

# AFRO BAROMETER

**Afrobarometer Paper No. 18**

**UNCRITICAL CITIZENS OR PATIENT  
TRUSTEES? TANZANIANS' VIEWS OF  
POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REFORM**

by Amon Chaligha, Robert Mattes, Michael  
Bratton, and Yul Derek Davids

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attitude surveys on democracy, markets  
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AFROBAROMETER WORKING PAPERS

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March 2002

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*We gratefully acknowledge the support of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the Tanzania Mission of the United States Agency for International Development which made this survey possible.*

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- No. 18 Chaligha, Amon, Robert Mattes, Michael Bratton, and Yul Derek Davids. “Uncritical Citizens and Patient Trustees? Tanzanians’ Views of Political and Economic Reform.” 2002.

## Abstract

The results of a 2001 national public opinion survey in Tanzania demonstrate significant public support for economic and political reform, but the legacy of 30 years of socialist one-party rule is evident as well. This report details patterns of public opinion that differ in important ways from those observed elsewhere in Africa, and that present several apparent paradoxes. First, while Tanzanians are very dissatisfied with the state of their national economy, they also display the highest levels of support for economic reform. Second, Tanzanians exhibit some of the highest levels of interest in politics and involvement in mobilized forms of political participation, but levels of more individual, unprompted forms of participation are quite low. Third, widespread perceptions of corruption coexist with even more widespread expressions of trust in public institutions. One possible interpretation of these divergent opinions is that Tanzanians are “uncritical citizens,” exhibiting “habits of accommodation” that reflect the socialist ideology and one-party structures inherited from the old regime. But, an alternative interpretation recognizes that Tanzania experienced a relatively benign form of top-down rule. Citizens may therefore be drawing sophisticated distinctions between well-meaning institutions and their disappointing performance, exhibiting a form of “diffuse support” for their political system that abides through short-term economic downturns.

## Executive Summary

On the heels of its second multiparty elections, Tanzania is still engaged in the process of *moving away* from a command economy and one-party state. But what do ordinary Tanzanians think about this process? Economic and political reforms that are imposed from above, or from outside, are unlikely to be sustained without deep roots in society. The consolidation of pluralist politics and a market-based economy requires that sizeable proportions of the population understand the content of democracy and economic adjustment and embrace policies that promote these regimes.

Do Tanzanians want to continue or turn back? And are they prepared to play the active, engaged and critical role that gives life to representative democracy?

The answers to this question are not conclusive. The data which we use comes from an Afrobarometer survey conducted by Research on Poverty Alleviation (REPOA) in Tanzania in 2001, between January and March for the Mainland, and between August and September in Zanzibar. The survey results demonstrate that almost 15 years after the introduction of economic adjustment and five years since the introduction of multiparty elections in Tanzania, there is significant public support for economic and political reform.

But we also see enduring legacies of 30 years of socialist one-party rule. Compared to the results of Afrobarometer surveys in 11 other African societies, Tanzanians are relatively uncritical about the political arrangements in their country, a stance that detracts from active citizenship and the construction of democracy. They are more critical, however, about economic conditions, though less so than other Africans interviewed. Tanzanians also seem uncertain about whether state or market arrangements can best bring about economic recovery.

Indeed, this report details an overall pattern of public opinion in Tanzania that differs in important ways from the trends observed by Afrobarometer surveys in 11 other African countries. It is a pattern that presents the analyst with a series of apparent paradoxes. Three stand out in particular.

First, Tanzanians are very dissatisfied with the state of their national economy, and in relative terms are some of the most dissatisfied citizens in Africa. At the same time, they display the highest overall levels of support for economic reform. While we have seen this elsewhere, the difference between support for reform and satisfaction in Tanzania is one of the largest we have measured.

Second, compared to other Africans Tanzanians exhibit some of the highest levels of interest in politics and involvement in mobilized forms of political participation, such as rallies, campaigns and community meetings. At the same time, they have quite low levels of participation in more individual, unprompted forms of participation such as contacting their political leaders or joining community organizations.

Third, public perceptions of official corruption normally reduce trust in public institutions. But Tanzania is the only country where we have seen widespread perceptions of corruption co-exist with even more widespread expressions of trust.

How can such divergent opinions be reconciled? One possible interpretation is that Tanzanians are “uncritical citizens.” Instead of what Michael Novak has called the “habits of self command,”<sup>1</sup> the data may suggest a “habit of accommodation.” These habits may partly reflect the socialist ideology and one-party structures inherited from the old regime. But they may also derive from the mode of political and economic change which, in Tanzania, has always originated from above. Because ordinary people have never been in the lead in making demands for change, the population at large has not yet developed the healthy skepticism about authority, the independence of preferences, and the courage to take action that are the life blood of functioning democratic and market systems.

Yet the same data may also lead to an alternative interpretation. This interpretation points out that Tanzania’s legacy was one of a relatively benign form of top-down rule, not the massive misrule and bad governance of a predatory state. In this view, the apparent paradoxes outlined above might be evidence of citizens drawing sophisticated distinctions between disappointing performance and well-meaning institutions in which they still place a great deal of trust. If true, it may be more accurate to say that Tanzanians have developed a form of what David Easton once called “diffuse support” for their political system that abides through short-term economic downturns.<sup>2</sup> Such support creates a wide berth for leaders and policy-makers to take initiatives and experiment with the pace and nature of reform.

## **Survey Highlights**

The following general patterns in popular perceptions can be discerned:

- Even though Tanzania is a very diverse society, its citizens exhibit high levels of national identity and low levels of ethnic consciousness. Most Tanzanians define themselves in terms of occupation rather than tribe, language or religion.
- There is considerable poverty in Tanzania both in terms of lack of income as well as the frequency with which people go without the basic necessities of life. Yet Tanzania still appears relatively egalitarian in the sense that there are few age, gender or regional differences in poverty levels.
- Tanzania is a highly politicized society, but not a highly organized one. While large proportions take part in mobilized forms of participation like voting and attending election rallies, much lower proportions take the initiative to contact government officials or to get involved in civic or community organizations.
- Tanzanians value a competitive marketplace and exhibit a remarkably high degree of support for economic reform policies such as market pricing, user fees for state services, retrenchment of civil servants, and privatization of state industries. Yet they still want the state to play a leading role in the delivery of social services.



- In general, Tanzanians support democracy and reject non-democratic alternatives. However, there is one important exception: a relatively low proportion rejects one-party rule. In fact, many citizens still give relatively positive marks to the old political regime. We believe that this reflects the history of a relatively competitive one-party regime that managed to deliver a measure of social welfare and to ensure a degree of economic equality (albeit at relatively low levels). It certainly does not reflect a pervasive nostalgia for presidential dictatorship or military rule, alternatives that Tanzanians reject overwhelmingly.
- Even though Tanzanians say they are satisfied with the way democracy is developing, they realize that their country still has some distance to travel on the road to full democratization. In fact, when compared to other African countries, there is an unusually wide gap between their high levels of preference for democracy as the best form of government, and their relatively lower levels of satisfaction with the way that democracy is actually working in Tanzania.
- Depending on how they are asked, Tanzanians appear to have a relatively substantive understanding of democracy that is based on the delivery and distribution of economic goods and social services. Over time, these expectations may come to moderate their evaluations of the success of democracy still further.
- Yet Tanzanians exhibit high levels of patience with the processes of both economic and political reform. They appear to recognize that things may get even worse before they get better. On the positive side, popular patience gives policy-makers time to achieve results; on the negative side, patience may be another manifestation of uncritical acceptance of the status quo.
- Tanzanians express extremely high levels of trust in each other as well as in their political institutions. In this regard, they differ from people in most other parts of the world and in other parts of Africa. But a puzzle remains as to why Tanzanians would perceive extensive corruption in state institutions but still say that they trust them.

## POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SETTING

Tanzania became independent in 1961 with a formal multiparty political system and free market economic regime. The multiparty regime lasted until 1965. Following the union of Zanzibar and Tanganyika into the United Republic of Tanzania in April 1964, the politics of Tanzania changed drastically. In 1965 Tanzania became a *de jure* one-party state, though in practice, the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) was the only political party on the Tanzania mainland, and the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP) was the only political party on Zanzibar. This political duopoly continued until 1970, when TANU and ASP merged to form Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), which was the country's sole political party until 1992.

The free market economy lasted until the 1967 Arusha Declaration that launched Tanzania on a socialist experiment with a strong emphasis on egalitarianism and self-reliance. All major industries, businesses, farms and estates were nationalized. Political leaders and senior state officials were prohibited from owning shares or holding board membership in private enterprises. The extent of government control over the economy became greater than any other country in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>3</sup>

However, this statist economic regime proved a good recipe for corruption and economic problems. Especially following Tanzania's war with Uganda, inflation escalated and shortages of basic goods became commonplace. Rationing was introduced in the early 1980s. Economic mismanagement and bureaucratic inertia became the norm. Subsidies to loss-making state industries and a lack of capacity to collect taxes drained the public coffers.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellites, Tanzania's political and economic regimes underwent drastic change. The voluntary retirement of President Julius Nyerere and the succession to power of President Ali Hassan Mwinyi in 1985 gave impetus to economic and political liberalization.

A Structural Adjustment Program was introduced in 1986 under strict World Bank and IMF supervision. The program featured strict control of the money supply, privatization of public companies, introduction of cost sharing in the form of education and health care user fees, relaxation of foreign currency controls, and valuation of the Tanzanian Shilling according to market rates.

These reforms had several positive consequences. The taxation system was upgraded. The state divested 40 percent of its public enterprises by 1998. Private sector investment increased from 64 percent of total investment in 1991 to 84 percent in 1998, and foreign direct investment went from zero in 1994 to US\$27 million in 1995.<sup>4</sup> Per capita annual income improved from US\$177 in 1995 to US\$284 in 2000, and the GDP growth rate reached 4.9 percent by 2000. Inflation declined from 36 percent in 1990 to only 5 percent by March 2001.<sup>5</sup> The number of private banks grew from zero in 1994 to 13 by 1998.

Despite these successes, problems still abound. Growth never achieved the kind of levels that economic reform brought to Uganda, Ethiopia and Ghana. Per capita annual income remains among the lowest in Sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>6</sup> Literacy rates have declined from 90 percent in the

1970s to 63 percent in 2000. Privatization has added 80,000 workers to the ranks of the jobless since 1992. Shops are now full of goods that many poor citizens cannot afford. And even after significant privatization, Tanzania was, in 1999, the only country on the continent that still has more than 200 state-owned enterprises in sectors ranging from agriculture to transport to tourism. Meanwhile, lax regulatory frameworks have failed to prevent abuses by new private enterprises.<sup>7</sup>

Economic liberalization was followed by political liberalization. In 1991 President Mwinyi appointed Francis Nyalali to head a Presidential Commission on Party Systems that subsequently came to be known as the Nyalali Commission. It interviewed over 35,835 Tanzanians, of whom 77 percent wanted the single-party system to remain and 22 percent wanted a multiparty system to be reintroduced. Despite this expression of popular preference for sticking with the status quo, the Nyalali Commission recommended the reintroduction of pluralist politics in Tanzania. In this sense, Tanzania's transition to democracy was initiated and led from above by reformers within the political elite, with the citizenry playing a rather passive and reactive role.

Constitutional amendments in 1992 allowed the creation of independent media, private associations, and political parties. By 1999, the country had approximately two dozen independent print media, and private media extended into radio and television as well. Within the first year after the amendments, roughly 200 private associations had established themselves, and by 1999 approximately 800 civil society organizations existed.<sup>8</sup>

By the end of 1993, 13 political parties were registered. But again, opposition political parties were organized from above rather than below, and they lacked grassroots support. To the chagrin of voters, most parties have operated like private fiefdoms. In the 1995 presidential and parliamentary elections, the first multiparty elections after almost three decades of monopoly politics, the opposition parties secured 41 percent of all valid votes cast and the governing CCM received 59 percent.

While in isolation this outcome might not be judged a success for the opposition, it was the strongest collective performance by opposition parties in any Southern African election at the time.<sup>9</sup> However, due to the country's "first past the post" electoral system, the opposition parties were systematically under-rewarded in terms of legislative seats. With 59 percent of the votes, the governing CCM won 186 of the 232 seats, or 80 percent. Collectively, opposition parties received just 46 of the seats (20 percent). The largest opposition party, the Civic United Front (CUF), a regional party from Zanzibar, was especially disadvantaged as it won 22 percent of the vote but just 7 percent of the seats.<sup>10</sup>

Opposition performance declined in the 2000 presidential and parliamentary elections. Support for the CCM increased to 69 percent (5,662,973 votes) and support for the combined opposition declined to 31 percent (or 2,523,664 votes). The opposition received even fewer seats in Parliament than before. The CCM's 69 percent of the vote now translated into 87 percent of the 231 legislative seats. Tanzania's constitution and electoral law provide for special seats for women (20 percent of elected constituency seats) allocated to each party in proportion to the number of seats won. In addition, the Constitution was amended to give the president power to appoint up to ten seats. The president is elected to office by only a simple majority of valid votes

cast. All these provisions set the scene for continued dominance of the party system and the political regime by the ruling CCM.

While Tanzania's transition away from socialist one-party rule toward multiparty democracy has made considerable progress, it remains incomplete. In many ways, it has been marked by continuity and evolution of the governing regime, rather than regime change. Besides the few, albeit significant, constitutional changes of 1993, the government has failed to act on the recommendations of the Nyalali Commission, which recommended an entirely new constitution.<sup>11</sup>

## **Theme of the Report**

The notion of "critical citizenship" was developed in settings very different to Tanzania to refer to the political attitudes of citizens in mature Western democracies. It refers to the well-known decline in popular trust in government institutions that has been recorded over the past 40 years in North America, Western Europe and Japan.<sup>12</sup>

On one hand, critical citizenship is an asset for democratization and economic reform because it prompts ordinary people to set aside blind faith in government and to actively question the actions of political leaders. The risk, however, is that healthy scepticism can degenerate into political cynicism in which habitually low levels of institutional trust undermine the legitimacy of the state. If taken too far, critical citizenship can inhibit the implementation of state policies (including policies of economic reform) and corrode the quality of democracy.

As we will show, Tanzania exhibits characteristics that stand dramatically apart from trends in the Western world and even the rest of Africa (at least as measured by Afrobarometer surveys in 11 other African societies). The Tanzania survey reveals extraordinarily high levels of trust in government expressed by its citizens in 2001. Not only does Tanzania lead the 12 African countries we have studied in terms of trust in government, but also in terms of support for democracy. More than four in five Tanzanians say they "support democracy." This finding is astounding in terms of the experience of Tanzania's political transition where, as recently as the 1991 Nyalali Commission on Party Systems, four in five said they *opposed* a multiparty system.

This observation raises numerous questions. How engaged are Tanzanians in the political world around them? What do they understand by democracy? Do they distinguish a multiparty democracy from a competitive one-party regime? Do they appreciate the goals of the government's economic reform program and support its component policies? Or do they simply go along with whatever economic or political regime is supplied by the government of the day? Are they, in short, *uncritical* citizens?

