



# A window on policy priorities

## Evidence from the citizens of 34 African countries

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## Introduction

The post-2015 sustainable development discourse has emphasized the need for a more inclusive and participatory policy framework projecting the voices of the people in policy-making and implementation processes. Some commentators have argued that while the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have achieved some poverty reduction, the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) should be better designed to enhance the living standards of the people. Yet not much has been done to create the necessary space for citizens' voices to be heard.

This paper argues for a more rigorous insistence on listening to citizens' voices as part of the development policy process. It begins this listening through an analysis of the most urgent policy priorities of Africans, as expressed in Afrobarometer survey data from 34 African countries. Analyses of differences by region, income level, and human development level provide useful insights for the development discourse going forward.

## Africa's development progress


The United Nations Millennium Declaration, adopted by 189 countries in 2000, provided a roadmap for improving the well-being of the world's poorest people through the achievement of eight measurable goals by 2015. Reports from the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the African Development Bank Group (ADBG) indicate tremendous progress— as well as remaining hurdles – on the road toward these goals in Africa, with reductions in poverty rates, growth in gross national income (GNI), and improvements on human development indicators. The same reports show that 42% of Africa's population still live below the poverty line as of 2013, along with a rise in inequality and in unemployment rates (11.3%) (ADBG, 2014).

Africa's economic growth rate rose slowly prior to 2000, reached 5% per year between 2000 and 2012, and was predicted to be above 5.5% in the coming years for low-income countries. This rapid growth has pushed more countries toward middle-income status, raising the number of middle-income countries from 10 in 2000 to 21 in 2013 (UNDP, 2014). Collectively, Africa's GNI per capita has reached \$953, and the share of the population living on less than \$1.25 a day has fallen from 51% in 2005 (ADBG, 2013).

Countries made good progress in transportation. Ethiopia, for instance, reduced the average distance to an all-weather road from 21 km in 1997 to 12.4km in 2012; this led to a 6.9% decrease in poverty and a nearly 17% increase in food consumption (ADBG, 2013).

On the other hand, access to an improved water source has increased only slightly, from 64% of the population in 2005 to 66% in 2012 (ADBG, 2013). Access to improved sanitation facilities lags behind; for instance, between 2010 and 2013, the percentage of the population with access to improved sanitation did not increase (40%). Almost 645 million people in Africa still lack electricity connections; only 43% of households are connected (ADBG, 2014). About 85% of the rural population continues to burn biomass for fuel, which is damaging to health (ADBG, 2013).

With regard to human development, the reports indicate that Africa has made tremendous progress, especially toward the goal of universal primary education. Enrolment in education at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels has risen from 37% in 2000 to 46% in 2012, with a completion rate of 70%, compared to 53% in 2000 (ADBG, 2014). Similarly, under-5 mortality rates have declined from 177 deaths per 1,000 in 1990 to 98 deaths per 1,000 in 2012, while maternal mortality rates have declined by 47% over the period. However, Africa remains the continent with the highest burden in terms of child and maternal mortality (UNDP, 2014).



As encouraging as some of these numbers are, progress is slower in Africa than in other developing regions of the world, and among other pressing issues, the ADBD report notes that food production needs to improve further to reduce Africa's risk of food insecurity.

As we approach the 2015 crossroads of MDGs and SDGs, it may be worth reflecting on how average citizens experience the impact of the progress made in their countries and what they consider the most urgent and important issues still to be addressed.

### Afrobarometer surveys

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

This paper uses Afrobarometer Round 5 data collected in 34 African countries<sup>1</sup> between 2011 and 2013.

### Methodology

This paper assesses popular views of priority problems in 34 African countries, expressed in response to the question, *In your opinion, what are the most important problems facing this country that government should address?* This standard question was used to develop variables for policy issues that citizens are most concerned about.

A multiple-response set was used to develop aggregated and average percentage responses for each problem mentioned among three responses per respondent across the 34 countries. Problems were ranked within each country using a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the most frequently cited problem and 10 the least frequently cited problem in that country.

For comparison, the problems were classified into five sectors: economic issues, public-services issues, social-services issues, governance issues, and food and agriculture issues.

To test for an association between a country's level of development and its citizens' development priorities, data on countries' GNI and Human Development Index (HDI) for 2012 was accessed from World Bank data and UNDP reports, respectively. The analysis was then done based on region, GNI per capita, and HDI score.

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<sup>1</sup> Surveyed countries, grouped by income category:

**Low-income economies:** Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, and Zimbabwe

**Lower-middle-income economies:** Cameroon, Cape Verde, Egypt, Ghana, Lesotho, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, and Zambia

**Upper-middle-income economies:** Algeria, Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, and Tunisia

## Most important problems

Despite reported progress on poverty reduction and maternal and child health in Africa, the highest priorities that citizens across the 34 surveyed countries want their governments to address are unemployment (mentioned among their three responses by 38% of respondents), health (23%), and poverty (23%) (Table 1). These are followed by water supply (22%), infrastructure/roads (19%), and education (19%). Unemployment ranked as the top priority for citizens in 17 countries – half of the 34 surveyed countries.

**Table 1: Top priorities that citizens want their governments to address**  
| 34 countries | 2011/2013

Most important problem	% of respondents citing problem as one of 3 priorities (average aggregated percentage for 34 countries)*
Unemployment	38
Health	23
Poverty	23
Water supply	22
Infrastructure/roads	19
Education	19
Food shortage	18
Crime/security	15
Management of the economy	13
Electricity	13
Corruption	13
Farming/agriculture	10
Wages/salaries	10
Housing	8

\*Average aggregated percentage = total % of respondents who identified each issue as one of the three most important problems across the 34 countries divided by the number of countries

These problems are generally among citizens' top priorities in each of the 34 countries. For instance, poverty ranks as the No. 1 priority in Burundi and the No. 2 priority in 12 countries (Botswana, Egypt, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan, Swaziland, and Uganda). Poverty is not listed as a priority in Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Liberia.

Health ranges between the first and fourth-most-prioritized problem that respondents want their government to address. It is ranked as the top problem in Burkina Faso (54% of respondents), Tanzania (45%), Zambia (42%), and Uganda (29%), while it is the second-most-important problem for citizens of Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Togó, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Senegal, Niger, Morocco, and Sudan.

When problems are categorized by sector (Table 2), it is obvious that economic issues are the most prioritized concerns, with a total of averaged percentages of 84% (unemployment (38%) + poverty (23%) + management of the economy (13%) + wages/salaries (10%)). Next is the category of public-services issues (53%), followed by social-services issues (50%). Food/agriculture is the least highly prioritized category, a surprise given that Africa imports large amounts of food.

