Key Results of the Afrobarometer Round 5 Survey in South Africa

June 21, 2012

www.afrobaromter.org
Purpose and Goal

• The Afrobarometer (AB) is a comparative series of public opinion surveys that measure public attitudes toward democracy, governance, the economy, leadership, identity, and other related issues.

• The AB is an independent, non-partisan, African-based network that is supported by the Department for International Development (DfID), the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

• **Purpose**: to measure popular perspectives on the social, political, and economic environments in each country where it is implemented and across Africa.

• **Goal**: to give the public a *voice* in policy making processes by providing high-quality public opinion data to policy-makers, advocates, academics, media, donors, and ordinary Africans.

[www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org)
Survey Methodology

• The Afrobarometer is a comparative series of public attitude surveys, covering up to 35 African countries in Round 5 (2011-2013).

• It measures public attitudes on democracy and its alternatives, evaluations of the quality of governance and economic performance.

• Field work for Round Five was conducted in South Africa between October and November in 2011.

• The survey interviewed 2400 adult South African citizens proportionate to the South African population (based on 2011 projections of the 2001 Census); A sample of this size yields results with a margin of error of +/- 2% at a 95% confidence level.

• Afrobarometer’s work in South Africa is coordinated by the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa) and field work was carried out by Citizens Surveys, Ltd.

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Key Findings of R5 South Africa

A. **The Public Agenda**: South Africans no longer perceive HIV/AIDS as a top 5 problem, but corruption has catapulted into the number 4 position.

B. **Corruption**: Perceptions of corruption in all government officials but tax collectors have risen since 2008.

C. **Job approval**: A majority of South Africans approve of the job of the President, their provincial premier, and their MPs, while most are unsatisfied with the performance of their local MPs.

D. **Media freedom**: Since 2008 South Africans have shifted substantially in their views on media freedom.

E. **Protest**: From 2000 to 2011, South Africans have become more likely to say they would never protest and there was a decline in the percent of South Africans who say they have attended a protest in the last year.

F. **Support for Democracy**: South Africans remain positive that their country is a democracy, albeit with minor problems.

G. **Partisanship and National Identity**: voter identification with political parties is relatively stable and the survey found continued widespread pride in South African citizenship across all race groups.

[www.afrobaromter.org](http://www.afrobaromter.org)
A) The Public Agenda – Perceptions of the Most Important Problems Facing South Africa

www.afrobaromter.org
A) South Africans’ Public Agenda (2011)

- What are the most important problems facing this country that government ought to address?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>% Most Important Problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food shortage</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orphans/Street kids</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming/Agric</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rates and taxes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xenophobia/foreignes</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wages, income and…</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water supply</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure/Roads</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.afrobarometer.org
A) South Africans’ Public Agenda Over Time (The “Big Five” Most Important Problems)

www.afrobarometer.org
A) South Africans’ Public Agenda Over Time
(Other Problems)

www.afrobarometer.org
R5 Key Findings: A) The Public Agenda

• Just as in Round 4, unemployment and crime remain the most important problems for South Africans.

• HIV/AIDS has dropped out of the top 5 problems – from 20% in Round 4 (2008) to 8% in Round 5 (2011).

• For the first time, South Africans perceive corruption as one of the top 5 problems – rising from 15% in Round 4 (2008) to 26% in Round 5 (2011).
B) Perceptions of Government Corruption
B) Perceptions of Government Corruption (2008-2011): (% “all of them”+ % “most of them”)

Figures represent proportion of respondents who perceive the government officials/state institutions as corruption.

www.afrobarometer.org
B) Perceptions of Government Corruption Over Time

(% “all of them” and % “most of them”)

www.afrobarometer.org
B) Perceptions of State Corruption Over Time (% “all of them” and “most of them”)

www.afrobarometer.org
R5 Key Findings: B) Corruption

• Perceptions of government corruption toward the office of the president, MPs, national officials, and local government councilors have all risen since 2008.

• A majority of citizens – 51% - view local government councilors as corrupt (compared with 35% in 2008).

• 35% of South Africans perceive the office of the president as corrupt (compared to 31% in 2008).

• A majority of citizens -52% - view the police as corrupt (compared to 46% in 2008).

• 23% of South Africans view their tax officials as corrupt – down from 29% in 2008. Tax officials are the only government officials perceived to be less corrupt in 2011 then in 2008.
C) Job Approval of Elected Leaders
C) Job Approval of Elected Leaders (2011)
% Approve / Strongly Approve

- President: 64%
- Provincial Premier: 54%
- Members of Parliament: 54%
- Elected Local Govt Councilor: 40%

www.afrobarometer.org
Presidential Approval by Province-2011

www.afrobarometer.org
C) Job Approval of Provincial Premiers by Province (2011)

Disapprove  Approve  DK

EC  69  26  4
FS  72  30  2
GP  51  25  3
KZN  73  32  16
LP  51  28  23
MP  66  41  44
NW  72  51  52
NC  35  37  11
WC  61  25  3

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R5 Key Findings: C) Job Approval

• 64% of South Africans approve of President Zuma’s performance over the last 12 months compared with 55% in 2008.

