

Institute for Public Policy Research
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News release

Namibia manages the economy well, but creates too few jobs

Most Namibians think that the economy has been well managed over the years, but at the same time, they think that the government has failed in creating enough jobs and narrowing income gaps. Successive Afrobarometer surveys have shown that the Namibian economy is managed well (62% in 2012, 60% in 2008, and 76% in 2006).

How do we account for the fact that recent figures (R6) show that slightly over 65% of Namibians positively evaluate how the economy is managed, while 68% think that the realm of job creation is handled badly? Job creation is far and away the “most important problem” identified by Namibian respondents in Round 6. It could well be that with low inflation, manageable public debt and robust fiscal discipline; most Namibians think that the economy is in good hands. Therefore, the consistently positive appraisal of how the Namibian economy is managed speaks to macroeconomics, while hiding intricacies that, for respondents, characterise the ‘real’ state of the economy. If what we mean by ‘managing the economy well’ relates to economic growth, then the consistently positive evaluation of how the Namibian economy is managed provides a false and inaccurate perception of everyday economic life for respondents.

Key findings

- Six in ten (60%) Namibians think that the country's economy is managed well.
- Almost seven in ten (70%) Namibians think that the government has failed to create enough jobs.
- About eight in ten (80%) Namibians think that the government has failed to arrest the persistent unequal income gaps, which are among the worst in the world. According to the United Nations Development Programme, the poorest 10% of Namibian households command just 1% of the country's total income whereas the wealthiest 10% control more than half (50%).

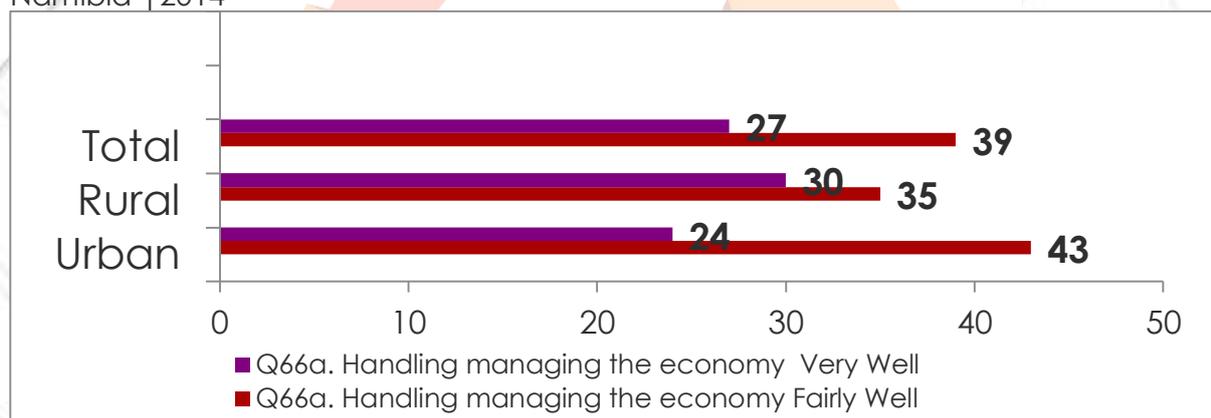
Afrobarometer

Afrobarometer is an African-led, non-partisan research project that has measured countries' social, political, and economic atmosphere since 1999. In its sixth survey round (2014-15), it is covering 35 countries. Afrobarometer is funded by the UK Department of International Development (DFID), U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), Mo Ibrahim Foundation and the World Bank.

The Afrobarometer team in Namibia, led by the Institute for Public Policy Research and Survey Warehouse, interviewed adult Namibians in August and September 2014. A sample of this size yields results with a margin of error of +/-3% at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys have been conducted in Namibia in 1999, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2008, and 2012.

