



Press Release
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**Almost one year into the fifth phase government: citizens approve of the removal of ghost workers, free primary education and the dismissal of public servants
But they disapprove of the sugar import ban and price directive**

15 September 2016, Dar es Salaam: When citizens were asked to name actions by President Magufuli's that they approve of, more than six out of ten mentioned the removal of ghost workers (69%), free education (67%) and the dismissal of public servants (61%). When asked to name actions that they disapprove of, three out of ten (32%) mentioned the sugar import ban and price directive. However six out of ten citizens (58%) say that they do not disapprove of any of his actions. Overall approval ratings for President Magufuli are at 96%. This is comparable to approval ratings for previous Tanzanian presidents. Other government leaders also have high levels of approval although none as high as the President. Citizens report that they approve or strongly approve of their village / street chairperson (78%), their local councilor (74%) and their MP (68%)

These findings were released by Twaweza in a research brief titled *The People's President? Citizens' assessment and expectations of the fifth phase government*. The brief is based on data from *Sauti za Wananchi*, Africa's first nationally representative high-frequency mobile phone survey. The findings are based on data collected from 1,813 respondents across Mainland Tanzania (Zanzibar is not covered in these results) between 4 and 20 June 2016.

In addition to strong approval ratings, nine out of ten citizens (88%) are confident that President Magufuli can maintain his current momentum until the end of his term.

The majority of citizens also report that they think there have been improvements in almost all public services under the fifth phase government. The Tanzania Revenue Authority leads as 85% of citizens say services there are improved under the new government. Citizens also think services are better in schools (75%), police stations (74%), courts (73%), health facilities (72%) and water service providers (67%). It is important to note that these data show citizens' perceptions of services and do not necessarily represent any hard improvements. Similarly, almost all citizens (95%) say that civil servants in service delivery, like doctors and teachers, as well as administrative civil servants have become more accountable and efficient.

However citizens themselves admit that they are not very informed about major national issues. Only 4% of citizens feel well informed about national politics and only 9% feel informed about health and education. This indicates that reported improvements in services are based on personal experiences or very localized information. However citizens remain hungry for more information on the sectors that impact their lives. When asked what topic they would like to ask their village chair, councilor or MP about, health, education, water and roads consistently emerged as critical issues. When it comes to President Magufuli, two out of ten citizens (18%) would like to ask him about prices and inflation.

A similar pattern emerges when citizens are asked whether they know and have engaged with local, district or national leadership. Almost all citizens (96%) know their village executive officer and almost half of them (47%) have interacted with him or her. However only 2 out of 10 citizens (21%) know their district executive director and only 4% have interacted with him or her.

Despite this strong approval for the work of the fifth phase government and President John Pombe Magufuli personally, citizens are keen for the principles of democracy and justice to be followed. Eight out of ten citizens think that public officials should only be dismissed when proof of wrongdoing has been established. A similar proportion of citizens (75%) think that officials should be dismissed for failing to perform their duties rather than for disobeying the President's orders. And despite their enthusiasm for the dismissals of public servants, citizens hold mixed views on the impact of the public dismissals. Although nine out of ten (90%) say these dismissals deter other public servants from wrongdoing, four out of ten (37%) also think that it demoralizes other government officials. And half of citizens (48%) think that the dismissals will only cause public servants to find new ways to hide their wrongdoing.

"Citizens are very positive about the performance of the fifth phase government and President Magufuli in particular. They report that public servants across the board are more accountable and that they have noticed improvements in public services. However citizens are also concerned about due process. For example, they want proof of wrongdoing to be established before officials are named, blamed and shamed. They are also worried about decisions that affect their pockets, like the sugar ban. This shows that they will not just blindly approve of all of the actions of a popular president. They continue to value the fundamental principles of good governance," said Aidan Eyakuze, Executive Director of Twaweza.

"The most exciting thing about these results" he continued "is the suggestion that citizens' expectations have shifted. Previously there was a sense of a vicious circle of apathy in which experience of poor performance lowered expectations, which in turn allowed poor performance to continue unchallenged. But recent developments, have shown that public sector performance can improve. Citizens could well come to expect higher standards as a permanent and pleasant new norm."

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For more information:

Risha Chande, Senior Communications Advisor, Twaweza
e: rchande@twaweza.org | t: (+255) (0) 656 657 559

Notes to Editors

- This brief and the data contained can be accessed at www.twaweza.org, or www.twaweza.org/sauti
- Twaweza works on enabling children to learn, citizens to exercise agency and governments to be more open and responsive in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. We have programs, staff and offices across all three countries, and a globally respected practice of learning, monitoring and evaluation. Our flagship programs include *Uwezo*, Africa's largest annual citizen assessment to assess children's learning levels across hundreds of thousands of households, and *Sauti za Wananchi*, Africa's first nationally representative mobile phone survey. We undertake effective public and policy engagement, through powerful media partnerships and global leadership of initiatives such as the Open Government Partnership
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