## **Background to the Survey**

This report, which is part of an Afrobarometer series, focuses on results from a survey of adult Tanzanians aged 18 years or older. The survey was conducted in 2001, between January and March on the Mainland, and between August and September on the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba. The Zanzibar and Pemba interviews were conducted five months after those on the

Mainland because the political climate in Zanzibar was very unstable between January and April 2001. The survey organizers felt that the safety of interviewers would have been jeopardized had the research teams gone to the field at that stage.

The results of the survey represent the nation as a whole since it is based on a random, stratified cluster sample in which every adult Tanzanian had an equal chance of being selected for an interview. A sample of this size allows us to make inferences about the overall population with a margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence level. In other words, we can be confident that 19 times out of 20 the survey results mirror the actual distribution of opinion in the population within the stated margin of error.<sup>13</sup>

The sample was disproportionate in that we deliberately over-sampled the Zanzibar islands to insure that we had enough interviews to allow for meaningful inferences for that sub-population. A total of 2054 interviews were conducted on the Mainland, and 144 interviews were conducted across the five regions that make up Zanzibar. However, the Zanzibar interviews were given proportionately lower weight in the final results to ensure that the influence of the Mainland and the Zanzibar Islands was proportional to their actual size in the overall population.

Four teams of four interviewers each traveled to 274 randomly selected wards around the country (256 wards were selected from all 20 regions on the Mainland, and an additional 18 wards from five regions in Zanzibar). Eight households were then randomly selected in each ward. Within each household, one person was randomly chosen for interview. Interviews were conducted face-to-face by trained interviewers. The original English version of the questionnaire was translated into Kiswahili.

The questionnaire asked people's opinions about democracy, markets, social capital and good governance. More specifically, it examined citizens' attitudes on democracy and its alternatives, their evaluations of the quality of governance and economic performance, and perceptions of the consequences of democratic governance on their everyday lives; it also gathered information about a range of actual and potential economic and political behaviours. In order to place Tanzania in comparative context and thus to aid in the interpretation of results, the questionnaire contained a large core of items drawn from Afrobarometer surveys already conducted in 11 other countries in West, East and Southern Africa. The wording of almost all such items was identical in each country. As a result, Tanzania now forms part of an ongoing, twelve-country project that tracks and contrasts public attitudes to democracy and economy across the continent.

## **Demographics of the Sample**

The sample is representative of the country as a whole because the proportions of various sub-groups in the sample closely match their distribution in the national population, based on projections from the official 1988 census (see Table 1). For example, the urban-rural ratio is 22:78, the median age is 36, and gender is evenly split between males and females. Further, the sample confirms the distribution of education among Tanzanians as shown by the census; two-thirds or more have received only primary education, while just one-in-five has received secondary education.

In terms of occupation, an overwhelming majority of respondents are classified as fishermen or farmers (55 percent). Christianity (60 percent) and Islam (36 percent) are the two main religions. Some 44 percent of respondents indicated that they speak Kiswahili at home, which confirms its status as the main national language. Kiswahili is also the language in which all the interviews were conducted.

## **THE BROADER CONTEXT: IDENTITY, POVERTY, AND SOCIAL CAPITAL**

Tanzania is a country of 32.9 million people and approximately 120 ethnic groups, each with its own primary language.<sup>14</sup> The population also contains adherents of Muslim, Catholic, Protestant and traditional faiths. Yet, for the most part, Tanzania has avoided the ethnic and religious fragmentation that has marred other plural societies in Africa.

Through the efforts of President Nyerere, Kiswahili was consciously developed as a national language. It was traditionally a coastal language, evolving into the primary language of commerce, and is now the language of government as well. According to the survey, just under half of all Tanzanians now consider Kiswahili to be their “home language,” and it is undoubtedly the *lingua franca* of the great majority of citizens. English is the second official language, though it is spoken largely by the country’s elite. At a minimum, Kiswahili has probably helped to ameliorate political tensions between the Mainland (which is predominantly Christian and African) and the islands (almost exclusively Muslim, including an Arab minority).

In this section of the report, we explore how Tanzanians see themselves. What sort of sub-national group identities (if any) do they profess? Are they proud to be Tanzanians? If pressed to choose, do they feel closer to their national identity or their sub-national group identity? We also probe the material conditions of life as perceived and experienced from below. Do Tanzanians see themselves as rich or poor or somewhere in between? Is poverty a matter of shortages of cash income or of other basic necessities of life, or both? Finally, when people cannot fulfill their basic needs, to whom do they turn?

**Table 1: Sample Demographics**

<b>Number of Persons Interviewed</b>	2196	<b>Languages</b>	
<b>Age</b>		Swahili	44
Median Age	36	Sukuma	10
<b>Gender</b>		Haya	4
Male	50	Nyakyusa	3
Female	<u>50</u>	Nyamwezi	3
	100%	Chagga	2
<b>Location</b>		Kurya	2
Urban	22	Pare	2
Rural	<u>78</u>	Hehe	2
	100%	Makonde	2
<b>Education</b>		Ngoni	2
No Schooling	7	Fipa	2
Informal Schooling	2	Jaluo	1
Primary only	67	Luguru	1
Secondary only	19	Masai	1
Post-secondary	<u>5</u>	Mbulu	1
	100%	Zaramo	<1
<b>Occupation</b>		Other	<u>17</u>
Farmer / fisher / peasant	55		100%
Business Person	10	<b>Region (weighted)</b>	
Worker	10	Arusha	6
Informal Marketeer	8	Coast	3
Housewife	6	Dar es Salaam	6
Professional	4	Dodoma	5
Student	2	Iringa	5
Unemployed	2	Kagera	6
Other	<u>3</u>	Kigoma	4
	100%	Kilimanjaro	5
<b>Religion</b>		Lindi	3
Christian	60	Mara	5
Muslim	36	Mbeya	6
Traditional	1	Morogoro	5
Other	<u>3</u>	Mtwara	3
	100%	Mwanza	8
<b>Income</b>		Rukwa	3
Nothing	6	Ruvuma	4
Less than 10,000 Tshs	35	Shinyanga	8
10,001 - 50,000 Tshs	38	Singida	3
50,001 - 100,000 Tshs	15	Tabora	5
100,001 - 200,000 Tshs	4	Tanga	6
200,001 - 300,000 Tshs	1	Kusini Pemba	1
More than 300,000 Tshs	<u>1</u>	Kusini Unguja	<1
	100%	Mjini Magharibi	1
		Kaskazini Pemba	1
		Kaskazini Unguja	<u>&lt;1</u>
			100%*

\*Figures may not add exactly to 100 percent because of rounding.

## Social Identity

Despite its ethnic and religious diversity, the vast majority of Tanzanians see themselves in occupational rather than ethnic or religious terms.

We measured social identity by asking: “Besides being Tanzanian, which specific group do you feel you belong to first and foremost?” The open-ended responses were written down verbatim and later grouped into categories. Three quarters (76 percent) defined their social identity in terms of the work they do on a daily basis, that is, their occupation. Only 3 percent identified themselves in terms of some ethnic group (for example, by language or by tribe) and another 5 percent gave a religious answer. One in ten (9 percent) think of themselves primarily in gender terms, and most of these people are women.

The fact that only 1 percent offer a political identity (e.g., as a member of a political association or party like CCM or CUF) by no means indicates that Tanzanians are apolitical. First of all, in none of the other 11 Afrobarometer surveys across Africa do more than 3 percent define themselves primarily in political terms. Second, when asked, “do you feel close to any political party?” eight in ten (79 percent) of respondents said they feel close to a party. But, clearly, attachments to political associations are not strong enough to constitute people’s primary social identity.

**Table 2: Self-Defined Identity Group (percentage of sample)**

Occupation	76	Ethnic or language group	3
Gender identity	9	Age related response	3
Religious group	5	Region	<1
Social class	3	Political association	<1

*Besides being Tanzanian, which specific group do you feel you belong to first and foremost?*

In contrast to several other African societies, Tanzanians seem to lack ethnic consciousness. Or, like party identification, ethnic identity is a secondary association. Or, perhaps people will not readily reveal primordial inclinations to a survey interviewer in a country where so much government effort has been devoted to discouraging sub-nationalism. By contrast, anywhere from one-half to one-third of people in Nigeria (48 percent), Namibia (46 percent), Mali (40 percent) and Zimbabwe (36 percent) think of themselves, first and foremost, in ethnic (i.e., tribal or linguistic) terms. And between one-third and one-quarter define themselves in religious terms (in this case, Christian) in Zambia (35 percent), Lesotho (27 percent) and Malawi (26 percent).

The three-quarters of Tanzanians with an occupational social identity is the highest measured in any Afrobarometer survey, approached only by the 63 percent in neighboring Uganda. The frequency in both these countries is at least twice as high as in any other Afrobarometer country. The level of gender consciousness (9 percent) is also higher than in any other survey, approached only by Uganda (6 percent).

As for national identity, more than nine in ten (93 percent) people say they are “proud” or “very proud” to be called Tanzanian. There is no significant difference between mainland and



Zanzibar responses on this matter, though mainlanders are slightly more likely to feel “very” proud of their national identity. Levels of national pride in Tanzania are similar to levels found in other African countries.

At the same time, 89 percent of Tanzanians say they are likewise proud of their group identity. So which identity is more important to people? We asked “Let us suppose that you had to choose between being a Tanzanian and being an “X” (where X is the respondent’s self-expressed identity group, which was inserted in the question). Which of these two groups do you feel most strongly attached to?” Even when exposed to this more rigorous test, three-quarters (74 percent) chose being Tanzanian, while one-quarter chose their identity group. This strong attachment to national identity stands in marked contrast to Mali, where a majority choose their sub-group (64 percent) and Nigeria, where the population is split on this question.

These results seem to suggest that President Nyerere’s efforts to mould a national identity (for example, by emphasizing Kiswahili and abolishing traditional rule) have borne fruit. The survey certainly provides evidence of a consensual, shared national identity, even on Zanzibar. If Tanzania was once an artificial construct of colonial mapmakers, it is no more. In the words of political scientist Joel Barkan, “this is no small achievement.” Barkan goes on to suggest that the extent of a common perception of nationhood and the lack of ethnic considerations in politics is an important reason that Tanzania has been one of the most politically stable countries in the region and on the continent.<sup>15</sup>

## Poverty

In monetary terms, Tanzania is a poor country; its per capita income was US\$284 in 2000. The Tanzanian government’s own assessment is that over 50 percent of the population live below the poverty line and that poverty levels “may have increased, to well over 50 percent for mainland Tanzania.”<sup>16</sup> Literacy rates have declined from about 90 percent in the 1970s to less than 70 percent in the late 1990s. Life expectancy has also declined, from 52 years in the 1980s, to 47 by the end of 2000. The Tanzanian government has prepared a poverty reduction strategy that aims to reduce income poverty, improve human capabilities, and reduce extreme vulnerability amongst the poor.

National censuses or surveys of living standards usually measure poverty indirectly as individual or household income, assets and consumption. A “poverty line” is calculated based on assumptions about the amount of cash income or consumption needed to secure a basket of goods comprising the basic necessities of life. When measured in this way by the Afrobarometer survey, poverty appears to be quite substantial. Eight in ten Tanzanians (80 percent) report a joint household income (they and their spouse together) of below Tanzanian Shillings (Tshs) 50,000 (US\$60) per month. One in twenty (6 percent) have no cash income at all. Less than 2 percent earn over Tshs 200,000 (US\$ 200) per month.

But the Afrobarometer also features several innovative measures of poverty. For example, we ask people about their personal financial situation. Were they able to save any money during the previous year, or did they break even, or, alternatively, did they have to dig into savings, take loans, or both? Less than one-fifth of Tanzanians (17 percent) said they were able to save any

part of their earnings. More than six in ten (64 percent) had to spend all their earnings. Nearly one-tenth (9 percent) spent savings to survive, and another tenth (10 percent) survived on borrowed income, indicating considerable difficulties in financing basic needs.

The Afrobarometer also measures poverty directly by simply asking people how often they secure the basic necessities. In a series of six questions, it asks: “Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you gone without: 1) food for your family, 2) water for domestic use, 3) schooling for your children, 4) medical treatment for your family, 5) electricity in your home, or 6) a cash income?”

When measured in this way, poverty in Tanzania appears to mirror the proportions living under a money-based poverty line. Almost one-half (48 percent) say they or their families went without food at least on occasion in the previous year, and one-fifth (19 percent) did so “always” or “frequently.” This indicates significant nutritional shortages among a sizeable share of the population. Over half of Tanzanians (54 percent) say that they experienced shortages of water for household use at least occasionally, and one-half (49 percent) also report going without adequate medical treatment for their families. Almost one-third (31 percent) report going without schooling for their children for at least some period.

The last three items are particularly significant because water, health care and education used to be free under Tanzanian’s socialist economic regime. Since then, user fees have been introduced for these services. However, at least with regard to schooling, the government plans to revert to universal primary education next year, removing user fees starting with Standard One.

Consistent with the income data discussed above, nearly eight in ten respondents (78 percent) say they had to go without a cash income on at least one occasion. The lack of a national electricity infrastructure, particularly in rural areas where most people live, is reflected in the fact that almost three-quarters (73 percent) say they “always” go without electricity. An additional 14 percent reported frequent or occasional shortages.

**Table 3: Shortages of Basic Needs**

	<b>Never</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Always</b>
Food for your family	52	30	18	<1
Water for domestic use	47	26	26	2
Schooling for your children	68	17	13	1
Medical care for your family	52	26	22	1
Electricity in your home	14	9	5	73
A cash income	23	37	31	10

*Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you gone without \_\_\_\_?*

The usual pattern throughout Southern Africa is to find much higher levels of poverty in rural than urban areas. Tanzania flies in the face of this pattern, reflecting many of the egalitarian legacies of the socialist period. Urban dwellers go without water, medical treatment, and schooling for children at the same rates as rural folk. There are slight differences with respect to food and a cash income. The major urban-rural difference on these measures is in access to

electricity; 81 percent in rural areas have no access, whereas the proportion is just 42 percent in towns and cities.

At the same time, reported levels of poverty in Tanzania are generally no worse than other countries with much higher cash income levels. While the response scale for Tanzania differed slightly from that used in other Southern African countries making a direct comparison impossible, we can make conceptually equivalent comparisons. We find that just as many Batswana say they “often” or “sometimes” go without food (49 percent) as Tanzanians say they do without “frequently” or “occasionally” (48 percent). And there are only small differences between food, water, and medical care deprivation in Tanzania, Namibia and Zimbabwe. Furthermore, while it is true that Tanzanians with lower reported levels of money income are more likely to go without basic necessities, the correlation is modest at best, and generally weak.<sup>17</sup>

**Table 4: Poverty in Tanzania and Other SADC Countries\***

	Tanzania	Botswana	Malawi	Namibia	Zambia	Zimbabwe	Lesotho	South Africa
Food	48	49	38	54	61	50	60	34
Water	54	16	30	47	50	41	46	24
Medical Treatment	49	16	49	58	69	54	38	38
Cash	78	52	69	69	80	71	77	47
Electricity	87	59	87	53	64	62	96	37
Per Capita Income**	\$696	\$5,611	\$773	\$4,052	\$986	\$2,135	\$1,290	\$4,234

*In the past year, how often, if ever, have you gone without \_\_\_\_\_? (percent responding “always,” “frequently,” or “occasionally”)*

*\*Note that on this and all other tables showing multi-country results, the question wording for Tanzania is shown. Question wording in other countries may have differed slightly, but the results should be roughly comparable.*

*\*\* Defined in terms of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) in 1999 US\$. Source: Freedom House Annual Survey, 1999 ([www.freedomhouse.org/survey99](http://www.freedomhouse.org/survey99)).*

## **Social Capital**

Based strictly on money income, Tanzanians should be doing far worse than they actually are. How, then, are they surviving? To whom do they turn for help in getting by? One possibility is that the state can provide social welfare during times of crisis. However, the capacity of the state to provide basic necessities has long been in decline, and it has been further limited by austerity budgets introduced under the economic reform program. Another possibility is that Tanzanians survive through their social networks of formal and informal associations, or what is now commonly referred to as “social capital.”