• Citizens from Kwazulu Natal (81%), Mpumalanga (80%), and Free State (74%) expressed the highest approval ratings of President Zuma while citizens from Eastern Cape (55%), Western Cape (53%), and Northern Cape (45%) expressed the highest disapproval ratings.

• Citizens from Kwazulu Natal (73%), Free State (72%), and Western Cape (61%) expressed the highest approval ratings of their Provincial Premiers while citizens of Eastern Cape (69%), Mpumalanga (66%), and North West (41%) expressed the highest disapproval ratings.

• Since 2008 approval ratings of the President, MPs, and Provincial Premiers has improved while the approval ratings of local government councilors has declined.

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D) Perceptions of the Media
D) Media Freedom vs. Government Control

- Media has the right to publish without government control:
  - 2008: 80
  - 2011: 61

- Gvt should be able to prevent media from publishing harmful material:
  - 2008: 16
  - 2011: 34
D) Media freedom

- Media to investigate and report on gov't corruption:
  - 2008: 59
  - 2011: 70

- Negative reports on gov't harm to the country:
  - 2008: 37
  - 2011: 23
D) Opinion on Protection of Information Bill

- Government to restrict access to any information it sees fit
- Government to restrict access to information vital to national security

www.afrobarometer.org
How often in this country does:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The news media abuse its freedoms by printing or saying things it knows are not true</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org)
R5 Key Findings: D) Media

• Compared to 2008, a higher proportion of South Africans believe that the government should be able to prevent the media from publishing harmful material (16% in 2008 to 34% in 2011).

• Compared to 2008, fewer South Africans believe that the media has the right to publish without government control (from 80% in 2008 to 61% in 2011).

• A higher percentage of South Africans believe that the media should investigate and report on government corruption (from 59% in 2008 to 70% in 2011).

• 38% of South Africans believe the government should be able to restrict access to any information it sees fit.

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E) Attitudes Toward Protest
E) Protest Trends in South Africa Over Time

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E) Characteristics of Protestors

Protest Attendance by Race

- African: 54% Would never protest, 13% Protested in past year
- White: 75% Would never protest, 1% Protested in past year
- Coloured: 66% Would never protest, 8% Protested in past year

Protest Attendance By Province

- Eastern Cape: 70% Would never protest, 7% Protested in past year
- Mpumalanga: 55% Would never protest, 8% Protested in past year
- Gauteng: 44% Would never protest, 9% Protested in past year
- North West: 48% Would never protest, 9% Protested in past year
- Kwazulu Natal: 72% Would never protest, 10% Protested in past year
- Western Cape: 73% Would never protest, 10% Protested in past year
- Northern Cape: 58% Would never protest, 13% Protested in past year
- Free State: 54% Would never protest, 16% Protested in past year
- Limpopo: 44% Would never protest, 19% Protested in past year

www.afrobarometer.org
E) Popular Attitudes on Protesting? Is it right or wrong?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Not wrong at all</th>
<th>Wrong but understandable</th>
<th>Wrong and punishable</th>
<th>DK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refusing to pay for government services, i.e. water, electricity</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusing to pay income tax</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending a non-violent demonstration or protest march</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using force or violence during a protest</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.afrobarometer.org
## E) Political Participation and Protest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation/Protest</th>
<th>Would never do this</th>
<th>Would if had the chance</th>
<th>Have done once or twice</th>
<th>Several times</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>DK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend a community meeting</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get together with others to raise an issue</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact a government department to raise an issue</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact media to complain about an issue</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusing to pay for government services, i.e. water, electricity</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusing to pay govt tax or fee</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a demonstration or protest march</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go on strike for salary hike or better working conditions</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use force or violence for a political cause</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org)
R5 Key Findings: E) Protest

• From 2000 to 20011, South Africans have become more likely to say they would never protest and there was a decline in the % of South Africans who reported that they attended a protest in the last year.

• Race and province are powerful predictors of having protested in the last year. Whites (75%) and Coloureds (66%) are more likely to say they would never attend a demonstration or protest than Blacks/Africans (54%). In addition, Blacks (13%) reported much higher rates of attending a demonstration or protest march over the past year than their White (1%) or Coloured (8%) counterparts.

• Nearly half of South Africans (49%) believe that attending a non-violent demonstration is “wrong but understandable” (27%) or wrong and punishable (22%).
F) Support for Democracy

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F) Demand for Democracy Over Time

- Democracy preferable to any other form of gvt:
  - 2006: 65%
  - 2008: 67%
  - 2011: 72%

- In some instances, a non-democratic gvt can be preferable:
  - 2006: 10%
  - 2008: 19%
  - 2011: 15%

- Doesn’t matter what form of gvt we have:
  - 2006: 16%
  - 2008: 12%
  - 2011: 11%

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F) Supply of Democracy Over Time

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F) Rejection of Authoritarian Rule

- Reject Strong Man Rule
- Reject Military Rule
- Reject 1 Party Rule
- Reject Return to Apartheid
- Unwilling To Live Under Unelected Govt

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R5 Key Findings: F) Support for Democracy

• There is a sustained demand for democracy among South Africans – strong majorities continue to reject a move to authoritarian rule.

