



Gaborone, Botswana
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News release

Unemployment tops Botswana policy priorities as they head toward elections, new Afrobarometer survey shows

As Botswana prepares for its upcoming elections, a new Afrobarometer survey shows that unemployment is the citizens' most pressing concern, far surpassing other issues such as health, crime, poverty, education, and corruption.

Over the past five years, unemployment has consistently topped the list of policy priorities Botswana wants their government to address. Concerns around crime and security have also grown in importance.

The study shows that the issue of unemployment is particularly urgent for younger adults and educated citizens, while older Botswana place greater emphasis than youth on health care and poverty.

These findings offer critical insights into citizens' expectations for the next government.

Key findings

- Six in 10 Botswana (59%) cite unemployment as the country's most important problem that citizens want their government to address (Figure 1).
 - Health ranks a distant second (29%), followed by crime and security (20%), poverty/destitution (14%), education (13%), corruption (12%), and wages, incomes, and salaries (10%).
- Compared to 2019, there has been a modest decline in the proportion of citizens who cite unemployment as their policy priority (from 63% to 59%), while crime and security has risen in importance (+ 9 percentage points) (Figure 2).
 - In contrast, there have been significant declines in the proportion of citizens who prioritise poverty (-10 points) and education (-8 points).
- Young Botswana are more likely than senior citizens to express great concern about unemployment (66% among those aged 18-35 vs. 50% among those 56 and above) and education (16% vs. 9%) (Figure 3). Health and poverty are more urgent priorities for senior citizens.
- Compared to citizens with no formal schooling, the most educated are far more concerned about unemployment (70% vs. 41%) (Figure 4). Those with no education are more likely to mention poverty (26% vs. 9%), food shortage (9% vs. 2%), and agricultural issues (9% vs. 2%).