One prerequisite for sufficient levels of social capital is interpersonal trust among people. The Afrobarometer asked people about their levels of trust in a range of different people and social institutions. We find extraordinarily high levels of trust in Tanzania. Nine out of ten people say they trust their relatives (92 percent), and eight out of ten say they trust their neighbors (83 percent). Three-quarters say they trust Tanzanians of their own tribe (76 percent), and a slightly lower but still quite high 68 percent say they trust Tanzanians from other tribes.<sup>18</sup> This level is significantly higher than that found in Mali, where 57 percent trust fellow countrymen of other tribes, but is quite similar to the 66 percent who gave this response in neighboring Uganda.<sup>19</sup>

Trust is a resource if it leads to cooperation in times of need. We measured social capital in several ways, first by asking about sources of help in times of family crisis. Nine of ten Tanzanians (90 percent) say they could count on their family for help at home if they became seriously ill, and six in ten (62 percent) feel they could approach people outside the family for help. Almost eight in ten (78 percent) feel they could borrow as much as a week's living expenses from a friend or relative if they had to. And just under one-third (29 percent) say they could borrow this amount from a community group. In contrast, just 16 percent felt that they would be able to borrow this type of money from a bank. These results suggest an impressive potential stock of social capital which people can fall back on during times of need.

We also examined this issue from another direction. How are Tanzanians in actual need coping? Whenever a person told us that they occasionally, frequently, or always had to go without basic necessities (as discussed above) Afrobarometer interviewers then asked them: "To whom do you usually turn when you are unable to get food (or water, schooling or medical treatment) for your family?"

Of those who go without food at least occasionally, just under half (46 percent) say they turn to their family. Another one-fifth (19 percent) try to scrounge together enough cash to buy it. When there is no schooling for children, over half (59 percent) say they turn to the family, presumably for some form of home education or, more likely, to borrow school fees. And when there are shortages of medical care, almost six in ten (58 percent) turn to the family for help. These results tend to confirm Tungaraza's observation that kinship ties in Tanzania are an important form of social capital: "The most important function of kin network relations was organized and cooperative activity in times of hardship or happiness."<sup>20</sup>

In contrast, community-based organizations are used at a far lower rate than the family. And Tanzanians in need rarely look to the state for help. Across these four items, no more than five percent of those experiencing shortages say they turn to government.

Many people, however, lack any recourse in a crisis. One quarter (26 percent) of those who experience food shortages say they have no one to turn to, as do 30 percent of those who face shortages in medical treatment, 41 percent of those who confront problems finding education for their children and, more importantly, 59 percent of those who face water shortages. This last finding reflects the general lack of water supply infrastructure throughout the country, with especially serious levels of water deprivation in rural areas.

**Table 5: Networks for Meeting Basic Needs**

	<b>No-one</b>	<b>Family</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Market</b>	<b>Government</b>
Food for family	26	46	5	19	3
Water	59	15	8	12	5
Schooling	41	52	4	<1	3
Medical treatment	30	58	4	3	4

*To whom do you usually turn when you are unable to get food/ water/schooling/medical treatment for your family? (percent of those who go without it at least occasionally)*

Because Tanzanians rely heavily on their own resources and those of their kin to address basic needs, we detect a *de facto* privatization of the Tanzanian economy that has taken place largely from below. To a remarkable extent, Tanzanians no longer regard associations in the public sphere, whether state- or community-based, as reliable providers of missing basic needs. It is striking how few respondents say that they turn to state or community organizations in times of need. And for the most essential needs – food and water – respondents apparently rely to a fair extent on the market, presumably by purchasing goods from large- and small-scale private suppliers. To explore this and related issues further, we will now explore popular attitudes toward economic reform.

## **ECONOMIC REFORM**

As mentioned above, economic reforms were introduced in 1986 by the government that came to power with the 1985 elections. Impetus for these reforms came from the collapse of the central planning model in Eastern Europe, the change of leadership in Tanzania, and donor pressure. But Tanzanian citizens also played a role by demanding alternative forms of economic organization that sought to by-pass the difficulties and restrictions imposed by a state-controlled economy.<sup>21</sup>

As of 2001, Tanzania continues to undergo a significant economic reform program that features trade liberalization, privatization, deregulation, and restructuring of the public service. Indeed, Tanzania is now ranked by donors as one of only 10 African countries that have attained “good compliance” with IMF and World Bank stabilization and adjustment reforms.<sup>22</sup> Whether the structural adjustment program is home grown and whether elite-negotiated reforms reflect the inputs of local citizens is highly contested. It is certainly easier for the government to renege on reforms if citizens do not understand or support them. On the other hand, an effective program might create popular legitimacy for itself regardless of whether it was home grown or not. In this section we examine how Tanzanians perceive these changes almost a decade and a half after they were introduced.

### **Most Important Problems: The People’s Agenda**

To set the scene, we asked Tanzanians what the “most important problems” were “facing you personally” as well as “facing the country that government should address.” These questions

were open ended and respondents could give up to three spontaneous replies. Thus, they provide very good pictures of Tanzanians' priorities.

We find that economic and social problems dominate both personal and national agendas. Almost one-third of Tanzanians (31 percent) cite "the economy" as a major personal problem; it is the most frequently mentioned category. It is very interesting that Tanzanians construct and frame their personal problems in this way, since "the economy" is often seen as a national problem. Health and health care are cited by 29 percent, and poverty by 27 percent of respondents. Lower proportions of respondents mention problems related to education (15 percent), food (14 percent) and farming (11 percent).

**Table 6: Perceptions of Personal Problems**

Economy	31	Water	9
Health	29	Getting Loans	6
Poverty / Destitution	27	Welfare	5
Education	15	Problems marketing goods	5
Food	14	Other social problems	9
Farming	11		

*In your view, what are the most important problems facing you personally? (percent who cite the problem as one of their three possible answers)*

When we asked about the most important national problems that government should address, health and health care come to the fore (32 percent). One-quarter (24 percent) point to problems with the education system. Somewhat smaller proportions cite the provision of water (18 percent), transportation (14 percent), access to loans (14 percent), the economy (12 percent), farming (12 percent) and infrastructure (12 percent).

It is interesting that socioeconomic issues are mentioned far more frequently than political issues. Democracy, discrimination, equality and governance are all cited by less than 1 percent of the respondents as a personal problem, and the same trend continues at a national level. Even on Zanzibar, internal strife following the October 2000 elections appears as a major concern to only a few voters. Two percent mention "political violence" and another 2 percent cite "political tensions," and less than one percent mention "national unity."

**Table 7: Perceptions of National Problems**

Health	32	Infrastructure	12
Education	24	Job Creation	10
Water	18	Problems with marketing goods	7
Providing Loans	14	Electricity	6
Transportation	14	Food	6
Economy	12	Poverty / Destitution	5
Farming	12		

*In your view, what are the most important problems facing the country which government should address? (percent who cite the problem as one of their three possible answers)*

When compared to Afrobarometer surveys done in other Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries, the specific “package” of top problems selected by Tanzanians’ (health, education, water, transport and farming) stands out as being relatively distinctive, matched perhaps only by Zambia and Malawi.

A number of issues seen as major problems elsewhere in the region simply do not feature in Tanzania. For example, just one in ten Tanzanians cite job creation (10 percent), whereas it is chosen by three-fourths of South Africans (76 percent) and nearly two-thirds of Basotho (63 percent), more than half of Batswana (58 percent) and Namibians (54 percent), and one in three Zimbabweans (37 percent) and Zambians (32 percent). Crime and security is cited by just 3 percent in Tanzania, in contrast to 60 percent of South Africans, 28 percent of Malawians and Basotho, and 12 percent of Batswana. Food is selected by 6 percent of Tanzanians, yet it is a major national problem for 26 percent of Malawians and 20 percent of Basotho. Housing, a major issue cited by 25 percent of South Africans, is mentioned by only 1 percent in Tanzania.

**Table 8: The National Agenda in Tanzania and Other SADC Countries**

	Tanzania	Botswana	Zimbabwe	Zambia	Malawi	Lesotho	Namibia	South Africa
Health	32	15	18	41	29	8	18	12
Education	24	20	9	31	12	6	46	13
Water	18	4	9	9	16	7	0	6
Transportation	14	2	7	18	16	10	1	7
Farming/ Agriculture	12	14	1	26	13	4	8	0
Economy	12	7	74	20	48	3	7	9
Infrastructure	12	1	1	2	3	<1	0	1
Job Creation	10	58	37	32	11	63	54	76
Food	6	2	8	8	26	20	4	1
Electricity	6	1	1	2	1	1	0	5
Rates/Taxes	5	<1	2	<1	<1	<1	0	1
Poverty/ Destitution	5	17	9	14	11	9	7	11

*In your view, what are the most important problems facing the country which government should address? (percent who cite the problem as one of their three possible answers)*

Finally, HIV/AIDS, perhaps the greatest crisis confronting the countries of Southern Africa, raises surprisingly few concerns throughout the region. It is cited by only 24 percent of Batswana, 14 percent of Namibians and 13 percent of South Africans, and it is even further off the radar screens of the average Tanzanian, mentioned by just 1 percent. These figures reflect a failure of leaders in all SADC countries, and especially in Tanzania, to raise the visibility of the pandemic as a political issue and thus something the government could be held accountable for.

## Economic Satisfaction

Overall, Tanzanians are negative about their own and the country's present economic situation. Only three in ten say that they are "somewhat" or "very satisfied" with their personal economic conditions (31 percent), and two-thirds (68 percent) are "not very" or "not at all satisfied." Just under one-third (29 percent) say they are more satisfied today than one year ago, while one-third (34 percent) say that things have remained the same and just over a third (37 percent) say they are "slightly" or "much less satisfied" than twelve months earlier. About one-third (36 percent) also feel that their conditions are "worse" or "much worse" than other Tanzanians, while 43 percent feel they are the same, and 20 percent say they are "better" or "much better" off than others. With respect to national conditions, less than one-third (29 percent) indicate that they are satisfied with the general situation in the country today, and just over one-fifth (22 percent) are satisfied with the state of the national economy.

*Table 9: Economic Satisfaction In Tanzania and Other Afrobarometer Countries*

Economic Satisfaction Compared to One Year Ago*		Relative Deprivation**		National Economic Conditions***	
Country	percent	Country	percent	Country	percent
Nigeria	68	Nigeria	7	Uganda	64
Uganda	54	Mali	23	Namibia	56
Namibia	42	Uganda	28	Nigeria	45
Ghana	39	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>36</b>	Ghana	32
<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>29</b>	Namibia	39	Mali	34
Mali	29	South Africa	50	Botswana	32
Botswana	26	Malawi	53	South Africa	30
Malawi	24	Botswana	54	Malawi	29
Lesotho	20	Zambia	58	Zambia	25
Zambia	19	Lesotho	66	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>22</b>
South Africa	15	Zimbabwe	75	Lesotho	16
Zimbabwe	3	Ghana	(NA)	Zimbabwe	6

\*When you look at your life today, how satisfied do you feel compared with one year ago? (percent "slightly" or "much more satisfied")

\*\*Would you say that your own living conditions are worse, the same, or better than other Tanzanians? (percent "worse" or "much worse")

\*\*\*How satisfied are you with the condition of the Tanzanian economy today? (percent "somewhat" or "very satisfied")



Compared to other Afrobarometer countries, assessments of personal economic conditions in Tanzania are not nearly as positive as in Nigeria in 2000, but neither are they as low as in Lesotho or Zimbabwe. However, satisfaction with national economic conditions is lower in Tanzania than in nine of twelve other countries, besting only Lesotho (16 percent) and Zimbabwe (6 percent). The most economically satisfied people can be found in Uganda (64 percent), Tanzania's neighbor.

Yet Tanzanians do not displace blame for their economic conditions. When asked "In your opinion, who is most responsible for current economic conditions in Tanzania," one half (53 percent) say the "current government," and fully one-fifth (21 percent) point to "the people." Only one in twenty (6 percent) attribute responsibility to international agencies like the IMF, World Bank and other donors. And, unlike other African countries, just a few Tanzanians blame the previous government (6 percent) for the economic hardships that they are experiencing. Turned around, the fact that few Tanzanians place the blame for a poor economic conditions on foreign sources or past regimes signals a belief that, together, the people and the government are responsible for creating, and therefore presumably for solving, the country's ongoing economic problems.

We also see a pattern where "the current government" is likely to get the most blame from the economically dissatisfied. For example, 59 percent of those most dissatisfied with the current state of the economy say the government is responsible, compared to only 46 percent amongst those who are most satisfied. Conversely, "the people" are more likely to be credited by the satisfied. Among the most dissatisfied, 16 percent say the people are responsible for current conditions, but among those who are most satisfied, 35 percent point to the people.

### **Basic Economic Values**

To what extent do the objectives of economic reform coincide with Tanzanians' basic economic values? We posed a range of questions to tap popular attitudes about the relative role of state and market in development. The results reveal a mix of both pro-reform and anti-reform sentiments.

This ambivalence is best captured by the split between those who value personal self-reliance and those who would rather depend on government. For example, one-half (50 percent) of all adult Tanzanians agree that "people should look after themselves and be responsible for their own success in life," while the other half (48 percent) instead believe that "government should bear the main responsibility for ensuring the well being of people." In this regard, Tanzanians are less self-reliant than Malawians, but also less dependent than Ugandans.

But on other questions, Tanzanians indicate that they favour an open, market-oriented economic system that allows individual initiative and entrepreneurial activity. For example, two-thirds (66 percent) agree that "the best way to create jobs is to encourage people to start their own businesses," while just 30 percent agree with the statement that "the government should provide employment for everyone who wants to work." Three-quarters (75 percent) agree that "people should be free to earn as much as they can, even if this leads to differences in income between people," while only one in five (21 percent) instead believe that the government "should place

limits on how much the rich can earn, even if this discourages some people from working hard.” Three-quarters also feel that “people should be able to own their own land, including buying and selling it, even in rural areas,” while just one in five (20 percent) think that “in rural areas, land should be owned by the community and allocated by traditional rulers.”

On each of these questions, Tanzania either leads the SADC region in its support for market-oriented approaches, or comes close to doing so. To all appearances therefore, existing cultural orientations should not pose an obstacle to the introduction of a market-based economic reform program.

