

## Amid rising corruption, most Africans say they risk retaliation if they speak up

**Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 743 | Boniface Dulani, Gildfred Boateng Asiamah, and Patrick Zindikirani**

### Summary

Corruption ranks among the greatest governance and development challenges confronting African countries. In the words of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (2016), “as both a product and cause of poor governance and weak institutions, corruption is one of the major costs and impediments to structural transformation in Africa.” Corruption not only wastes scarce public resources that could instead be used for public services and meaningful development, but also weakens democracy by eroding public trust in the government’s ability to act in the best interests of the citizenry (Transparency International, 2022; Mhaka, 2022). Election platforms often highlight eliminating corruption as a popular campaign promise, yet studies consistently rank Africa as the most corrupt region in the world (Mokgonyana, 2023). In the most recent Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), 44 of 49 African countries fall below the midpoint of the CPI scoring, with a sub-Saharan regional average of 32 out of 100 (Transparency International, 2022).



Against this background, how do ordinary Africans perceive corruption trends and their government’s performance in fighting the corruption scourge? To what extent do ordinary citizens feel safe in reporting corruption when they encounter it?

Findings from the most recent Afrobarometer surveys, conducted in 39 countries in 2021/2023, show that a majority of Africans say corruption increased in their country during the previous year, and most see little improvement in their government’s poor performance in addressing the problem. Among key public institutions, the police are most commonly seen as corrupt. Assessments vary widely by country, with Gabon, South Africa, Nigeria, Liberia, and Uganda registering some of the highest perceptions of official corruption.

In significant numbers, citizens report having to pay bribes to access public services, and most say people risk retaliation if they report incidents of corruption to the authorities.

For policy makers and civil society, these findings point to a need for renewed efforts to fight corruption and for improved strategies to increase citizens’ sense that they are safe in reporting corruption.

### 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. Nine survey rounds in up to 42 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 9 surveys (2021/2023) cover 39 countries. (See Appendix Table A.1 for a list of countries and fieldwork dates.)

Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with samples of 1,200-2,400 adults that yield country-level results with margins of error of +/-2 to +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.

The data are weighted to ensure nationally representative samples. When reporting multi-country averages, all countries are weighted equally (rather than in proportion to population size).

## Key findings

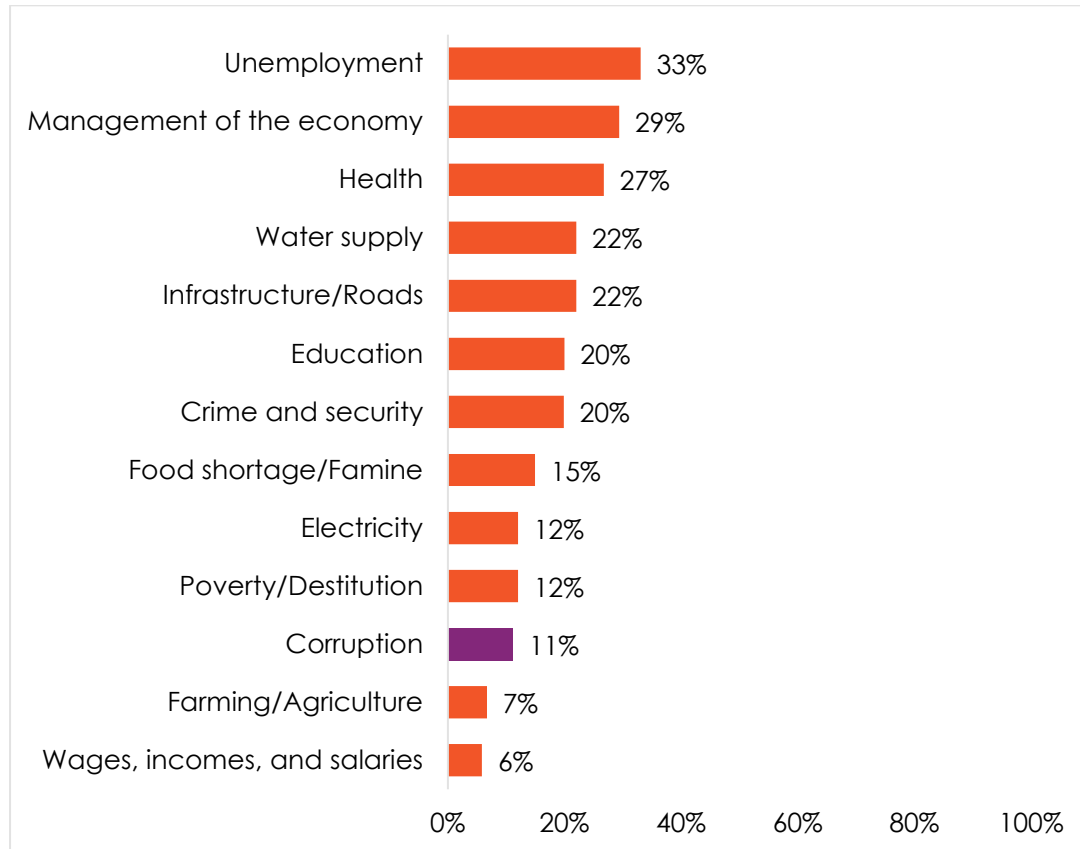
- While corruption ranks 11<sup>th</sup> among the most important problems that Africans want their governments to address, it is a high priority in some countries – and has climbed to No. 1 in Kenya and No. 3 in Botswana and Namibia.
- On average across 39 countries, a majority (58%) of Africans say corruption increased “somewhat” or “a lot” in their country during the preceding year.
  - Compared to 2014/2015, 12 countries recorded double-digit increases in perceptions of worsening corruption, including a surge of 39 percentage points in Senegal, while decreases reached a remarkable 61 points in Benin.
  - More than two-thirds (68%) of citizens say “some” or “a lot” of the resources intended to address the COVID-19 pandemic were lost to corruption.
- Almost half (46%) of Africans say that “most” or “all” police officials are corrupt, the worst rating among 11 institutions and leaders the survey asked about. Tax officials, civil servants, and officials in the Presidency tie for second-worst, at 38%.
- Gabon, South Africa, Nigeria, Liberia, and Uganda are the worst-performing countries when it comes to perceived corruption in seven key public institutions, while Seychelles, Cabo Verde, Tanzania, and Mauritius turn in the best performances.
- Among citizens who sought selected public services during the previous year, substantial proportions say they had to pay a bribe to obtain police assistance (36%), to avoid problems with the police (37%), to get a government document (31%), or to receive services at a public medical facility (20%) or a public school (19%).
  - Self-reported bribe-paying varies widely across countries. For example, obtaining a government document required a bribe from 68% of applicants in Congo-Brazzaville, compared to 1% in Cabo Verde and Seychelles.
- Two in three Africans (67%) say their government is doing a poor job of fighting corruption.
- Only one in four Africans (26%) say people can report corruption to the authorities without fear of retaliation.

## Salience of corruption in Africa

Despite its corrosive effects on democracy, development, and security, many African citizens do not rate corruption among their top priorities for government intervention. When respondents are asked what they consider the most important problems that their government should address, corruption comes in at No. 11, cited by 11% among their top three priorities – far behind unemployment (33%), management of the economy (29%), and

the provision of key services such as health (27%), water supply (22%), and infrastructure/roads (22%) (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Most important problems** | 39 countries | 2021/2023

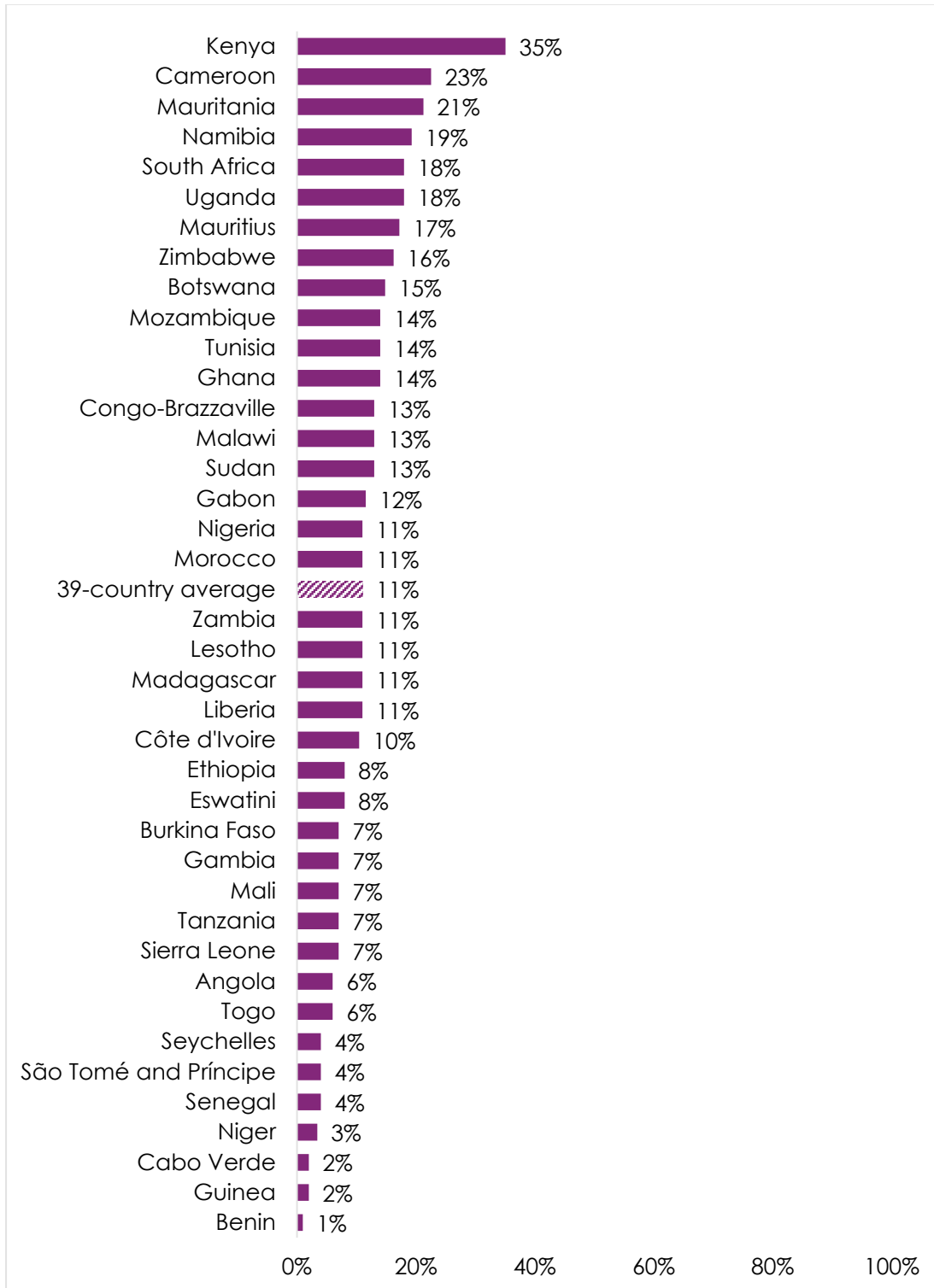


**Respondents were asked:** *In your opinion, what are the most important problems facing this country that government should address? (Up to three responses per person. Figure shows % of respondents who mention each problem as one of up to three priorities.)*

Though not among the top 10 at the continental level, corruption ranks as a high priority in several countries. Kenyans rate corruption as their No. 1 problem requiring government action (cited by 35%). Corruption ranks in third place among Namibians (19%) and Batswana (15%). Other countries where substantial proportions of the population consider corruption one of their most important problems include Cameroon (23%), Mauritania (21%), South Africa (18%), and Uganda (18%), while only a handful of Beninese, Guineans, and Cabo Verdeans express concern about corruption (Figure 2).