**Table 2: Most important problems | by sector | 34 countries | 2011/2013**

Category	Most important problems	Total of averaged % per category
Economic	Unemployment (38%)	84%
	Poverty (23%)	
	Management of economy (13%)	
	Wages/salary (10%)	
Public service/infrastructure	Water supply (22%)	53%
	Infrastructure/roads (19%)	
	Electricity (13%)	
Social service	Health (23%)	50%
	Education (19%)	
	Housing (8%)	
Governance	Crime/security (15%)	28%
	Corruption (13%)	
Food and agriculture	Food shortage (18%)	28%
	Farming/agriculture (10%)	

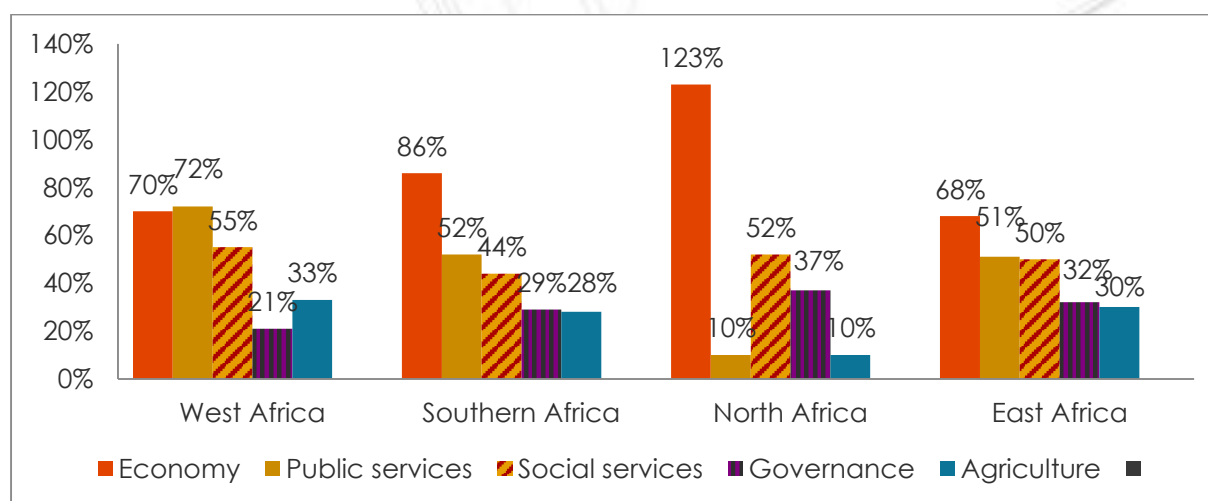
Note: Due to rounding, the sum of category percentages may differ by 1 percentage point from the total.

### Prioritization of sectors by region

Looking at the priorities by region (northern, southern, eastern, and western Africa), economic issues are the top concern in all regions except West Africa, where they rank just behind public services such as water supply, electricity, and roads (Figure 1).

Responses from eastern and southern Africa show similar patterns, with the top concern being economic issues, followed by public services, social services, agriculture, and governance. Madagascar and Mauritius stand out among southern African countries by ranking crime/security as the top problem.

**Figure 1: Priority sectors | by region | 34 countries | 2011/2013**



Note: Graph shows aggregate % of responses for each category by region. Percentage of responses for each sector can total more than 100% because each respondent can give up to three responses.



Governance issues such as crime/security and corruption rank lowest in all regions except North Africa, where high income levels (except in Sudan) and instability might be explanatory factors to consider. Crime/security was mentioned as a prioritized concern by 32% of respondents in Egypt and 41% in Tunisia, where it was the second-most-important problem.

North Africa also stands out with regard to its emphasis on economic issues vis-à-vis public services and social services. The summed percentages show a difference of more than 70 points between economic issues (123%) and the next-highest sector (social services, 52%) (Figure 1). This clearly shows the priority placed on economic problems in the North Africa region.

An ANOVA means test for variations in respondents' prioritization of economic issues across the four regions shows significant differences between North Africa and the other regions (Table 3). Percentage differences between West Africa, southern Africa, and East Africa do not show any statistical significance. Respondents' prioritization of concerns about public services shows the same pattern of difference between North Africa and the other three regions but does not show significant differences among the other regions (western, eastern, and southern Africa).

Respondents' prioritization of concerns about social services, governance, and food/agriculture are not statistically significantly different across the four regions.

**Table 3: Comparison of respondents' prioritization of economic issues | by region**

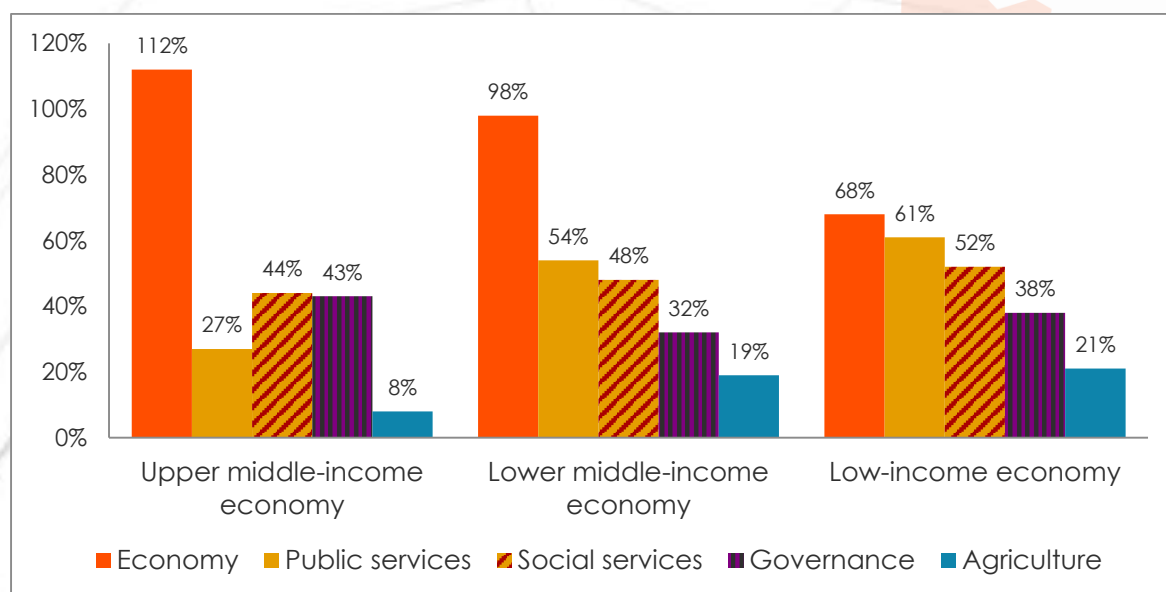
Dependent variable: Economic issues						
(I) Region	(J) Region in comparison	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. error	Sig. values	95% confidence interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
West Africa	East Africa	2.462	11.628	1.000	-30.38	35.31
Southern Africa	West Africa	15.788	8.141	.371	-7.21	38.78
	East Africa	18.250	11.741	.783	-14.91	51.41
North Africa	West Africa	52.938**	10.702	.000	22.71	83.17
	East Africa	55.400**	13.642	.002	16.87	93.93
	Southern Africa	37.150*	10.825	.011	6.57	67.73

\* Significant at the 0.05 level; \*\* significant at the 0.01 level

### Priority sectors by country per capita income level

According to the World Bank and ADBG reports, GNI growth rates in Africa are high. Nonetheless, responses in the Afrobarometer survey suggest that economic issues are a top-priority concern for respondents across all country per capita income levels (Figure 2). (For a breakdown of countries by upper-middle, lower-middle, and lower-income categories, see Footnote 1 above). Except for Mauritius, Zambia, and Algeria, unemployment is the top priority for citizens in countries in upper-middle and lower-middle-income economies. Poverty ranks as the second-most-important issue that governments should address in 13 of the 30 upper-middle and lower-middle-income economies. Among the low-income economies, citizens in five countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Togo, and Mozambique) prioritize unemployment as their most urgent issue.

**Figure 2: Prioritization of sectors | by country per capita income level**



Note: Graph represents aggregate % for each problem category within each income class. Percentages total more than 100% because each respondent can give up to three responses.

Social-service issues are the second priority for countries in the upper-middle-income category, while those in the lower-middle and low-income categories are more concerned about public services (roads, water supply, and electricity) than social services. Agriculture is of least concern to upper-middle and lower-middle-income countries, while governance is the lowest priority of respondents from low-income economy countries.

