
Afrobarometer Round 6

New data from
across Africa



Accra, Ghana
23 August 2016

News release

Trustworthy institutions play vital role in Africa's development, new Afrobarometer findings suggest

Government institutions that earn the public's trust are essential to the successful pursuit of development in Africa, a new Afrobarometer analysis suggests.

The findings, which are being released on August 23, are based on the perceptions of about 54,000 citizens in 36 African countries regarding the trustworthiness of their presidents, local government councils, and other political institutions.

If citizens think that office-holders are free of corruption, they are likely to trust that institution, with demonstrable links to better development outcomes, the analysis suggests (Figure 1).

The report, titled "Do trustworthy institutions matter for development?" (Afrobarometer Dispatch No.112), is available in English and French at <http://globalreleases.afrobarometer.org>.

Key findings

- Across 36 countries in 2014/2015, Africans express more trust in informal institutions such as religious and traditional leaders (72% and 61% respectively) than in the formal executive agencies of the state (on average 54%) (Figure 2).
- That said, people find certain executive agencies, such as the national army and the state presidency, to be quite trustworthy (64% and 57% respectively), especially when compared with legislative and electoral institutions (47% and 44% respectively).
- Popular trust in the executive institutions of the state varies considerably across African countries, from more than 80% in Niger and Burundi to less than 40% in Nigeria, Liberia, and São Tomé and Príncipe (Figure 3).
- Institutional trust is related to perceptions of corruption. If people think that office-holders are honest, they are likely to deem an institution trustworthy – and vice versa if they think officials are self-serving.
- Trustworthy institutions help to achieve the development outcomes that Africans say they want. For every one of the general public's stated development priorities, trust in the state is associated with positive popular assessments of government performance.
- Thus, socioeconomic development is not a purely technical or engineering exercise. Development outcomes also depend on good governance, which citizens assess partly in terms of whether they find political institutions trustworthy.

Afrobarometer

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues across more than 30 countries in Africa. Five rounds of surveys were conducted between 1999 and 2013, and findings from Round 6 surveys (2014/2015) are currently being released. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples that yield country-level results with margins of error of +/-2% (for samples of 2,400) or +/3% (for samples of 1,200) at a 95% confidence level.

Interested readers should visit <http://globalreleases.afrobarometer.org> for previous Round 6 releases and watch for additional releases over the coming months.