Urgent economic and social challenges confronting many African countries have no doubt helped relegate corruption to its relatively low ranking, in many countries, among the most important problems requiring government attention. It is worth noting, however, that even if corruption itself does not always rank as a top priority, its effects directly impact the ability of governments to provide services that are among citizens' top priorities. As the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (2016) notes, corruption hinders the delivery of public services such as water, sanitation, education, and health care and limits the provision of key infrastructure such as electricity and roads, in addition to increasing the cost of investment, thus reducing investment inflows that could be critical for job creation and trade. In other words, if African governments do a better job of reducing corruption, they will be better able to address some of their citizens' key concerns.

**Figure 2: Corruption as the most important problem** | by country | 39 countries  
 | 2021/2023



**Respondents were asked:** *In your opinion, what are the most important problems facing this country that government should address? (Up to three responses per person. Figure shows % of respondents who mention corruption as one of up to three priorities.)*

### Trends in corruption as a most important problem

On average across 30 countries for which comparable data are available from Afrobarometer surveys in Round 5 (2011/2013) and Round 9 (2021/2023), the prioritisation of corruption as a most important problem has remained unchanged. However, some countries have recorded notable changes over the past decade (Figure 3).

Most striking is Kenya, where corruption has jumped by 19 percentage points to become citizens' No. 1 priority issue. Five other countries have recorded increases of 6-7 percentage points in the salience of corruption: Malawi, Mozambique, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Botswana.

On the other hand, the salience of corruption has declined by 5 points or more in nine countries, including double-digit drops in Morocco (-13 points), Nigeria (-12 points), and Cameroon (-10 points).

**Figure 3: Change in perceptions of corruption as a top priority | 30 countries | 2011-2023**

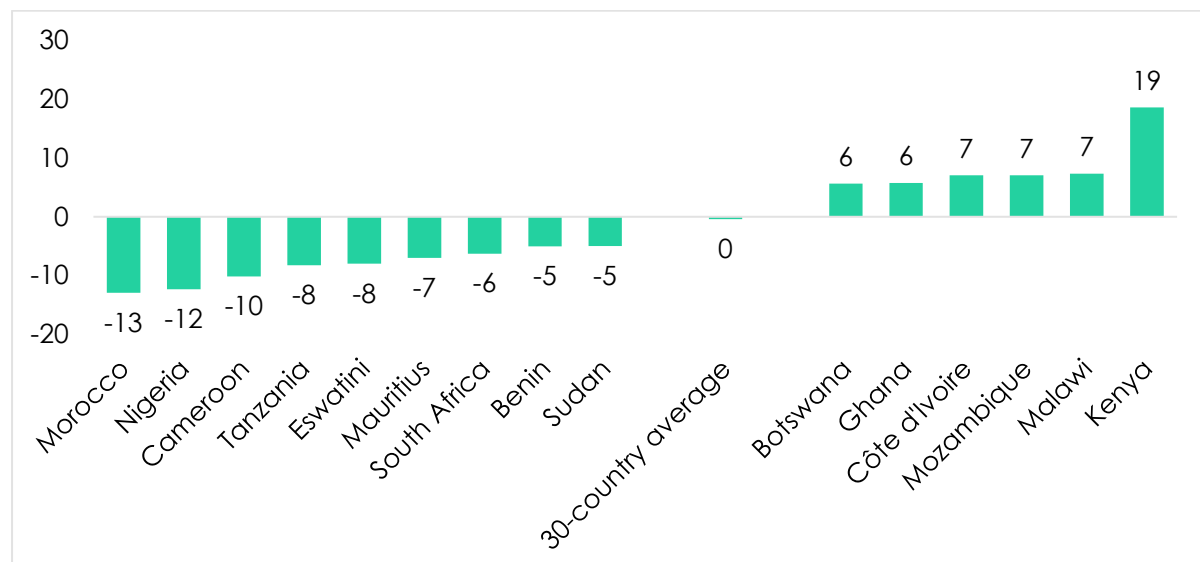


Figure shows change, in percentage points, between survey rounds in 2011/2013 and 2021/2023 in the proportion of respondents who cite corruption among up to three most important problems that their government should address. Only countries with changes of at least 5 percentage points are shown.

### State of corruption in Africa

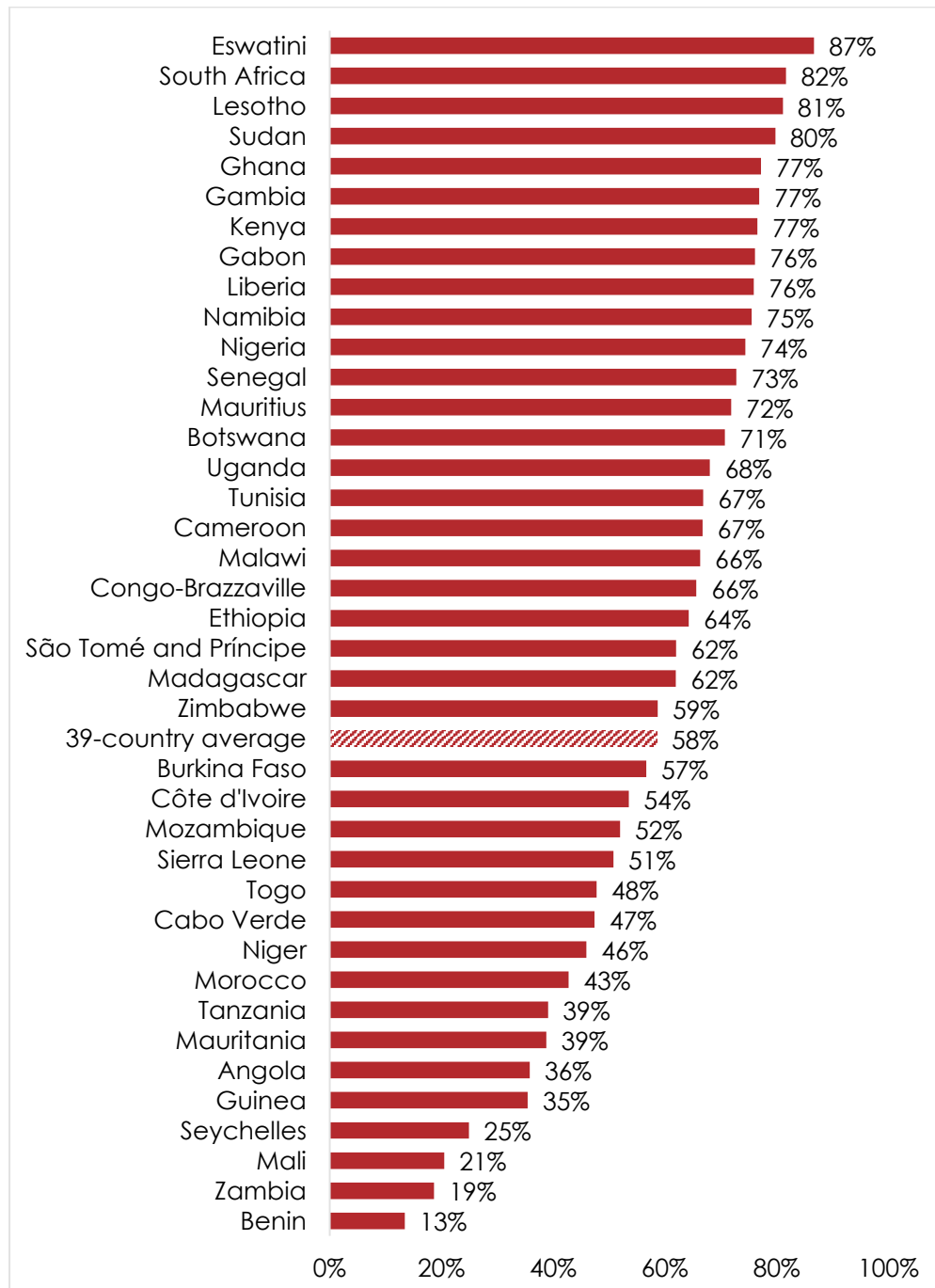
According to the most recent Corruption Perceptions Index, Africa has experienced stagnation in the fight against corruption, with gains by a few countries outweighed by significant deterioration in others (Transparency International, 2022). Among ordinary Africans, there is a widespread perception that corruption is worsening. On average across 39 countries, nearly six in 10 citizens (58%) say the level of corruption in their country increased “somewhat” or “a lot” during the previous 12 months (Figure 4).

Majorities in 27 of the 39 surveyed countries share this view. At the top of the list are three Southern African neighbours – Eswatini (87%), South Africa (82%), and Lesotho (81%). This is consistent with the latest CPI report, which ranks Eswatini 130<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries and notes that Lesotho registered the largest decline in CPI scores over the previous eight years, a development attributed to executive interference in independent institutions (Transparency International, 2023a). Based on the 2022 CPI report, Transparency International (2023b)

identifies South Africa among a group of “nine countries to watch” due to widespread public-sector corruption underscored by a series of scandals involving former and incumbent presidents.

At the other extreme, fewer than a quarter of citizens report increased corruption levels in Benin (13%), Zambia (19%), and Mali (21%).

**Figure 4: Level of corruption increased** | 39 countries | 2021/2023



**Respondents were asked:** *In your opinion, over the past year, has the level of corruption in this country increased, decreased, or stayed the same? (% who say corruption “increased somewhat” or “increased a lot”)*

On average across 32 countries surveyed in both Round 6 (2014/2015) and Round 9 (2021/2023), perceptions of worsening corruption rose by a marginal 3 percentage points, from 57% to 60%, although the share who say corruption grew “a lot” shows a 10-point rise (from 37% to 47%).

Importantly, these averages obscure massive changes in both directions at the country level (Figure 5): Double-digit increases in 12 countries range up to 39 percentage points in Senegal, while double-digit decreases in six countries reach an astonishing 61 points in Benin.