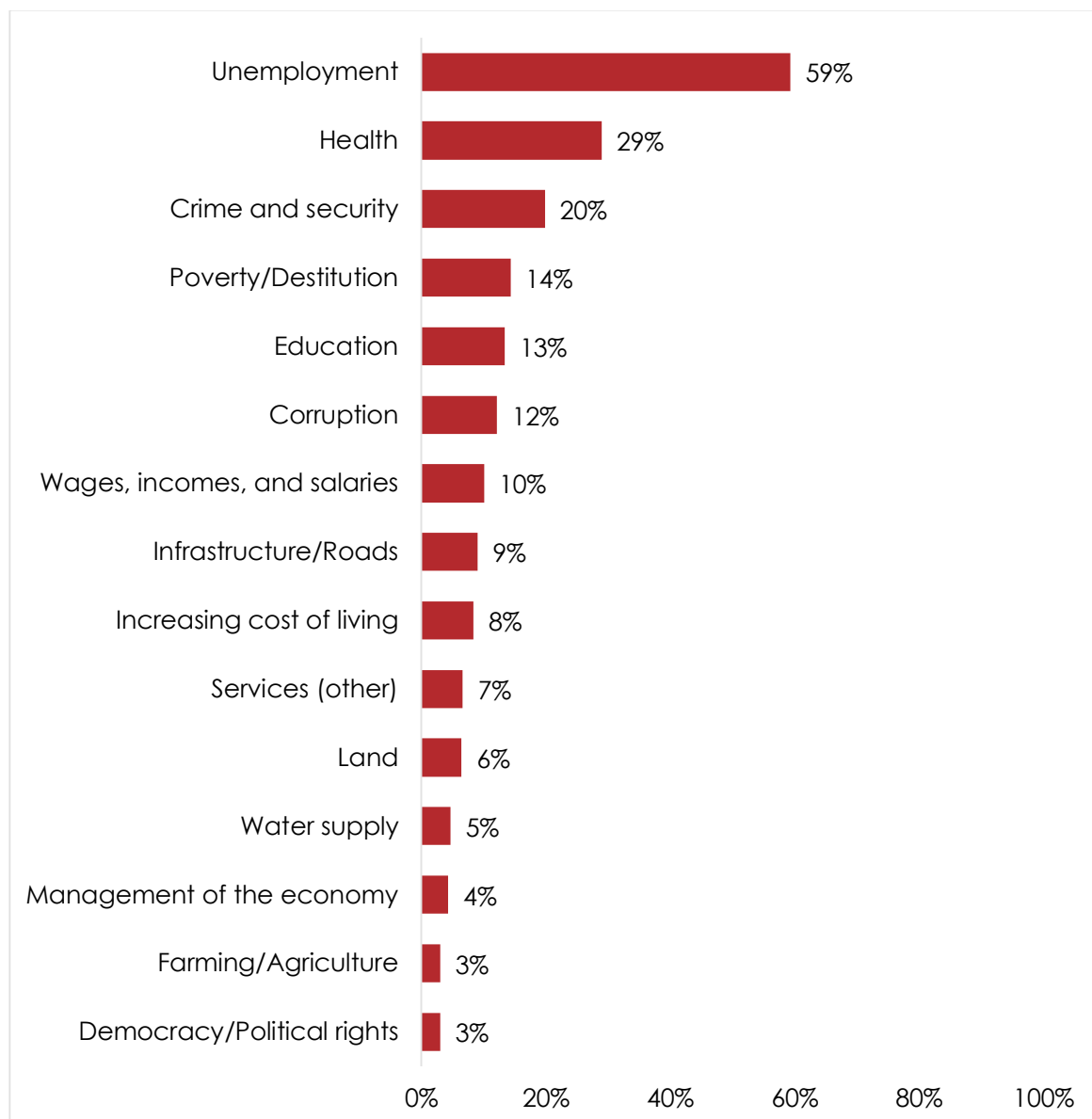
Afrobarometer surveys

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 were launched in January 2024. Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Botswana, led by Star Awards, interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,200 adult Batswana between 6 July and 19 July 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 Botswana in 1999, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2019, and 2022.

