

What do citizens think about media freedoms in Tanzania?

The data presented here comes from two main sources. *Sauti za Wananchi* is a nationally-representative, high-frequency mobile phone panel survey, representative for mainland Tanzania. *Afrobarometer* is an Africa-wide survey of public opinion on political and economic issues, conducted every 2 - 3 years and representative for Tanzania as a whole.

Fact 1: Support for democracy is strong

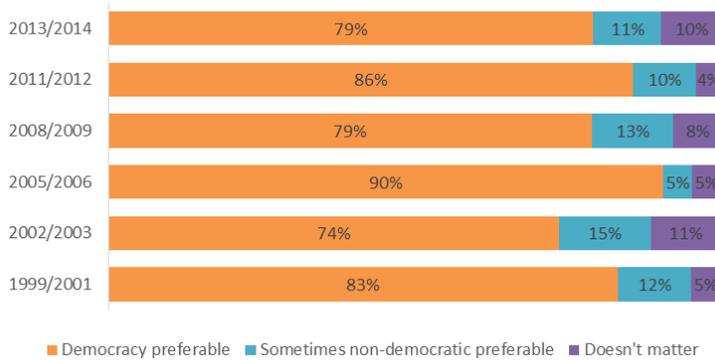
Across all surveys and time periods, support for electoral democracy is consistently strong. *Afrobarometer* finds that 74%-90% of Tanzanians see democracy as preferable to any other form of government. A *Sauti za Wananchi* poll in 2016 found a similar level of support. This provides a strong foundation for similar levels of support for key democratic rights, including freedom of the media and access to information.

Preference for democracy over other forms of government



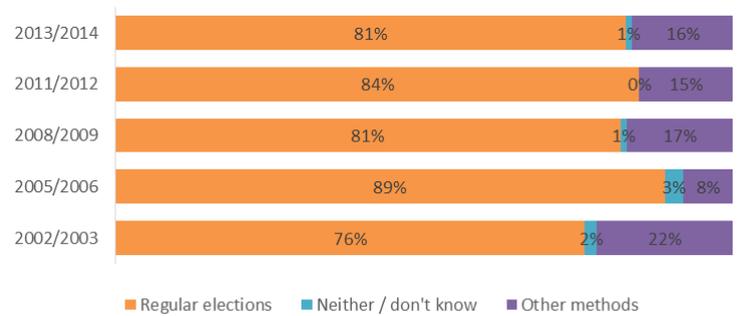
Source: *Sauti za Wananchi*, 2016

Support for democracy in Tanzania



Source: *Afrobarometer* 1999-2014

We should choose our leaders through regular elections / Elections sometimes produce bad results, so we should adopt other methods

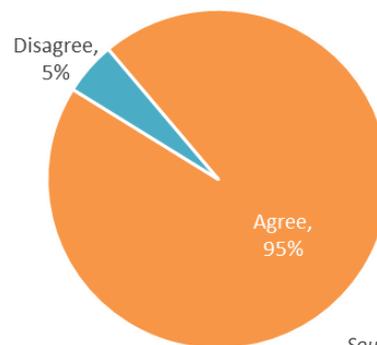


Source: *Afrobarometer* 2002-2014

Fact 2. Nineteen in twenty citizens see freedom of speech as important

Support for freedom of speech is strong. An overwhelming majority (95%) agree that citizens should be allowed to criticise the government when they believe it has done something wrong.

Citizens should be allowed to criticize government when they believe it's done something wrong

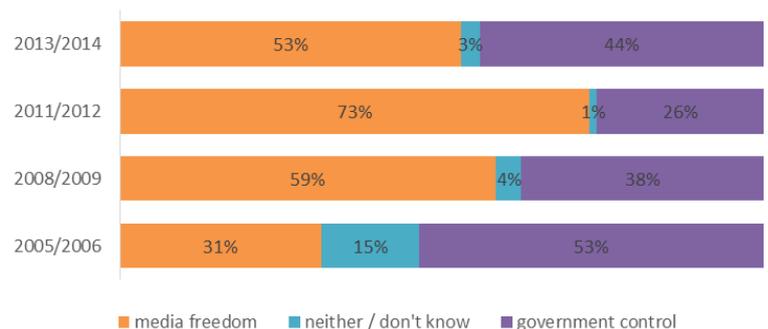


Source: *Sauti za Wananchi*, 2016

Fact 3. Citizens feel that the media should be free to operate without government interference

Over half (53%) of citizens feel that giving the media freedom to operate without interference is more important than giving the government power to close newspapers that print stories it doesn't like. This support for media freedom has varied a little over the past ten years, but has been a consistent majority since 2008.