**Figure 5: Level of corruption increased** | 32 countries | 2014-2023

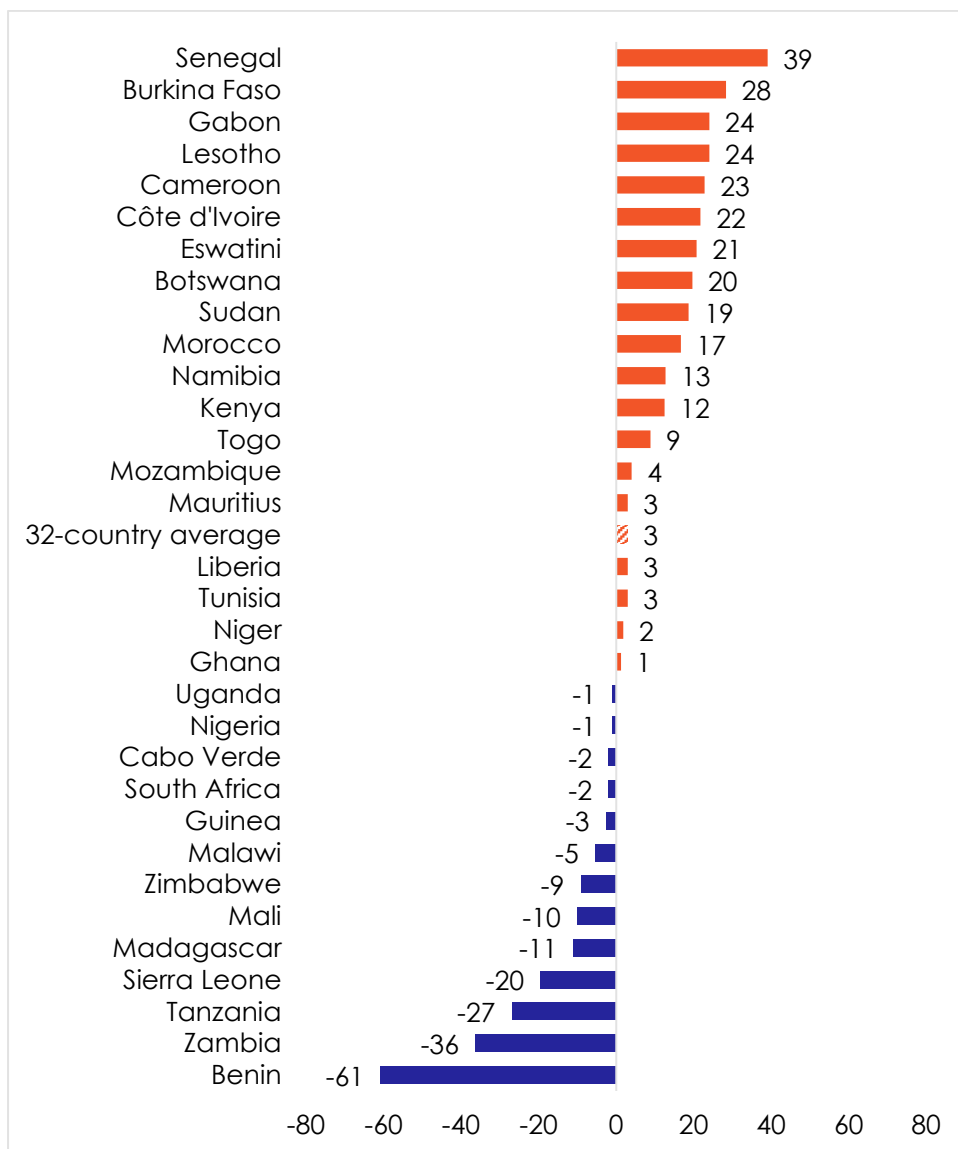


Figure shows change, in percentage points, between survey rounds in 2014/2015 and 2021/2023 in the proportion of respondents who say corruption “increased somewhat” or “increased a lot” in their country during the previous year.

While explanations for upward and downward trends in perceptions of increasing corruption are beyond the scope of this dispatch, one interesting observation suggests a possible link between stronger democracies and less corruption: The four countries with the largest drops

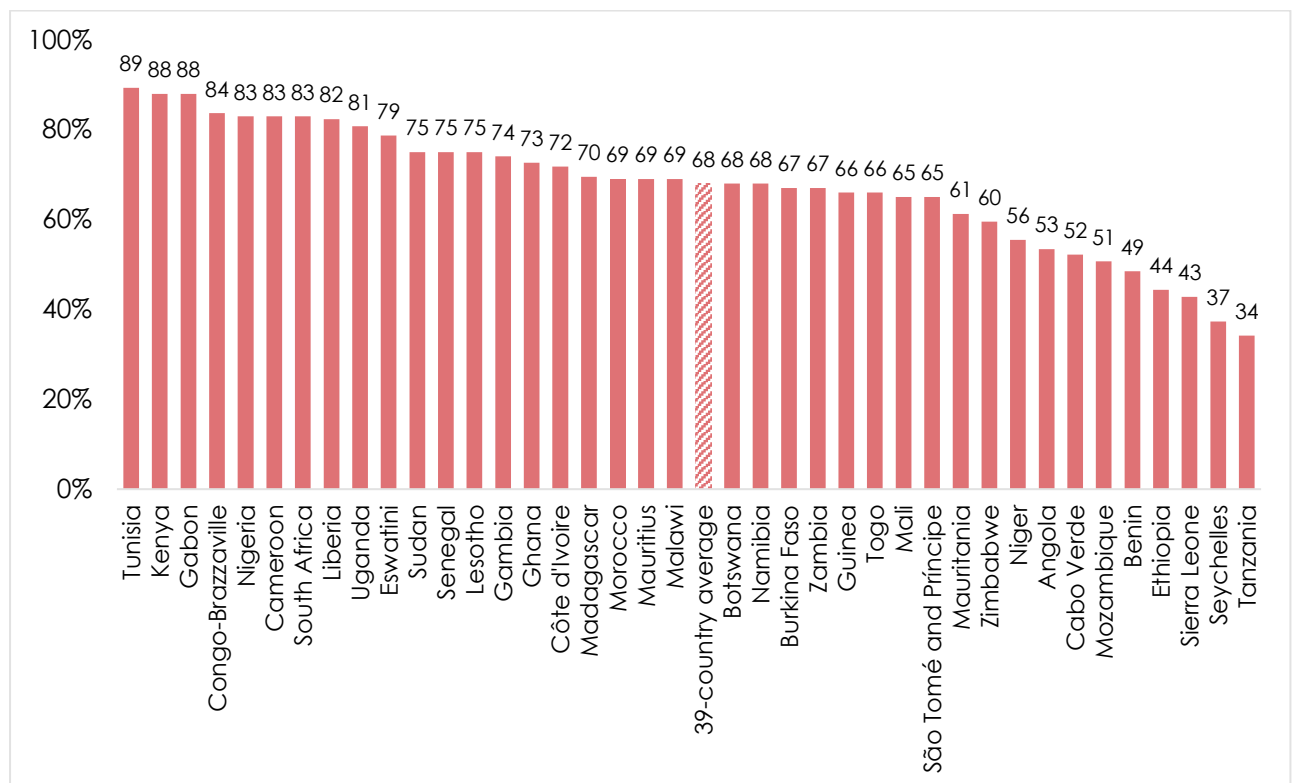
in perceptions of worsening corruption (Benin, Zambia, Tanzania, and Sierra Leone) record some of the highest levels of perceived democracy in Afrobarometer Round 9 data, while the five countries with the largest increases in perceptions of worsening corruption (Senegal, Burkina Faso, Gabon, Lesotho, and Cameroon) rank in the bottom half in their assessments of the extent of democracy in their countries.

### Corruption during COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic opened up new opportunities to syphon off resources meant for the public good. In addition to the temptations of emergency assistance funds, some countries struggling to cope with the pandemic relaxed accountability policies designed to ensure oversight in the use of public funds in order to fast-track the procurement of essential goods and services (Africa Defense Forum, 2022).

Across 39 countries, more than two-thirds (68%) of citizens say “some” or “a lot” of the resources intended for the COVID-19 response were squandered through corruption (Figure 6). This is the majority view in 34 of the 39 countries, including almost nine in 10 citizens in Tunisia (89%), Gabon (88%), and Kenya (88%). Even in Tanzania and Seychelles, where this perception is least common, more than one-third of respondents think that at least some of the resources meant to address COVID-19 were lost to corruption.

**Figure 6: Corruption in the use of COVID-19 resources | 39 countries | 2021/2023**



**Respondents were asked:** Considering all of the funds and resources that were available to the government for combating and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, how much do you think was lost or stolen due to corruption? (% who say “some” or “a lot”)

### Corruption in public institutions

Corruption often makes headlines when high-profile public figures are accused of wrongdoing. In South Africa, for example, corruption allegations against former President



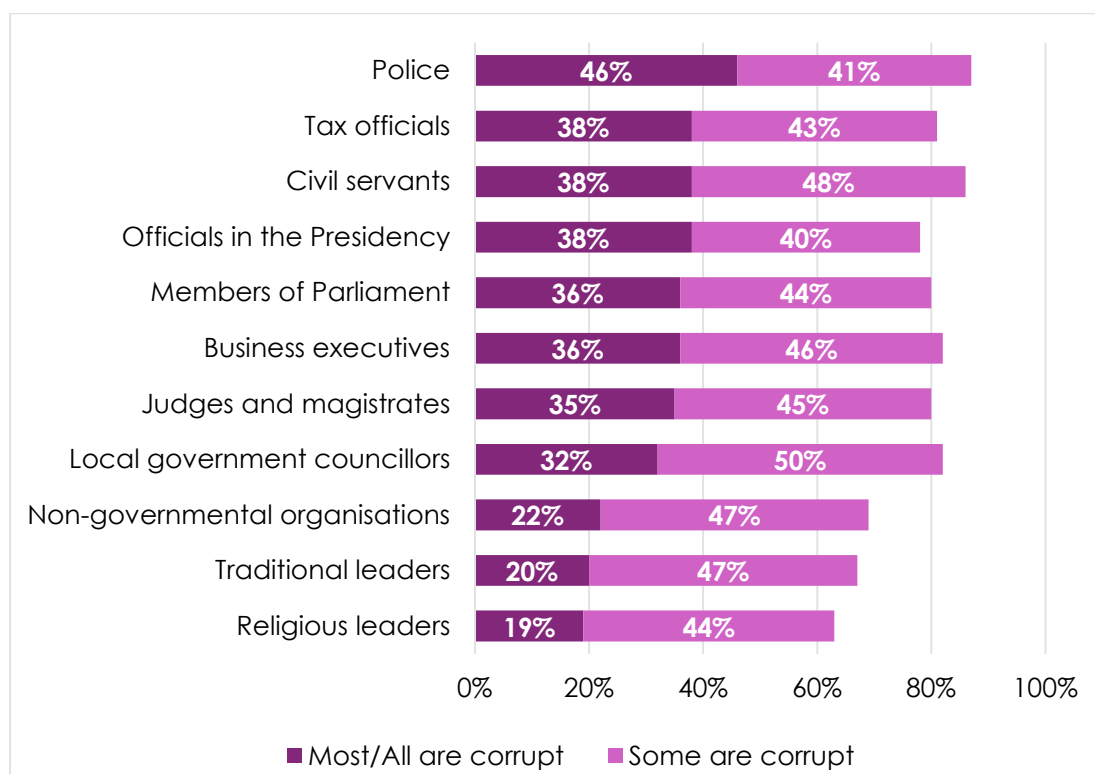
Jacob Zuma, incumbent President Cyril Ramaphosa, and other senior African National Congress leaders have frequently dominated the news (BBC News, 2022). In Mozambique, charges that the son of former President Armando Guebuza, a former finance minister, and other senior ruling-party members had participated in the disappearance of loans captured global media attention (Financial Times, 2019). Similarly, corruption in Angola trended globally when Isabel dos Santos, daughter of former President José Eduardo dos Santos, was accused of making billions of dollars through illicit activities (New York Times, 2022).

