

## Advison Lesotho

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Maseru, Lesotho

# News release

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## Lived poverty declines but still a reality for a majority of Basotho, new Afrobarometer survey shows

About six in 10 Basotho experienced moderate or high lived poverty during the past year, a significant improvement compared to 2020, a recent Afrobarometer survey shows.

Reflecting shortages of basic life necessities such as food, water, and a cash income, moderate/high lived poverty was most common among rural residents, women, the elderly, and those with no formal education.

The proportion of Basotho who suffered frequent deprivation of basic life necessities peaked in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, but has since decreased steadily.

Unemployment tops citizens' list of priorities for government action, and an overwhelming majority say the government is performing poorly on creating jobs for its people.

### Key findings

- More than eight in 10 Basotho (85%) say they or a household member went without a cash income at least once during the past year, while 60% experienced shortages of food and half went without needed medical care (50%) and water (50%) at least once (Figure 1).
- About six in 10 Basotho (59%) experienced moderate or high lived poverty during the previous year, meaning they frequently went without basic life necessities. This is an 11-percentage-point decrease compared to 2020 (Figure 2).
- Moderate/High lived poverty was more common in rural areas than in cities (67% vs. 49%) and among women than among men (62% vs. 54%) (Figure 3).
  - Citizens with no formal education or only primary schooling report the highest levels of lived poverty (76% and 66%, respectively, compared to 33% of those with post-secondary qualifications).
  - Older Basotho report higher levels of moderate/high lived poverty (64%, compared to 50% of respondents aged 18-25 years).
- Unemployment is the most important problem that Basotho want their government to address, cited by 63% of respondents as one of their three priorities (Figure 4).
  - Unemployment is followed by infrastructure/roads (47%), water supply (23%), electricity (20%), and poverty (18%).
- Majorities of Basotho say the government is doing a poor job of creating employment opportunities (87%), improving the living standards of the poor (68%), providing water and sanitation services (65%), providing reliable electricity (58%), and maintaining roads and bridges (58%) (Figure 5).

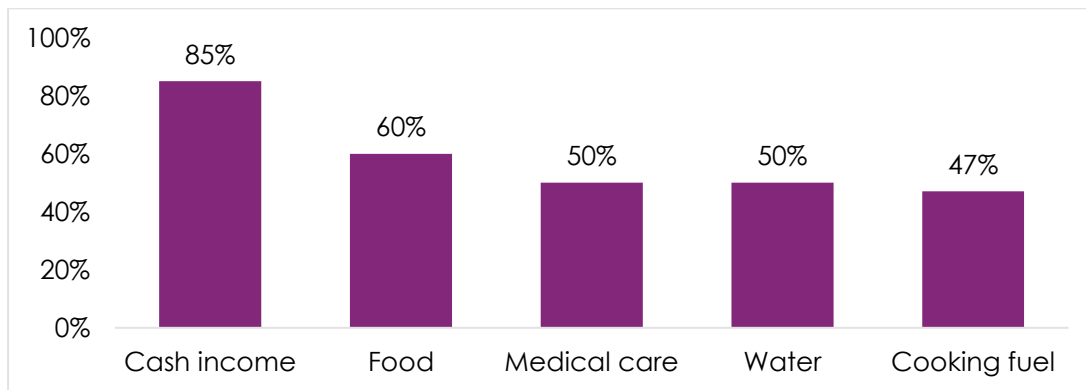
## Afrobarometer surveys

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. Nine survey rounds in up to 42 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 10 surveys are currently underway. Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Lesotho, led by Advision Lesotho, interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,200 adult Basotho in March 2024. 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 Lesotho in 2000, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2020, and 2022.

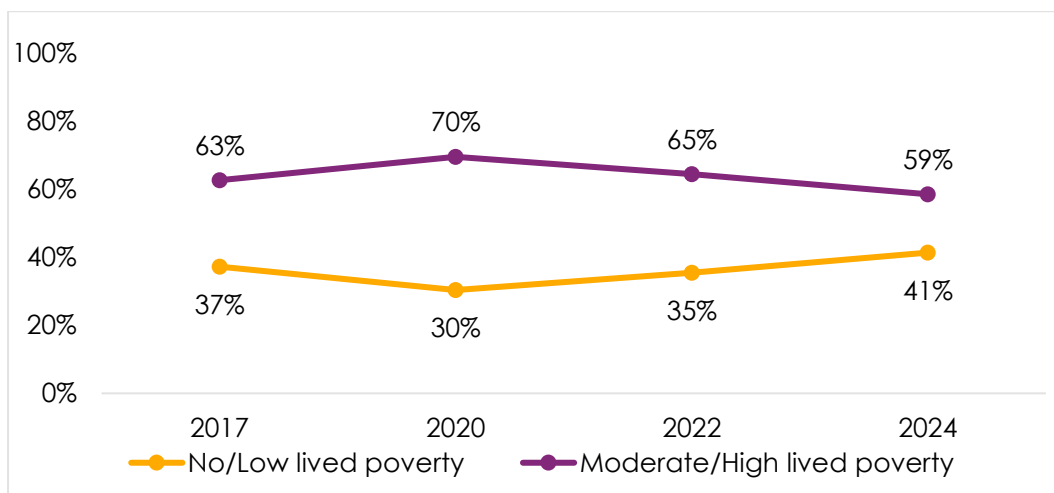
## Charts

**Figure 1: Went without basic necessities | Lesotho | 2024**



**Respondents were asked:** Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family gone without: Enough food to eat? Enough clean water for home use? Medicines or medical treatment? Enough fuel to cook your food? A cash income? (% who say "just once or twice," "several times," "many times," or "always")