Across the different income classes, economic issues rate higher in upper-middle-income economies than in lower-middle-income and low-income economies. A means test for variation in respondents' prioritization of economic issues across per capita income levels shows a statistically significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) between low-income economies, on the one hand, and upper-middle and lower-middle-income economies on the other (Table 4), with low-income economies least likely to prioritize economic issues over other concerns. Differences in respondents' concerns about public services, social services, governance, and food/agriculture across the different per capita income levels are statistically significant only between upper-middle-income economies and low-income economies.

**Table 4: Comparison of respondents' prioritization of economic issues**  
| by country's income class

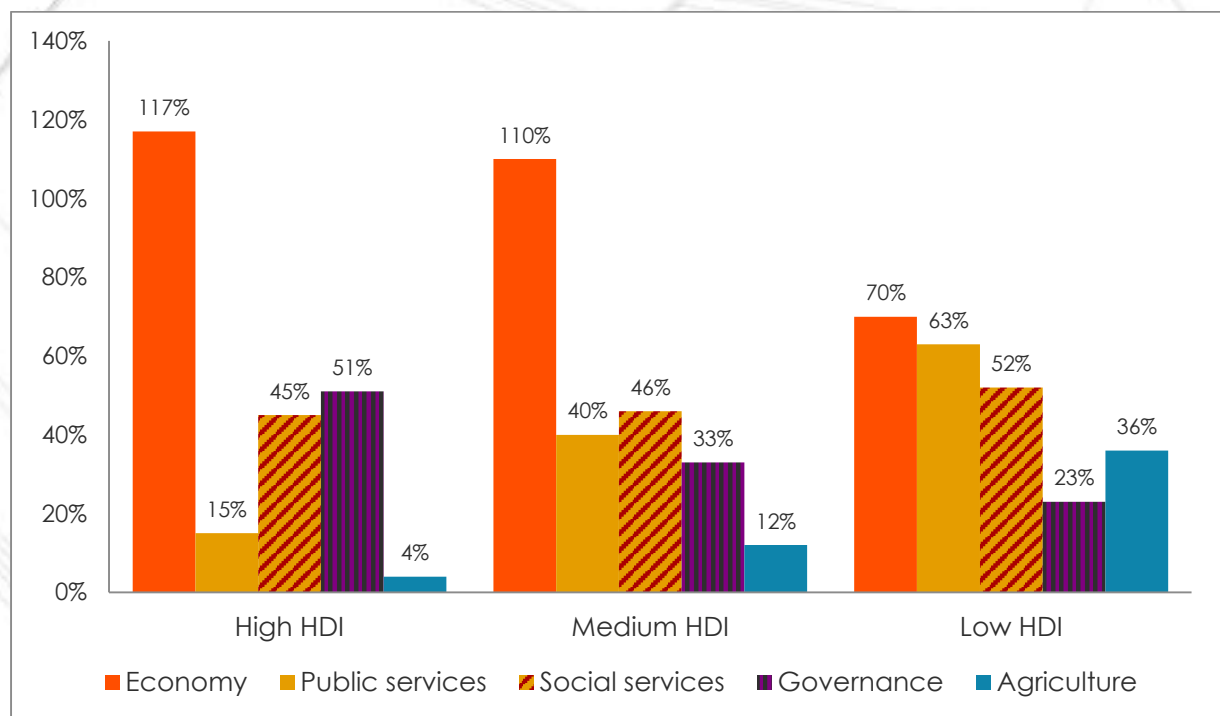
Dependent variable: Economic issues						
(I) Income class	(J) Income class in comparison	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. error	Sig. values	95% confidence interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Low-income economy	Upper-middle-income economy	-44.158**	9.324	.000	-67.76	-20.56
	Lower-middle-income economy	-29.825**	8.057	.002	-50.22	-9.43
Lower-middle-income economy	Upper-middle-income economy	-14.333	10.494	.545	-40.89	12.23

\*\* Significant at the 0.01 level

## Priority sectors by country's Human Development Index score

Analyzing respondents' prioritization of problems across their countries' human development levels, as scored by the UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI),<sup>2</sup> economic issues remain at the top of the priority list across all development levels (Figure 3). However, the second-most-prioritized problem by sector varies with the HDI level. Among high-HDI countries, governance is the second-most-prioritized concern, while the second-most-prioritized concern for respondents' in low-HDI countries is public services, with governance in fifth place. Among respondents from medium-HDI countries, No. 2 is social services, followed by public services, with governance in fourth place. Food/agriculture remains at or near the bottom of the list in all groups.

**Figure 3: Prioritization of sectors** | by country's human development level



Note: Graph represents aggregate % for each problem category within each HDI category. Percentages total more than 100% because each respondent can give up to three responses.

A means test of variation in respondents' prioritization of economic issues across development levels indicates a statistically significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) between low-HDI countries, on the one hand, and medium- and high-HDI countries on the other (Table 5), with low-HDI countries least likely to prioritize economic issues over other concerns.

<sup>2</sup> Countries by Human Development Index scores:

**Low HDI:** Kenya, Cameroon, Madagascar, Tanzania, Nigeria, Senegal, Lesotho, Niger, Benin, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Côte d'Ivoire, Malawi, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Burundi, Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Mozambique

**Medium HDI:** Egypt, Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, Morocco, Cape Verde, Ghana, and Swaziland

**High HDI:** Mauritius, Algeria, and Tunisia



**Table 5: Comparison of respondents' prioritization of economic issues**  
| by country's human development level

Dependent variable: Economic issues						
(I) Development level	(J) Development level	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. error	Sig. values	95% confidence interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Low human development	High human development	-47.464**	11.162	.001	-75.71	-19.21
	Medium human development	-40.255**	7.464	.000	-59.15	-21.37
Medium human development	High human development	-7.208	12.310	1.000	-38.37	23.95

**\*\* Significant at the 0.01 level**

Similarly, respondents' prioritization of public services and governance problems shows statistically significant differences between low-HDI countries and high-HDI countries, with low-HDI countries less likely to prioritize governance and more likely to prioritize public services. Respondents from low-HDI countries are also more likely than those from medium- and high-HDI countries to prioritize food/agriculture problems. Respondents' prioritization of social services does not show any significant difference across the different HDI levels.