But when Africans are asked to assess the involvement of various public officials in corruption, a more commonplace face of corruption stands out: The police consistently top perceptions of widespread graft. On average across 39 countries, almost half (46%) of citizens say that “most” or “all” police officials are involved in corruption, in addition to 41% who consider “some of them” corrupt (Figure 7). Tax officials, civil servants, and officials in the Presidency tie for second place, each seen as largely corrupt by 38% of citizens, followed by members of Parliament (MPs) (36%), business executives (36%), judges and magistrates (35%), and local government councillors (32%).

About one in five respondents see widespread corruption among non-governmental organisations (22%), traditional leaders (20%), and religious leaders (19%).

In addition, with respect to each institution or group of leaders, more than four in 10 respondents say “some of them” are corrupt.

**Figure 7: Corruption among public institutions and leaders | 39 countries\***  
 | 2021/2023



**Respondents were asked:** How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?

\* The question about MPs was not asked in Guinea, Sudan, and Tunisia.

The question about local government councillors was not asked in Angola and Seychelles.

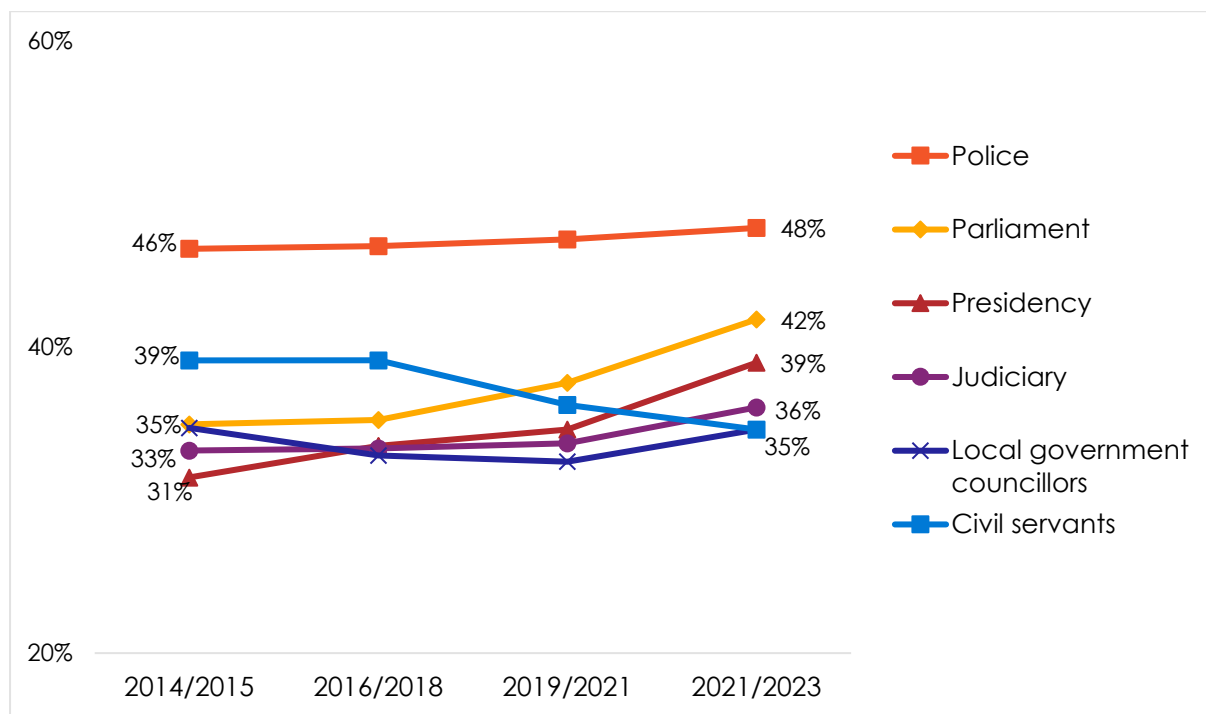
The question about traditional leaders was not asked in Cabo Verde, Mauritius, São Tomé and Príncipe, Seychelles, and Tunisia.

As part of their efforts to deal with this scourge, many African countries have enacted anti-corruption legislation and established agencies that work to prevent and prosecute corruption cases. At the continental level, the 2003 African Union (AU) Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption projects the AU's call for countries to address the root causes of corruption and adopt adequate preventive measures (African Union, 2003). Forty-nine of 55 AU member states have signed the convention, and 48 had ratified it as of February 2023 (African Union, 2023).

Despite such efforts, the general view among African citizens is that corruption among key public institutions is not improving. Across 31 countries surveyed consistently between 2014/2015 and 2021/2023, perceptions of widespread corruption have worsened for officials in the Presidency (from 31% to 39%), MPs (from 35% to 42%), and judges and magistrates (from 33% to 36%) while stagnating for the police and local government councillors (Figure 8). Assessments of widespread corruption have improved modestly (from 39% to 35%) for civil servants.

These findings suggest that anti-corruption efforts to date have been either ineffective or insufficient to reduce corruption among key public agencies across Africa.

**Figure 8: Widespread corruption in key public institutions | 31 countries<sup>1</sup>**  
| 2014-2023



**Respondents were asked:** How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? (% who say "most of them" or "all of them")

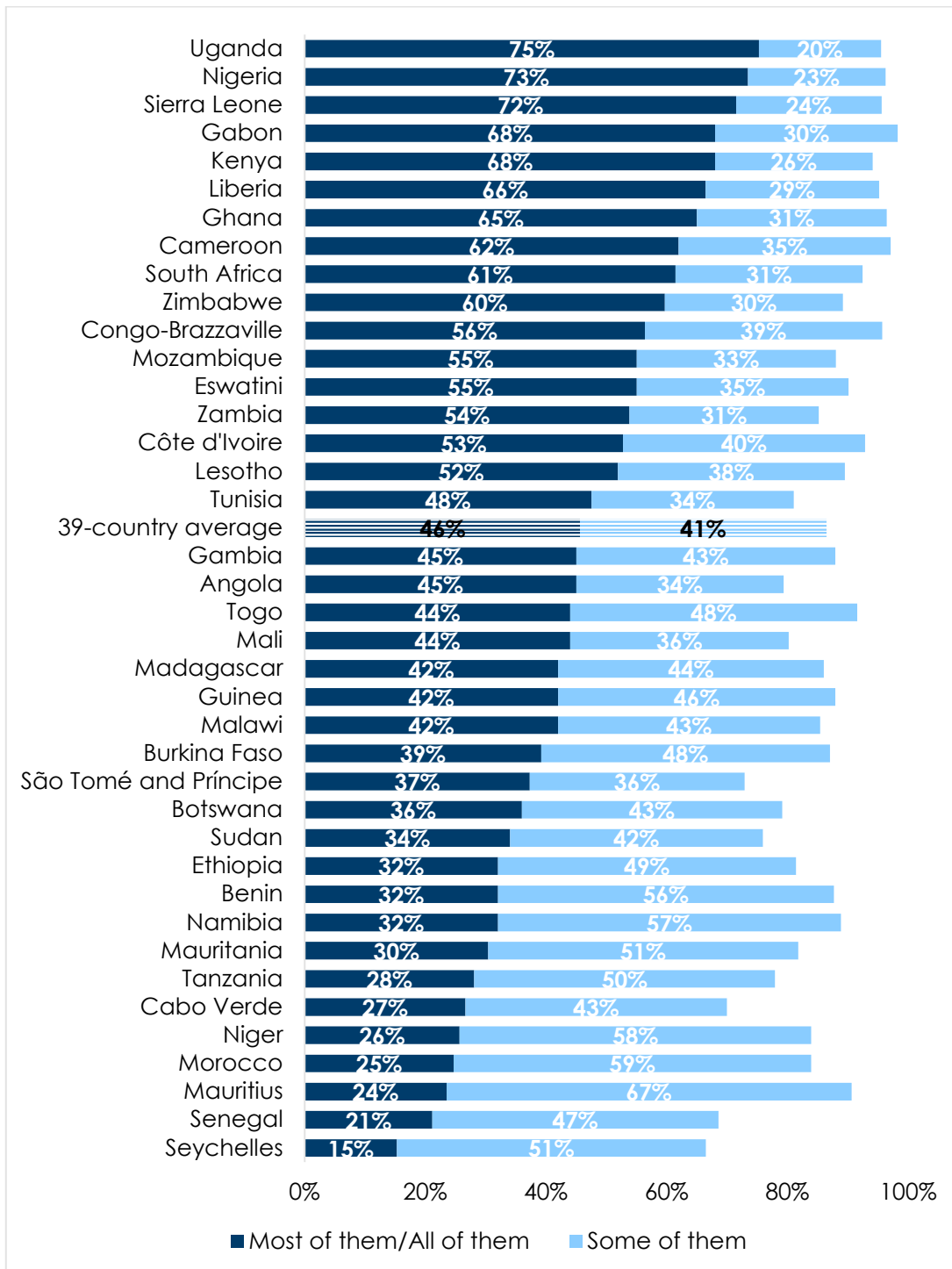
### Corruption among the police

While the police – perhaps the most public-facing government service – fare most poorly in citizens' assessments of who is corrupt, these evaluations vary significantly across countries

<sup>1</sup> Madagascar, which was not surveyed in Round 8, is included in 32-country comparisons between Round 6 and Round 9 but not in 31-country comparisons across rounds 6, 7, 8 and 9.

(Figure 9). In 16 of the 39 surveyed countries, majorities consider “most” or “all” police corrupt, led by Uganda (75%), Nigeria (73%), and Sierra Leone (72%). On the other hand, fewer than one in four citizens report widespread police corruption in Seychelles (15%), Senegal (21%), and Mauritius (24%) – though even here, two to three times as many say that “some” police officers are corrupt.

**Figure 9: Corruption among the police | 39 countries | 2021/2023**



**Respondents were asked:** How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: The police? (% who say “most of them” or “all of them”)

On average across 32 countries for which comparable data from both 2014/2015 and 2021/2023 are available, the proportion of citizens who say most/all police are corrupt has remained stable. But assessments have improved significantly in 10 countries, most dramatically (by 22 percentage points) in Benin and Tanzania (Figure 10). They have worsened (by 3 percentage points or more) in 15 countries, led by Tunisia (+21 points) and the three Southern African neighbours where perceptions of increased overall corruption were highest (as shown in Figure 4): South Africa (+14 points), Lesotho (+13 points), and Eswatini (+13 points).

