



Press Release
20 May 2019

9 out of 10 Kenyans are dissatisfied with the country's economic management And 8 out of 10 say corruption might hinder success of the government's Big Four Agenda

20 May 2019, Nairobi: Nine out of ten (87%) are dissatisfied with the country's direction on economic management. The proportion of citizens who express dissatisfaction has been increasing since 2016 when five out of ten citizens (53%) were unhappy. Citizens are equally dissatisfied with the country's direction on job creation (82%); again these numbers have grown since 2016 when half of citizens (51%) were unhappy with this area. While the share of Kenyans who are satisfied with the country's direction on corruption has increased from 23% in 2017 to 25% in 2018, more than half of citizens (54%) are still unhappy with management of corruption. More positively, a majority of Kenyans (62%) are satisfied with the country's progress in security matters.

These findings were released by Twaweza in a research brief titled *The Big Four Agenda: Kenyans' views on current public policy issues*. 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 1,637 respondents across Kenya between 21 November and 17 December, 2018.

Despite some positive indications in citizens' views about corruption management, 8 out of 10 Kenyans (77%) cite corruption as the main reason why the government's agenda may not succeed. Other factors are named by far fewer people (politics – 13%, bureaucracy – 5%). Nonetheless, 14% of Kenyans say that nothing will derail the agenda.

Citizens have other important views for the government to take into account as it is implementing this agenda. On the social and affordable housing initiative, Kenyans largely believe that it should benefit all Kenyans (48%) or more specifically the poor (28%). A sizeable proportion also think that the initiative should benefit the urban poor (20%). However, when asked who they think will actually benefit, views are varied: 2 out of 10 (18%) think all Kenyans will benefit and 4 out of 10 (38%) think the urban poor will benefit most. This view may reflect the fact that housing shortages and challenges are generally more acute in urban areas. However 2 out of 10 citizens (19%) say that politicians, civil servants and the rich will benefit, which is again in some ways linked to perceptions about corruption.

In terms of food security, citizens are keen for the government to reduce the cost of food (40%) or to lower the cost of farm inputs and use local fertilisers (40%). The share of people who provide more specific suggestions around farming is similar to that of those who make their primary living from crop farming (33%). Citizens also have other interesting ideas to consider: enhancing large scale production, and using idle arable land (23%); incentivising the use of technology to reduce post-harvest losses (19%); and forming a working group to coordinate irrigation (18%).

Citizens also see agriculture as the main opportunity for enhancing manufacturing in their area: six out of ten citizens (63%) see this as the sector for developing and enhancing manufacturing. Other

opportunities are also mentioned by less than one out of ten people including construction/materials (7%), textiles (6%), and extractive industries (5%).

And on the final agenda item of affordable health care for all, more than half of citizens (58%) are strongly in support of increasing productivity and reducing costs in the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) in order for it to reach more people and function better. Other ideas include increasing the number of agents (31%), increasing the number of household volunteers who recruit people (20%), and increased funding to the ministry or NHIF (12%).

Victor Rateng of *Sauti za Wananchi* at Twaweza, said: *“The central message of these findings is that citizens have the information, ideas and experience to contribute usefully to critical current policy debates. Government should listen to these ideas for a number of reasons: citizens will feel as if they have been listened to; they have experience on the front lines of many of the big four issues; and because the agenda will be more likely to succeed with citizen participation. Using these insights and initiating a broad program of citizen consultations will surely enhance the plans for and implementation of the Big Four Agenda.”*

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Notes to Editors

- This brief and the data contained can be accessed at www.twaweza.org, or www.twaweza.org/sauti
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