



The Big Four Agenda

Kenyans' views on current public policy issues

1. Introduction

Soon after the October 26, 2017 repeat general elections, President Uhuru Kenyatta announced a four-point agenda (The Big Four Agenda), comprising: food security, affordable housing, manufacturing and universal health coverage (affordable health for all). The President stated that this was in response to citizens' sentiments and expectations.

The ambitious plan includes raising the manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP from 8.5% to 15%, achieving a top-50 rank in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business global index, creating one million new jobs in the manufacturing sector and achieving a fivefold increase in foreign investment. On housing, the plan aims to deliver 500,000 homes across the 47 counties, reduce the cost of home ownership by 50% and construction by 30%, create 300,000 construction jobs and double the sector's contribution to GDP. In health, the plan entails a 100% cost subsidy for essential services, and a reduction in

citizens' out-of-pocket medical expenses by 54%. And on food security, the government aims to achieve a 34% increase in the average daily income of farmers, a 27% reduction in malnutrition among children under 5 years of age and a 50% reduction in the number of food-insecure citizens, the creation of 1,000 agro-processing small and medium enterprises and 600,000 new jobs, and a 48% increase in the agriculture sector's contribution to GDP.

This research brief presents data on citizens' views on these and related public policy issues in Kenya. What do citizens think of the country's direction on economic, security and other matters? What do they see as the main obstacles that could prevent the government from delivering on its priorities? And what suggestions do they have for improvements in the government's four priority areas?

Data for this brief comes from Twaweza's flagship *Sauti za Wananchi*, which is a

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Sauti za Wananchi



nationally-representative, high-frequency mobile phone panel survey. Information on the overall methodology is available at www.twaweza.org/sauti. For this brief, data were collected from 1,637 respondents from Kenya's *Sauti za Wananchi* panel in the twenty-fifth round of calls to the panel, conducted between 21 November and 17 December, 2018. The poll has +/-2.4% margin of error at 95% confidence level.

The key findings are:

- Citizens are most concerned about the country's economic direction, including unemployment
- Citizens see corruption as the main obstacle that might prevent the government from delivering its agenda
- Kenyans are not confident that social housing will benefit those most in need
- Citizens say the best ways to improve food security are to reduce the cost of farm inputs and reduce the cost of food
- Citizens say the sector with most potential for manufacturing is agro-processing
- 6 out of ten 10 citizens say the best way to improve health insurance is to reduce costs

2. Six insights on citizens' views on policy matters in Kenya

Insight 1: Citizens are most concerned about the country's economic direction, including unemployment

