



The end of the beginning?

Priorities, performance and politics in Tanzania

1. Introduction

We are now eighteen months into the administration of President Magufuli, and the president has settled into his role – appointing key officials and putting his own stamp on key policies and actions. The passage of time also means citizens are now better able to see beyond the government’s more eye-catching early actions and see how his policies and style of governance are affecting their daily lives.

This brief presents data on citizens’ views on political matters. What do they see as the most serious problems facing the country at this moment, and how has this changed compared to previous years? How do citizens rate the performance of their elected representatives, including the president? And how has support for different political parties changed over the past few years?

Data for the brief come from Twaweza’s flagship *Sauti za Wananchi* survey. *Sauti za Wananchi* is a nationally-representative, high-frequency mobile phone panel survey.

It is representative for Mainland Tanzania. Information on the overall methodology is available at www.twaweza.org/sauti. For this brief, data were collected from 1,805 respondents from the 18th round of the second *Sauti za Wananchi* panel, conducted between March 31 and April 17, 2017. It should be noted that these figures apply only to Tanzania Mainland, not to Zanzibar.

The key findings are:

- Citizens identify poverty / economics as the most serious problem facing Tanzania
- The number of citizens identifying food shortages as a serious problem has risen, the number identifying corruption has fallen
- Fewer citizens approve of their elected representatives’ performance in 2017 than in earlier years
- Seven in ten citizens approve of the performance of President Magufuli
- Approval for President Magufuli is highest among older citizens and those with less education

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Sauti za Wananchi



- Five in six citizens say they are likely to vote in the 2020 general elections
- Six in ten citizens feel closer to CCM than to any other party
- Support for Chadema has declined since 2013
- Support for CCM is higher among older citizens, those with less formal education, the poor, women and rural residents

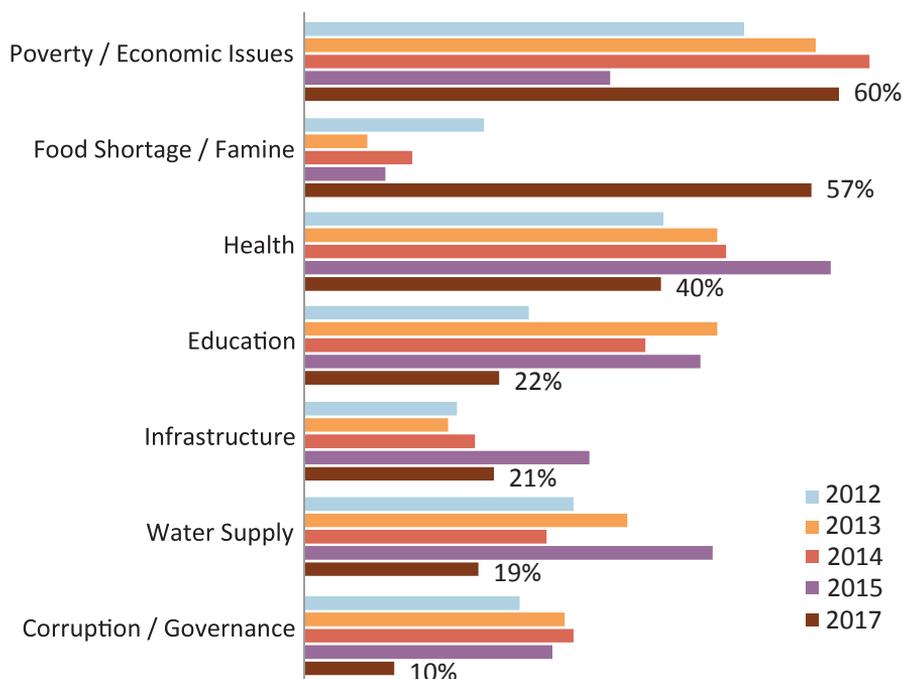
2. Nine facts about citizens' views on political matters

Fact 1: Citizens identify poverty / economics as the most serious problem facing Tanzania

The top three problems facing the country, according to citizens are poverty / economic issues (60%), food shortage / famine (57%) and health (40%).

The number of citizens listing public services (health, education and water supply) as among the top three most serious issues facing the country has dropped compared to previous years.