### Prioritization of economic issues

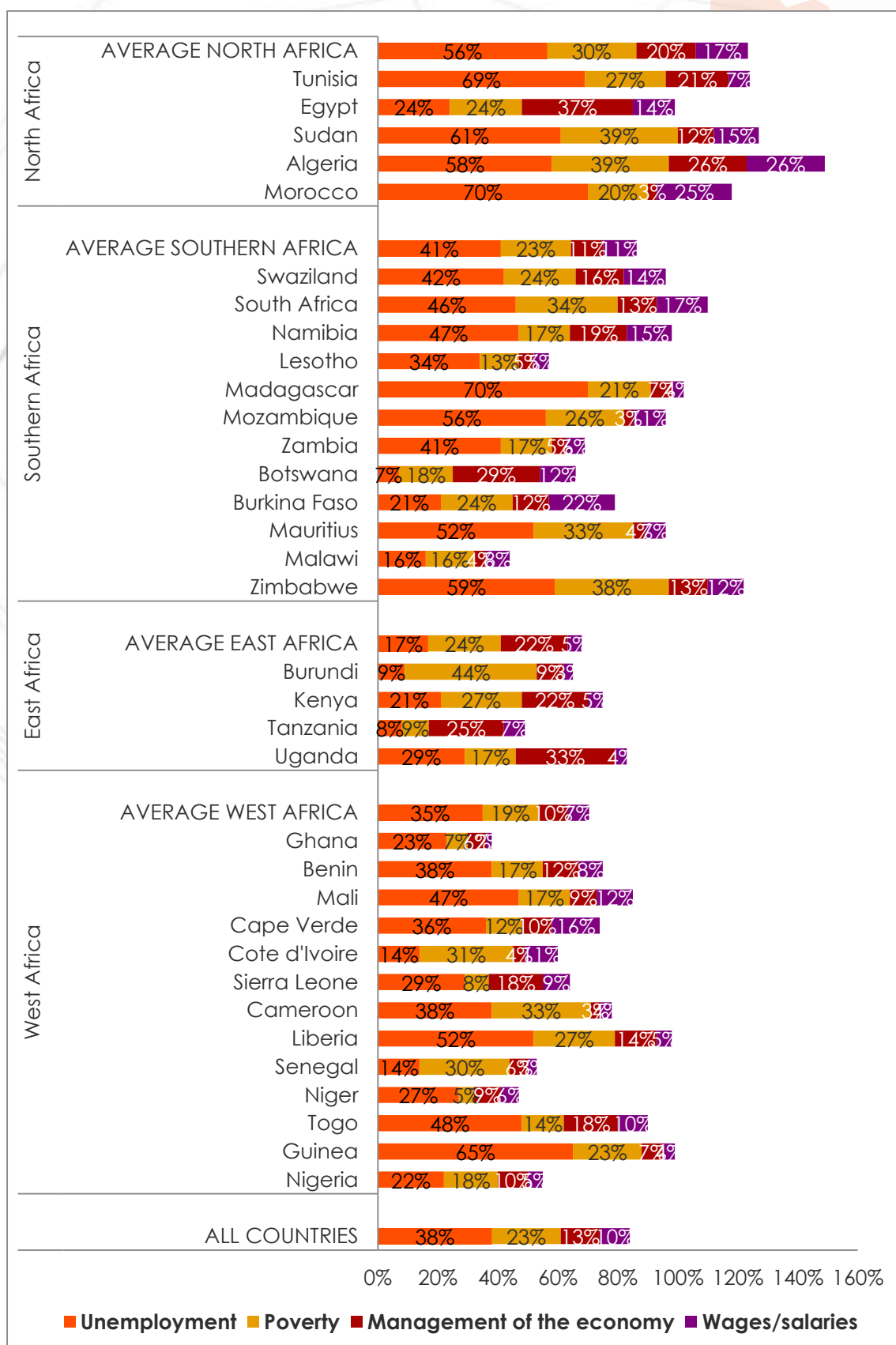
Within the category of economic issues, which problems are people most concerned about? Do the top priorities vary across countries and regions in Africa? Afrobarometer data from the 34 surveyed countries shows that citizens are most concerned about unemployment and poverty.

Looking at regions, unemployment stands out as the No. 1 priority among respondents in most countries of West, North, and southern Africa (Figure 4). Majorities in South Africa (70%), Tunisia (69%), Cape Verde (65%), Morocco (61%), Botswana (59%), and Egypt (58%) mentioned unemployment as a problem that requires immediate government attention.

However, respondents in East Africa are more concerned about poverty and management of the economy than about unemployment and wages. Ranking priorities from all sectors in terms of importance on the scale of 1-10, unemployment is the least prioritized concern of respondents in Malawi and Tanzania. Malawians' top priorities are food shortages, management of the economy, and water supply, whilst Tanzanians' most highly prioritized concerns are health, water supply, and education.

Among North African countries, unemployment is the top priority except for Sudan, where respondents' top priority with regard to economic issues is management of the economy.

Figure 4: Prioritization of economic issues | by country and region



Note: Each category shows the % of respondents who cited the problem as a priority; "average" for each region represents the sum of country percentages divided by the number of countries.



## Prioritization of public services

While policy makers and international organizations applaud Africa's progress in improving the provision of public services, Afrobarometer data suggests that there is still great concern about the number of people lacking basic services. What are survey respondents most concerned about with regard to the delivery of public services? What do people want their governments to give priority to?

Based on the Afrobarometer data, concerns about the need for government prioritization of water provision and infrastructure/roads are prominent across all 34 surveyed countries (Figure 5). Infrastructure/roads and water supply vary between first and second in importance among public-services issues, depending on the country.

While the provision of electricity ranks third among public-services concerns in 71% of surveyed countries, it is the top public-services issue in Egypt, Namibia, Senegal, Nigeria, and Cape Verde.

Southern Africa places a higher priority on water supply than other regions. In six of 13 West African countries, citizens are more concerned about poor infrastructure than about water supply. In North Africa, respondents in Algeria are least concerned about water supply and electricity.

## Prioritization of social services

Given the important associations among education, health, and shelter, what are respondents most concerned about when it comes to their governments' delivery of social services?

Afrobarometer data shows that among concerns about social services, health is most highly prioritized by citizens in 21 of 34 countries (Figure 6). Housing is the top social-services concern for respondents in South Africa and Algeria, whilst education is prioritized as the most important social-services problem by respondents in Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone in West Africa; Kenya in East Africa; Lesotho, Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, and Swaziland in southern Africa; and Sudan in North Africa.

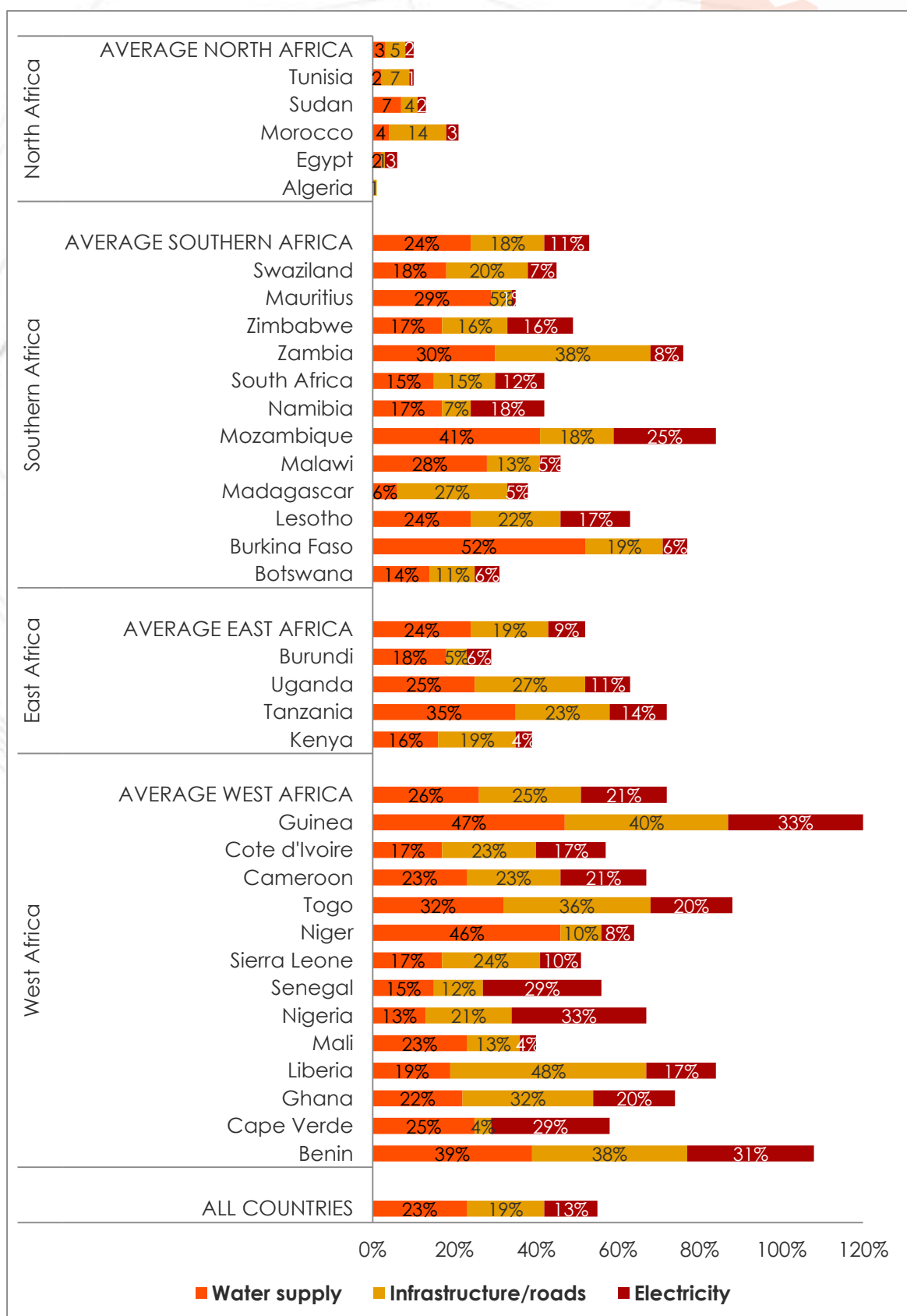
## Prioritization of governance concerns