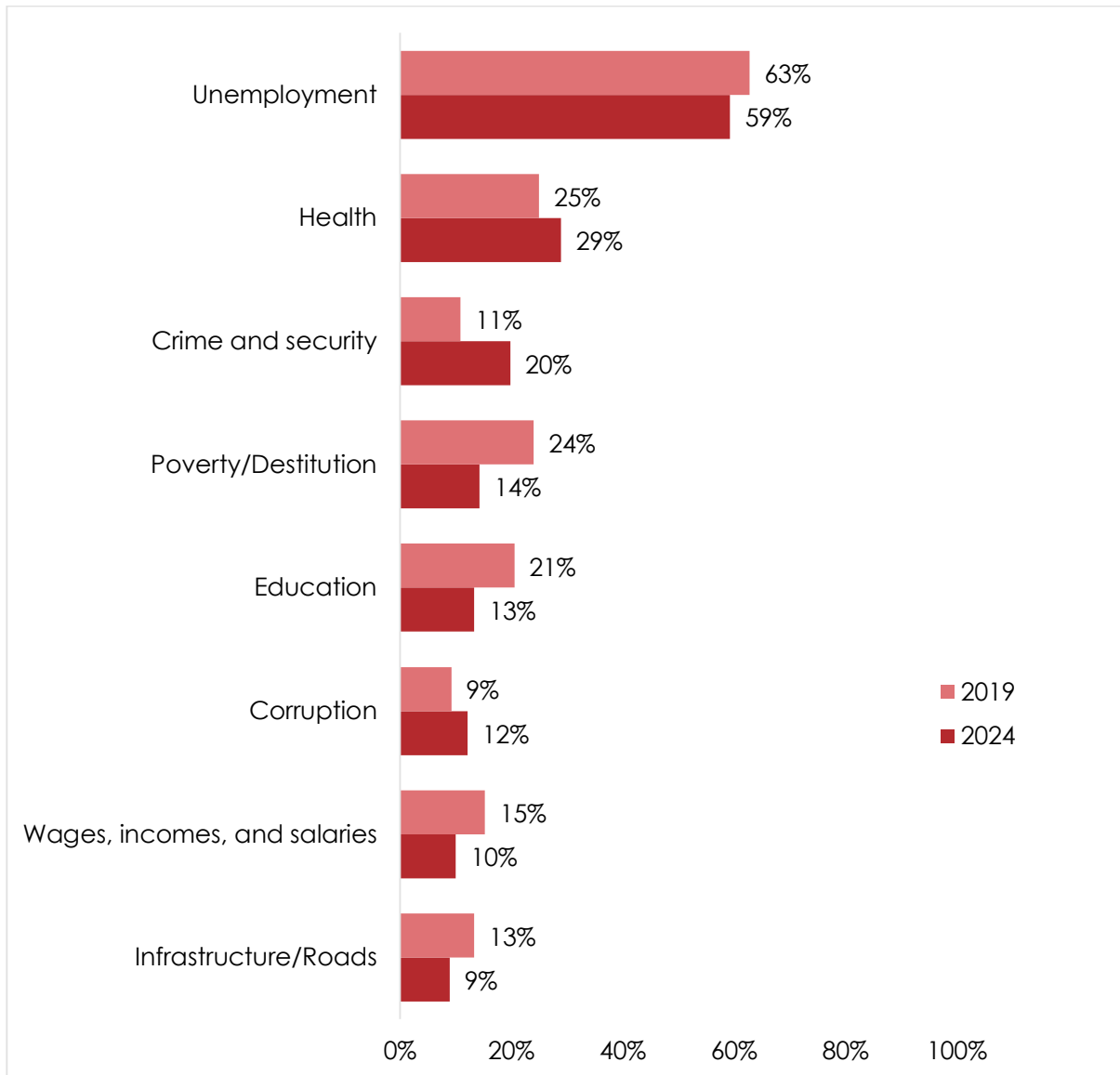
Charts

Figure 1: Most important problems | Botswana | 2024



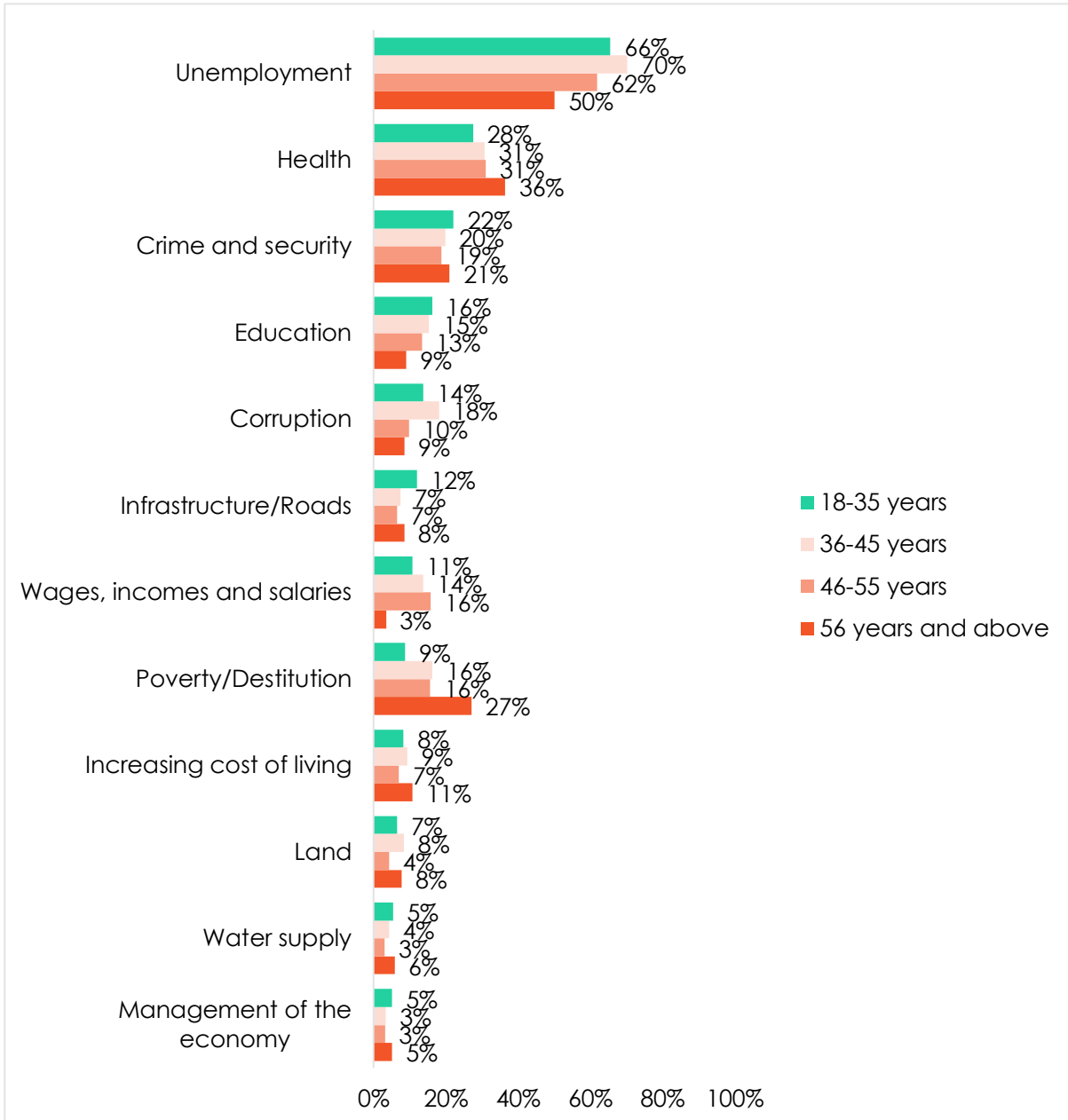
Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, what are the most important problems facing this country that government should address? (Up to three responses per person were recorded. The figure shows the percentage of respondents who cite each problem as one of up to three priorities.)*