**Figure 10: Change in perceptions of widespread police corruption | 32 countries | 2014-2023**

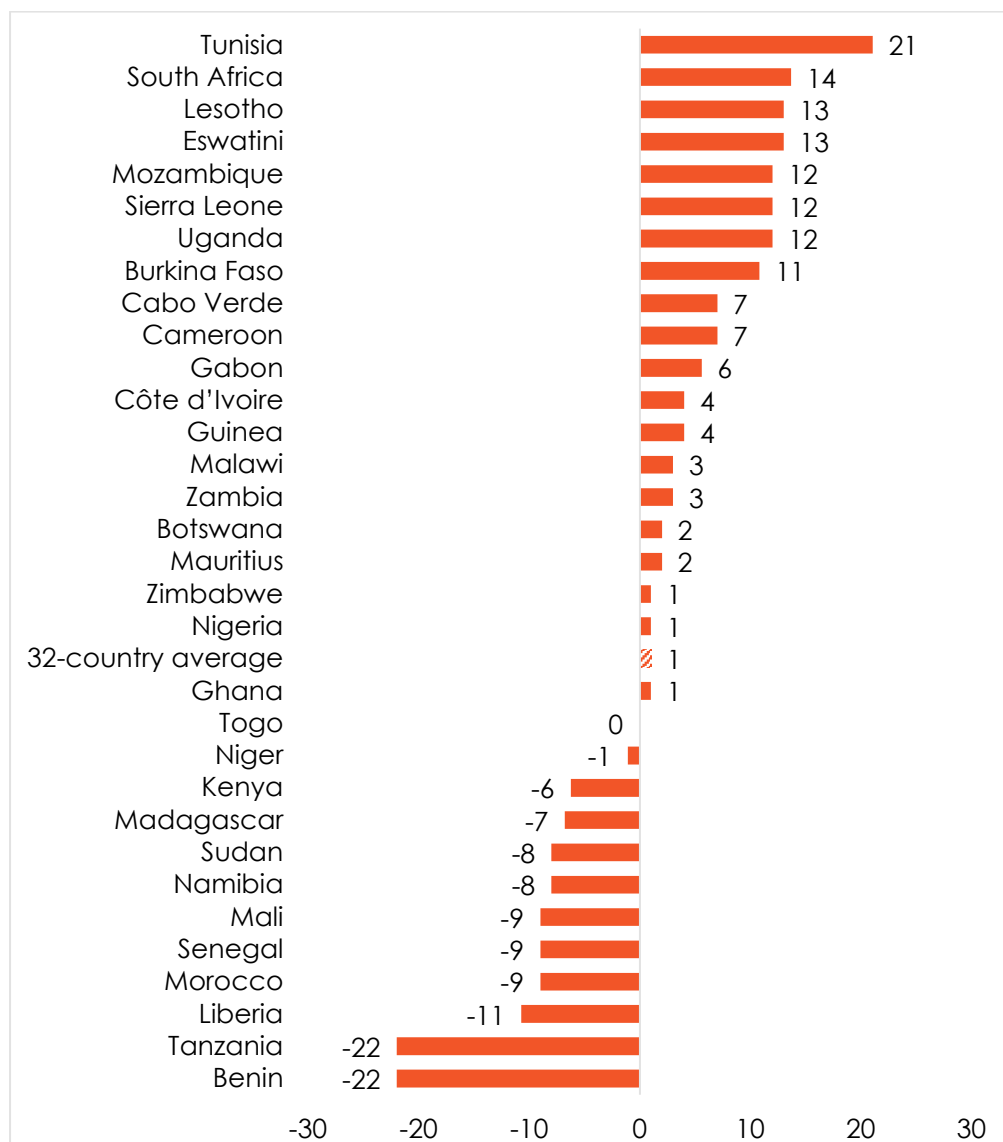
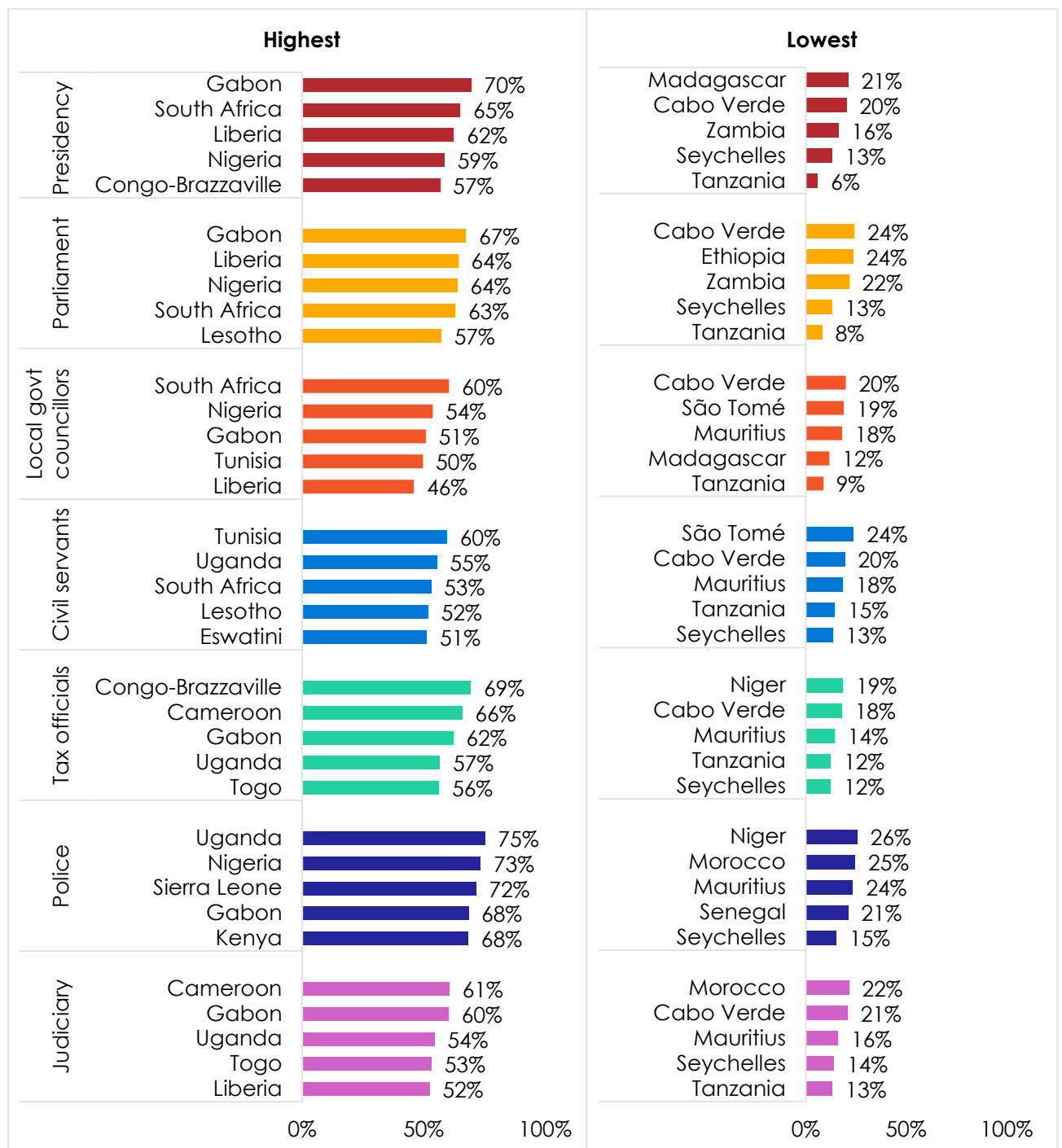


Figure shows change, in percentage points, between 2014/2015 and 2021/2023 in the proportion of respondents who say “most” or “all” police are corrupt.

While perceived corruption varies greatly across countries and institutions, Gabon appears among the five worst performers for six of seven key institutions (Figure 11), suggesting that corruption can be seen as endemic there. South Africa, Nigeria, and Liberia record some of

the highest perceptions of corruption in four institutions, including the Presidency, Parliament, and local government. Uganda, too, is among the worst performers in four categories (civil servants, tax officials, police, and judiciary).

**Figure 11: Countries with highest and lowest perceived corruption | by key institution**  
| 39 countries | 2021/2023



**Respondents were asked:** How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? (Figure shows, for each of seven institutions, the five countries where the largest proportions of respondents say "most" or "all" officials are corrupt.)

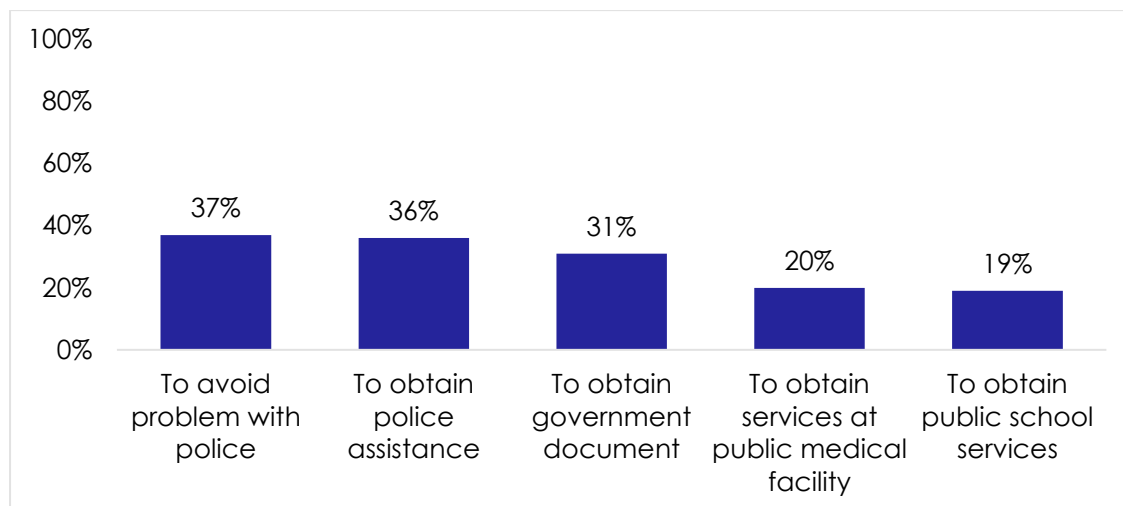
Seychelles ranks at the least corrupt end of the scale for all six of these institutions that its citizens were asked about (the question about local government councillors was not asked in Seychelles), and Cabo Verde and Tanzania rank among top performers in all categories except for the police. Mauritius joins the best performers in four categories.

### Payment of bribes to access public services

Citizens' assessments of corruption levels in public institutions are likely shaped in part by their personal experiences, such as when they seek to access various government services. On average across 39 countries, more than one in three adults who interacted with the police during the previous year say they had to pay a bribe, give a gift, or do a favour (36% of those who sought police assistance, 37% of those who encountered the police in other situations, such as a traffic stops or investigations) (Figure 12).

Among citizens who tried to obtain a government document such as a birth certificate, driver's license, passport, or voter's card, 31% say they paid a bribe at least once. One in five respondents report having to pay a bribe to obtain services at a public medical facility (20%) or a public school (19%).