Reports from the ADBG and the Mo Ibrahim Foundation suggest that progress has been made in the area of governance. Considering the importance of crime and corruption as threats to the development and security of countries, what are survey respondents' priorities with regard to these issues?

Overall, citizens are more concerned about crime and insecurity than about corruption (Figure 7). Among all problems, crime is the most frequently cited priority of Mauritians and the second-most-important concern of respondents in Cape Verde, Nigeria, Burundi, and Tunisia. Within the governance sector, crime is prioritized as the top problem needing government attention in 19 of the 34 countries. On the 10-point scale, it is not a top priority for citizens of Sierra Leone, Niger, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

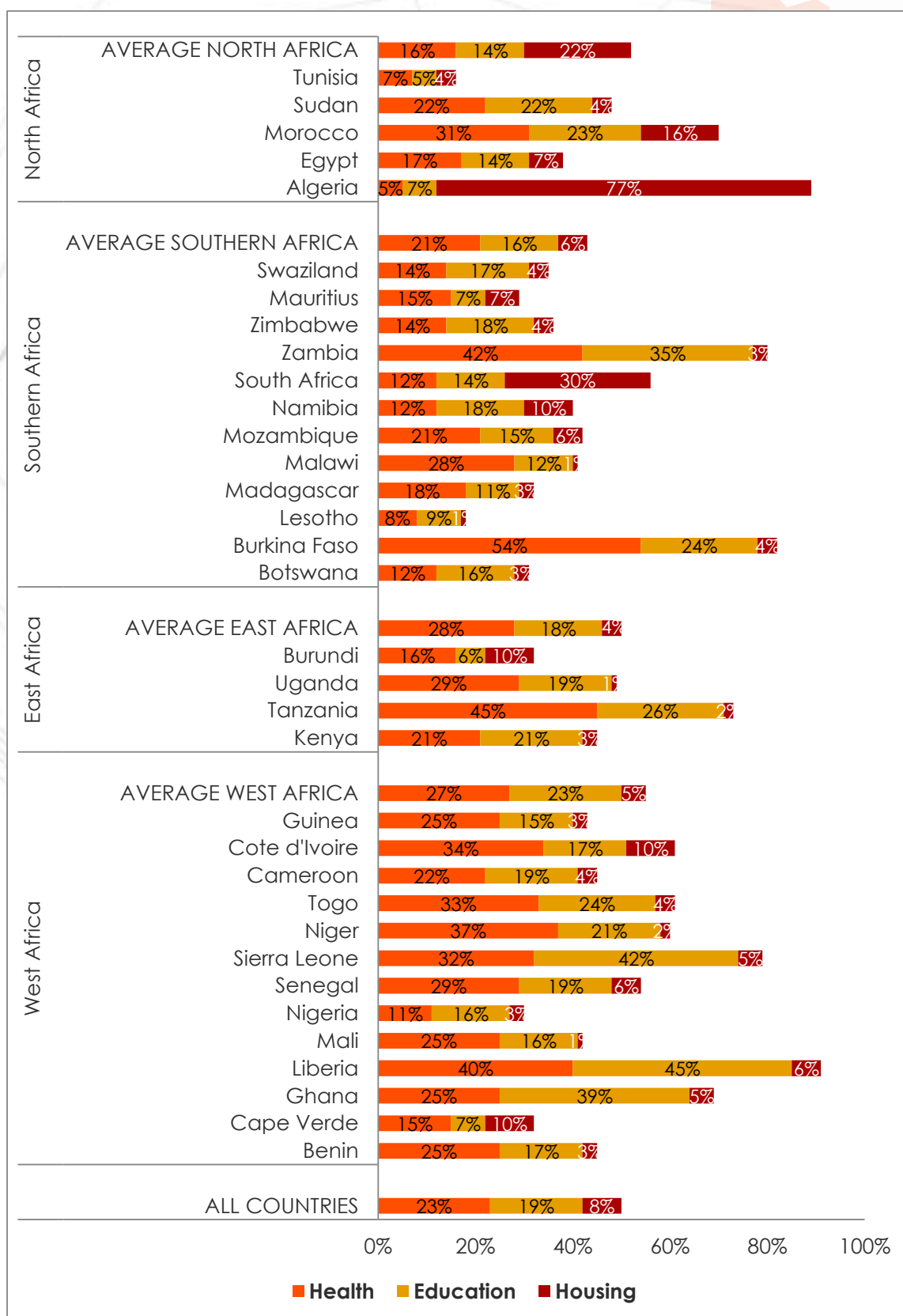
Corruption ranges between third and 10<sup>th</sup> place among problems that respondents in 24 countries want their government to address. It is ranked as the third priority in Nigeria (24% of respondents) and the fourth priority in Morocco (25%), Sudan (18%), and Zimbabwe (18%). On the 10-point scale, it is not a top priority for citizens of Senegal, Sierra Leone, Niger, Togo, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, and Malawi.

Figure 5: Prioritization of public services | by country and region



Note: Each category shows the % of respondents who cited the problem as a priority; "average" for each region represents the sum of country percentages divided by the number of countries.

