



PRESS RELEASE

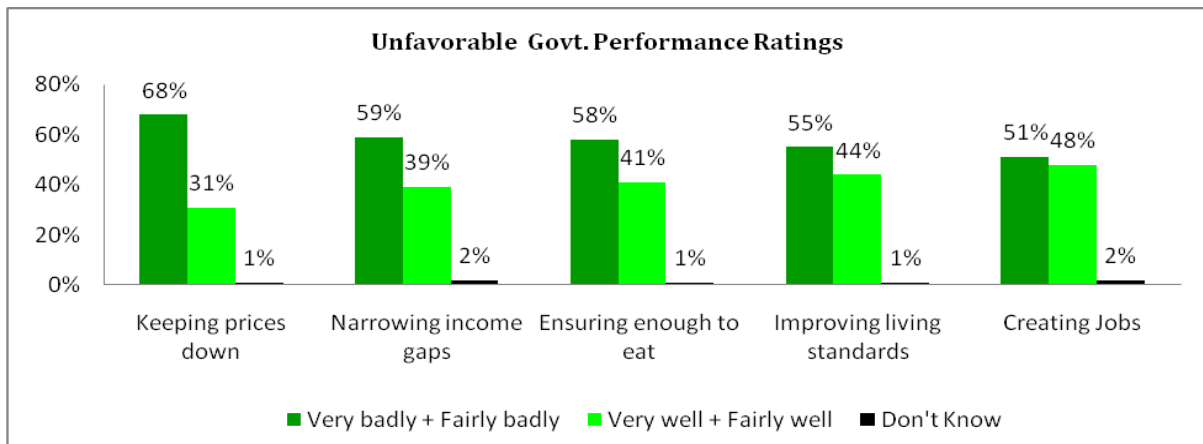
Matters of the Economy: Interrogating Government Performance, Service Delivery and Living Conditions in Sierra Leone.

Moving towards thirteen (13) years after the cessation of hostilities and three (3) successful post-conflict elections, Sierra Leoneans speak up on a number of issues ranging from present economic and living conditions to their personal living conditions. The responses received were mixed. This serves as a useful assessment for all stakeholders because the key to development and alleviating poverty in Sierra Leone is the proper management of the economy and equitable distribution of wealth.

Government performance was rated “*very well or fairly well*” in the following areas:

- Fighting corruption (54%);
- Addressing educational needs (52%);
- Managing Economy (52%);
- Providing water and sanitation services (51%); and
- Reducing crime (51%).

But over half of the Sierra Leoneans interviewed rated government’s performance in Keeping prices down; Narrowing income gaps; Ensuring enough to eat; Improving living standards; and Creating Jobs as “*very bad or fairly bad*”.



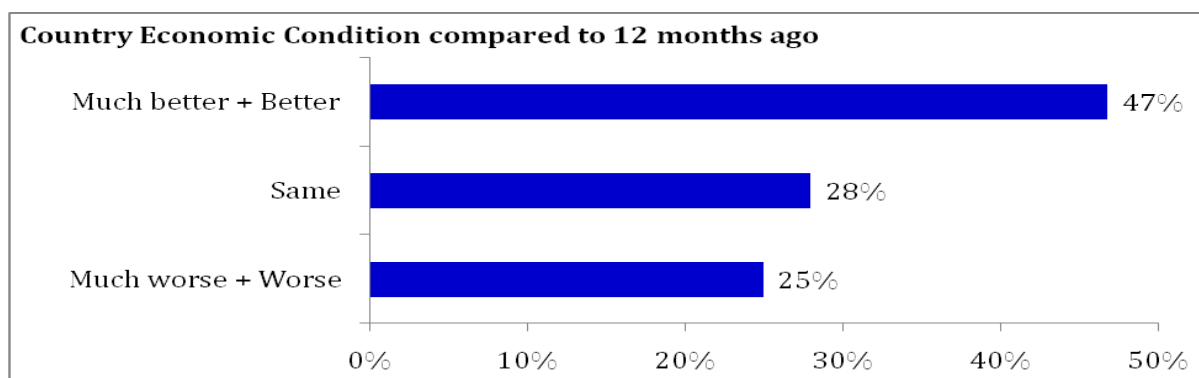
In terms of challenges in public service delivery the critical problems highlighted were in education and health. At least, 4 in every 10 Sierra Leoneans interviewed encountered the following challenges in education service delivery in the past year:

- Absent teachers (50%),
- Lack of textbooks supplies (49%),
- Poor teaching (48%),
- Poor condition of facilities (47%),
- Overcrowded classrooms (43%),
- Expensive service (43%).