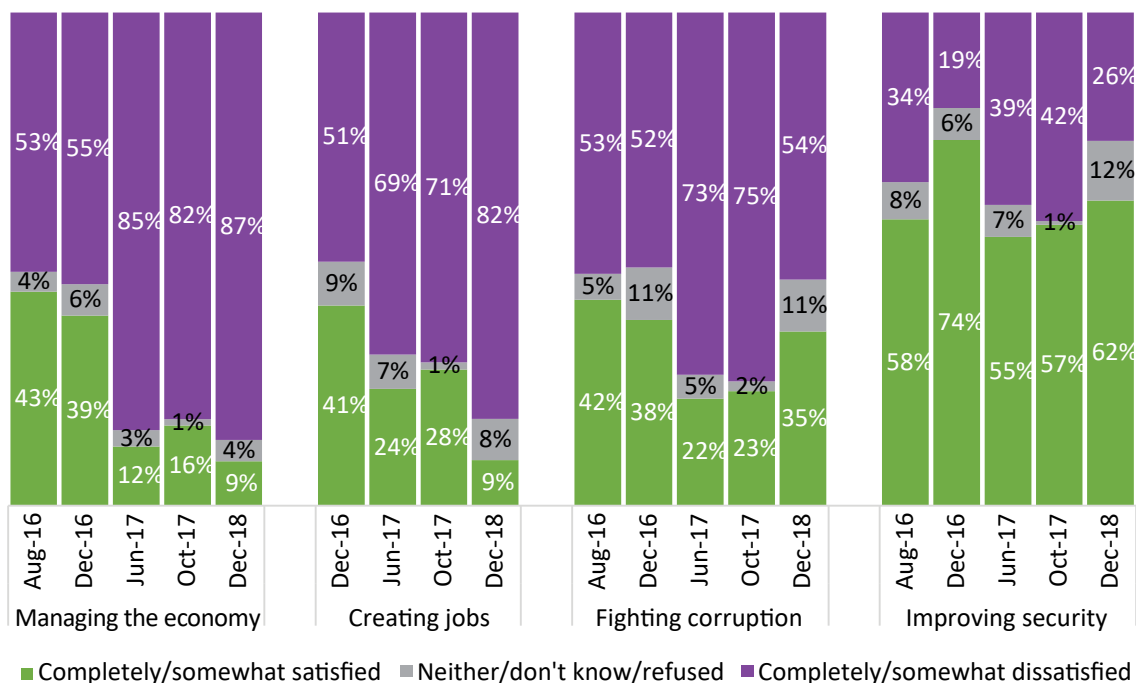
Nine out of ten citizens (87%) are dissatisfied with the country's direction on economic management, and eight out of ten (82%) are dissatisfied with the country's direction in job creation. In both cases, more citizens are dissatisfied now compared to 2016.

One out of three citizens (35%) is satisfied with the country's direction in fighting corruption, an increase since 2017, but the majority (54%) remain dissatisfied.

On security matters¹, a majority of citizens (62%) express satisfaction with the country's direction. This is largely consistent with previous surveys in 2016 and 2017.

1 These data were collected before the attack on the DusitD2 complex in January

Figure 1: Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the direction Kenya is headed in the following areas?²



Source: *Sauti za Wananchi*, Mobile Phone Surveys

(Round 5, August 2016, n=1,801; Round 9 December 2016, n=1,714; Round 13 June 2017, n=1,702; Round 17, October 2017, n=1,701 and Round 25, December 2018, n=1,637)

Insight 2: Citizens see corruption as the main obstacle that might prevent the government from delivering its agenda

Three out of four citizens (77%) cite corruption as a possible reason why the government may not deliver on its four priority areas – enhancing manufacturing, food security and nutrition, universal health coverage and affordable housing.

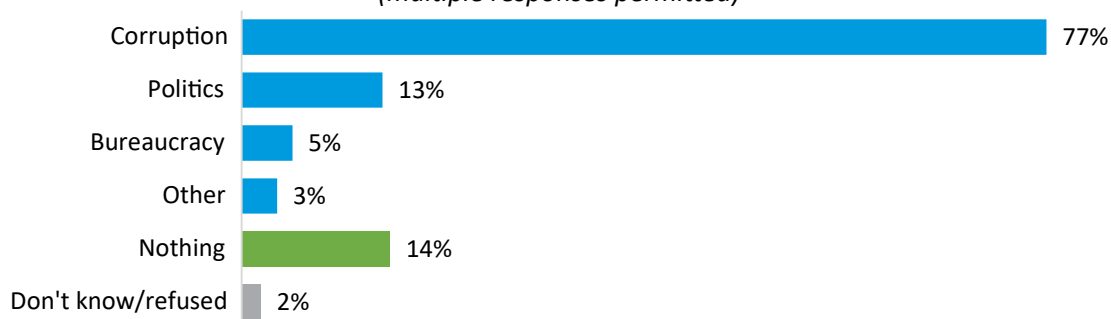
The second most commonly mentioned obstacle is politics, cited by one out of eight citizens (13%). Third is bureaucracy, at 5%.

One out of eight (14%) believe nothing will prevent the government from delivering.

2 Percentages in charts may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Figure 2: What do you think might hinder the government from achieving its big four agenda of enhancing manufacturing, food security and nutrition, universal health coverage and affordable housing?

