



Press Release

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## **One year before elections, there is no leading contender for President Many Tanzanians are unhappy with performance of MPs and will not re-elect them**

**12 November 2014, Dar es Salaam:** One out of three citizens (33%) on Tanzania Mainland does not know who they will vote for in the upcoming presidential election. No single potential candidate is preferred by more than 15% of the voters. According to poll data collected by Twaweza in September 2014, the front-runners are Edward Lowassa (13%) and Mizengo Pinda (12%) of CCM and Wilbrod Slaa of Chadema (11%). Among CCM supporters, one quarter (24%) say that they will vote for whomever the party chooses.

Comparing parties, half of citizens (51%) report that they will vote for CCM in the presidential election compared to one quarter (23%) preferring Chadema. When asked what they would do if the opposition fields only one candidate, as the coalition UKAWA has promised to do, CCM still leads but its overall support drops to just under half (47%) of all citizens, while almost three out of ten (28%) report that they would vote for the opposition candidate. Significantly, one out of five (19%) say that they will not vote for the party but rather the individual; should most of this group opt to vote for an opposition candidate the contest could become very tight in 2015.

These findings were released by Twaweza in a research brief titled *Tanzania towards 2015: citizen preferences and views on political leadership*. The brief is based on data from *Sauti za Wananchi*, Africa's first nationally representative high-frequency mobile phone survey that interviews households across Tanzania Mainland (Zanzibar is not covered in these results). The main findings are based on data collected from 1,445 respondents in September 2014.

When it comes to party preferences the story is clearer; CCM continues to dominate. When respondents were asked which party's candidates they would vote for – whether for President, MP or Councillor – CCM is by far the most popular. Twice as many respondents say they will vote for CCM candidates for these positions compared to close rival, Chadema. Similarly 54% of the *Sauti za Wananchi* respondents say they are affiliated with CCM as a party, as compared to 27% for Chadema.

Party	Councillor	MP	President	Party Affiliation
CCM	47%	46%	54%	54%
Chadema	23%	24%	23%	27%
CUF	4%	4%	4%	4%

However, this trend may not continue; CCM has been losing vote share since 2005, falling from 80% (2005) to 61% (2010) and to 54% (2014 – Twaweza data). In addition when party preferences are broken down by age there is a clear bias towards Chadema among young voters. Among citizens who are under 35, 44% claim CCM affiliation while 34% support Chadema. This can be contrasted with party affiliations among 35 – 50 year olds, of whom 60% support CCM and 24% support Chadema. If this remains constant, Chadema may increase its vote share in the future.

Citizens are also generally disillusioned with the political space and their elected representatives. When asked if they were planning to vote back their local MPs, almost half of citizens (47%) report

that they will not. This could in part be because citizens do not think that MPs are keeping their promises. Eight out of ten (79%) report that they remember the promises made by MPs during the last campaign and three out of ten (32%) report that MPs did not deliver any of these promises. A further 16% report that their MP delivered on a few of the promises. However, citizens are more active; four out of ten (38%) report following up with the relevant MP on these promises. In general it is the citizens who say that their MPs kept few or none of the promises made that report that they will not vote for that MP again.

The decline in trust and engagement with the political sphere emerges consistently through the *Sauti za Wananchi* poll data. In 2012, no citizens reported that they vote for candidates not parties. Whereas in 2014, an average of 17% of respondents will choose candidates not parties in regards to councillor, MP and even the presidential elections. But the strongest sign of discontent emerges from reported levels of trust in a particular office. Across the board, from President to MP to street / village chairman, citizens have much less trust in these office holders today than two years ago. The biggest decline in trust is in village / street chairmen and councillors whose approval levels dropped by 25% (village / street chairman) and 23% (councillors). Trust in the President has also declined, dropping from 45% in 2012 to 31% in 2014.

Rakesh Rajani, Head of Twaweza, noted: *“Elections are about citizens getting their voices heard by choosing their leaders. The data show that overall people are concerned about implementation of policies, and key issues such as poverty, education and health. Many are unhappy with the performance of their MPs and will not re-elect them. And among potential presidential aspirants, there is no leading candidate, and the field is wide open. Among political parties CCM enjoys a clear lead, but its share of the vote is declining, and could be threatened if the undecided vote goes to a united opposition.”*

*“In short”, added Rajani “it seems that many citizens want to see delivery and leadership. Political aspirants would do well to listen to the people and address citizen priorities in specific and achievable ways.”*

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**For more information:**

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**Notes to Editors**

- This brief and the data contained can be accessed at [www.twaweza.org](http://www.twaweza.org), or [www.twaweza.org/sauti](http://www.twaweza.org/sauti)
- Twaweza is a ten year citizen-centered initiative, focusing on large-scale change in East Africa. Twaweza believes that lasting change requires bottom-up action, and seeks to foster conditions and expand opportunities through which millions of people can get information and make change happen in their own communities directly and by holding government to account.
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