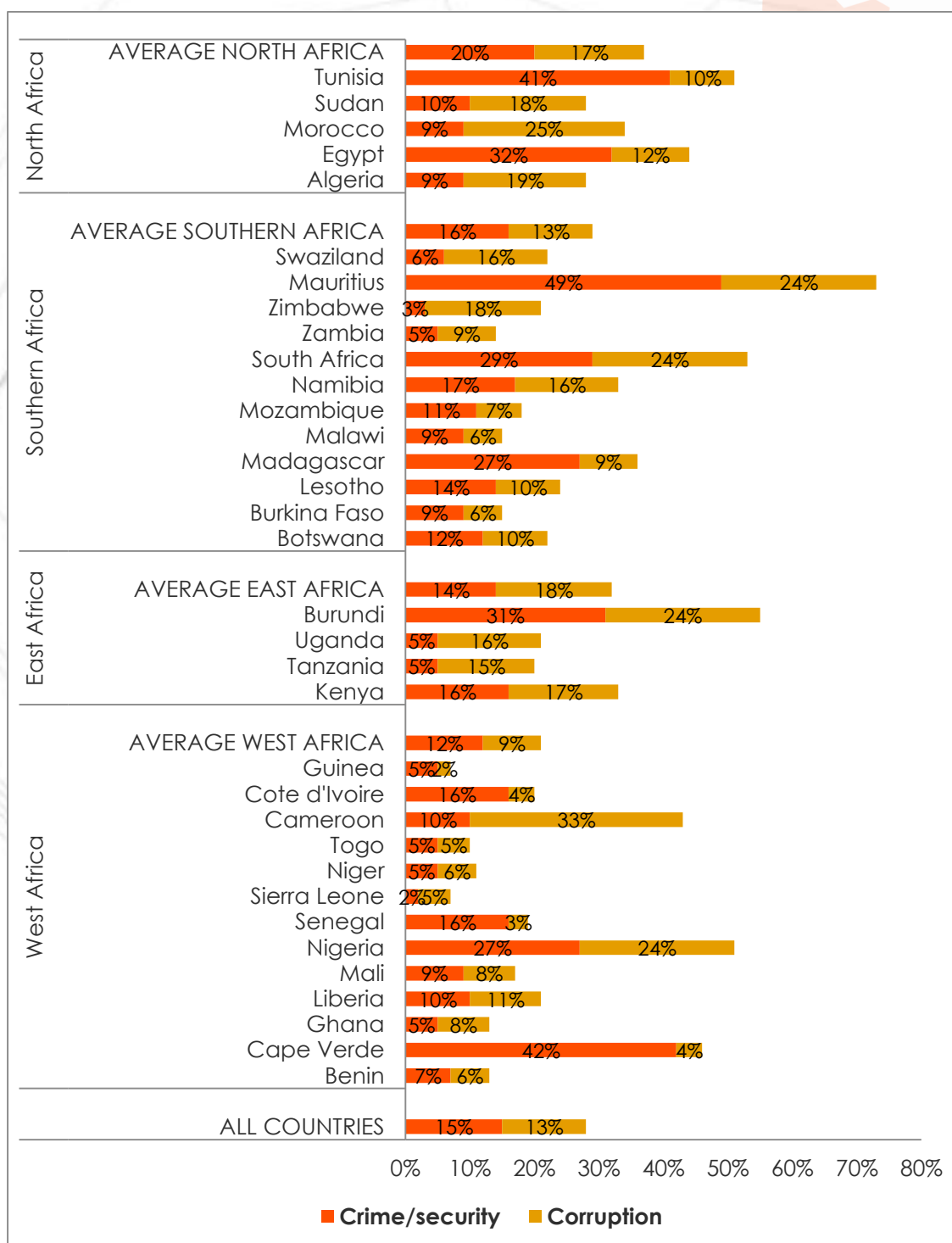
**Figure 6: Prioritization of social services | by country and region**



Note: Each category shows the % of respondents who cited the problem as a priority; "average" for each region represents the sum of country percentages divided by the number of countries.



**Figure 7: Prioritization of governance issues | by country and region**



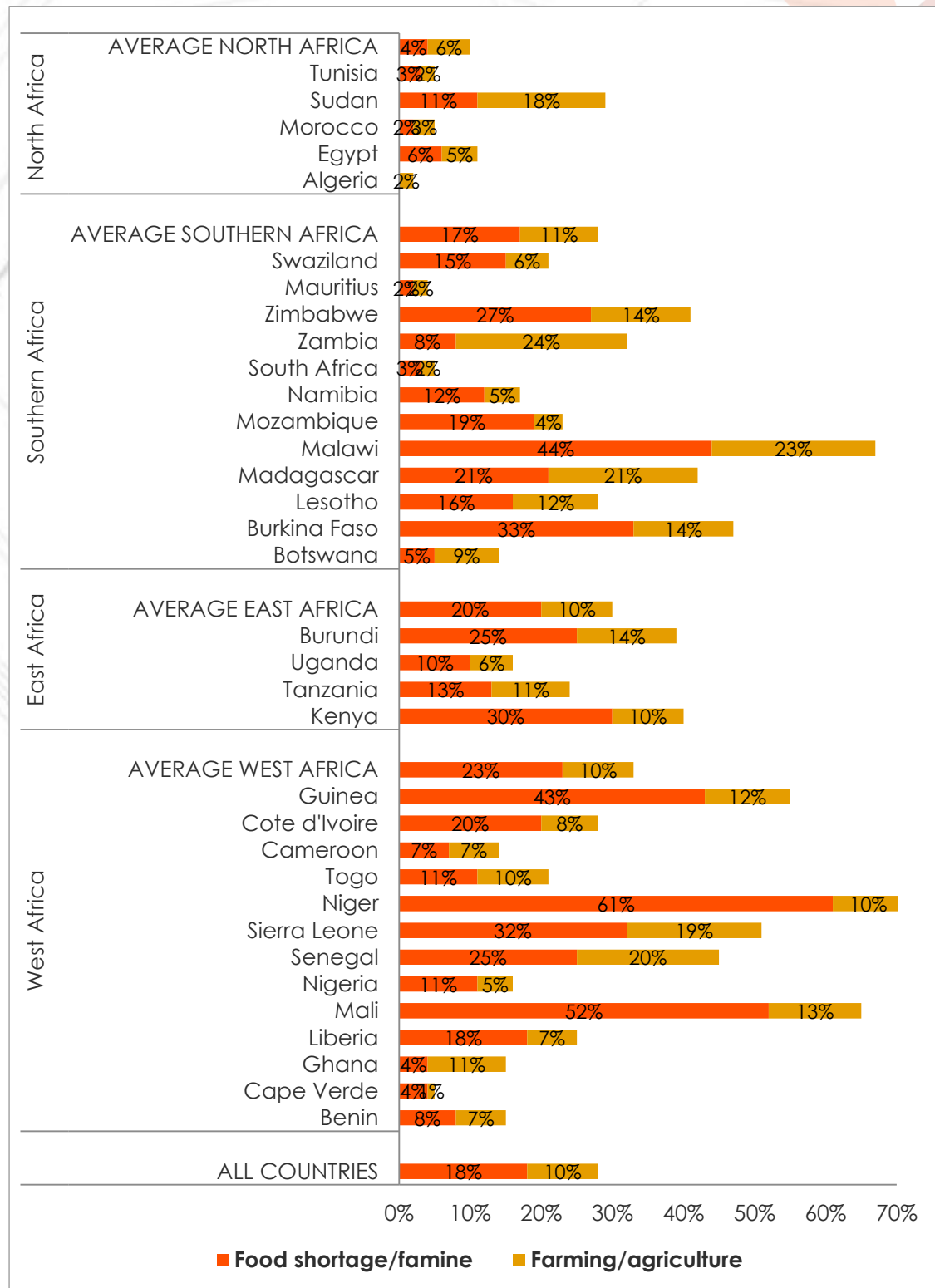
Note: Each category shows the % of respondents who cited the problem as a priority; "average" for each region represents the sum of country percentages divided by the number of countries.