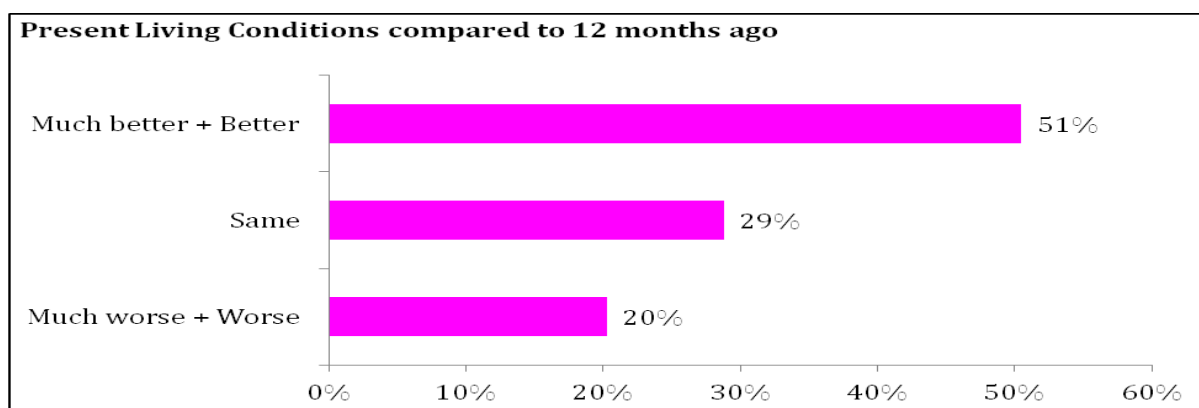
On the healthcare delivery in general over half of the people of Sierra Leone reported encountering the following problems:

	Never	Once/twice + A few times + Often	No experience in past year	Don't know
Lack of medicines/supplies	12%	61%	25%	2%
Long waiting time	12%	60%	25%	2%
Absent Doctors	13%	59%	25%	2%
Service too expensive/unable to pay	17%	55%	24%	2%
Lack of attention/ respect	20%	52%	25%	2%
Dirty facilities	28%	45%	25%	1%

In the area of economic and personal living conditions, sizeable percentages of Sierra Leoneans describe the present economic condition (46%) as “*very bad or fairly bad*”. However, when asked to compare the present situation to that of the previous year, a small majority (47%) assessed it to be “*much better or better*” than it was 12 months ago.



Similarly, significant percentage of Sierra Leoneans (40%) consider their present living condition to be “*very bad or fairly bad*”. This notwithstanding, a little over half (51%) think their present living conditions is “*much better or better*” than it was 12 months ago.



In conclusion, whilst government performance and basic service delivery were gradually improving; the economic well-being and living standards of the ordinary Sierra Leonean remain a major concern. Narrowing income gaps, creating jobs and keeping prices down should therefore be urgent next step for government if democracy and economic well being should be seen as a pattern of good governance in our context.

About the Afrobarometer

The Afrobarometer is a comparative series of public opinion surveys produced by an independent network of African social scientists. Now covering up to 35 African countries, the Afrobarometer measures the views of the electorate on democracy and its alternatives, the quality of governance and economic performance, and critical political issues of the day. The survey's standard instrument – used for four previous rounds of surveys (1999 – 2008) and the current Round 5 (2011 – 2013) – allows comparisons across countries over time.

About the Round 5 Survey in Sierra Leone

The Afrobarometer survey fieldwork (data collection) in Sierra Leone was undertaken by ITASCAP Limited and dissemination by Campaign for Good Governance and Lena Thompson. The fieldwork for Round 5 was conducted from 23rd June to 18th July 2012. ITASCAP interviewed a random sample of 1190 adult Sierra Leoneans, yielding results with a margin of sampling error of approximately +/- 3 percent at a 95 percent confidence level.

Visit us online at www.afrobarometer.org and follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

 @Afrobarometer

For further information, please contact:

MONICA TIMBO

Campaign for Good Governance (CGG)
11A Old Railway Line
Tengbeh Town
Tel: (+232) (0)76 949 580; (0)33 622 063
Email: mtimbo@slcgg.org
cgg@slcgg.org

LENA THOMPSON

University of Sierra Leone
Department of Political Science
Fourah Bay College
Mount Aureol
(+232) (0)76 607 418