**Figure 2: Lived poverty | Lesotho | 2017-2024**



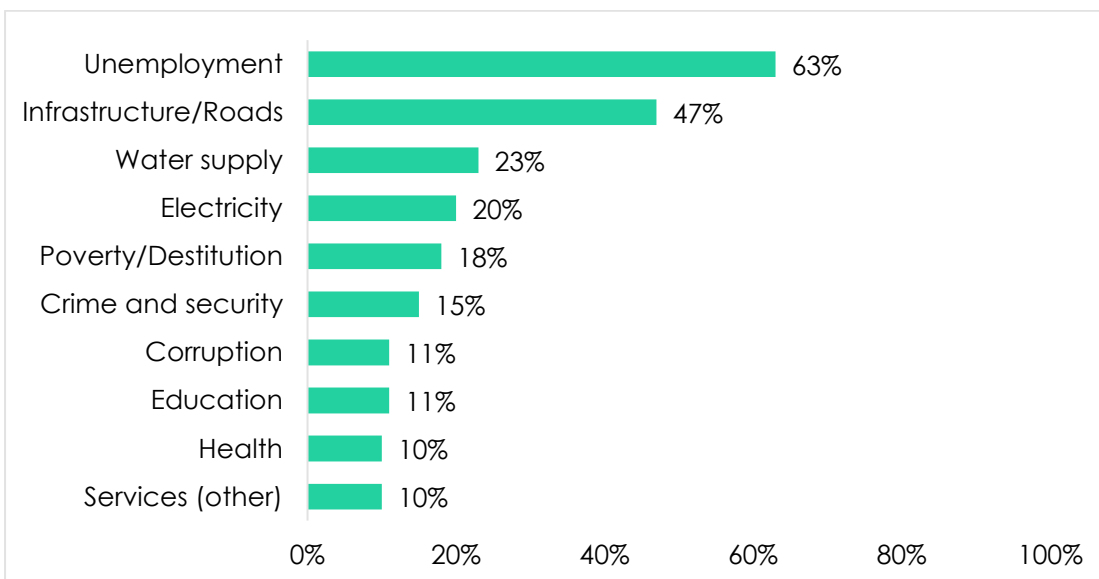
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**Figure 3: Lived poverty** | by demographic group | Lesotho | 2024



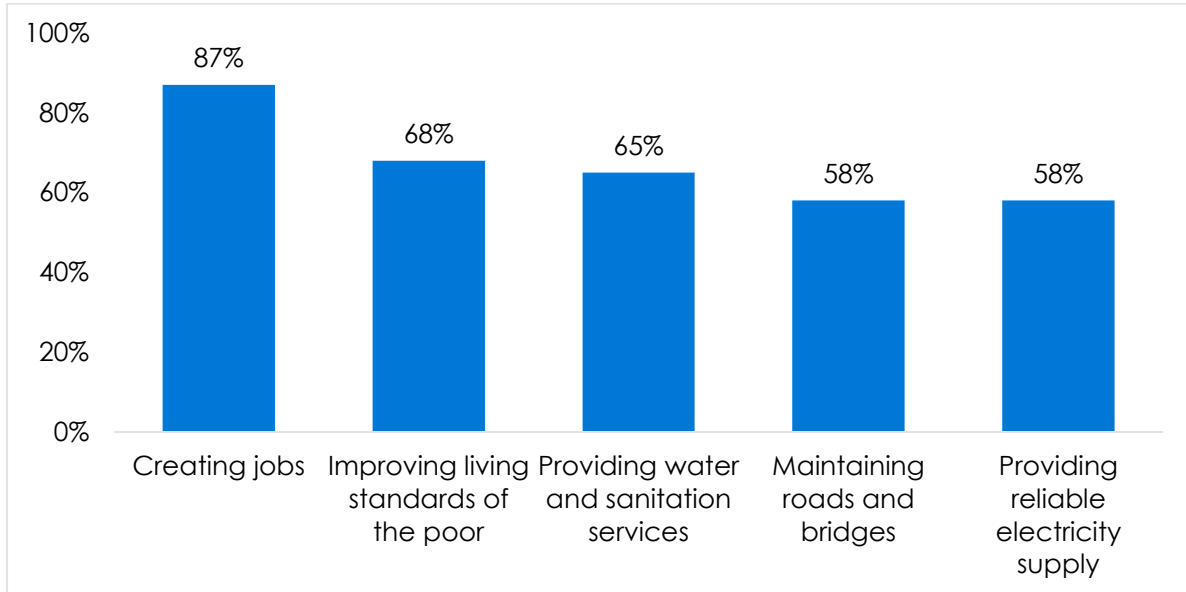
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**Figure 4: Most important problems** | Lesotho | 2024



**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 percentage of respondents who cite each problem as one of up to three priorities.)

**Figure 5: Negative assessments of government performance | Lesotho | 2024**



**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: Creating jobs? Improving living standards of the poor? Providing water and sanitation services? Maintaining roads and bridges? Providing reliable electricity supply? (% who say "fairly badly" or "very badly")

**For more information, please contact:**

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