### Prioritization of food/agriculture issues

Agriculture is considered the backbone of developing economies, but food/agriculture is the least prioritized concern of most respondents in this survey. In the category of food/agriculture, respondents in 82% of surveyed countries are more concerned about a shortage of food than about farming/agriculture. Most notable

are the large proportions of respondents in Niger (61%), Mali (52%), and Malawi (44%) who prioritize the problem of food shortage.

**Figure 8: Prioritization of food/agriculture issues | by country and region**



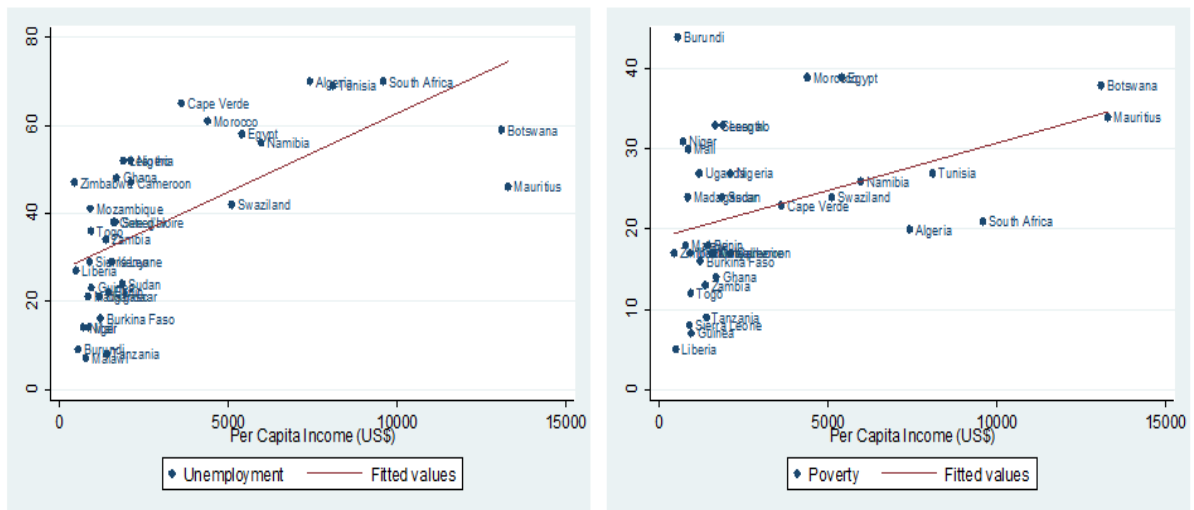
Note: Each category shows the % of respondents who cited the problem as a priority; "average" for each region represents the sum of country percentages divided by the number of countries.

## Comparison of differences in the prioritization of specific problems

As discussed above, citizens' prioritization of sectors differs by region, country income level, and country HDI score. Scatter plots can help us understand possible relationships between respondents' prioritizations of specific problems and their countries' income and HDI levels, and means tests can help show whether these differences in prioritization are statistically significant.

Examining respondents' prioritization of unemployment and poverty across their countries' income levels, the scatter plot regression lines suggest a positive correlation (Figure 9), i.e. the higher a country's income level, the more likely its citizens are to cite unemployment and poverty as priority problems that their governments should address (with Burundi as an outlier). This is surprising, given the association of employment with income and poverty, and may have to do with income inequality across the 34 countries, inadequate employment avenues for young graduates, and the fact that in most African countries the predominant means of employment is agriculture, usually on a small scale.

**Figure 9: Comparison of respondents' prioritization of unemployment and poverty**  
| by country per capita income



Pearson's  $r=0.6505$

Pearson's  $r=0.4144$

A means test for variance shows that there is a statistically significant difference ( $p<0.001$ ) in respondents' prioritization of unemployment across the different income and HDI levels, while differences in respondents' prioritizations of poverty and management of the economy are not statistically significant (Table 6).

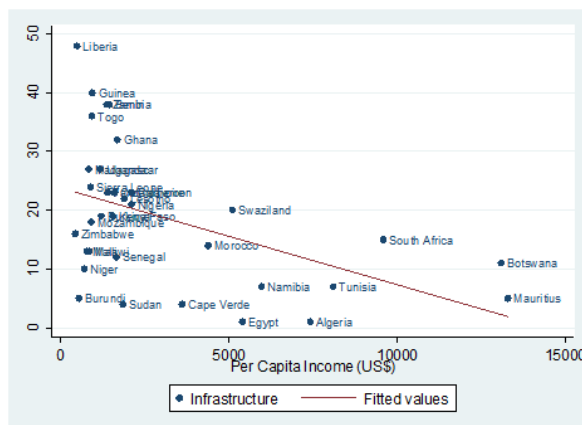
**Table 6: Comparison of differences in prioritization** | by country income and HDI levels

Problems	Income level	HDI level
<b>Economic</b>		
Unemployment	0.000**	0.000**
Poverty	0.07	0.114
Management of the economy	0.355	0.725
Wages/salaries	0.456	0.009**
<b>Public services</b>		
Water supply	0.0413*	0.035*
Infrastructure/roads	0.029*	0.011*
Electricity	0.079	0.119
<b>Social services</b>		
Health	0.003**	0.008**
Education	0.11	0.145
Housing	0.011*	0.000**
<b>Governance</b>		
Crime/security	0.011*	0.022*
Corruption	0.147	0.186
<b>Food/agriculture</b>		
Food shortage	0.000**	0.002**
Agriculture/farming	0.017*	0.001**

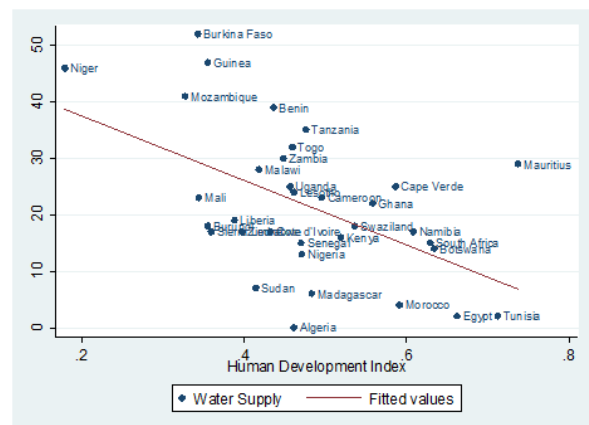
\* Significant at the 0.05 level; \*\* significant at the 0.01 level

The scatter plots of respondents' prioritization of infrastructure/roads and water supply indicate a negative correlation (Figure 10), suggesting that respondents from countries in the upper-middle-income and medium- and high-HDI categories are less concerned about poor infrastructure and water supply than those from low-income and low-HDI countries. A means test of variance shows that differences in respondents' prioritization of water supply and infrastructure/roads across country income and HDI levels are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) (Table 6).