(multiple responses permitted)



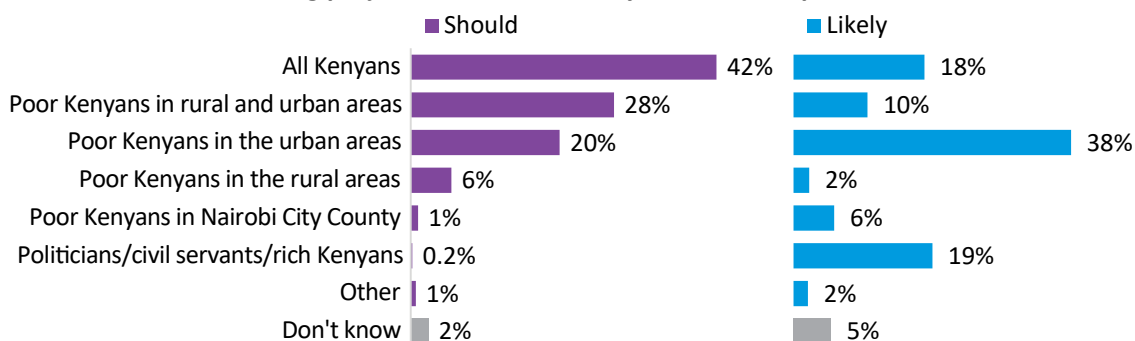
Source: *Sauti za Wananchi* Mobile Phone Survey, Round 25 (November 21 to December 17, 2018; n=1,637)

Insight 3: Kenyans are not confident that social housing will benefit those most in need

Four out of ten citizens (42%) say all Kenyans should benefit from the government’s social and affordable housing initiative, and a further three out of ten (28%) say all poor Kenyans should benefit. However, just three out of ten (28%) say they expect this to happen in reality.

Instead, citizens think poor citizens in urban areas are most likely to benefit (38%). A sizeable number (19%) are sceptical of the initiative, saying it is most likely to benefit those with power: politicians, civil servants or rich Kenyans.

Figure 3: Who do you think is should benefit from the government’s social and affordable housing project? And who is likely to benefit in practice?



Source: *Sauti za Wananchi* Mobile Phone Survey, Round 25 (November 21 to December 17, 2018; n=1,637)

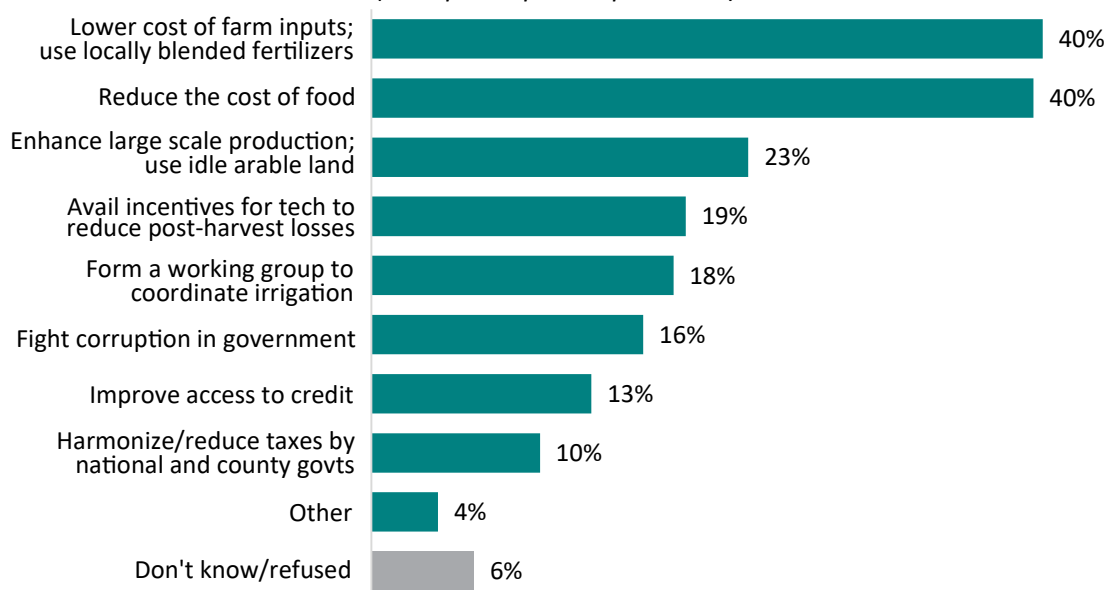
Insight 4: Citizens say the best ways to improve food security are to reduce the cost of farm inputs and the cost of food

