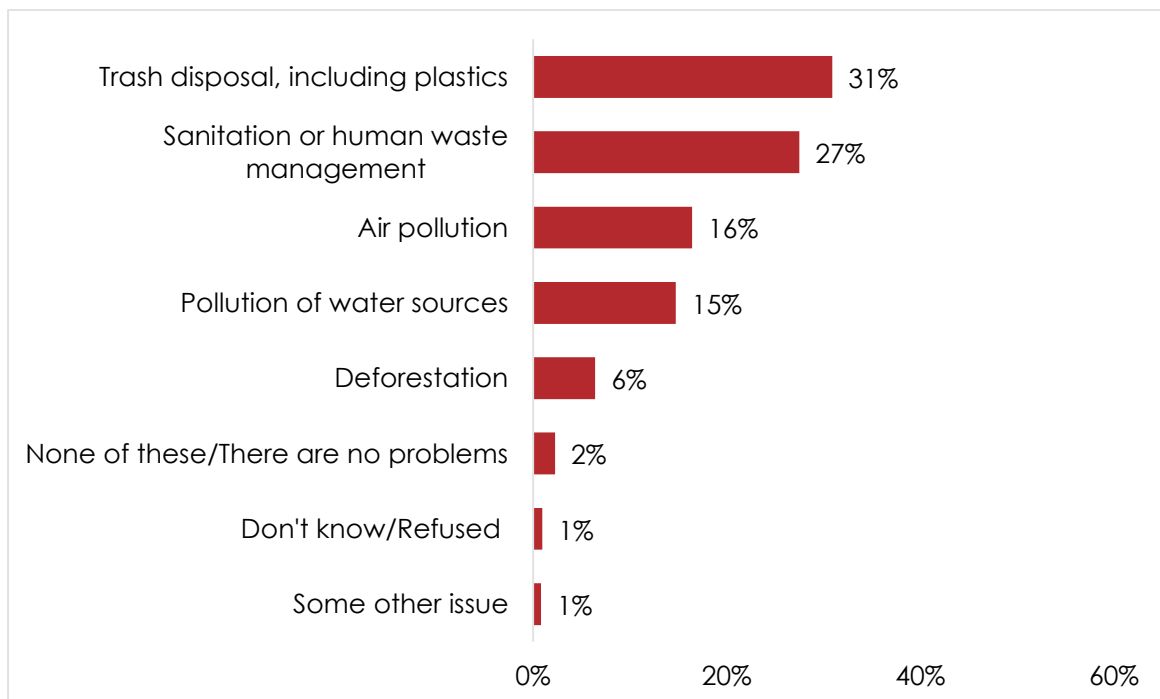
Charts

Figure 1: Extent of pollution in the community | Liberia | 2022



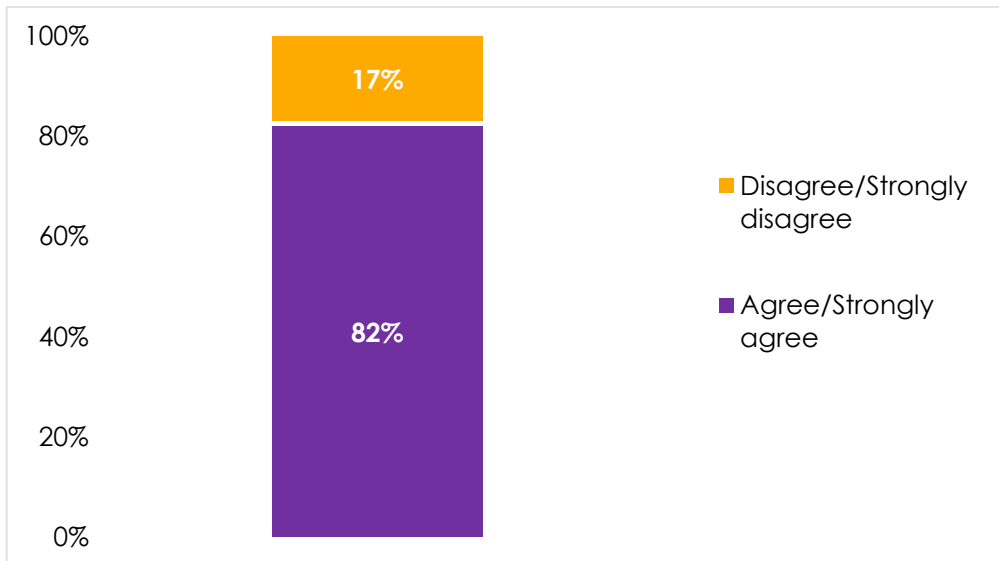
Respondents were asked: How serious a problem is pollution, such as the accumulation of trash or garbage, or damage to the quality of the air, the water, or the land in your community?