Charts

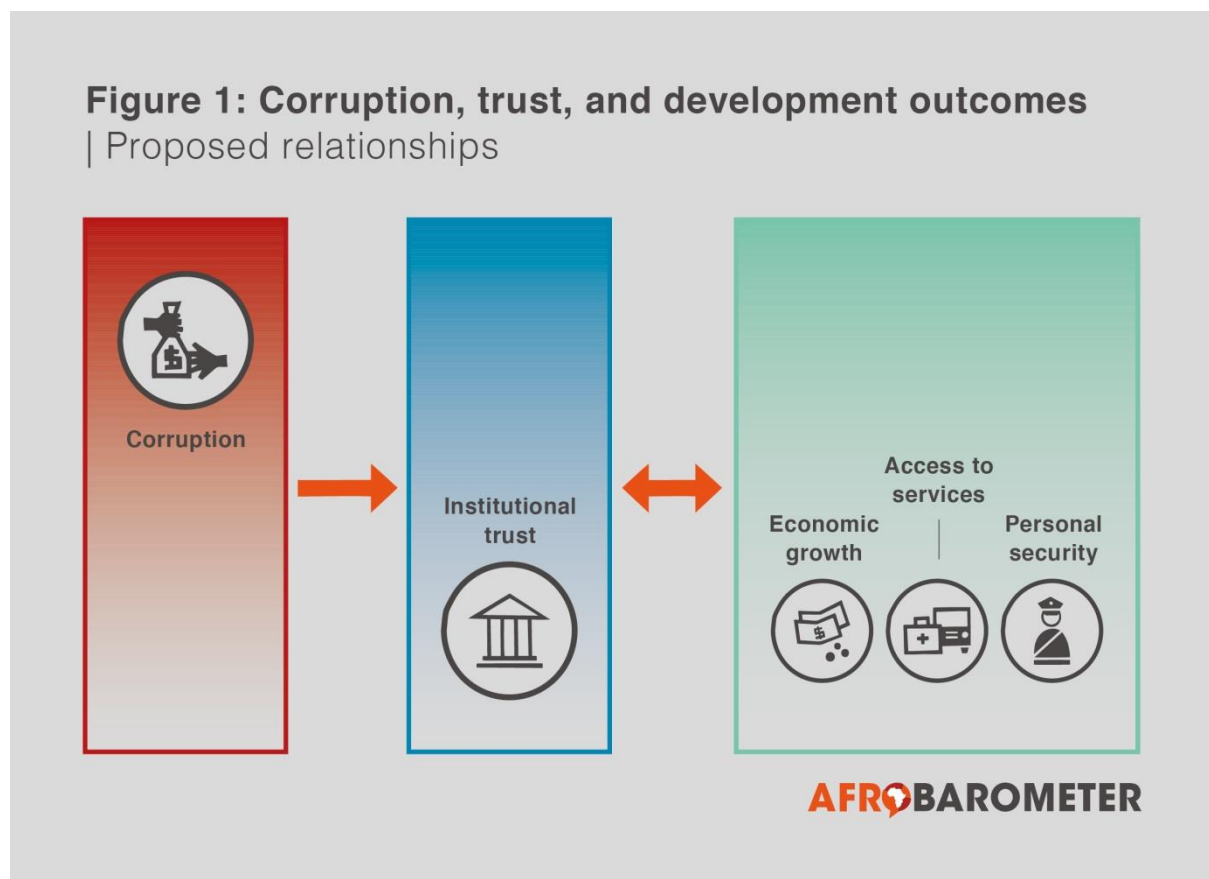
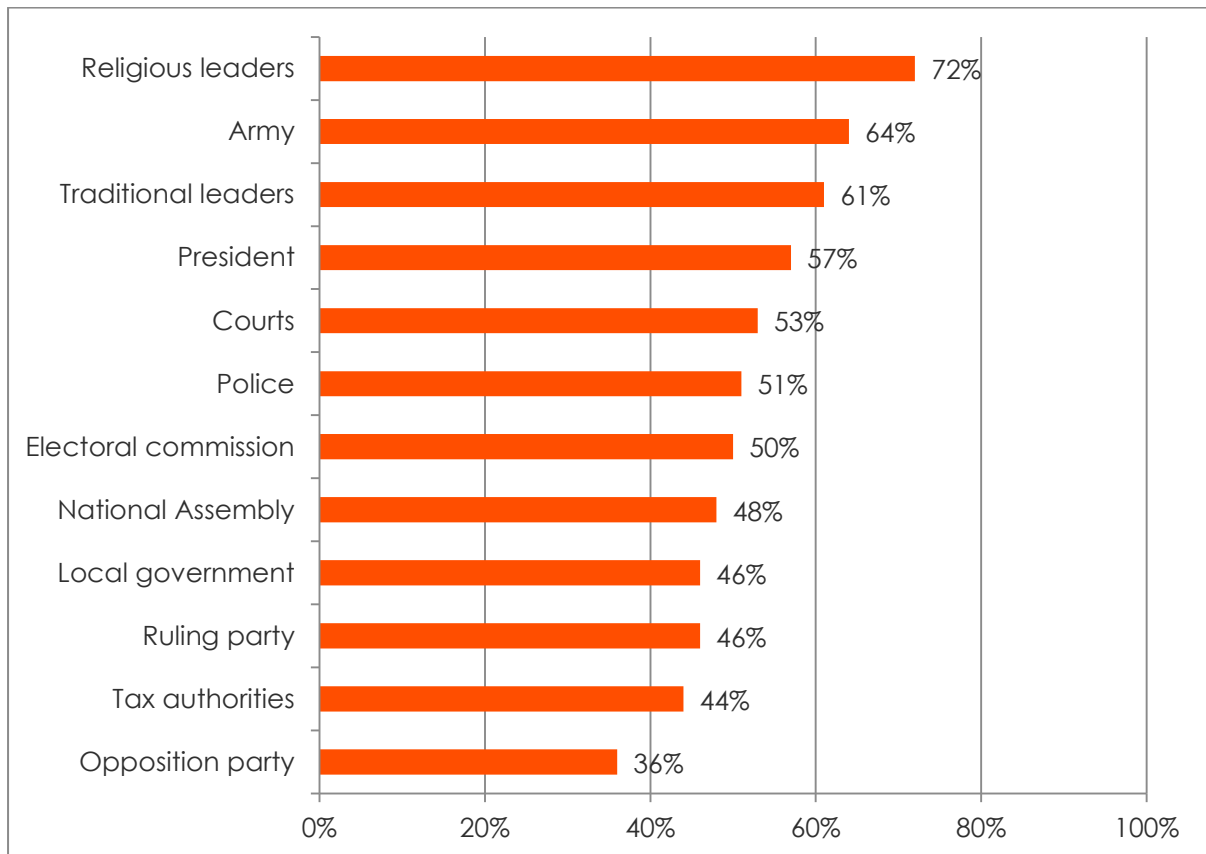
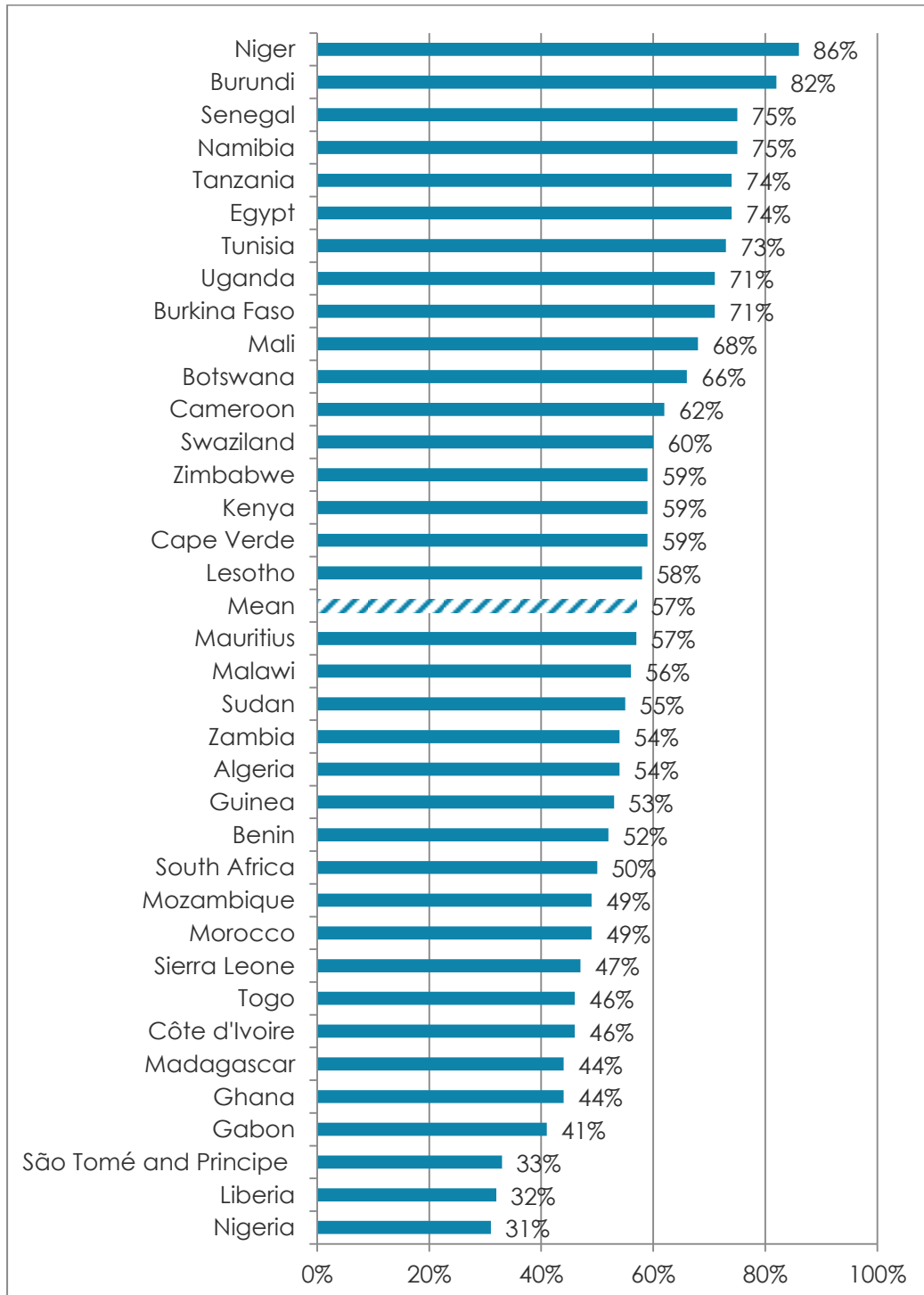


Figure 2: Popular trust in institutions | by type of institution | 36 African countries
 | 2014/2015



Respondents were asked: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough to say?
 (% of respondents who say "somewhat" or "a lot"; N= 53,935)

Figure 3: Trust in the state* | by country | 36 African countries | 2014/2015



* Core executive institutions only (president or prime minister, army, police)

Respondents were asked: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough to say?

(mean % of respondents who say "somewhat" or "a lot")



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