**Figure 12: Payment of bribes to access public services | 39 countries | 2021/2023**



**Respondents were asked:**

*In the past 12 months, have you had contact with a public school? [If yes:] How often, if ever, did you have to pay a bribe, give a gift, or do a favour for a teacher or school official in order to get the services you needed from the schools?*

*In the past 12 months, have you had contact with a public clinic or hospital? [If yes:] How often, if ever, did you have to pay a bribe, give a gift, or do a favour for a health worker or clinic or hospital staff in order to get the medical care you needed?*

*In the past 12 months, have you tried to get an identity document like a birth certificate, driver's license, passport or voter's card, or permit from government? [If yes:] How often, if ever, did you have to pay a bribe, give a gift, or do a favour for a government official in order to get the document you needed?*

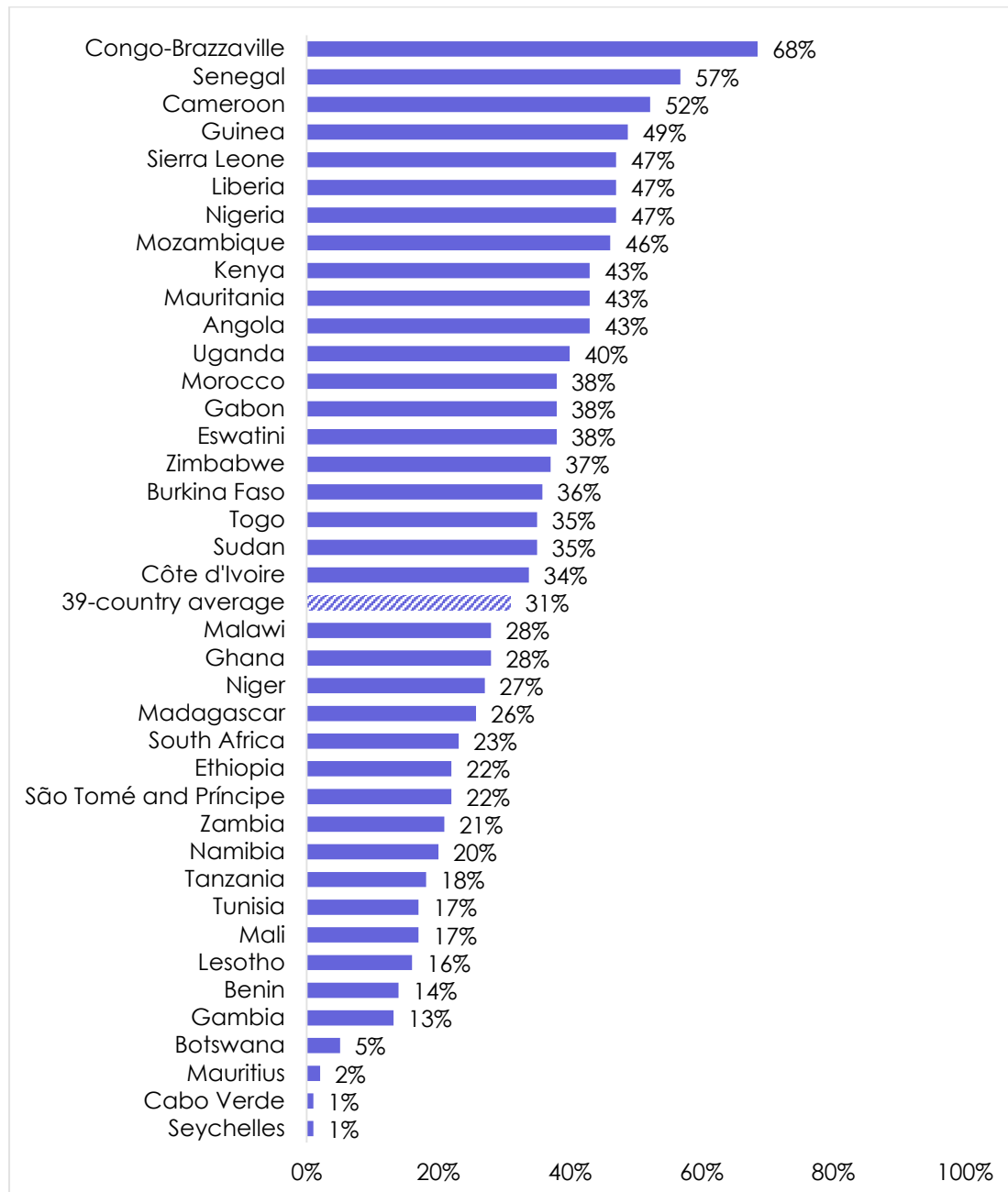
*In the past 12 months, have you requested assistance from the police? [If yes:] How often, if ever, did you have to pay a bribe, give a gift, or do a favour for a police officer in order to get the assistance you needed?*

*In the past 12 months, how often have you encountered the police in other situations, like at checkpoints, during identity checks or traffic stops, or during an investigation? [If yes:] How often, if ever did you have to pay a bribe, give a gift, or do a favour for a police officer in order to avoid a problem during one of these encounters?*

*(% who say "once or twice," "a few times," or "often." Respondents who did not have contact with these services are excluded.)*

Self-reported bribe-paying varies widely across countries (Figure 13). Among citizens who sought to obtain a government document, for example, more than two-thirds (68%) of those in Congo-Brazzaville say they had to pay a bribe at least once. So did more than half of Senegalese (57%) and Cameroonians (52%). In contrast, no more than one in 20 citizens say the same in Botswana (5%), Mauritius (2%), Cabo Verde (1%), and Seychelles (1%).

**Figure 13: Proportion of citizens seeking identity documents who had to pay a bribe**  
 | 39 countries | 2021/2023

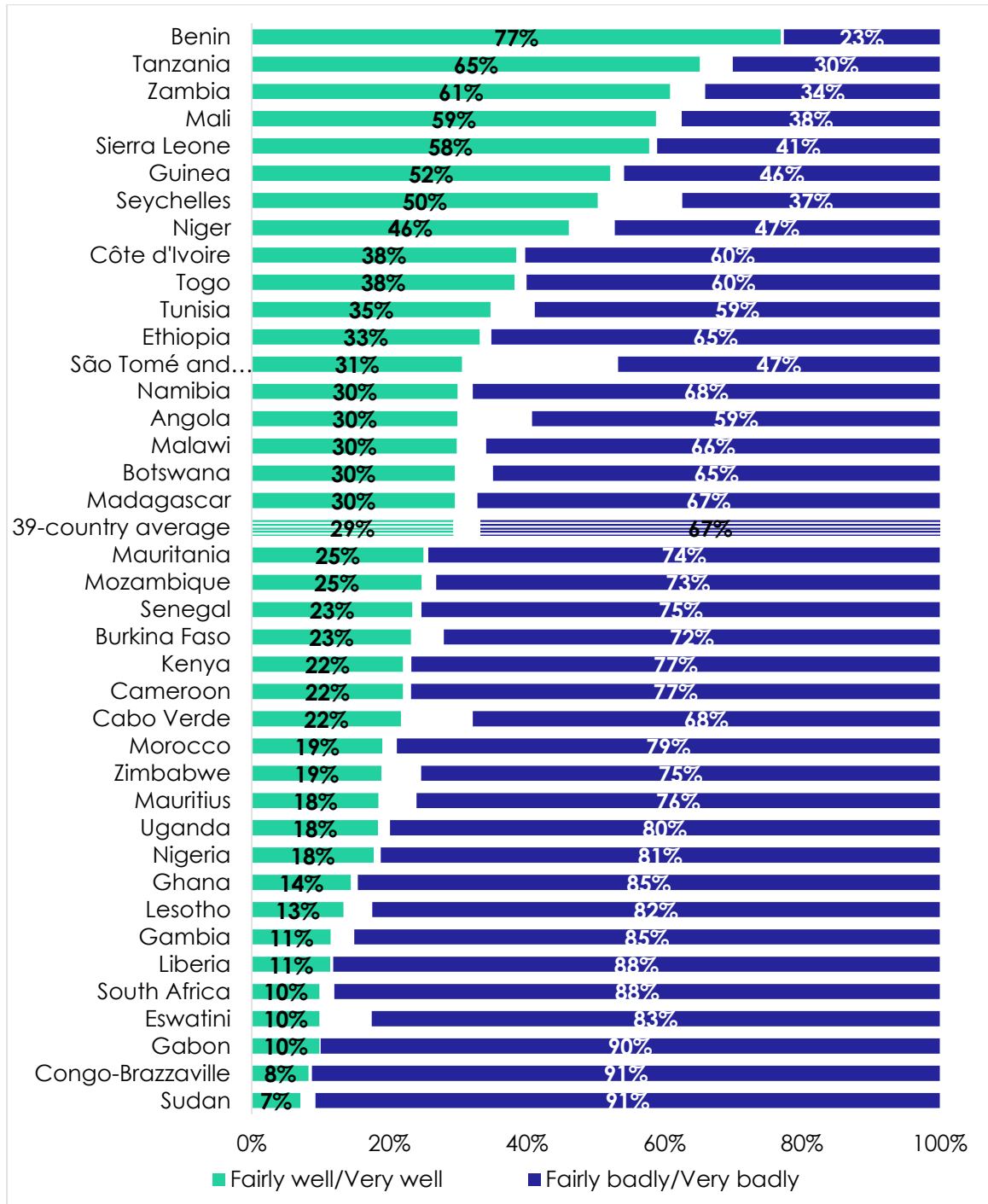


**Respondents were asked:** In the past 12 months, have you tried to get an identity document like a birth certificate, driver's license, passport or voter's card, or permit from government? [If yes:] How often, if ever, did you have to pay a bribe, give a gift, or do a favour for a government official in order to get the document you needed? (% who say "once or twice," "a few times," or "often." Respondents who did not have contact with these services are excluded.)

## Government performance in fighting corruption

Considering that most Africans say corruption is increasing, and many report personal experiences with having to pay bribes, it is not surprising that two-thirds (67%) of Africans say their government is failing when it comes to fighting corruption (Figure 14).

**Figure 14: Government performance in fighting corruption | 39 countries | 2021/2023**



**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: Fighting corruption in government?



Only six countries record majority approval of their government's performance on corruption, led by Benin (77%), Tanzania (65%), and Zambia (61%). In contrast, no more than one in 10 citizens give their government a passing grade in South Africa (10%), Eswatini (10%), Gabon (10%), Congo-Brazzaville (8%), and Sudan (7%).

Despite many government promises to tackle the scourge of corruption, on average public evaluations of government performance on the issue have not changed significantly since 2014/2015 (Figure 15). But country-level assessments show substantial changes, including double-digit improvements in seven countries.