• South Africans are relatively satisfied with democracy – 66% said the country is fully or largely democratic, up from 61% in 2008. 77% felt that the last national election was completely free and fair or free and fair with minor problems.

• There has been an increased in perceived freedoms – 69% said that they feel completely free to vote as they please. 64% felt “completely free” to join any political organization. A weak majority (52%) said they felt completely free to say what they think.
G) Partisanship and National Identity
60% said they feel close to a political party.
G) Partisan Identification (of those who feel close)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANC</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DP/DA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNP</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFP</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>UDM</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.afrobarometer.org
Voting preference - Presidential elections

- Don't Know: 9 (2006), 8 (2008), 6 (2011)
G) People Should Think of Themselves as SA’s First (Over Time)
G) Proud to be Called A South African Over Time

[Chart showing the percentage of people proud to be called a South African from 1998 to 2011, with data points for Black, White, Coloured, and Indian populations.]

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G) Want Children to Think of Themselves as SA Over Time
R5 Key Findings: G) Partisanship and National Identity

- Voter identification with political parties is stable – 60% indicated that they felt close to a party. Of those 60% - 44% said they feel close to the ANC – similar to the 43% who felt close in 2008.

- 55% of respondents chose the ANC as the party they would vote for if a presidential election were held the next day. 13% indicated that they would vote for the Democratic Alliance (DA).

- Wide majorities indicated that they thought of themselves as South African first and indicated that they wanted their children to think of themselves as South African. There is substantial pride in South African citizenship across all race groups.

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In addition to the key findings, the survey measures popular perspectives on the following other themes:

• Economic evaluations and perceptions of poverty

• Evaluation of government performance

• Trust in government institutions

• “Democratic norms” (limits to presidential power, freedom of speech, etc)

• Political violence and intimidation

• Xenophobia
Personal Economic Evaluations Over Time (% good + % very good)

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National Economic Evaluations Over Time (% good+very good) + (better + much better)

National Economic Situation (Next Year)
National Economic Situation (Present)
Country Going In Right Direction

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Lived Poverty in South Africa Over Time
(At Least One Shortage in Past Year)

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Rating Government Policy Performance (2011)

- Keeping prices down: 22%
- Narrowing gap between rich and poor: 22%
- Job creation: 23%
- Improving living standards: 33%
- Fighting corruption: 33%
- Managing immigration: 33%
- Enough food: 35%
- Reducing crime: 38%
- Managing the Economy: 45%
- Resolving conflict: 46%
- Maintaining roads and bridges: 55%
- Providing water and sanitation: 57%
- Empowering women: 59%
- Improving health care: 59%
- Reliable Electricity: 64%
- Uniting South Africans: 65%
- Addressing educational needs: 67%
- HIV/AIDS: 71%
- Distribution of welfare payments: 76%

Well / Very Well

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Evaluations of Government Performance
Equality, Redistribution, and Nation Building.
(% well + % very well)

www.afrobarometer.org
Evaluations of Government Performance
Welfare and Development

Addressing Educational Needs
Improving Basic Health Services
Distributing Welfare Payments
Combatting HIV/AIDS
Delivering Household Water
Ensuring Everyone Has Enough to Eat

www.afrobarometer.org
Evaluations of Government Performance
Political Governance

Reducing Crime Fighting Corruption in Govt Responding to the Situation in Zimbabwe

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How much do you trust each of the following?

- Ruling Party: 28% A lot, 33% Somewhat, 23% A little, 15% Not at all, 1% Don't know
- President: 27% A lot, 24% Somewhat, 13% A little, 1% Not at all, 9% Don't know
- Opposition Parties: 30% A lot, 31% Somewhat, 26% A little, 3% Not at all, 3% Don't know

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Trust In Political Institutions Over Time:
(% for somewhat + a lot)

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South Africans’ Trust In State Institutions (2006-2011): % for A lot/Somewhat

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Trust in President Zuma (by Province)

% Somewhat/A lot

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President should be bound to court decisions by province

www.afrobarometer.org
President should be bound to court decisions (by race)

- President should not be bound by court decisions
- President must obey law and courts even if he thinks they are wrong
- Agree with neither
- Don't know

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### Freedom of Speech, Association, and Voting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Free to say what you think</th>
<th>Free to join any political organization</th>
<th>Free to vote without feeling pressure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all free</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very free</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat free</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completely free</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fear of Political Intimidation – 2008-2011

- Party competition leads to violence
- Fear becoming a victim of political intimidation
- Powerful people can find out how you voted

2008: 50, 28, 33
2011: 47, 21, 20
Is violence justified in South Africa?

Statement 1: The use of violence is never justified in South Africa
Statement 2: In this country, it is sometimes necessary to use violence in support of a just cause

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How much do you trust foreigners living here in South Africa?

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How likely is it that you would take part in action to prevent people who have come here from other countries in Africa from operating a business in your area.

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Also Available:

- Local government performance
- Interaction between citizens and leaders
- Role of parliamentarians
- Role of traditional leaders
- Ethnic identities
- Gender issues

Please visit www.afrobarometer.org to use the online data analysis tool.