Four out of ten citizens (40%) say the best way to improve food security and nutrition in Kenya is to reduce the cost of farm inputs. The same number (40%) say the best way would be to reduce the cost of food.

Smaller numbers point to increasing large scale production, perhaps by using idle land (23%), using technology to reduce post-harvest losses (19%), better coordination of irrigation initiatives (18%) or fighting corruption (16%).

Figure 4: What do you think the government should do to improve food security and nutrition in Kenya?

(multiple responses permitted)



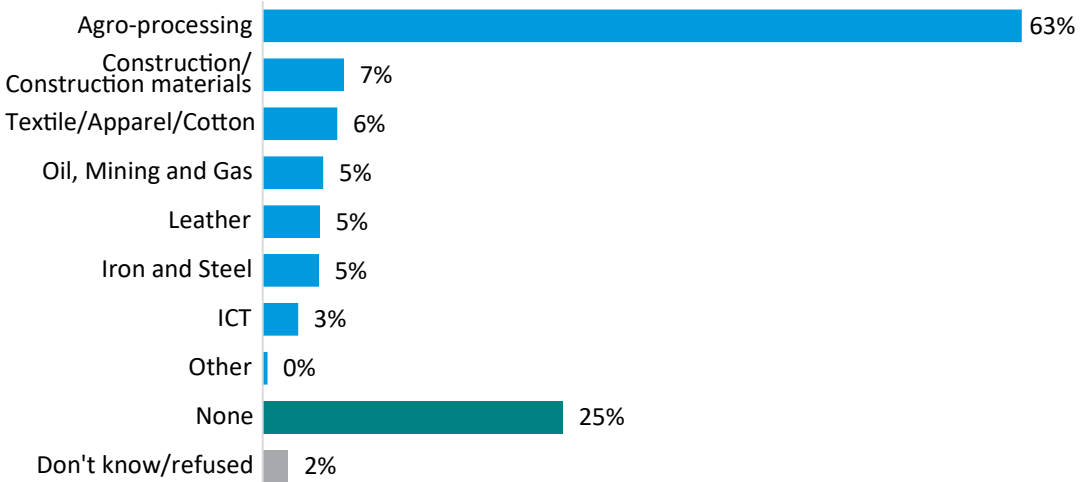
Source: *Sauti za Wananchi* Mobile Phone Survey, Round 25 (November 21 to December 17, 2018; n=1,637)

Insight 5: Citizens say the sector with most potential for manufacturing is agro-processing

Six out of ten citizens (63%) say the sector with the most potential for enhancing manufacturing in their locality is agro-processing, well ahead of any other sector. This is followed by construction / materials (7%), textiles (6%), extractive industries (5%), leather (5%), iron and steel (5%) and information and communications technologies (ICTs; 3%).

One out of four citizens (25%) say there are no sectors with potential for manufacturing in their area.