Figure 2: Most important problems | Botswana | 2019-2024



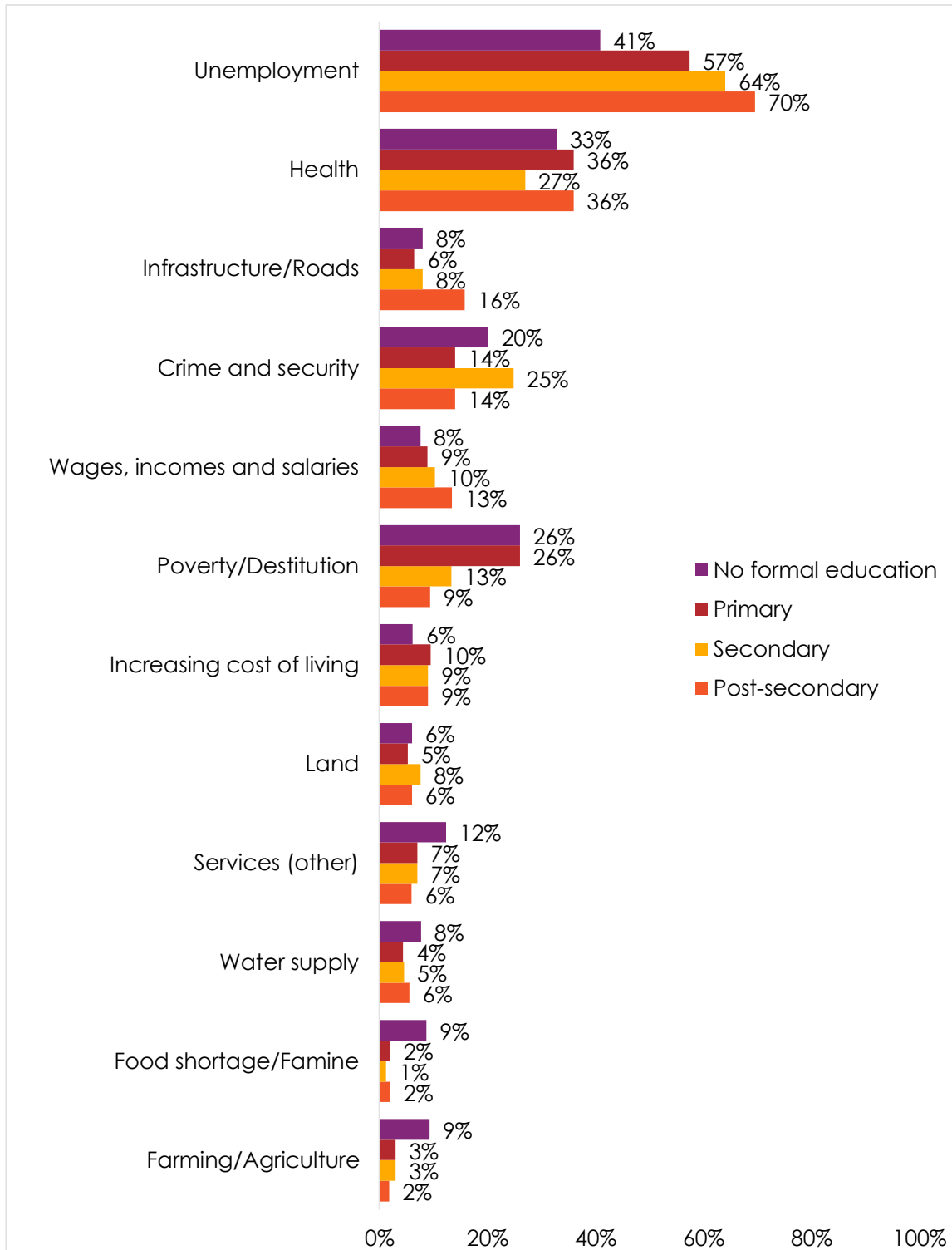
Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, what are the most important problems facing this country that government should address? (Up to three responses per person were recorded. The figure shows the percentage of respondents who cite each problem as one of up to three priorities.)*

Figure 3: Most important problems | by age group | Botswana | 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 were recorded. The figure shows the percentage of respondents who cite each problem as one of up to three priorities.)*

Figure 4: Most important problems | by education | Botswana | 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 were recorded. The figure shows the percentage of respondents who cite each problem as one of up to three priorities.)



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