**Table 10: Economic Values In Tanzania and Other Afrobarometer Countries**

<b>Freedom to Earn As Much As You Can*</b>		<b>Creating Jobs By Encouraging Small Business**</b>		<b>People Should Be Responsible for Own Well Being***</b>	
<i>Country</i>	<i>percent</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>percent</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>percent</i>
<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>75</b>	Malawi	68	Malawi	73
Uganda	73	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>66</b>	Mali	65
Malawi	72	Mali	66	Namibia	55
Ghana	70	Namibia	64	Ghana	55
Mali	66	Botswana	57	South Africa	52
Namibia	65	Uganda	56	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>50</b>
South Africa	63	Ghana	51	Zambia	51
Lesotho	59	Zambia	47	Botswana	49
Zambia	59	Nigeria	43	Nigeria	43
Nigeria	55	South Africa	42	Lesotho	43
Botswana	48	Zimbabwe	41	Zimbabwe	36
Zimbabwe	45	Lesotho	39	Uganda	36

*Which statement do you agree with most, statement A or statement B? (percent agreeing more with statement A)*

*\*A: Everyone should be free to earn as much as they can, even if this leads to differences in income between people. B: The government should place limits on how much the rich can earn, even if this discourages some people from working hard.*

*\*\*A: The best way to create jobs is to encourage people to start their own businesses. B: The government should provide employment for everyone who wants to work.*

*\*\*\*A: People should look after themselves and be responsible for their own success in life. B: The government should bear the main responsibility for ensuring the well-being of people.*

At the same time, however, Tanzanians still want the government to play a major role in an open economy. They expect the state (as opposed to business, individuals, or some combination of the three) to take the main responsibility for delivering a wide range of services. Nearly nine in ten people (87 percent) want the state to be responsible for providing agricultural credit, even more than the proportion that says it should be responsible for national defence (77 percent). Three in five say that the government should be responsible for creating jobs (60 percent). One-half want the government to take the main responsibility for reducing crime (56 percent), and a similar proportion think it should be responsible for producing and marketing the country’s main

agricultural export, cotton (53 percent). Interestingly, even though 15 years have passed since the introduction of the first market reform policies, the Tanzanian Cotton Authority still controls the production and marketing of cotton. But Tanzanians are divided about whether it should continue to do so.

These findings are surprising given that Tanzania at one time had the most state-centred economy in all of sub-Saharan Africa. Its private sector has been severely suppressed. Historically, the state portrayed entrepreneurs as *mabepari* (capitalist exploiters), and business acumen was seen as *ulangazi* (connivance). At the same time, they are consistent with the fact that Tanzania's extensive divestiture of state-owned enterprises met with no major opposition from workers, even though many government officials fully expected strikes and worker resistance.<sup>23</sup>

**Table 11: Preferred Providers of Services**

	Government	Combination	Private Business	Individuals/ People	Don't Know
Extending agricultural credit	87	10	2	1	1
Protecting National borders	77	19	< 1	4	< 1
Creating Jobs	60	33	1	6	<1
Reducing crime	56	38	<1	6	<1
Producing and selling cotton	53	31	7	8	1
Providing schools and clinics	43	47	1	9	< 1
Selling consumer goods	16	28	36	20	< 1
Building houses	2	2	6	90	<1

*Here is a list of things that are important for the development of our country. In your opinion, who should take the main responsibility for these things? Is it government, private business, individuals, or some combination of these?*

However, possibly reflecting declining confidence in state capacities, only 43 percent want the government to be solely responsible for building schools and clinics, while 47 percent instead prefer some sort of partnership between the public and private sector. Indeed, Tanzanians are less attached to purely public education than people anywhere else in the SADC region, perhaps reflecting the serious erosion in the system of state-run schools. Only when it comes to selling consumer goods and building houses does the balance of opinion tilt over predominantly to the private sector.

**Table 12: Preference for Government Responsibility in Tanzania and Other SADC Countries**

	Tanzania	Botswana	Lesotho	Malawi	Namibia	Zambia	Zimbabwe	South Africa
Agricultural credit	87	76	84	70	51	76	62	53
Creating jobs	60	48	74	52	41	57	48	47
Reducing crime	56	31	68	50	42	60	48	53
Buying and selling main export	53	77	49	38	43	75	42	45
Building schools and clinics	43	67	69	50	72	57	53	76
Building houses	2	35	45	28	40	44	35	63

*Here is a list of things that are important for the development of our country. In your opinion, who should take the main responsibility for these things? Is it government, private business, individuals, or some combination of these? (percent responding “government”)*

How do we understand the apparent contradiction between a popular desire for an open economy that allows for initiative and entrepreneurial activity with the equally strong mass desire for a major government role in the economy? At least part of the explanation may be that Tanzanians appreciate their new found economic freedoms, and yet still retain a good deal of nostalgia for the socialist era when the government, at least for a while, was able to cushion them from inflation through price controls and offer free basic services. Alternatively, they might like the idea of running their own businesses in the abstract but, in reality, realize that they cannot achieve this goal or meet other needs unless the state becomes a more capable provider.

### **Support for Economic Reform**

Beyond basic economic values, we also asked Tanzanians for their opinions about the country’s Structural Adjustment Program (SAP). The first question was whether they had even heard of it. Only 24 percent say they have. Among the nine Afrobarometer surveys that have asked this question, the level of Tanzanians’ awareness of their SAP is the second lowest, higher only than the 13 percent of South Africans who had heard of that country’s Growth, Employment and Redistribution Program. In contrast, 85 percent of Zimbabweans have heard of what is popularly known in that country as ESAP. At minimum, this finding would seem to point to a lack of popular awareness about national economic strategy, let alone popular debate about and participation in the program.

**Table 13: Awareness of SAP Programs in Tanzania and Other Afrobarometer Countries**

Zimbabwe	85	Nigeria	40
Uganda	55	Mali	40
Malawi	51	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>24</b>
Ghana	42	South Africa	13
Zambia	42		

*Have you heard about the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP)? (percent responding “yes”)*

Somewhat surprisingly, there is no meaningful difference in awareness of the SAP between urban and rural dwellers (25 versus 24 percent). Education, on the other hand, plays a significant role. Only 6 percent of people without formal schooling have heard of the SAP, compared to 69 percent of those who had attended a tertiary institution. Social class also has a profound effect; professionals are much more aware (60 percent) than farmers and fishermen, or what are referred to in Tanzania as peasants (19 percent).

For those people who had heard of the SAP, we then asked “what, in your opinion, is the Structural Adjustment Programme supposed to do?” Only 23 percent of these respondents were able to provide an answer. Seven percent said it is supposed to “improve the economy,” 5 percent said “improve living conditions,” both very vague, if correct, responses. Even fewer could name specific reform objectives, with just 1 percent giving answers that amounted to “obtaining fiscal balance,” and another 2 percent to “restructuring economic institutions.” In short, very few Tanzanians perceive the SAP in terms of its intended goals of stabilization and adjustment.

We then asked those respondents who had heard of the SAP whether they were satisfied with it. More than four out of ten (41 percent) said they were satisfied, but another 43 percent said they were dissatisfied, while 11 percent took a neutral view.

**Table 14: Satisfaction with SAP Programs in Tanzania and Other Afrobarometer Countries**

<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>41</b>	Malawi	18
Mali	39	South Africa	14
Uganda	31	Nigeria	14
Ghana	24	Zimbabwe	3
Zambia	18		

*How satisfied or unsatisfied are you with the SAP? (percent of those who have heard of the SAP who are “satisfied” or “very satisfied”)*

When compared to other African countries, however, Tanzanians are the most satisfied with their SAP (as a percentage of those who had heard of it). To be sure, more people are dissatisfied than satisfied, but this is true for all African countries surveyed. But Tanzania clearly must be included in that handful of African countries – along with Mali and Uganda and, to a lesser extent, Ghana – where economic reform programs have won a measure of support among a significant minority of the population. In Tanzania, as in the other countries, this minority tends

to be primarily male, well educated, and relatively well off in terms of income. There is no significant difference in satisfaction with the SAP between rural and urban areas, which calls into question the conventional view that rural areas gain at the expense of urban areas under neo-liberal economic reforms.

Importantly, we asked all respondents, regardless of whether or not they had heard of the SAP, whether the “government’s economic policies” had hurt or helped most people. Six in ten (60 percent) agree with the statement that “the government’s economic policies have hurt most people and only benefited a few,” while one-third (33 percent) instead believe that “the government’s economic policies have helped most people; only a few have suffered.” Thus, when viewed through the lens of public opinion, a key weakness of economic reform programs is that they lead to widening gaps between the rich and the poor, or at least the perception that this is the case. And even some “reformers” who support adjustment have acknowledged that the benefits can be overly concentrated, especially in the hands of those close to government.

**Table 15: Social Impact of SAP Programs in Tanzania and Other Afrobarometer Countries**

Mali	41	Malawi	22*
<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>33</b>	Zambia	18*
Nigeria	33	Zimbabwe	8*
Ghana	31	Uganda	NA
South Africa	30*		

*Which statement do you agree with most, statement A or statement B? (percent agreeing more with statement A)*

*A: The government’s economic policies have helped most people; only a few have suffered.*

*B: The government’s economic policies have hurt most people, and only benefited a few.*

*\*Asked only of those who had heard of the SAP.*

Other results are also consistent with the relatively high levels of mass satisfaction with reform policies, suggesting that Tanzanians are economically patient and are willing to wait for reform to produce results. Slightly over one-half (53 percent) agree that “for the economy to get better in the future, it is necessary for us to accept some hardships now,” while just over one-third (37 percent) instead feel that “the costs of reforming the economy are too high; the government should therefore change its economic policies.” Along with Mali, this is the highest level of support for maintaining the economic course that we have found among those countries where the question was asked. One-half (49 percent) of Malians express similar levels of patience with the economy, as do 47 percent of Ugandans. These are the only three countries in the Afrobarometer sample, however, in which “adjustment fatigue” does not (yet) appear to have set in.

### **Support for Economic Reform Policies**

Even if Tanzanians have not heard of the SAP by name, they still are likely to have experienced the effects of economic reform. Hence, we asked respondents to position themselves in relation to several specific reform policies that they were likely to have encountered.

First, we asked about market prices for consumer goods. Seven in ten Tanzanians (70 percent) say that it is “better to have goods available in the market even if the prices are high,” while one-quarter (26 percent) disagree, favoring “low prices even if there are shortages of goods.” Second, we asked about user fees for public services. Eight in ten (82 percent) agree that, “it is better to raise educational standards, even if we have to pay for school fees,” while just 16 percent instead choose “free schooling for our children, even if the quality of education is low.” Third, we asked about restructuring the public service. Six in ten (59 percent) agree that “the government cannot afford so many public employees and should lay some of them off,” whereas just under one-third (31 percent) feel that “all civil servants should keep their jobs, even if paying their salaries is costly to the country.” These findings must be regarded as indicators of popular pro-reform sentiment.

Finally, we questioned respondents about privatization. Here the pattern is reversed, with most people taking an anti-reform position. A slight majority (53 percent) feel that “government should retain ownership of its factories, businesses, and farms,” while 45 percent counter that “it is better for the government to sell its businesses to private companies and individuals.”

**Table 16: Attitudes to Economic Reform in Tanzania and Other Afrobarometer Countries**

Market Pricing*		User Fees**		Restructuring the Public Service***		Privatisation****	
Country	percent	Country	Percent	Country	percent	Country	percent
Ghana	72	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>59</b>	Botswana	49
<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>70</b>	Ghana	77	Zimbabwe	51	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>45</b>
Uganda	69	Nigeria	69	South Africa	42	South Africa	42
Zambia	60	Lesotho	66	Zambia	36	Zimbabwe	42
Nigeria	56	Mali	65	Uganda	35	Nigeria	35
Mali	52	South Africa	60	Mali	30	Malawi	32
Botswana	50	Zimbabwe	58	Ghana	27	Namibia	32
South Africa	50	Botswana	57	Lesotho	23	Uganda	30
Namibia	44	Uganda	57	Malawi	21	Ghana	30
Zimbabwe	43	Zambia	52	Botswana	21	Lesotho	29
Malawi	41	Namibia	49	Namibia	20	Zambia	29
Lesotho	38	Malawi	48	Nigeria	19	Mali	25

*Which statement do you agree with most, statement A or statement B?*

*\*A: It is better to have goods available in the market, even if the prices are high. B: It is better to have low prices, even if there are shortages of goods. (percent agreeing more with statement A)*

*\*\* A: It is better to have free schooling for our children, even if the quality of education is low. B: It is better to raise educational standards, even if we have to pay for school fees. (percent agreeing more with statement B)*

*\*\*\*A: All civil servants should keep their jobs, even if paying their salaries is costly to the country. B: The government cannot afford so many public employees and should lay some of them off. (percent agreeing more with statement B)*

*\*\*\*\*A: The government should retain ownership of its factories, businesses, and farms. B: It is better for the government to sell its businesses to private companies and individuals. (percent agreeing more with statement B)*

Thus, solid majorities of Tanzanians accept three out of four core economic reform policies (market pricing, user fees, and restructuring the public service). Only with regard to privatisation is opinion equally divided between market and statist views. This may reflect the fact that Tanzania's politicians, as well as its public, are still debating whether public companies should be sold and, if so, to foreign or local companies.

When viewed across all of these items, Tanzanians have the most consistently pro-reform attitudes of any country included in the Afrobarometer. This may well indicate that Tanzanians have powerful memories of the 1980s as years of empty shops and rationing of basic items such as soap, toothpaste, and sugar. They do not want to go back to this situation. Providing it has a "human face" so that a social safety net can be provided for the poor, Tanzanians may be ready to experiment with capitalism.

Alternatively, Tanzanians may be "uncritical citizens," who passively accept the top-down policies supplied by their leaders. Just as they once accepted *ujamaa*, now they accept adjustment. Because they have not developed the habit of questioning official decisions, especially in the arcane arena of macroeconomic policy, they may simply go along with the orthodoxy of the day. Not wanting to appear to be out of step with their leaders, they may simply take refuge in easy expressions of satisfaction with market policies when survey researchers happen to ask their opinions.

## **DEMOCRACY**

Despite holding multiparty elections in 1995 and 2000, Tanzania is still undergoing a transition towards full democracy. According to Freedom House rankings, Tanzania's scores for both political rights and civil liberties at the end of 2000 gain it the label of only "partly free."<sup>24</sup> Larry Diamond currently categorizes it as a "pseudo democracy," meaning that, behind a formal veneer of democratic procedures, there remain real limits to political participation and political competition.<sup>25</sup>

This section reviews Tanzanians' attitudes towards democracy. Presuming that the country can complete a transition, its new political regime will not be consolidated unless an overwhelming majority of citizens support democracy as, in the words of Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, "the only game in town."<sup>26</sup> In other words, citizens must choose democracy both as the best possible form of government and as preferable over alternative regime forms that they have known. More broadly, citizens should also give life to democracy through active participation, and they must be willing to defend it if it comes under threat.