Figure 2: Most important environmental issue in the community | Liberia | 2022



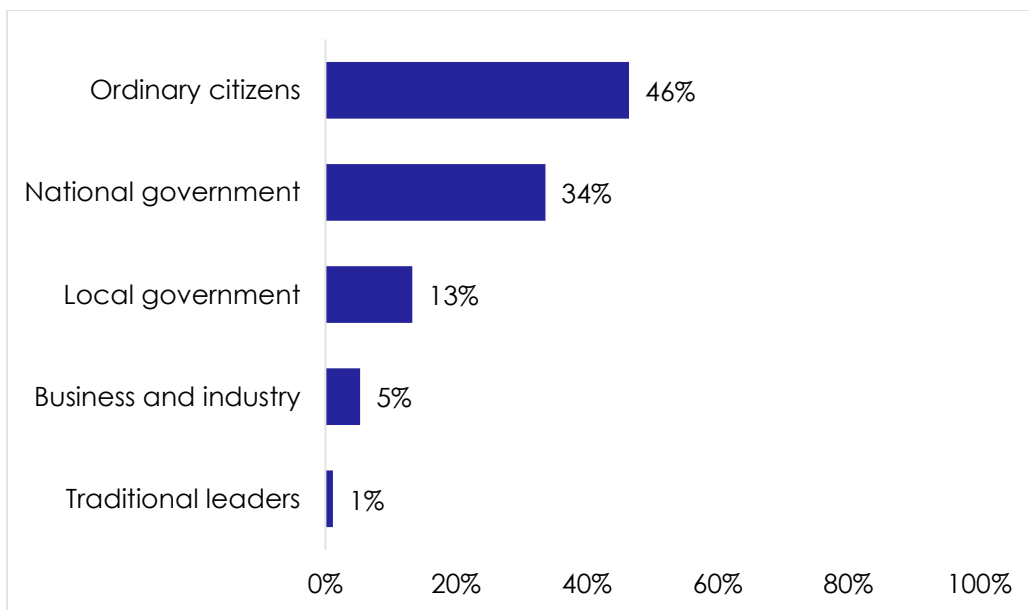
Respondents were asked: Which of the following is the most important environmental issue in your community today?

Figure 3: Are plastic bags a major source of pollution? | Liberia | 2022



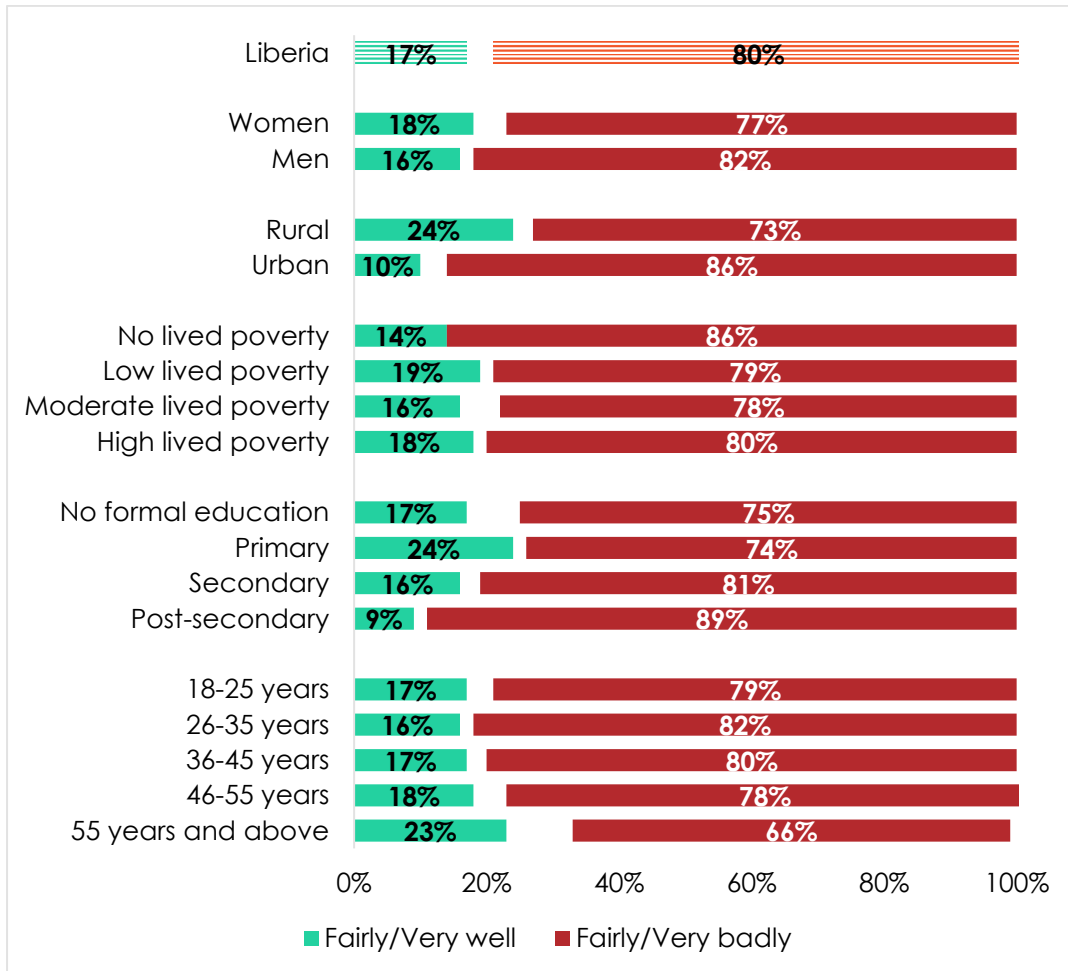
Respondents were asked: Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: Plastic bags are a major source of pollution in this country.

Figure 4: Who should be responsible for reducing environmental pollution? | Liberia | 2022



Respondents were asked: Who do you think should have primary responsibility for reducing pollution and keeping your community clean?

Figure 5: Government performance on reducing pollution and protecting the environment | by demographic group | Liberia | 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: Reducing pollution and protecting the environment?

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