Media should be free to publish any story / Government should be able to close newspapers

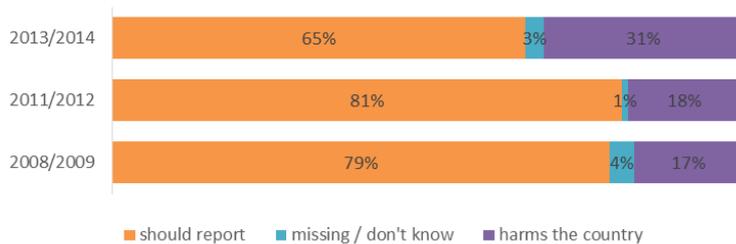


Source: *Afrobarometer* 2005-2014

Fact 4. A consistent majority see the benefits of critical media as outweighing the costs

A clear majority see media reporting of problems such as corruption and government mistakes as valuable rather than harmful to the country. The most recent *Afrobarometer* survey (2013/14) found that two thirds of citizens (65%) see reporting on such problems as important.

Media should report on government mistakes and corruption / Reporting on government mistakes only harms the country



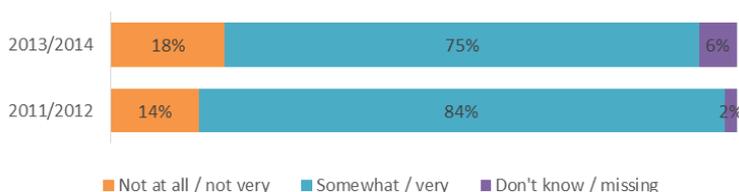
Source: *Afrobarometer*

Fact 5. Three in four citizens see the media as an effective force for holding government to account; just one in four say the media often abuses its freedom

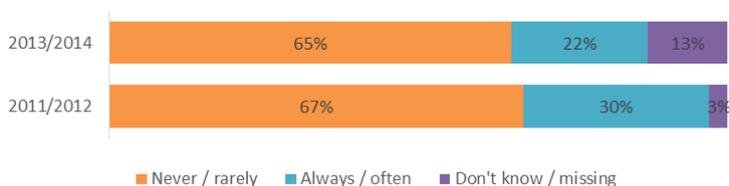
The support shown for media freedom is backed up by citizens views of media performance in practice. Around three out of four citizens feel the news media is somewhat or very effective in revealing government mistakes and corruption.

Similarly, two out of three citizens say that the media never or rarely abuses its freedom by saying things it knows are not true.

How effective is the news media in revealing government mistakes and corruption?



How often does the media abuse its freedoms by saying things it knows are not true?



Source: *Afrobarometer 2011-2014*

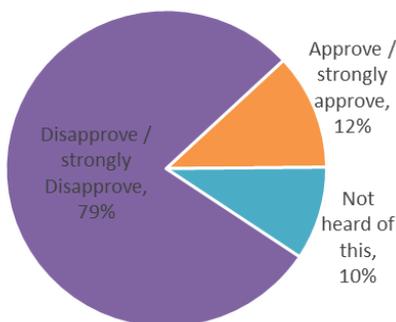
Fact 6. Large majorities of citizens do not support the decision to stop live broadcasts of parliamentary sessions, they see it as worth the cost

When a specific issue of media freedom came to public attention—the government’s decision to stop live TV and radio broadcasts from parliament—the public strongly disagreed with the decision. Eight in ten (79%) said they disapproved.

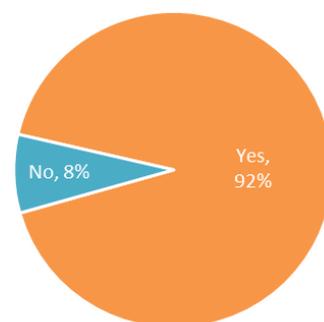
Similarly, nine in ten (92%) said it was important that parliamentary sessions should be aired live on TV and radio.

Further, nine in ten (88%) said that cost should not be considered a valid reason to stop such broadcasts.

What do you think of the government's decision to stop live coverage of parliament?



Do you think it is important for parliament sessions to be aired live on TV/Radio?



Cost vs importance of live broadcasts from parliament

Government should air sessions live as it is an important aspect of citizen's right to information irrespective of the cost



Government does not have to air sessions live if they believe doing so would constrain expenditure

Source: *Sauti za Wananchi, 2016*

Fact 7. Three quarters see greater access to info as a means to address corruption & mismanagement

Eight in ten citizens (80%) believe that giving citizens more access to information would help reduce corruption cases. A similar number (77%) support the right of citizens to access information held by government. Media are one of the main channels through which citizens can access government information.

Importance of access to information

Only those working in public authorities should have access to government information



Ordinary citizens should have access to information held by public authorities

If citizens were given access to info, public servants would find other ways of hiding corruption



If citizens were given access to info, it would cut down on corruption cases

Source: *Sauti za Wananchi, 2016*