### **Interest in Politics and Political Efficacy**

An interest in politics and a belief that one is able to influence others (political efficacy) are usually taken as preconditions for citizens to take an active role in the democratization of their country. Based on the survey results, Tanzanians display very high degrees of interest and efficacy.



Tanzanians were asked: “how interested are you in politics and government?” The vast majority (82 percent) express some level of interest, with more than one-third (36 percent) saying “very interested” and almost half (46 percent) saying “somewhat interested.”

We also asked people: “how often do you discuss politics and government with other people?” Confirming Tanzanians’ keen interest in politics, three-quarters (75 percent) say they discuss politics with other people, with almost one-third (30 percent) saying they do so “often,” and almost half (45 percent) doing so “sometimes.”

In response to a question on political efficacy, six in ten (61 percent) agree that “in discussion with friends and neighbors, I can influence the opinions of others”; just one-quarter (24 percent) say that “as far as politics are concerned, friends and neighbors do not listen to me.”

Turning to another indicator of efficacy, over three-quarters (78 percent) believe that “as a community, we are generally able to make our elected representatives listen to our problems,” while just 13 percent say “we are usually unable to make our elected representatives listen to us.”

However, respondents are more evenly split on the question of how well they understand the workings of government. Just under half (46 percent) feel that they “can usually understand the way that government works,” while the same proportion (48 percent) instead agree with the statement that “the way the government operates sometimes seems so complicated that I cannot really understand what is going on.”

Although we find no consistent differences between urban and rural populations in terms of political interest or political efficacy, we do discern gender and educational differences of an expected kind. Men and educated people say they are more interested and feel more efficacious than do women and those with less formal education. Compared to mainland Tanzanians, people on Zanzibar are slightly more interested in politics, much more likely to discuss politics, and more likely to say they can understand politics.

Compared to other African countries where the same questions were asked, only Ugandans show consistently greater interest in politics and political discussion or a sense of confidence in their own ability to understand government. The high level of awareness in Tanzania may well reflect the mobilization of the populace and the politicization of all spheres of life for three decades during the single-party regime. Politics was widely discussed in schools, the national service, and on radio. The single party penetrated deeply into society, with structures as small as “cells” that provided a political officer for every ten households. The significant levels of perceived political efficacy may reflect the official culture of equality and self-reliance (the *ujamaa* ethic) that stressed that there was no difference between leaders and the people. What was missing, however, was a widespread popular tradition of removing leaders, or a culture of questioning them. Instead, major decisions (including the number of political parties to permit) were made at the top and transmitted downward for the people to approve.

**Table 17: Political Interest and Efficacy in Tanzania and Other Afrobarometer Countries**

<b>Interest In Politics*</b>		<b>Political Discussion**</b>		<b>Understand Government***</b>	
<i>Country</i>	<i>percent</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>percent</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>percent</i>
Uganda	45	Uganda	37	Uganda	47
<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>46</b>
Lesotho	31	Zimbabwe	25	Ghana	37
Ghana	25	Ghana	22	Malawi	30
Nigeria	25	Namibia	20	Nigeria	29
Zambia	22	Malawi	19	Mali	27
Zimbabwe	21	Nigeria	16	Namibia	26
Namibia	18	Mali	15	Zimbabwe	25
Malawi	17	Botswana	14	Botswana	23
Botswana	15	Zambia	14	Zambia	18
South Africa	12	Lesotho	13	Lesotho	15
Mali	10	South Africa	11	South Africa	12

\*How interested are you in politics and government? (percent “very interested”)

\*\*How often do you discuss politics and government with other people? (percent “often”)

\*\*\* Which statement do you agree with most, statement A or statement B? A: The way the government operates sometimes seems so complicated that I cannot really understand what is going on. B: I can usually understand the way that government works. (percent agreeing more with statement B)

### **Knowledge of Political Leaders**

Tanzanians’ very high level of interest in politics is not matched by high levels of awareness of their political leaders, especially at the national level. Just four in ten (39 percent) are able to offer the correct name of their mayor or the chairman of their local council (and over half were not able to venture a guess). Slightly more (47 percent) can correctly identify their regional commissioner. With regard to national political figures, less than one in ten (8 percent) can identify their member of parliament, while fully 89 percent can not even venture a guess. One-quarter are able to name the Minister of Finance, and just over half (52 percent) can identify the Vice President. Tanzanians’ awareness of local and national political leaders is average or below average when compared with other Afrobarometer countries.

**Table 18: Awareness of Political Leaders In Tanzania and Other Afrobarometer Countries**

Local Government Representative		Member of Parliament		Minister of Finance		Vice President	
Country	percent	Country	percent	Country	percent	Country	percent
Ghana	59	Malawi	84	Zimbabwe	41	Botswana	82
Mali	56	Botswana	73	South Africa	38	Malawi	79
Zimbabwe	55	Zimbabwe	52	Ghana	32	Zimbabwe	72
Botswana	52	Ghana	49	Namibia	31	Lesotho	72
Nigeria	43	Zambia	44	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>27</b>	Namibia	67
<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>39</b>	Mali	26	Malawi	26	Ghana	60
Zambia	28	Namibia	23	Zambia	25	Zambia	57
Lesotho	11	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>8</b>	Nigeria	16	South Africa	57
Namibia	6	Nigeria	8	Botswana	13	Nigeria	56
South Africa	NA*	Lesotho	1	Lesotho	7	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>52</b>
Malawi	NA	South Africa	NA*	Mali	4	Mali	24

Can you tell me the name of your \_\_\_\_\_? (percent correct)

\*Coders were unable to ascertain correct responses in South Africa because we were not able to get complete information from political parties concerning parliamentarians and local government councilors.

### Political Participation through Voting and Elections

Democracy can only survive and mature where citizens take an active role in the governance of their country, for example by voting, contacting representatives, and taking part in community affairs. According to the National Electoral Commission (NEC), 10.1 million Tanzanians registered to vote in the October 2000 General Elections out of an estimated total of 15.1 million eligible voters (67 percent) (the NEC had estimated 10.3 million eligible voters).<sup>27</sup> Ultimately, 8.518 million people actually cast a ballot, a turnout rate of 84 percent of registered voters (though only 56 percent of all those eligible to vote).

Turning to responses to survey questions, two-thirds of Tanzanians (66 percent) say they have attended an election rally over the past five years, and one-fifth (21 percent) say they have worked for a candidate or political party. These figures are high compared to those found in other Afrobarometer surveys. They represent a form of political participation that may be described as *mobilized*, that is, stimulated from above by a dominant political party.

### Political Participation through Non-Electoral Means

One important way that citizens can participate in a democratic system between elections is to contact elected leaders to ensure that representatives understand the opinions and preferences of their constituents. In turn, such regular contacts may help to ensure that citizens feel close to their government and support its decisions. The survey asked people: “During the last five years, how often have you contacted any of the following persons for help to solve a problem?”

With regard to elected leaders, almost one-third of respondents (29 percent) report contacting a local government councilor, and one-tenth (12 percent) have contacted a member of the National

Assembly. With regard to other political leaders, around one in ten respondents have made contact with a political party official (13 percent) or a government ministry official (9 percent). The higher levels of contact with local officials may reflect the fact that most essential services such as water, health and primary education are the prerogative of local, not national, authorities. Moreover, local officials are geographically less remote and, in principle, more accessible. As shown below, contact with central government officials is especially difficult in a country like Tanzania, which has a large land area and poor communications.

Contact with non-elected community leaders is much higher than with elected representatives. Almost half of all respondents (49 percent) say they have contacted a religious leader about some problem they have had. One-tenth have contacted a traditional ruler (12 percent), and one-quarter (25 percent) report making contact with some other influential person.

**Table 19. Contacting Leaders**

Religious leader	49	Traditional ruler	12
Local government councilor	29	Member of Parliament	12
Other influential person	26	Government Ministry official	9
Political party official	13		

*During the last five years, how often have you contacted any of the following persons for help to solve a problem? (percent contacting at least once)*

Citizens can also participate in democratic politics between elections by getting involved in a range of other activities. We found that three quarters of Tanzanians (75 percent) have attended a community meeting in the past five years. This reflects the process by which community problems are first discussed at village assembly meetings and hamlet meetings before they are forwarded to the Local Authority Council. Moreover, 60 percent of the respondents say they have joined with others to raise some issue. Far lower numbers have signed a petition (12 percent), attended a demonstration (11 percent), or written a letter to a newspaper (3 percent). Zanzibar respondents are less likely to have attended community meetings or joined together to raise an issue, but more likely to have attended an election rally or a protest demonstration.

**Table 20: Community-Based Participation**

Attend a community meeting	75	Attend a demonstration	11
Get together to raise an issue	60	Write letter to a newspaper	3
Sign petition	12		

*I will read out a list of things that people sometimes do as citizens. Please tell me how often you, personally, have done any of these things during the last five years. (percent participating at least once)*

Across six indicators of political participation that have been asked in a number of Afrobarometer surveys, Tanzanians have high levels of activism on four of the six indicators. Interestingly, however, Tanzanians display exceptionally low levels of participation relative to others with regard to contacting elected or government officials, activities that require individuals and communities to take initiatives independent of a mobilizing political party.

**Table 21: Political Participation In Tanzania and Other Afrobarometer Counties**

Attend an Election Rally		Work for a Candidate or Party		Contact Government Officials		Attend a Community Meeting		Join With Others to Raise an Issue		Attend a Demonstration	
Malawi	71	Uganda	43	Zimbabwe	30	Uganda	81	<b>Tanzania</b>	60	South Africa	24
Uganda	66	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>21</b>	Namibia	30	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>75</b>	Zimbabwe	56	Zimbabwe	24
<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>65</b>	Zimbabwe	21	Uganda	22	Ghana	63	Nigeria	54	Namibia	21
Namibia	54	Ghana	19	Zambia	22	Mali	52	Ghana	53	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>11</b>
Ghana	50	Namibia	16	Lesotho	14	Namibia	50	Namibia	51	Botswana	10
Zimbabwe	47	Mali	15	Nigeria	13	Nigeria	45	Malawi	42	Zambia	9
Zambia	44	Nigeria	13	Ghana	11	South Africa	40	Zambia	39	Mali	8
Botswana	39	Lesotho	13	Botswana	9	Malawi	36	Lesotho	38	Ghana	8
South Africa	33	Zambia	11	Malawi	9	Zimbabwe	32	Mali	30	Nigeria	7
Mali	21	Botswana	10	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>8</b>	Zambia	31	South Africa	30	Malawi	6
Nigeria	19	Malawi	10	South Africa	6	Lesotho	24	Botswana	28	Lesotho	4
Lesotho	19	South Africa	7	Mali	4	Botswana	23	Uganda	NA	Uganda	NA

### Associational Life

While Tanzania has a mobilized and politicized populace, it possesses a rather unorganized civil society. For the most part, the density of voluntary and civic organizations is sparser in Tanzania than in other African countries. Religious groups are the lone exception; 82 percent of interviewees say they belong to a church or a mosque. No other type of voluntary organization in Tanzania can claim anywhere near this level of membership. Only 16 percent belong to a trade union or farmers association, and 11 percent are members of a women’s group. The proportions of people who belong to any other group are all less than 10 percent, including sports or recreation groups (7 percent), educational groups (6 percent), professional or business groups (6 percent), community development groups (6 percent), environmental groups (6 percent), and human rights or pro-democracy groups (3 percent).

**Table 22: Associational Life In Tanzania and Other Afrobarometer Countries**

Religious Group		Community Development Group		Professional or Business Group		Trade Union or Farmers Association	
Country	percent	Country	percent	Country	percent	Country	percent
<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>82</b>	Uganda	30	Uganda	22	Mali	40
Uganda	80	Mali	28	Mali	20	Uganda	30
Nigeria	79	Nigeria	11	Nigeria	6	Nigeria	17
Mali	50	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>16</b>

*For each of these voluntary organizations, could you tell me whether you are an official leader, an active member, an inactive member, or not a member of that type of organization? (percent responding “official leader” or “active member”)*

Besides religious group membership, membership in other types of civil society groups is the lowest in any country where Afrobarometer surveys have asked similar questions. The Tanzania

case probably reflects the legacy of three decades of political monopoly during which independent organization was discouraged and group activities were incorporated within the structures of the single party.

Taken together with the indicators of political participation, we find very high levels of participation among Tanzanians in activities that tend to be mobilized by others (e.g., voting, election rallies, community meetings). But Tanzanians lag behind other Africans in the extent of their *spontaneous* participation in which initiative for political action comes from the individual or the local community (e.g., contacting government officials, joining civic groups). It could be that Tanzanians are used to having their politics and avenues of participation *supplied* to them rather than having to organize in order to participate.

This leads us to wonder whether there is a connection between mobilized participation and uncritical citizenship. If citizens take their cues from a mobilizing party when engaging in political action, do they take the same passive and reactive approach when forming their political opinions and attitudes?

This limited presence of civil society also has important implications for local government in Tanzania, with implications for a high profile government reform program aimed at strengthening local governments. According to Barkan, local government and civil society

exist in a symbiotic relationship, and are dependent on each other for their respective success. If the purpose of local government is to bring government closer to the people and enhance government accountability to local populations, then it is essential that local populations have the capacity to give voice to their concerns vis-à-vis local government.<sup>28</sup>

Thus, strengthening local government in Tanzania will ultimately require strengthening civil society.

### **Popular Understandings of Democracy**

While the concept of democracy may have universal connotations, the word may also mean different things to different people. In order to find out how Tanzanians understand democracy, a standard, open-ended question was asked: “What if anything, does ‘democracy’ mean to you?” People were able to provide their own answer spontaneously, and they were allowed to give up to three meanings. Responses were recorded verbatim and later coded and grouped into categories for analysis.

The vast majority of Tanzanians (86 percent) are able to attach some meaning to democracy. Only 14 percent were unable to give any response. With regard to their actual understandings, almost one-half conceive of democracy in terms of civil liberties or personal freedoms (46 percent). Another one-fifth see it in terms of electoral choice, voting or multiparty competitive elections (20 percent). The third most frequently mentioned conception was to see democracy in terms of equality and justice (12 percent). Just 6 percent provided an economic or substantive meaning, equating democracy with social and economic development.

**Table 23: Spontaneous Definitions of Democracy In Tanzanian and Other SADC Countries**

	Tanzania	Botswana	Zimbabwe	Zambia	Malawi	Lesotho	Namibia	South Africa
Civil Liberties / Personal Freedoms	46	30	30	65	79	17	72	70
Government By the People	3	34	16	12	5	21	3	14
Voting / Multiparty Competition	20	8	6	8	14	<1	10	12
Peace / Unity	6	19	8	2	2	6	7	4
Social / Economic Development	6	3	4	2	2	2	3	7
Equality / Justice	12	8	7	1	1	1	9	26
Good Governance / Accountability	4	3	6	1	2	3	0	1
National Independence	1	2	2	<1	1	1	5	1
Majority Rule	2	1	17	1	<1	0	0	8
Rule of Law	2	0	0	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Group Rights / Freedoms	1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Other Positive Meanings	13	0	0	1	5	2	0	1
Refused / Won't Explain	2	<1	<1	2	<1	<1	0	<1

*What if anything, does “democracy” mean to you? (percent of respondents providing meanings in the given category as one of their three responses)*

### **Components of Democracy**

As a crosscheck, the Afrobarometer also assesses popular understandings of democracy by asking people which of a number of possible components they consider important for a society to be called democratic. Here we focus only on those who say a given item was “very important.”