**Figure 15: Change in approval of government performance in fighting corruption**  
 | 31 countries\* | 2014-2023

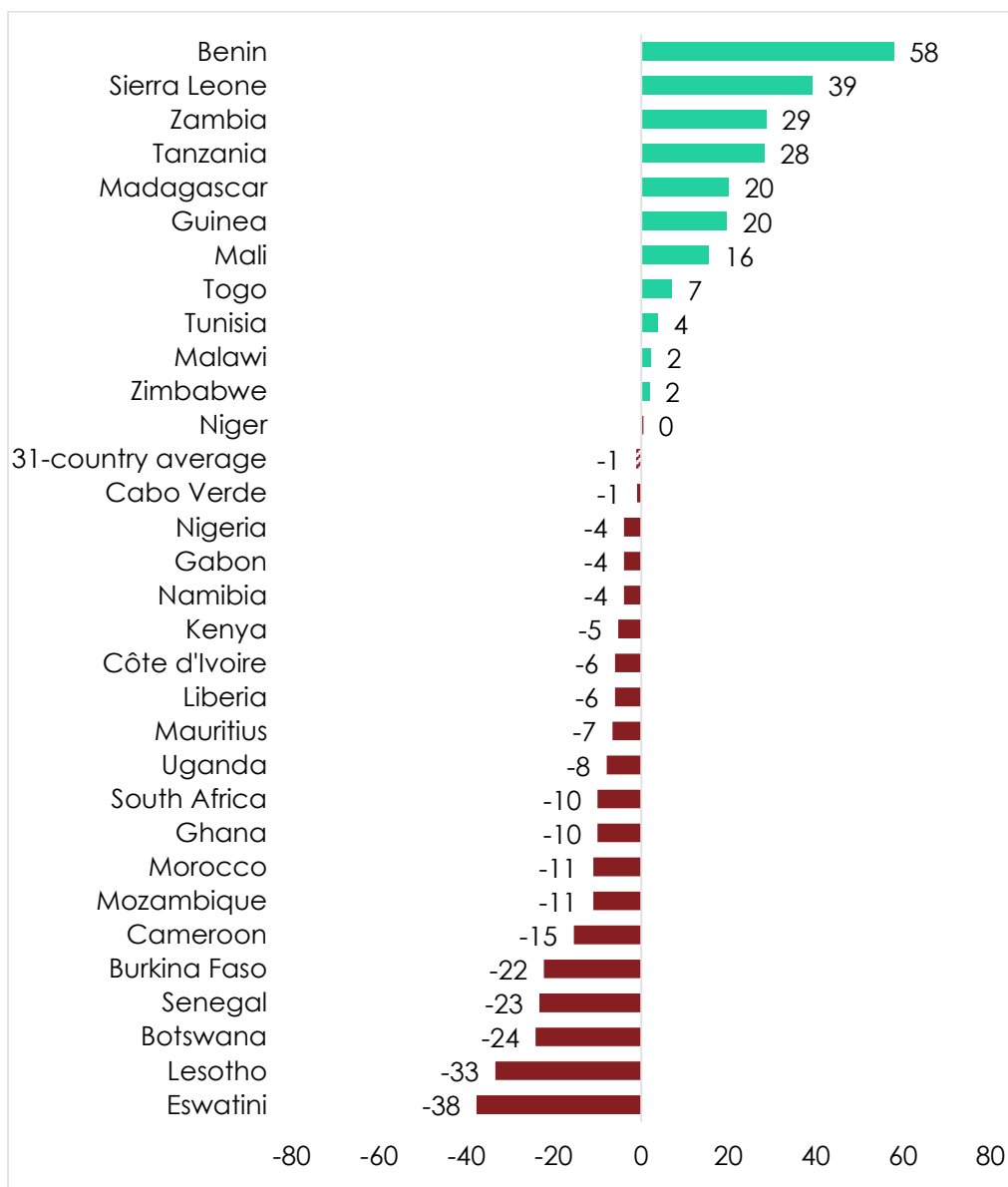


Figure shows change, in percentage points, between 2014/2015 and 2021/2023 in the proportion of respondents who say the government is doing "fairly well" or "very well."

\* This question was not asked in Sudan in Round 6.

The countries with the largest gains in favourable ratings are Benin (+58 percentage points), Sierra Leone (+39 points), Zambia (+29 points), and Tanzania (+28 points) – the same countries that Figure 4 showed with the largest declines in the share of citizens reporting worsening corruption.

In contrast, citizens in 18 countries rate their governments significantly worse on fighting corruption than they did in 2014/2015, including declines of 38 percentage points in Eswatini and 33 points in Lesotho. The Botswana government also suffers a huge drop (-24 points) in citizen approval of its performance on corruption, as do its counterparts in Senegal (-23 points) and Burkina Faso (-22 points).

### Risks of reporting corruption

A key part of an effective anti-corruption strategy is to facilitate whistleblowing – the act of reporting suspected or observed wrongdoing to officials in a position to take action. Vian, Agnew, and McInnes (2022) describe reporting corruption as “the single most important strategy for detecting occupational fraud committed by employees or managers.”

Whistleblowing not only reveals individual cases of corruption, but it also helps to unearth systemic weaknesses that encourage corrupt behaviour, allowing governments and anti-corruption agencies to use the information to close loopholes that enable corrupt activities.

But if people worry that their identities might be revealed, they will be less inclined to report corruption for fear of reprisals. The risk is particularly high if the perpetrators are powerful and capable of exacting revenge in the event of exposure.

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How safe do Africans feel to report corruption to the authorities?

On average across 39 countries, a large majority (71%) of respondents believe that people risk retaliation or other negative consequences if they speak out. Only one in four (26%) say corruption can be reported without fear (Figure 16).

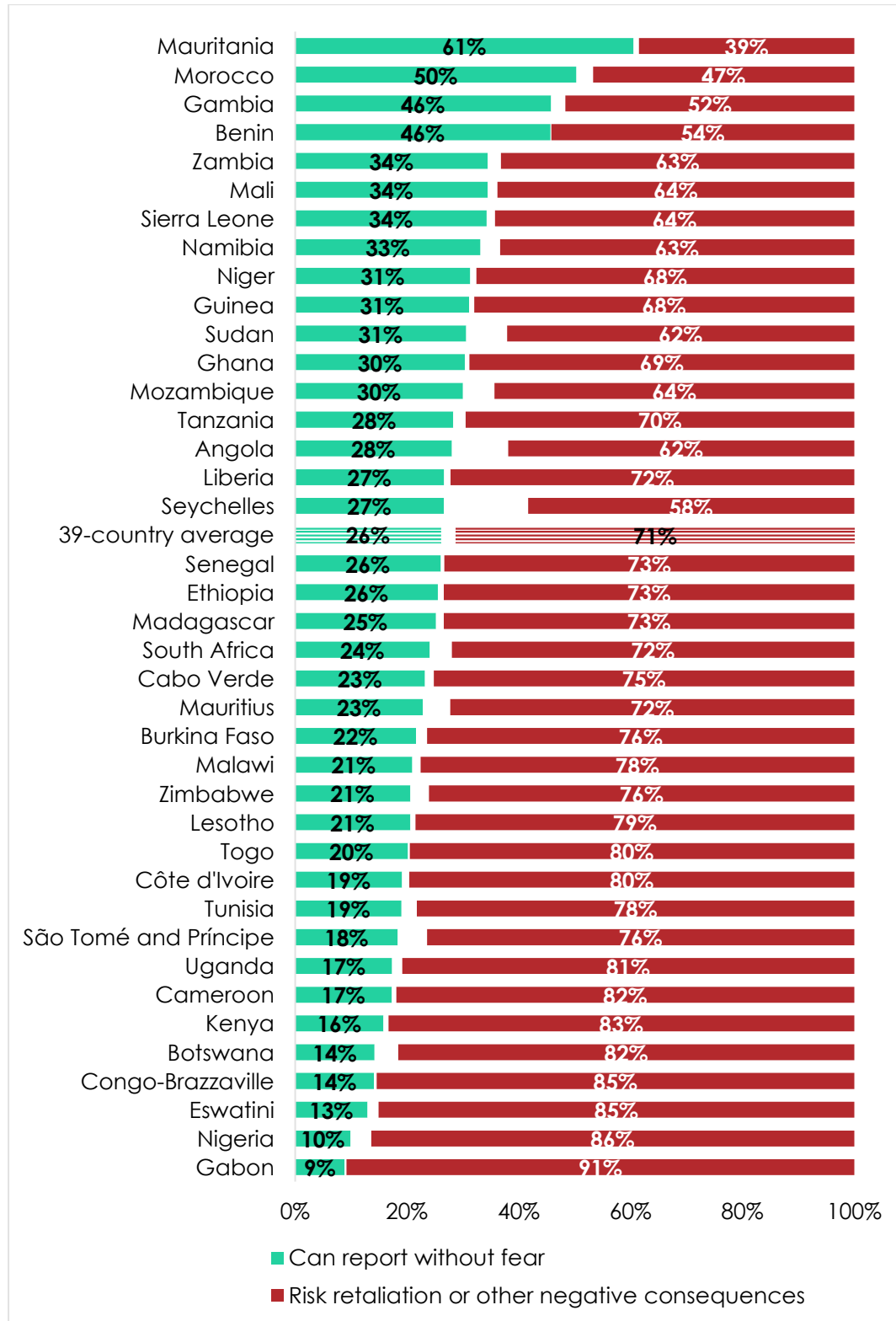
Mauritania is the only surveyed country where a majority (61%) of respondents say people can feel safe in reporting corruption. Only one in 10 Nigerians (10%) and Gabonese (9%) agree.

Concern about possible reprisals is high across key demographic groups (Figure 17). It is particularly high among citizens with secondary or higher education (74%) (who may be most aware of cases of retaliation) and is relatively low among economically well-off citizens<sup>2</sup> (who may be more likely to feel shielded from negative consequences).