Charts

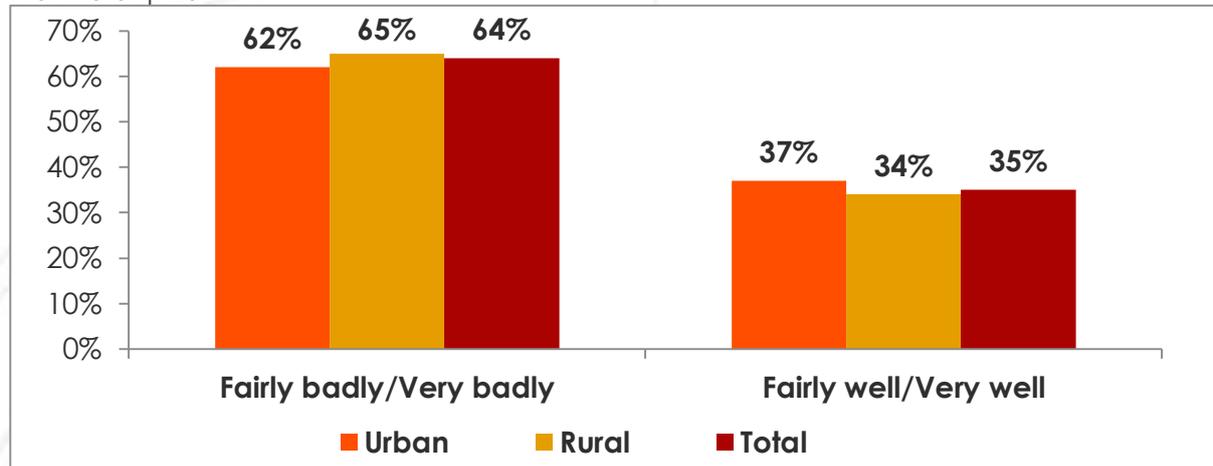
Figure 1: Managing the Economy
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Respondents were asked: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: Managing the economy

Figure 2: Creating Jobs

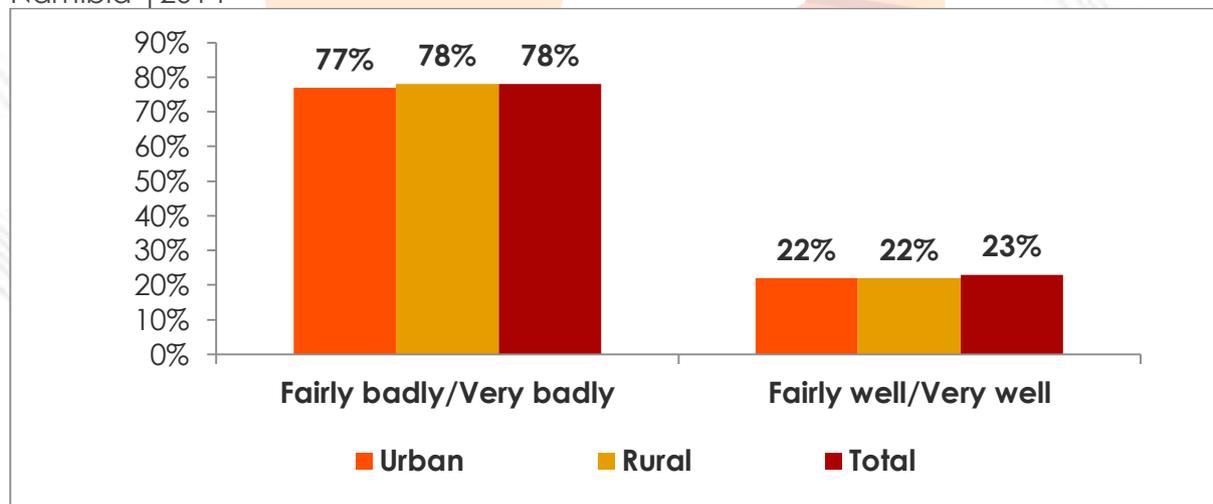
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Respondents were asked: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: Creating jobs

Figure 3: Narrowing Income Gaps Between Rich and Poor

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Respondents were asked: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: Narrowing income gaps

For more information, please contact:

Ellison Tjirera
 Institute for Public Policy Research
 70-72 Frans Indongo Street
 Windhoek, Namibia
 +264-61-240514

blindeke@ippr.org.na

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