Figure 1: In your opinion, what are the three most serious problems facing Tanzania today? (% naming an issue in the top three)



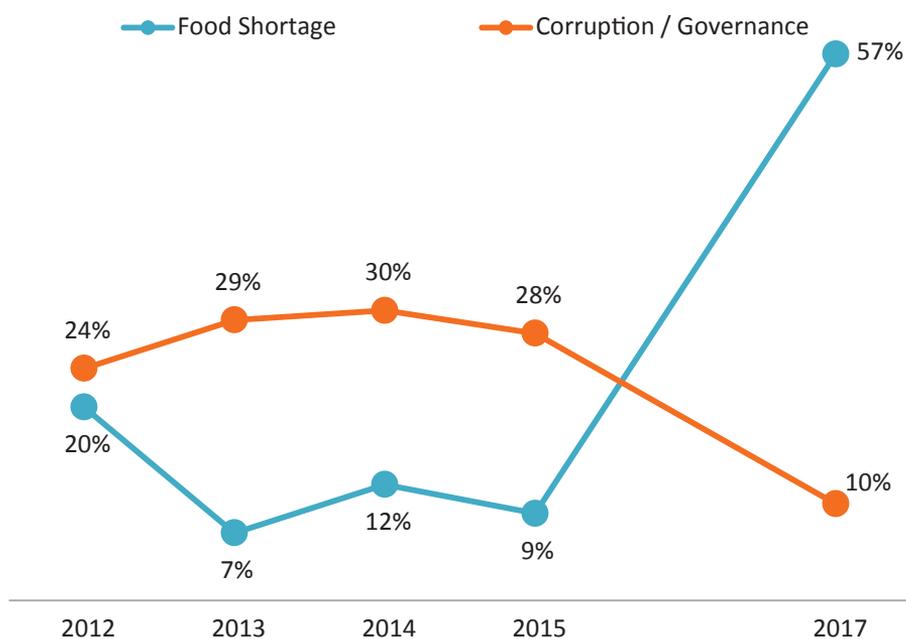
Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, mobile phone panel survey: Panel 1 Baseline Survey (October-December 2012), Round 10 (October 2013) and Round 24 (September 2014), and Panel 2 Round 1 (August-September 2015) and Round 18 (April 2017)
No list provided, respondents just named the issues and then these were grouped.

Fact 2: The number of citizens identifying food shortages as a serious problem has risen, the number identifying corruption has fallen

A clear majority of citizens (57%) identify food shortages as among the top three most serious issues facing Tanzania today. This compares to between 7% and 20% who felt the same between 2012 and 2015.

The number of citizens identifying corruption or governance as among the most serious problems has fallen considerably: between 24% and 30% in the period 2012 to 2015, to 10% this year.

Figure 2: In your opinion, what are the three most serious problems facing Tanzania today? (% naming an issue in the top three; selected issues)



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, mobile phone panel survey: Panel 1 Baseline Survey (October-December 2012), Round 10 (October 2013) and Round 24 (September 2014), and Panel 2 Round 1 (August-September 2015) and Round 18 (April 2017)

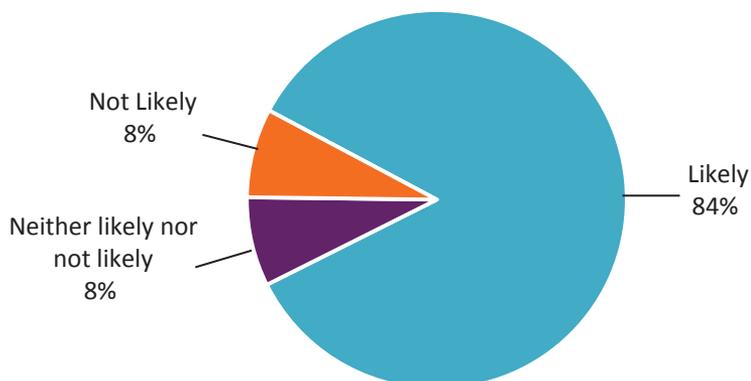
Fact 3: Five in six citizens say they are likely to vote in the 2020 general elections

A large majority (84%) say they are likely to vote in the next scheduled general elections in Tanzania, to be held in 2020. Fewer than one in ten (8%) say they are not likely to vote, and a similar number (8%) say they are neither likely nor unlikely.