Figure 5: Thinking about your locality, which manufacturing areas do you think will greatly contribute to enhancing manufacturing in Kenya?
(multiple responses permitted)



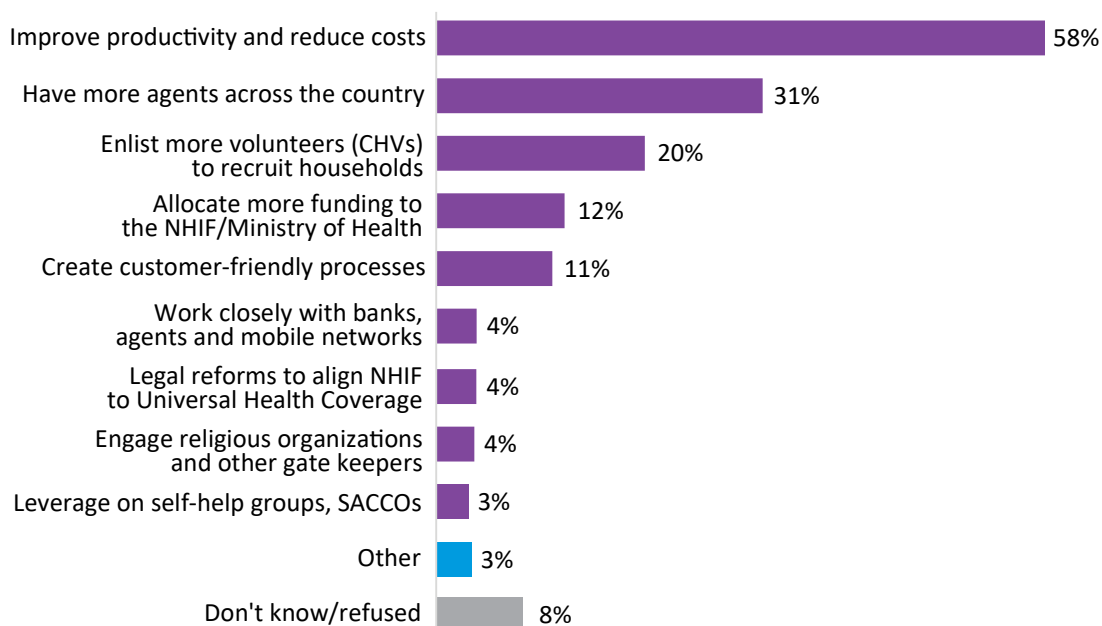
Source: *Sauti za Wananchi*, Mobile Phone Survey, Round 25
 (November 21 to December 17, 2018; n=1,637)

Insight 6: Six out of ten citizens say the best way to improve health insurance is to reduce costs

Six out of ten citizens (58%) say the best way to help the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) reach more people and work better would be to improve productivity and cut costs. Second on the list is increasing the number of agents across the country (31%), followed by enlisting more Community Health Volunteers (CHVs) to recruit households (20%).

Citizens also suggest allocating more funding to NHIF and/or the Ministry of Health (12%) or making the process more customer-friendly (11%).

Figure 6: What do you think can be done to make the National Hospital Insurance Fund-NHIF reach more people and function better?




Source: *Sauti za Wananchi* Mobile Phone Survey, Round 25 (November 21 to December 17, 2018; n=1,637)

3. Conclusions

The top headline finding of this brief is that citizens are largely concerned about the state of the economy in Kenya. Just 9% of citizens are satisfied with the country’s direction on economic matters, compared to 43% in 2016. Similarly, just 9% are satisfied with the rate of job creation, compared to 41% in 2016.

Second, citizens are clear that the main obstacle to effective governance in Kenya is corruption, far ahead of any other concern. This was asked specifically in relation to the government’s big four agenda, which will concern anyone in government with genuine commitment to this agenda. It can also be read to apply to citizens’ view of government efforts in general – that corruption is a major obstacle to any government initiative.

Third, on specific aspects of the big four agenda, citizens have useful ideas to propose. On agriculture, citizens prioritise a combination of reducing the cost of farm inputs and reducing the cost of food. On industry, a large majority of citizens point to agro-processing as the best area to focus on developing.



Perhaps the most critical message of this brief is that citizen voices provide valuable input and they have views on major national policies and issues. Consulting them, bringing them in more to conversations about key national issues, may even help to alleviate some of their dissatisfaction.