This question appears to tap approximately the same levels of emphasis on key procedural elements of democracy as the previous one. What differs, however, is that substantive understandings of democracy emerge much more frequently. Almost half say that the freedom to criticize government (46 percent) is very important for a country to be called a democracy. Four in ten say the same about multiparty competition (40 percent), while less than a third feel regular elections (32 percent) or majority rule (31 percent) are very important. Importantly, Zanzibar respondents are far more likely to emphasize all of these procedural aspects of democracy than those on the Mainland.

By contrast, large majorities now say that universal education (72 percent), universal access to shelter, food and water (71 percent) and universal employment (55 percent) are “very important” for a country to be called democratic. Just under one-half (48 percent) say a small income gap between rich and poor is very important.

Once they are “primed” to think about these issues by the survey question, Tanzanians appear to associate democracy far more with egalitarian policy outcomes than with political procedures. Indeed, in every Southern African country, responses to these questions indicate that people are more likely to emphasize substantive outcomes than political procedures. However the *gap* between Tanzanians’ average emphasis on the four substantive outcomes (62 percent) and their average emphasis on the four political procedures (37 percent) is tied with South Africa as the largest in the region. This heavily substantive understanding reflects the way that the founding President Julius Nyerere described democracy during one-party rule. Thus, Tanzanians’ understandings of democracy must be seen to contain *both* elements of procedure and outcome, with perhaps more emphasis on outcome.

**Table 24: Perceptions of Components of Democracy In Tanzania and Other SADC Countries**

	Tanzania	Botswana	Zimbabwe	Zambia	Malawi	Lesotho	Namibia	South Africa
The majority rules	31	47	67	47	66	41	42	38
Anyone is free to criticise the government	46	41	60	40	58	39	26	35
Elections are held regularly	32	46	61	36	47	32	37	37
At least two political parties compete with each other	40	45	58	38	45	35	22	29
Everyone enjoys basic necessities like shelter, food and water	71	52	69	57	77	60	52	67
Jobs for everyone	55	49	67	45	55	64	53	73
Education for everyone	72	51	62	44	68	56	56	66
A small income gap between rich and poor	48	34	51	29	50	37	27	35

*People associate democracy with many different meanings such as the ones I will mention now. In order for a society to be called democratic, how important is each of these? (percent responding “very important”)*



## Support for Democracy

Keeping these understandings in mind, we now ask whether Tanzanians support democracy, at least as they understand it. We use a question commonly used in attitude research around the world: “Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion? A: Democracy is preferable to any other form of government. B: In certain situations, a non-democratic government can be preferable. Or C: To people like me, it doesn’t matter what form of government we have.”

Over eight in ten Tanzanians (84 percent) say that democracy is the best form of government, while only a small minority (5 percent) say it does not matter to them what form of government comes to power. One in ten (12 percent) feel that non-democratic government might be justified in certain situations. This level of support for democracy is the highest measured in any Afrobarometer survey, comparable to those observed in Botswana and Nigeria.

**Table 25: Support for Democracy in Tanzania and Other Afrobarometer Countries**

<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>84</b>	Zimbabwe	71
Botswana	83	Malawi	66
Nigeria	81	Mali	60
Uganda	80	South Africa	60
Ghana	77	Namibia	57
Zambia	74	Lesotho	39

*Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion? A: Democracy is preferable to any other form of government. B: In certain situations, a non-democratic government can be preferable. C: To people like me, it doesn’t matter what form of government we have. (percent selecting statement A)*

So the vast majority of Tanzanians say they support something called democracy, yet we just observed that they also have more of a substantive, economic understanding of democracy than a procedural one. So what do Tanzanians mean when they say they support democracy? Are they only saying they support a system that delivers substantive equality to citizens, or are they also saying they want a pluralist political system free of autocratic rule? In order to explore this question, the Afrobarometer survey asks a series of question designed to measure whether people reject autocratic or authoritarian alternatives to multiparty democracy.

Consistent with the previous government’s policy of removing powers from chiefs and headmen, nine in ten respondents (89 percent) reject the idea that “all decisions should be made by a council of traditional leaders.” An even greater proportion (96 percent) rejects the idea that “the army should come in to govern the country.” Nine in ten (92 percent) also oppose the idea that “we should get rid of elections so that a strong leader can decide everything.” Popular hostility to “big man” rule was also expressed in a different question, where just 5 percent agree with the idea that “the President of Tanzania should be able to change the Constitution whenever he chooses,” while 95 percent instead believe that “in Tanzania, even the President should obey the Constitution.”

Importantly, however, a significantly lower proportion (62 percent) reject the idea that “we should have only one political party.” In fact, 38 percent support this idea. Along with substantial minorities in Lesotho, Uganda and South Africa, many Tanzanians apparently still feel nostalgic about the previous political regime. Indeed, the high levels of support for democracy in Tanzania may well be inflated by an assumption that one-party rule is democratic, because that is what their rulers always told them. This is confirmed by the fact that 82 percent of those who think Tanzania should have only one political party also think that democracy is the best form of government!

**Table 26: Rejection of Authoritarian Rule in Tanzania and Other Afrobarometer Countries**

Reject Presidential Dictatorship		Reject One-Party Rule		Reject Military Rule		Reject Traditional Rule	
Country	percent	Country	percent	Country	percent	Country	percent
<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>92</b>	Nigeria	88	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>89</b>
Zambia	91	Zambia	80	Zambia	95	Uganda	80
Botswana	88	Botswana	78	Nigeria	90	Zambia	80
Malawi	87	Ghana	78	Uganda	89	Botswana	74
Ghana	86	Malawi	76	Ghana	88	Ghana	71
Uganda	84	Zimbabwe	74	Botswana	85	Malawi	71
Nigeria	83	Mali	73	Malawi	83	South Africa	64
Zimbabwe	78	Namibia	63	Zimbabwe	80	Zimbabwe	63
Mali	73	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>62</b>	South Africa	75	Lesotho	59
Lesotho	69	South Africa	56	Mali	70	Namibia	55
South Africa	67	Uganda	53	Lesotho	70	Mali	47
Namibia	57	Lesotho	51	Namibia	59	Nigeria	NA

*Some people say that we would be better off if the country was governed differently. What do you think about the following options? (percent “disagree” or “strongly disagree”)*

A separate set of questions explored respondents’ comparisons of the present regime to the former one-party system and other regimes by asking them to give each system scores on a scale of 1 to 10, where the best government gets 10, and the worst government gets 1. Two-thirds of Tanzanians (66 percent) give positive ratings (defined as scores of 6 and above) to the present system of government (described as “one with free elections and many parties”). A far lower, though still significant, 42 percent award positive ratings to “the former system of one-party rule.” In contrast, just 3 percent give a positive rating to the even older colonial system when Tanzania was under British rule, and only 8 percent have a positive view of “the old system of government by traditional leaders.” Tanzanians’ relatively benign memories of life under one-party rule were confirmed by an even more recent World Values Study survey. Of 771 respondents, 43 percent said that the one-party system was a good or very good system of government, while just 22 percent rated it as bad or very bad.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, even though Tanzanians may have a strong substantive element to how they conceive of democracy, they are not prepared to accept any and all authoritarian political systems that may promise to increase people’s quality of life. They resoundingly oppose presidential dictatorship, military rule and rule by traditional leaders. Importantly, however, they have not completely

abandoned the idea of one-party rule. Indeed, many people still think of the old regime in positive terms. However, this may not reflect a preference for curtailing political competition as much as the rather unique history of one-party rule in Tanzania, which featured competition *within* the single party. It may also reflect a performance-based judgment that government simply worked better under that system. The recent World Values Survey found that 41 percent of those interviewed rated the performance of the 1965 to 1985 one-party regime as good or very good, and 45 percent gave the same rating to the performance of the 1985 to 1995 transitional single-party regime. A significantly smaller 31 percent said the performance of the present multiparty regime was good or very good.<sup>30</sup>

Tanzanians also support a series of other basic tenets that are necessary preconditions for democracy to flourish. First of all, eight in ten (82 percent) agree that the “use of violence is never justified in Tanzanian politics.” Less than one-fifth (18 percent) say that “In Tanzania, it is sometimes alright for citizens to use violence in trying to reach political goals.” In contrast, just under half of Zanzibar respondents say that violence is never justified. This may reflect the fact that Zanzibar achieved independence through violent revolution (in contrast to the Mainland) as much as any recent political tensions on the islands.

Nationally, the same proportion (83 percent) feel that “all people should be allowed to vote, even if they do not fully understand all the issues in an election,” while just 15 percent think that “only those who are sufficiently well educated should be allowed to vote.” Similarly, 81 percent agree that “if people have different views than I do, they should be allowed to express them,” with just 17 percent saying that “it is dangerous to allow the expression of too many different points of view.” A slightly lower 73 percent agree that “every member of a family should be free to make up his or her own mind on political issues,” whereas 27 percent believe that “all members of a family should hold the same political opinions.” Finally, 87 percent say that “women in Tanzania should have equal rights and receive the same treatment as men do,” while just 13 percent instead agree with the statement that “women have always been subject to traditional African law, and should remain so.”

However, despite high expressed support for democracy itself, and for its underlying values, very few Tanzanians are willing to stand up and fight for democracy. When asked what they would do if the government suspended the National Assembly and cancelled elections, almost half (47 percent) say they would do nothing, while 9 percent would join a protest march, and 16 percent would contact an elected representative. The same pattern emerges when we offered the potential scenario in which the government dismisses judges who had ruled against it. Half (49 percent) say they would do nothing; only 7 percent would protest, and 13 percent would complain to an elected representative. Similarly, if the government shut down independent newspapers that criticize it, 45 percent would do nothing, 8 percent would protest, and 14 percent would contact an elected official. This leads one to wonder whether there is a sufficient critical mass that would be willing to stand up and support democratic institutions under threat.

Only when the scenario shifts to a potential threat to personal liberties does the picture change. If government stopped people from traveling freely inside Tanzania, 33 percent would remain inactive, while 15 percent would protest and fully 25 percent would speak to an elected official. And if government told people which religion to follow, just one-quarter (26 percent) would

remain on the sidelines. One-fifth (19 percent) would protest, and another fifth (22 percent) would contact an elected official.

### Satisfaction With Democracy

We tapped people’s views about the performance of Tanzania’s multiparty regime in three ways. First, we asked them about the honesty of the 2000 election. Overall, almost eight in ten (79 percent) say it was “quite” or “very honest.” But this sentiment was driven by mainland opinion, which obscures dissent on Zanzibar. Whereas only 16 percent perceived significant electoral malpractice on the Mainland, over half (52 percent) on the Zanzibar islands feel that the 2000 election was “quite” or “very dishonest.” Not surprisingly, this concern is particularly prevalent among CUF partisans, who may feel that their votes were not freely and fairly registered.

Despite the considerable controversy over the 2000 elections, popular perceptions of those elections were among some of the most positive of all Southern African elections held in the past five years. But this result is attributable to the weight of uncritical citizens on the Mainland, many of whom are CCM partisans, whose overwhelming numbers drown out the protesting voices of the political minority on Zanzibar.<sup>31</sup>

**Table 27: Evaluations of Elections In Tanzania and Other SADC Countries**

	Tanzania	Botswana	Zimbabwe	Zambia	Malawi	Lesotho	Namibia	South Africa
Very Honest / Completely Free and Fair	50	55	16	43	46	37	50	42
Quite Honest / Free and fair with minor problems	29	28	15	22	17	17	28	31
Somewhat dishonest / Free and fair but with major problems	11	7	21	10	13	11	8	14
Very dishonest / Not free or fair	6	3	26	8	21	18	3	6
Don't know	3	7	22	15	3	17	11	8

*Tanzania: In your opinion, how honest or dishonest were the presidential elections of October 2000?*

*All other countries: On the whole, how would you rate the freeness and fairness of the last national election, held in \_\_\_\_?*

Our next question was “how much of a democracy is Tanzania today?” Less than one-fifth (17 percent) of Tanzanians rate their political system as a complete democracy. Another one-third (33 percent) feel that it is a democracy, but with minor problems. Thus, just 50 percent gave

positive or relatively positive assessments of the state of the country’s democratic development. A further one-quarter (26 percent) say that the country is democratic, but with major problems. Just less than one in ten (8 percent), however, say Tanzania is not a democracy. But on Zanzibar, fully 23 percent feel this way. This may be a realistic assessment of the distance that Tanzanian democracy still has to travel. Here, at least, Tanzanians exhibit some important signs of critical tendencies.

Finally, we asked directly, “generally how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in Tanzania?” Six in ten respondents (62 percent) say they are “somewhat” or “very satisfied,” while 20 percent were “somewhat” or “very dissatisfied.” While Tanzania as a whole falls in the top half of Afrobarometer countries in satisfaction with democracy, public opinion on Zanzibar, where just 49 percent are somewhat or very satisfied, compares with some of the countries receiving the most negative ratings in the Afrobarometer.

It is also worth noting that the *gap* between support for democracy and satisfaction with democracy in Tanzania is particularly wide. There is a gap of 22 percentage points between the 84 percent who say they support democracy and the 62 percent who say they are satisfied with it. This can be thought of as a “reality gap” that distinguishes the ideal political regime that citizens desire and the real regime that their leaders provide. This gap is extremely wide in contemporary Zimbabwe (53 percentage points). But Tanzania almost ties with Ghana in 1999 (23 points) as the country in which the gap is next widest (and Ghana’s support-satisfaction gap may have closed considerably since the Rawlings’ government was peacefully turned out of power). This “gap” is especially wide on Zanzibar, with a 47 point spread between support for democracy (96 percent) and satisfaction with democracy (49 percent), almost as wide as that in Zimbabwe.

**Table 28: Satisfaction with Democracy in Tanzania and Other Afrobarometer Countries**

Country Is Governed Democratically*		Satisfied With Way Democracy Works**	
Country	percent	Country	percent
Botswana	82	Nigeria	84
Namibia	71	Botswana	75
Ghana	69	Namibia	64
Zambia	63	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>62</b>
Malawi	62	Uganda	62
South Africa	60	Mali	60
<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>50</b>	Zambia	59
Nigeria	50	Malawi	57
Uganda	48	Ghana	54
Mali	45	South Africa	52
Lesotho	37	Lesotho	38
Zimbabwe	17	Zimbabwe	18

\*In your opinion, how much of a democracy is Tanzania today? (percent selecting “full democracy” or “minor problems, but still a democracy”)

\*\*Generally, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in Tanzania? (percent responding “somewhat” or “very satisfied”)

Let us explore the sources of this gap between support for democracy and satisfaction with it. That Tanzanians see some advantages in their new multiparty regime is borne out by a series of questions that explicitly ask people to “compare our present system of government with the former system of one-party rule.” Approximately eight in ten people say that Tanzanians have greater freedom of speech (77 percent), greater freedom of association (81 percent), and greater freedom to vote without being pressured by others (79 percent). On these issues, Zanzibaris do not generally differentiate themselves from other Tanzanians. Though they are more likely to feel continued pressure to vote in approved ways, they think that multiparty democracy has improved other freedoms.