**Figure 10: Relationships between prioritization of infrastructure/roads and country per capita income (left) and between prioritization of water supply and country HDI score (right)**



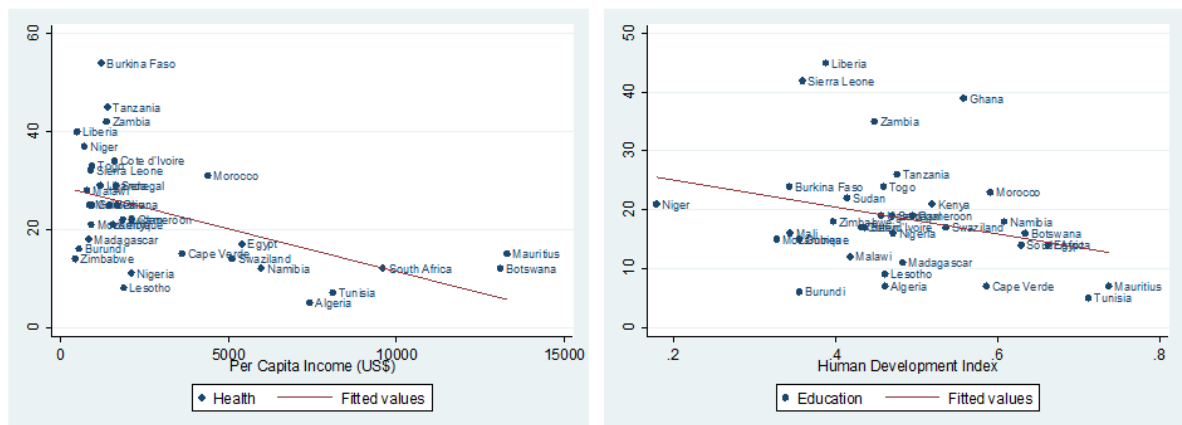
Pearson's  $r = -0.4770$



Pearson's  $r = -0.5226$

Regarding prioritization of education and health issues, the scatter plot suggests a reduction in priority as country per capita income and HDI levels increase (Figure 11). However, a means test of variance shows that while differences in respondents' prioritizations of health and of housing across income and HDI levels are statistically significant ( $p < 0.005$ ), those regarding prioritization of education are not (Table 6).

**Figure 11: Relationship between prioritization of health and country per capita income level (left) and between prioritization of education and country HDI score (right)**



Pearson's  $r = -0.5205$

Pearson's  $r = -0.2637$

Similarly, means tests of variance show statistically significant differences across country income and HDI levels in respondents' prioritizations of crime/security, food shortage, and agriculture/farming issues, but not of corruption (Table 6).

## Conclusion

The most important problems that Africans want their governments to address are unemployment, health, and poverty. These three problems are very much related, as each can cause or exacerbate the others.

While these are urgent concerns throughout the 34 surveyed countries, there are differences in respondents' prioritization of problems by region, country income level, and country HDI score. Residents of North Africa, for example, place by far the

highest priority on economic issues, while the West African region is more concerned about public services.

To further explore this data, please visit Afrobarometer's online data analysis facility at [www.afrobarometer-online-analysis.com](http://www.afrobarometer-online-analysis.com).

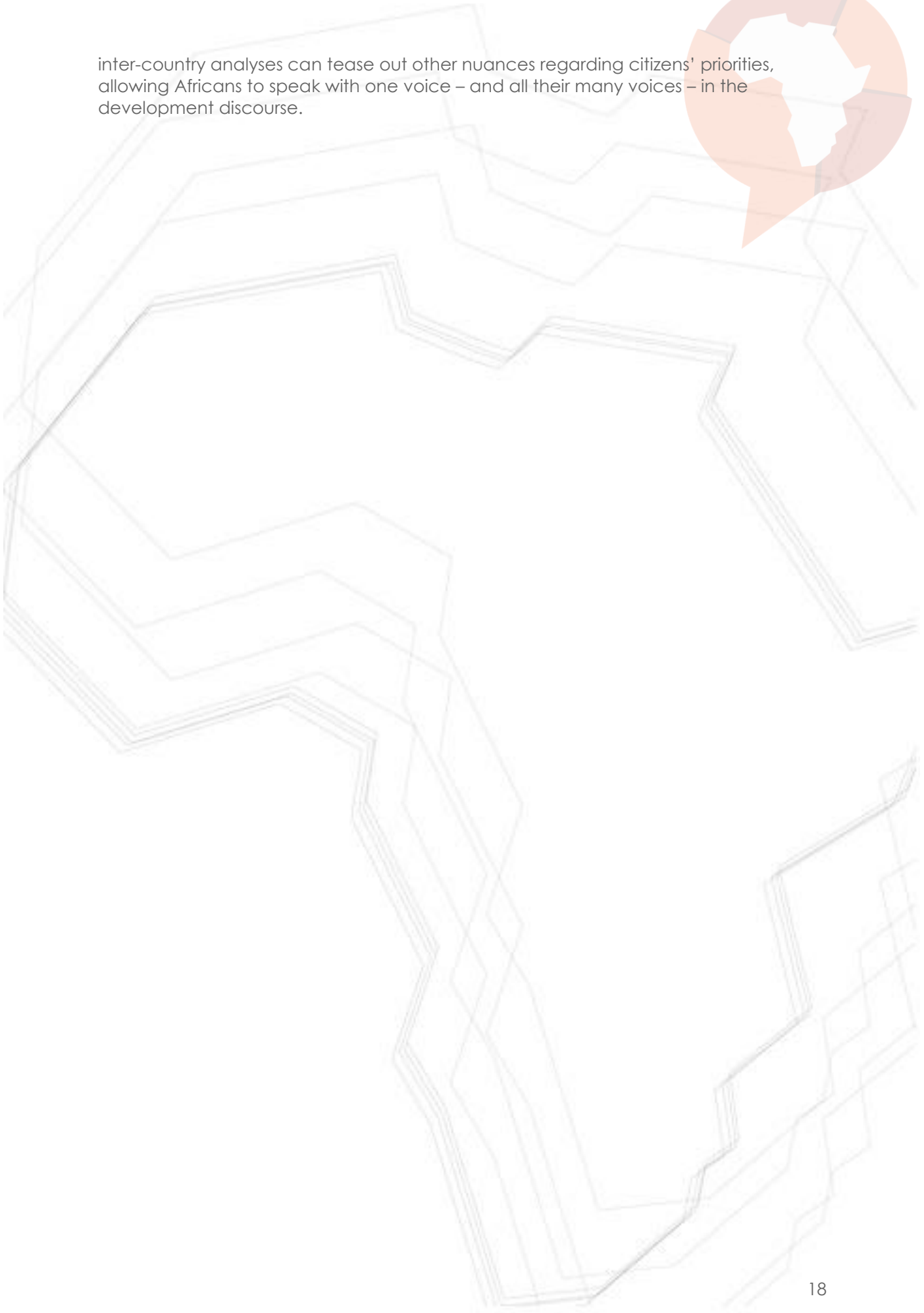
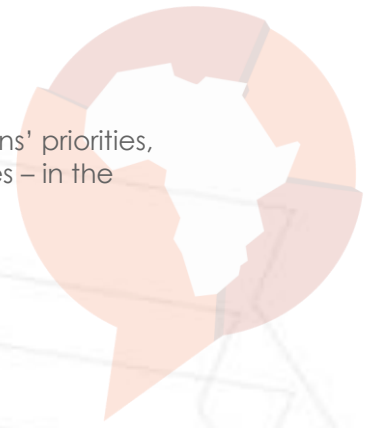
Across all country income and HDI levels, citizens are most concerned about economic issues. The No. 2 priority among citizens of lower-middle and low-income economies and low-

HDI countries is public services, while No. 2 for citizens of upper-middle-income and medium-HDI countries is social services. Governance issues (crime/security and corruption) ranks as second in priority among residents of high-HDI countries and third among residents of upper-middle-income economies.

Looking back, these prioritized concerns are not far from those that the MDGs sought to address. Reported progress may not be reflective of the situation on the ground – certainly not everywhere, as shown in the varying degrees of concern among different regions, income levels, and human development levels. More intra- and



inter-country analyses can tease out other nuances regarding citizens' priorities, allowing Africans to speak with one voice – and all their many voices – in the development discourse.



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# AFRO BAROMETER

LET THE PEOPLE HAVE A SAY

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