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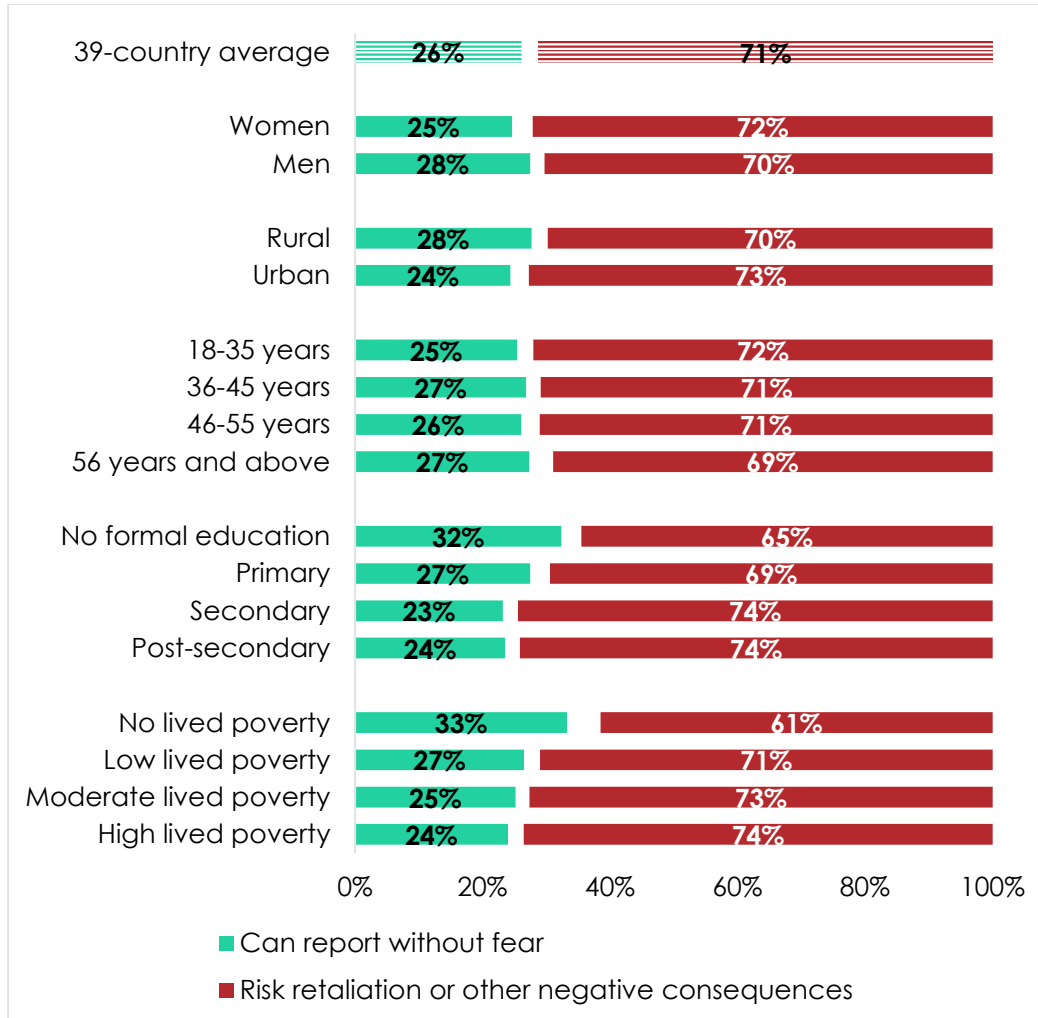
<sup>2</sup> Afrobarometer’s Lived Poverty Index (LPI) measures respondents’ levels of material deprivation by asking how often they or their families went without basic necessities (enough food, enough water, medical care, enough cooking fuel, and a cash income) during the preceding year. For more on lived poverty, see Mattes and Patel (2022).

**Figure 16: Can ordinary citizens report corruption without fear? | 39 countries**  
 | 2021/2023



**Respondents were asked:** *In this country, can ordinary people report incidents of corruption without fear, or do they risk retaliation or other negative consequences if they speak out?*

**Figure 17: Can ordinary citizens report corruption without fear? | by demographic group | 39 countries | 2021/2023**



**Respondents were asked:** *In this country, can ordinary people report incidents of corruption without fear, or do they risk retaliation or other negative consequences if they speak out?*

Across 32 countries for which comparable data are available for Round 7 (2016/2018) and Round 9 (2021/2023), the share of citizens who feel safe in reporting corruption has declined by 3 percentage points (Figure 18). Only six countries record significant increases (of at least 3 percentage points), led by Morocco (+19 percentage points) and Benin (+12 points). Seventeen countries register declines, including drops of 24 percentage points in Burkina Faso, 15 points in Tunisia, and 14 points in Botswana.

**Figure 18: Change in proportion of respondents who say citizens can report corruption without fear | 32 countries | 2016-2023**

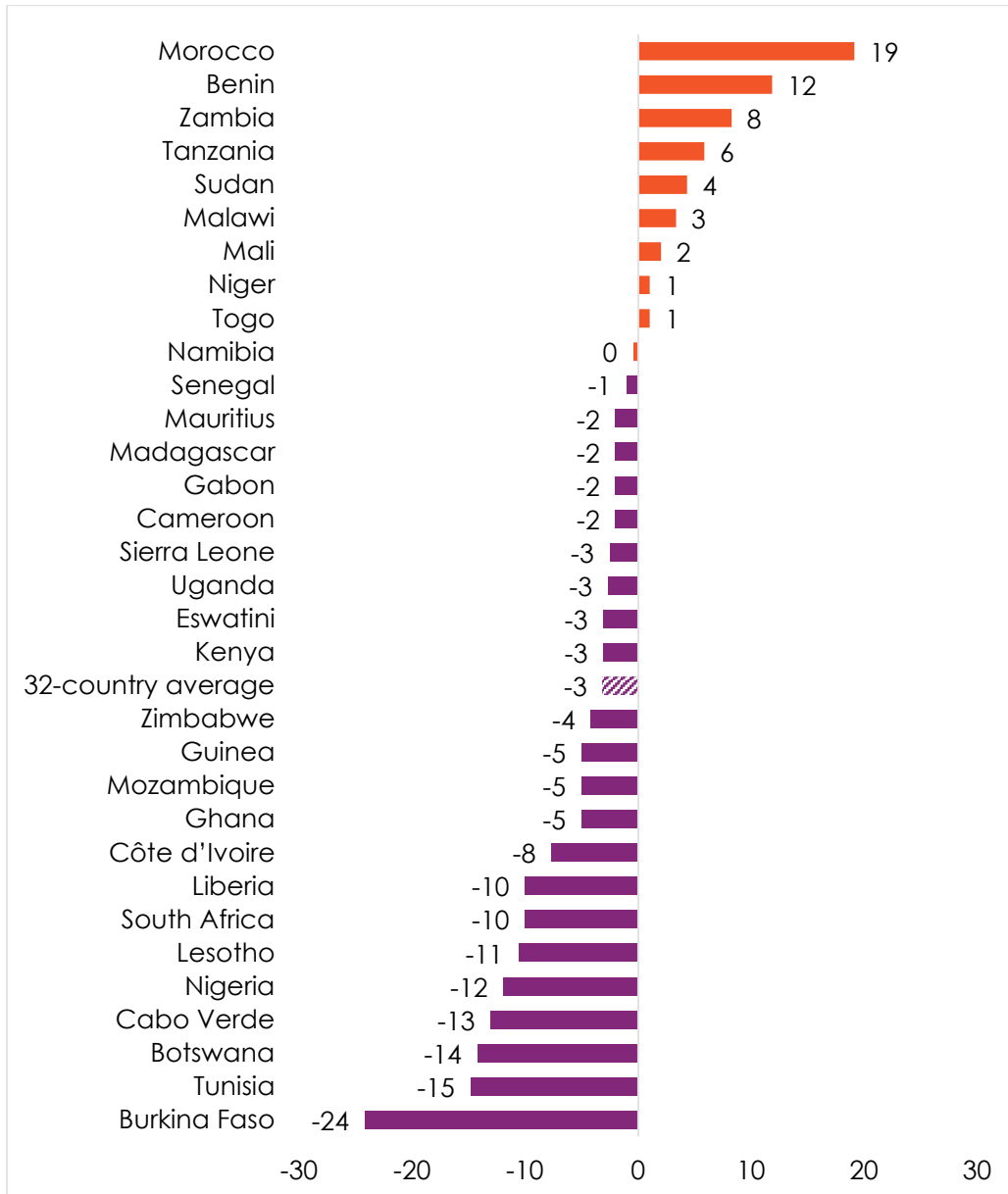


Figure shows change, in percentage points, between 2016/2018 and 2021/2023 in the proportion of respondents who say ordinary citizens can report corruption without fear.

## Conclusion

On a continent where governments struggle to raise revenues to provide for citizens' basic needs, corruption is continuing its corrosive attack on economic progress and democratic governance. Government commitments to fighting corruption appear to be bearing little fruit, as most Africans see the problem as worsening and their leaders' anti-corruption efforts as inadequate. Even during a national emergency like the COVID-19 pandemic, corruption takes a big bite out of resources intended to serve the people, in citizens' view.

Assessments vary widely by country. Survey findings suggest that Gabon, South Africa, Nigeria, Liberia, and Uganda rank high among countries that must take a harder look at their

public officials and policies. Meanwhile, Seychelles, Cabo Verde, Tanzania, Mauritius, and rapidly improving Benin might have lessons for their neighbours when it comes to controlling official graft.

Citizens' fear of retaliation for reporting corruption is a serious handicap in the fight for integrity, requiring better strategies for protecting whistleblowers if governments hope to gain this important ally.

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## Appendix

**Table A.1: Afrobarometer Round 9 fieldwork dates and previous survey rounds**

Country	Round 9 fieldwork	Previous survey rounds
Angola	Feb.-March 2022	2019
Benin	Jan. 2022	2005, 2008, 2011, 2014, 2017, 2020
Botswana	June-July 2022	1999, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2019
Burkina Faso	Sept.-Oct. 2022	2008, 2012, 2015, 2017, 2019
Cabo Verde	July-Aug. 2022	2002, 2005, 2008, 2011, 2014, 2017, 2019
Cameroon	March 2022	2013, 2015, 2018, 2021
Congo-Brazzaville	June-July 2023	NA
Côte d'Ivoire	Nov.-Dec. 2021	2013, 2014, 2017, 2019
Eswatini	Oct.-Nov. 2022	2013, 2015, 2018, 2021
Ethiopia	May-June 2023	2013, 2020
Gabon	Nov.-Dec. 2021	2015, 2017, 2020
Gambia	Aug.-Sept. 2022	2018, 2021
Ghana	April 2022	1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2019
Guinea	Aug. 2022	2013, 2015, 2017, 2019
Kenya	Nov.-Dec. 2021	2003, 2005, 2008, 2011, 2014, 2016, 2019
Lesotho	Feb.-March 2022	2000, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2020
Liberia	Aug.-Sept. 2022	2008, 2012, 2015, 2018, 2020
Madagascar	April-May 2022	2005, 2008, 2013, 2015, 2018
Malawi	Feb. 2022	1999, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2019
Mali	July 2022	2001, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2013, 2014, 2017, 2020
Mauritania	Nov. 2022	NA
Mauritius	March 2022	2012, 2014, 2017, 2020
Morocco	Aug.-Sept. 2022	2013, 2015, 2018, 2021
Mozambique	Oct.-Nov. 2022	2002, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2015, 2018, 2021
Namibia	Oct.-Nov. 2021	1999, 2003, 2006, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2019
Niger	June 2022	2013, 2015, 2018, 2020
Nigeria	March 2022	2000, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2020
São Tomé and Príncipe	Dec. 2022	2015, 2018
Senegal	May-June 2022	2002, 2005, 2008, 2013, 2014, 2017, 2021
Seychelles	Dec. 2022	NA
Sierra Leone	June-July 2022	2012, 2015, 2018, 2020
South Africa	Nov.-Dec. 2022	2000, 2002, 2006, 2008, 2011, 2015, 2018, 2021
Sudan	Nov.-Dec. 2022	2013, 2015, 2018, 2021
Tanzania	Sept.-Oct. 2022	2001, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2021
Togo	March 2022	2012, 2014, 2017, 2021
Tunisia	Feb.-March 2022	2013, 2015, 2018, 2020
Uganda	Jan. 2022	2000, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2015, 2017, 2019
Zambia	Aug.-Sept. 2022	1999, 2003, 2005, 2009, 2013, 2014, 2017, 2020
Zimbabwe	March-April 2022	1999, 2004, 2005, 2009, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2021



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