The extent to which Tanzanians’ see advances in rights under the new multiparty regime is roughly equivalent to that found in Zambia and Malawi with respect to their transitions from one-party systems, as well as South Africa’s transition from *apartheid*.

However, while Tanzanians are very likely to see substantial increases in political rights, they are less likely to say that they have more influence over government or that they are treated better by government. Four in ten (39 percent) say that things are better with respect to the ability of ordinary people to influence government, but 20 percent feel that nothing has changed, and 39 percent say that things are actually worse. With regard to whether all Tanzanians are treated equally and fairly by government, one-third (32 percent) say things are better under the new regime, but over one-quarter (28 percent) say nothing has changed, and another quarter (27 percent) say things are worse in this respect. Thus even on procedural terms, while Tanzanians feel freer, they do not necessarily feel more equal, a key element of any political definition of democracy.

**Table 29: Increases in Freedom and Rights in Tanzania and Other SADC Countries**

	Tanzania	Botswana	Zimbabwe	Zambia	Malawi	Lesotho	Namibia	South Africa
People are free to say what they think.	77	57	54	76	89	56	80	77
People can join any organization they choose.	81	60	63	84	93	63	85	84
Each person can freely choose who to vote for without feeling pressured.	79	60	63	82	94	66	86	84
Everybody is treated equally and fairly by the government.	32	49	44	44	57	47	65	60
People have an adequate standard of living.	30	45	28	28	51	42	57	39

*Please tell me if the following things are better or worse now than they used to be. (percent responding “somewhat” or “much better”)*

Moreover, Tanzanians are even less likely to feel that their lives have improved economically under multiparty politics. Less than one-third (30 percent) say that more people have an adequate standard of living now than under the one-party regime, while one-quarter (26 percent) see no difference, and fully four in ten (43 percent) say living standards have become *worse*.

To summarize, then, when we compare the present multiparty regime with the old one-party regime, Tanzanians see significant improvements in political freedom even as they say that things have not changed, or have even become worse, economically. Nostalgia for the old regime probably stems from the perception that, for all its failings, it at least treated people equally, was relatively responsive to public opinion, and finally, was better able to deliver a degree of basic social welfare. The perception that the multiparty regime has delivered neither greater political nor economic equality must be counted as a major reason for Tanzania's wide "reality gap" between support for and satisfaction with democracy.

Yet Tanzanians still strongly support democracy and oppose authoritarian alternatives. This suggests that people value democracy and support it in large part because of the dignity and freedoms it brings them as citizens, and that they are not likely to easily give up on democracy if it fails to deliver the goods economically. This is borne out by the fact that almost three-quarters (72 percent) express political patience. They agree with the statement that "our present system of elected government should be able to deal with inherited problems, even if this takes time," although 23 percent instead believe that "if democracy can't produce results soon, we should try another form of government." This degree of patience is also reflected in the fact that satisfaction with democracy (60 percent) is much higher than the proportion that thinks Tanzania is completely democratic (33 percent).

## **VIEWS OF GOVERNMENT AND THE STATE**

This final section reports evidence about the extent to which Tanzanians believe they are benefiting from good governance. Do they feel that the state is legitimate, transparent and responsive to public influence? Do they trust the institutions of the state, and are they satisfied with the government's performance?

### **Legitimacy of the State**

In order to assess the legitimacy of the state, Afrobarometer surveys ask people whether the constitution represents popular aspirations, whether the government exercises power in an acceptable manner, whether it was elected by acceptable procedures, and whether it has a right to command people to abide by decisions with which they disagree.

The present Constitution is a point of considerable controversy among the country's political and academic elites, who are not satisfied with the 1992 amendments to the 1977 document that allowed the reintroduction of multiparty politics. They argue that the constitution does not represent the current situation on the ground, and urge the government to contemplate a new constitutional order based on a new national consensus.<sup>32</sup> Opposition parties have been calling for a constitutional conference to draft a completely new document.<sup>33</sup>

In contrast to political and academic elites, however, over two-thirds (70 percent) of ordinary Tanzanians feel that the constitution expresses the values and aspirations of the Tanzanian people. This suggests that either the political elite in Tanzania is out of touch with public opinion, or that the people do not really understand the constitution and its implications for their lives. However, endorsement of the constitution is a minority opinion on the Zanzibar Islands, where only 40 percent find it to be authentically Tanzanian.

A sizeable majority of Tanzanians (72 percent) also think that the government exercises power in an acceptable manner. And consistent with the largely positive views of the 2000 election detailed earlier for the Mainland, 85 percent say that the government was elected to power by acceptable procedures.<sup>34</sup> Zanzibar again stands apart, with only bare majorities endorsing the way the government was elected (54 percent) and the way it rules (52 percent).

**Table 30: State Legitimacy In Tanzania and Other SADC Countries**

	Tanzania	Botswana	Zimbabwe	Zambia	Malawi	Lesotho	Namibia	South Africa
Our government was elected to power by accepted procedures.	85	82	58	7	65	54	78	73
Our government exercises power in an accepted way.	72	73	24	57	62	50	70	53
Our constitution expresses the values and aspirations of the Tanzanian people.	70	62	23	50	56	49	66	59
Our government has the right to make decisions that all people have to abide by, whether or not they agree with them.	46	37	20	33	29	44	41	43

*Please say whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. (percent responding “agree” or “strongly agree”)*

*Note: In Tanzania, respondents were asked whether they strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree. In all other countries, there was also a “neither agree nor disagree” category.*

Despite the Zanzibar exceptions, these sentiments help to legitimate the state in Tanzania. At the same time, if a core, defining feature of political legitimacy is that “citizens regard official decisions as binding,”<sup>35</sup> Tanzania’s government has not yet achieved full legitimacy. When asked whether “our government has the right to make decisions that all people have to abide by, whether or not they agree with them,” less than half (46 percent) of Tanzanians agree, and among Zanzibaris the level is just 29 percent. Thus, while Tanzanians respect the state, they are wary of being bound by government decisions that they have not had the chance to question, and in this sense they show stirrings of critical citizenship. At the same time, the willingness to



accept unpopular decisions is higher in Tanzania than in any other SADC country where Afrobarometer surveys have been conducted.

### Trust in Public Institutions

Closely related to whether people feel the state is legitimate, is whether people trust it to govern well. A sense of trust is also necessary to sustain popular support for those times when the state is not able to please everyone, or even most people. However, this sense of trust can only be developed if government has shown the ability to honor, or at least attempt to honor, its promises, respond to public opinion, and treat people equally.<sup>36</sup>

Respondents were asked about the extent to which they trust a range of government leaders and public institutions. The results reveal truly astonishing levels of trust in the army (95 percent, with 68 percent saying they trust it “a lot”), the National Assembly (92 percent, with 56 percent saying they trust it “a lot”), and President Mkapa (91 percent, with 60 percent who trust him “a lot”). Trust in the President is significantly lower in Zanzibar, at just 52 percent.

Levels of trust are lower, though still relatively high, for the national broadcaster, RTD (87 percent), the Tanzanian Electoral Commission (82 percent), local government (79 percent), and the courts (72 percent). Significantly, the lowest levels (though again, still relatively high) are found for political parties (66 percent) and the police (62 percent).

*Table 31: Trust In Political Institutions in Tanzania and Other Afrobarometer Countries*

President		Courts		Army		Police		Electoral Commission		National Broadcaster	
Tanzania	91	Tanzania	72	Tanzania	95	Namibia	69	Tanzania	82	Mali	88
Nigeria	77	Botswana	64	Mali	80	Tanzania	62	Uganda	76	Tanzania	82
Namibia	73	Namibia	64	Botswana	74	Botswana	60	Namibia	67	Namibia	85
Malawi	50	Uganda	63	Malawi	71	Uganda	53	Ghana	63	Ghana	79
Botswana	44	Ghana	58	Namibia	66	Ghana	49	Nigeria	62	Botswana	71
Lesotho	41	Zambia	56	Ghana	63	Mali	48	Botswana	60	South Africa	62
South Africa	41	Nigeria	54	Zambia	54	Malawi	42	Malawi	49	Zambia	58
Zambia	38	Malawi	47	Zimbabwe	53	Lesotho	40	South Africa	49	Malawi	56
Zimbabwe	20	Mali	43	South Africa	44	Zambia	38	Mali	46	Lesotho	53
Ghana	NA	Zimbabwe	43	Lesotho	39	Zimbabwe	36	Zambia	45	Zimbabwe	40
Mali	NA	South Africa	43	Nigeria	37	South Africa	35	Lesotho	32	Nigeria	NA
Uganda	NA	Lesotho	40	Uganda	NA	Nigeria	29	Zimbabwe	26	Uganda	NA

*How much do you trust the following institutions? (percent responding “trust them somewhat” or “a lot”)*

Thus, Tanzanians are exceptionally trusting people, with average levels of trust across these nine institutions of 81 percent, well above anything seen in previous Afrobarometer surveys; Namibia, also a one-party dominant system, is next at 71 percent. These high levels of trust have translated into high voter turnout and solid political support for the ruling party. A government with such high levels of support and trust is a government in control. But unprecedented levels

of faith in state and government, again, cause us to wonder whether Tanzanians are uncritical in their citizenship.

## Perceptions of Corruption

Trust in public institutions is especially hard to understand in Tanzania given a context of widespread official corruption. Corruption breeds bad governance and undermines democracy as it eliminates accountability, transparency and equity in society. Corrupt officials tend to be arrogant and are prone to violate the rights of ordinary citizens.

Tanzania has scored near the bottom of Transparency International's country ratings.<sup>37</sup> Tanzanians are not blind to official corruption; on the contrary, they say they see it almost everywhere. Six in ten Tanzanians (62 percent) agree that "the best way to get ahead in this life is to have contacts with important people in high places." When read the statement that "bribery is not common among public officials in Tanzania," two-thirds (68 percent) *disagree*, indicating that they believe it is common. And when presented with the statement, "corruption was a worse problem under the old single-party government than these days," 62 percent *disagree*, indicating that they feel the problem is worse now.

While the question wordings varied, thus preventing direct comparison, perceptions of official corruption in Tanzania appear to be among the highest anywhere in Southern Africa. Only in Zimbabwe did a roughly similar number (65 percent) say that "most or all" civil servants were engaged in corruption. One-half of South Africans (50 percent) and Zambians (50 percent) and Malawians (46 percent) also said this. Figures were significantly lower, however, in Botswana (32 percent), Lesotho (30 percent) and Namibia (24 percent).

When asked whether they have ever "been required to give a bribe, a gift, a favor or anything else in return for getting something you were entitled to," four in ten Tanzanians (41 percent) say they have. In Zimbabwe, just 10 to 15 percent respond positively, although the questions were worded somewhat differently, asked about specific services, and limited the time period to the past year. Less than one percent of Botswana reported having to pay money or give a gift to receive services (in response to the same questions as those asked in Zimbabwe), the lowest level in the region.

At the same time, there does seem to be some confidence that corruption is being combated at the highest levels of government. Seven in ten respondents (73 percent) agree that "rather than protecting his friends, President Mkapa will fight corruption wherever he finds it."

But which government institutions specifically do Tanzanians think are corrupt? The highest levels of perceived corruption were registered with regard to the police (81 percent say it is "fairly common" or "very common"), which appears to offer popular verification of the conclusions of the Warioba Report, which stated that "there is no doubting about the spread of corruption at all levels of the Police Force. This situation has seriously undermined the integrity and efficiency of the Force and turned the Force into an instrument of injustice and private gain instead of being an instrument of national security and justice."<sup>38</sup> The next highest levels of

perceived corruption can be found with respect to civil servants (62 percent), customs agents (52 percent), elected officials (46 percent) and judges (44 percent).

But the public sector is not alone in suffering from this poor reputation. One-half (48 percent) also say that corruption is common among Tanzanian businessmen, who are judged even more harshly than foreign businessmen (40 percent). Just under one-fifth think corruption is common among teachers (18 percent), while just 7 percent say there is corruption amongst women's organizations, and only 2 percent think it is common in the country's churches.

**Table 32: Perceptions of Corruption In Public Institutions**

	Very Common	Fairly Common	Fairly Rare	Very Rare	Don't Know
<b>State</b>					
Elected leaders	19	27	24	25	5
Civil servants	28	34	20	14	4
Police	54	27	10	7	3
Customs agents	28	24	15	13	20
Judges	23	21	20	16	20
<b>Non-State</b>					
Tanzanian businessmen	21	27	21	17	14
Foreign businessmen	19	21	18	19	24
Teachers	6	11	20	58	6
Women's organizations	3	4	14	52	27
Churches	1	1	8	78	12

*Please tell me how common or rare you think corruption is within each of the following groups or organizations?*

### Accessibility of the State

Good governance also has to do with the ability of citizens to gain access to efficient and effective government services. To gauge citizen access, we asked respondents how easy or difficult it is to obtain a range of public services.

Just one in twenty say it is difficult to obtain a voter registration card (4 percent), but the figures begin to rise quickly thereafter. Nearly one in five say it is difficult to get a place in primary school for a child (17 percent), and one-third claim it is difficult to obtain a birth certificate (34 percent). Three-quarters complain that getting a telephone service, including cell phones, is difficult (74 percent). And eight in ten say it is difficult to get an electricity connection for their homes (79 percent).

Why do people feel this way? Are they simply referring to the cost of the service, which puts them off from even trying to get it, or are they talking about the hassles of dealing with the bureaucracy? We put this question to those people who said it was difficult to get the service. In general, it seems that they see costs as the main issue. With regard to electricity and telephones, the services listed as the most difficult to get, just over one-quarter said the main problem was

cost (26 percent for electricity and 28 percent for phones). Relatively few people cited the time it required as the real problem (4 and 5 percent respectively). Around four in ten said it was both time and cost (46 percent and 40 percent, respectively). The reality is that electricity and telephones are not widely available for a majority of the people in rural areas since the infrastructure for such facilities simply does not exist. Moreover these utilities have been dominated for many years by state monopolies, which are generally inept, inefficient and poor in customer relations.

When it comes to children's access to primary school, however, the pattern shifts. Overall, 12 percent cite time delays as the main problem, while only 3 percent cite costs and 2 percent say both. Thirteen percent say the problem in getting birth certificates is the time factor, while 7 percent attribute the problems to cost.

Bureaucratic delays create a fertile ground for corrupt or illegal practices. We asked people "What should a person do who is waiting for a government permit if a government official says 'just be patient'?" One-half suggest that it is best to follow normal procedures, though it appears that Tanzanians are growing impatient with bureaucratic inertia. One-quarter are willing to wait, believing the permit will come eventually. Another quarter feel it would be more effective to write a letter to a higher official (25 percent). However, 26 percent think the best strategy would be to bribe the official (in the form of a tip or gift), and 10 percent suggest that it would be best to use one's connections with whomever could influence things. Six percent feel there is nothing that can be done, and another 4 percent feel you should just do what you want and ignore the permit.

### **Satisfaction with Leadership**

In order to assess Tanzanians' evaluation of their political leaders, we asked respondents, how satisfied they have been with the performance of a range of elected representatives and government officials since the last elections. Astonishingly high levels of satisfaction were registered for President Mkapa (90 percent, with 61 percent "very satisfied"). The President attains far higher positive ratings than any other political leader, possibly due to his efforts to fight official corruption and graft. Three-quarters are satisfied with the performance of their regional commissioner (75 percent) and two-thirds with their local mayor or council chairman (67 percent). Six in ten are satisfied with the work of their member of parliament (58 percent) and with political parties generally (52 percent). Eight in ten (81 percent) are unable to give an opinion about the performance of judges or lawyers.

Zanzibar respondents exhibit far lower levels of satisfaction with the President (54 percent), their MPs (39 percent), their regional commissioner (45 percent), and their mayor or council chairman (37 percent), but they are more satisfied with the performance of political parties (70 percent).

**Table 33: Satisfaction with Leaders**

	<b>Very satisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat satisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat unsatisfied</b>	<b>Very unsatisfied</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
The President of the Republic	60	28	6	5	1
Your Member of Parliament	23	35	21	16	5
Your Regional Commissioner	31	44	13	8	4
Your Mayor/ Council Chairman	25	42	16	9	9
Political parties	14	46	26	12	2
Judges or lawyers you have met	4	8	3	5	81

*Since the last election, how satisfied have you been with the performance of \_\_\_\_\_?*

### **Public Policy Performance**

Finally, good governance involves the ability of the government to respond to citizen demands across a range of policy areas. To gauge the quality of governance, we asked respondents “how well would you say the current government is handling the following problems?”

While people have very high levels of overall satisfaction with the performance of the President and the legislature, it does not mean that they are equally satisfied with all aspects of the government’s work. In fact, Tanzanians offer relatively negative evaluations of the administration’s macroeconomic management. They are most positive about the delivery of social services.

Just one-quarter feel the government is doing a good job reducing the gap between rich and poor (24 percent), a gap that has been growing since the inception of market reforms in the mid 1980s. Slightly higher levels say the government has been effective in creating jobs (27 percent) and reducing poverty (31 percent). Around four in ten feel the government is doing a good job ensuring food security (39 percent). Opinion is more evenly divided on the issue of controlling inflation; 48 percent say the government has done a good job controlling prices.

Fifty percent give the government positive marks in the area of improving health services. As noted earlier with regard to public belief in President Mkapa’s commitment to fighting corruption, 55 percent approve of the government’s efforts to address this problem. Six in ten are happy with government efforts to address educational needs (59 percent), and the government also gets strong marks in fighting crime (59 percent). Almost three-quarters approve of government efforts to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS (72 percent).

**Table 34: Public Policy Performance**

	<b>Very badly</b>	<b>Fairly badly</b>	<b>Fairly well</b>	<b>Very well</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
<b><i>Macro-Economic Management</i></b>					
Ensuring food security	30	29	33	6	2
Creating (employment) jobs	38	28	26	3	6
Reducing poverty	30	37	28	3	2
Reducing the rich-poor gap	37	33	22	2	5
Controlling inflation	20	30	40	8	2
<b><i>Social Service Delivery</i></b>					
Addressing educational needs	14	27	49	10	1
Improving health services	21	28	42	8	1
Preventing the spread of AIDS	11	15	44	28	2
Reducing crime	18	18	45	18	1
Fighting corruption in government	25	17	38	17	3

## **CONCLUSION**

This report has detailed an overall pattern of public opinion in Tanzania that differs in important ways from that found by Afrobarometer surveys in 11 other African countries, presenting analysts with a series of apparent paradoxes. Three stand out in particular.

The first paradox is that Tanzanians are very dissatisfied with the state of their national economy; in relative terms they are some of the most dissatisfied citizens in Africa. At the same time, they display the highest overall levels of support for economic reform. While we have seen this elsewhere, the difference between support for reform and satisfaction in Tanzania is (along with Zimbabwe) the largest we have measured.

Second, compared to other Africans, Tanzanians exhibit some of the highest levels of interest in politics and involvement in mobilized forms of political participation such as rallies, campaigns and community meetings. At the same time, they have quite low levels of participation in more individual, unprompted forms of participation such as contacting their political leaders or joining community organizations.

Third, public perceptions of official corruption normally reduce trust in public institutions. But Tanzania is the only country where we have seen widespread perceptions of corruption co-exist with high levels of trust.

How can such divergent opinions be reconciled? One interpretation is that Tanzanians are “uncritical citizens.” Michael Novak has argued that new regimes are created and consolidated in three phases. At first, people who are emerging from authoritarian rule have a single-minded focus on liberty. Soon they discover, however, that merely electing their representatives does

not bring about economic betterment and they turn their attention from politics to economics. Finally, they learn that:

It is not even enough to install the institutions of capitalism. People must begin to *change the way they live*; they must change their outlooks and their habits. . . . to think for themselves, to look around to see what needed to be done, and to start doing it at their own initiative and at their own risk. . . . It is a society of three freedoms: political liberty, economic liberty, and the moral and cultural liberty that dwells in the habits of self-command that make men and women free.<sup>39</sup>

In general, we find little evidence of the “habits of self-command” in the Afrobarometer survey of Tanzania. We find instead a tendency among Tanzanians to accept whatever their leaders give them. These habits of accommodation are partly a product of the socialist ideology and one-party structures inherited from the old regime. But they also derive from the mode of political and economic change which, in Tanzania, has always originated from above. Because ordinary people have never been in the lead in making demands for change, the population at large has not yet developed the healthy skepticism about authority, the independence of preferences, and the courage to take action that are the life blood of functioning democratic and market systems.

The same data may also lead to an alternative interpretation. This interpretation points out that Tanzania’s legacy was one of a relatively benign form of top-down rule, not the massive misrule and bad governance of a predatory state. In this view, the apparent paradoxes outlined above might be evidence of citizens drawing sophisticated distinctions between disappointing performance and well-meaning institutions, in which they still place a great deal of trust. If true, it may be more accurate to say that Tanzanians have developed a form of what David Easton once called “diffuse support” for their political system, a form of support that abides through short term economic downturns.<sup>40</sup> Such support creates a wide berth for leaders and policy-makers to take initiatives and experiment with the pace and nature of reform.

It is for all concerned Tanzanians to make up their own minds about what these findings mean for the future of political and economic reforms in their country.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Michael Novak, "Rediscovering Culture," *Journal of Democracy* 12, no. 2 (2001): 168-169.
- <sup>2</sup> David Easton, *A Systems Analysis of Political Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965).
- <sup>3</sup> By 1988, Tanzania had 413 public enterprises, far higher than any other country in the region except Mozambique. Andrew Temu and Jean M. Due, "The Business Environment In Tanzania After Socialism: Challenges of Reforming Banks, Parastatals, Taxation and the Civil Service," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 39, no. 4 (2000): 693.
- <sup>4</sup> Temu and Due, "Business Environment In Tanzania," 683.
- <sup>5</sup> United Republic of Tanzania (URT), "Speech by the Minister for Finance, Hon. Basil P. Mramba (MP) Introducing to the National Assembly the Estimates of Government Revenue and Expenditure for the Financial Year 2001/2002 on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2001," Government Printer, Dar es Salaam, 2001, 3.
- <sup>6</sup> Joel Barkan, "Increasing Public Sector Accountability and Transparency in Tanzania: An Assessment of the Political Context of Economic Reform," unpublished country assessment delivered to the World Bank, 27 April, 2000, 1.
- <sup>7</sup> Temu and Due, "The Business Environment in Tanzania," 683, 694 and 704.
- <sup>8</sup> Barkan, *Increasing Public Sector Accountability*, 21-23.
- <sup>9</sup> Comparable figures are Zambia (1996) 40 percent, South Africa (1994) 38 percent, Lesotho (1999) 38 percent, Botswana (1994) 27 percent, Namibia (1994) 27 percent and Zimbabwe (1990) 20 percent. Samuel Mushi and Mukandela Rwekaza, eds., *Multiparty Democracy In Transition: Tanzania's 1995 General Elections* (Dar es Salaam: Department of Political Science and Public Administration, University of Dar Es Salaam, 1997). In Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), *SADC Regional Human Development Report 1998: Governance and Human Development In Southern Africa* (Harare: Southern African Regional Institute for Policy Studies of the Southern African Political Economy Series Trust, 1998), 90.
- <sup>10</sup> SADC, *SADC Regional Human Development Report 1998*, 90.
- <sup>11</sup> Barkan, *Increasing Public Sector Accountability*, 23.
- <sup>12</sup> Pippa Norris, ed., *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999).
- <sup>13</sup> But probability theory reminds us that one out of every 20 survey results could differ from the population parameter by more than 2.5 percentage points. Moreover, readers should be aware of possible response error. Public opinion surveys in Africa are particularly sensitive to the likelihood that some respondents will provide socially or politically "correct" answers, especially when they are unsure of the identity of the interviewer. Other kinds of response error can arise in the processes of translating questions and recording data. Thus, when interpreting results, we remind readers that these could contain both sampling and response errors.
- <sup>14</sup> World Bank, *African Development Indicators, 2001* (Washington D.C., World Bank, 2001), 6. The population figure is an official projection for 1999.
- <sup>15</sup> Barkan, *Increasing Public Sector Accountability*, 1.
- <sup>16</sup> URT, "Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)," Government Printer, Dar es Salaam, 2000, 5-6.



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<sup>17</sup> The Pearson's  $r$  correlation for income and going without food was -0.21, water -0.09, medical treatment -0.17, electricity -0.15, and schooling -0.12. All correlations were statistically significant at the 0.001 level of probability. Money income also correlated modestly with a self-perceived measure of poverty that asked people to place themselves on a scale of 1 to 10, where 0 was "poor" and 10 was "not poor" (Pearson's  $r$  = -0.21). In turn, this self-perceived rating correlated weakly with measures of going without food (-0.14), and electricity (-0.08) (both significant at the 0.001 level of probability), and medical treatment (-0.06) (significant at the 0.01 level of probability). And there is no statistically significant relationship between the self-described ranking and going without water or going without schooling for children.

<sup>18</sup> In contrast, we also included a standard question widely used in international research to measure interpersonal trust. It asks "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you must be very careful in dealing with people." Nine out of ten Tanzanians (89 percent) say you must be very careful, and only 10 percent say most people can be trusted. Furthermore, this item is weakly related to questions measuring trust in relatives (Pearson's  $r$  = 0.15), neighbors (0.17), and members of one's own tribe (0.17). More importantly, this item is most weakly related to the question measuring trust in Tanzanians from other tribes (0.10), the item that could most plausibly be seen to measure a generalized form of interpersonal trust beyond one's immediate geographic or familial context. All correlations were significant at the 0.001 probability level.

<sup>19</sup> Michael Bratton, Gina Lambright and Robert Sentamu, "Democracy and Economy in Uganda: A Public Opinion Perspective," Michigan State University, Afrobarometer Working Paper No. 4, 2000.

<sup>20</sup> Felician Tungaraza, "Social Networks and Social Care in Tanzania," *Social Policy and Administration* 27, no. 2 (1993): 144-145.

<sup>21</sup> For an excellent discussion of this issue see Aili Mari Tripp, *Changing the Rules: The Politics of Liberalization and the Urban Informal Economy in Tanzania* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1997).

<sup>22</sup> World Bank, "Adjustment Lending in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Update," Washington D.C., World Bank Operations Evaluation Department Report No. 16594, 1997.

<sup>23</sup> Temu and Due, "The Business Environment In Tanzania," 684 and 696.

<sup>24</sup> See [www.freedomhouse.org/research/freeworld/2001/](http://www.freedomhouse.org/research/freeworld/2001/).

<sup>25</sup> Larry Diamond, "Introduction," in *Democratization In Africa*, eds. Larry Diamond and Mark Plattner (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).

<sup>26</sup> Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, "Towards Consolidated Democracies," *Journal of Democracy* 7, no. 2 (1996).

<sup>27</sup> We are grateful to Professor Jorgen Elklit for providing us with the voting age population estimates. See also URT, "The Report of the National Electoral Commission on the 2000 Presidential, Parliamentary and Council Elections." National Electoral Commission, 2001, 40-41.

<sup>28</sup> Barkan, *Increasing Public Sector Accountability*, 19.

<sup>29</sup> See Gasper Munishi, "Changing Values of Tanzanians Following the Liberalizing Policies: Preliminary Comments," paper presented to the World Values Survey Conference, University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch, South Africa, 17-20 November 2001, 7.

<sup>30</sup> Munishi, "Changing Values of Tanzanians," 8.

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<sup>31</sup> IFES was unable to confirm the honesty of the 2000 election in Zanzibar because the actions of the Zanzibar Electoral Commission compromised ballot security, calling the validity of the entire process into question. Thomas Beyer and Laurie Cooper, *IFES International Observer Report: The October 29, 2000 Elections In Zanzibar* (IFES: Washington, D.C., 16 January 2001).

<sup>32</sup> Issa G. Shivji, "Problems of Constitution-Making as Consensus-Building: The Tanzanian Experience," in *The State and Constitutionalism in Southern Africa*, ed. Owen Sichone (Harare: SAPES Trust, 1998), 41; and Robert V. Makaramba, *A New Constitutional Order for Tanzania? Why and How* (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and Tanganyika Law Society, 1997), 10.

<sup>33</sup> Tanzania Election Monitoring Committee, "The 1995 General Elections in Tanzania: Report of the Tanzania Election Monitoring Committee," Dar es Salaam, 1997; "NCCR-Mageuzi 2000 Election Manifesto," 8; "CHADEMA 2000 Election Manifesto," 5; "TLP 2000 Election Manifesto," 10; "CUF 2000 Party Manifesto," 5; Tanzania Election Monitoring Committee, "The 2000 General Elections in Tanzania: Report of the Tanzania Election Monitoring Committee," Dar Es Salaam, 2001, 193.

<sup>34</sup> Popular opinion appears to be corroborated by election monitor reports on the mainland that concluded "NEC personnel complied with the election rules in most of the constituencies monitored by TEMCO and generally, the parties, their candidates and the electorate did so as well." Tanzania Election Monitoring Committee, "The 2000 General Elections," 193. In contrast, TEMCO called the Zanzibar balloting "a sad story of aborted elections." (*Ibid.*, 199).

<sup>35</sup> Michael Bratton, Massa Coulibaly and Fabiana Machado, "Popular Perceptions of Good Governance in Mali," Michigan State University, Afrobarometer Working Paper No. 9, 2000, 26.

<sup>36</sup> Bratton, Coulibaly and Machado, "Popular Perceptions of Good Governance," 27.

<sup>37</sup> Temu and Due, "The Business Environment in Tanzania," 704.

<sup>38</sup> URT, *Presidential Commission of Inquiry Against Corruption: Report on the Commission on Corruption*, 1/1: (1996), 23.

<sup>39</sup> Novak, "Rediscovering Culture," 168-169.

<sup>40</sup> Easton, *A Systems Analysis of Political Life*.