It should be noted, however, that it is common that some citizens who say they are likely to vote will not actually do so when it comes to the elections. A *Sauti za Wananchi* poll in 2015,

for example, found that 99% said they intended to vote, while actual voter turnout in the election that year was 67%.¹

Figure 3: How likely are you to vote in the coming general elections of 2020?



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, mobile phone survey, Round 18 (April 2017)

There is only a small difference between the proportion of CCM supporters who say they are likely to vote (90%) and the proportion of Chadema supporters who say the same (85%) – not shown in chart.

Fact 4: Fewer citizens approve of their elected representatives' performance in 2017 than in earlier years

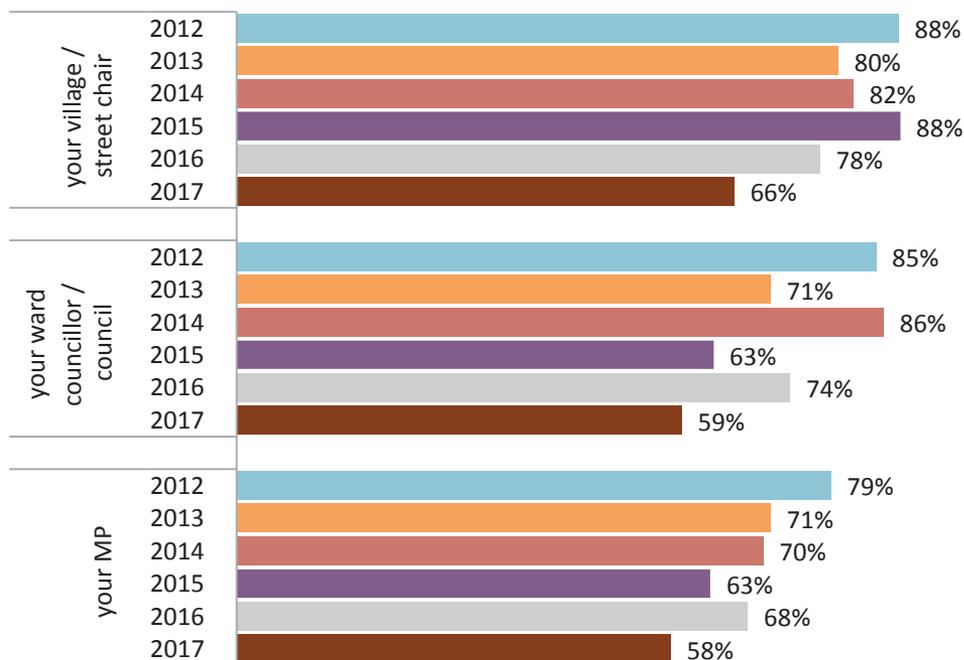
Approval ratings for village / street chairpersons, ward councillors / councils and MPs have all declined in the past five years.

In 2012, nine in ten (88%) approved of the performance of their village or street chair. By this year, two in three citizens (66%) feel this way. Similarly, between 2012 and 2017, the number of citizens approving of the performance of councillors has declined from 85% to 59%, and the number approving of MP's performance has dropped from 79% to 58%.

In all these cases, new representatives were elected during this time: in December 2014 for village / street leaders and October 2015 for councillors and MPs. However, while these leaders were given higher public approval ratings a year after their election, these rating have dropped in subsequent survey rounds.

1 See <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/John-Magufuli-declared-Tanzania-s-fifth-president/-/2558/2934778/-/11h61fz/-/index.html> and <http://www.twaweza.org/uploads/files/PolPoll-EN-FINAL.pdf>

Figure 4: % who approve of the way the following elected representatives have performed since coming to office



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, mobile phone panel survey: Panel 1 Baseline Survey (October-December 2012), Round 10 (October 2013) and Round 24 (September 2014), and Panel 2 Baseline Survey (July-August 2015), Round 11 (June 2016) and Round 18 (April 2017)

Fact 5: Seven in ten citizens approve of the performance of President Magufuli

Seven in ten citizens (71%) approve of the performance of President John Magufuli. This is down from 96% who approved of his performance in 2016.

Between 2012 and 2015, approval ratings for President Jakaya Kikwete fluctuated between 81% and 87%.

Figure 5: % who approve of the way the President has performed since coming to office



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, mobile phone panel survey: Panel 1 Baseline Survey (October-December 2012), Round 10 (October 2013) and Round 24 (September 2014), and Panel 2 Baseline Survey (July-August 2015), Round 11 (June 2016) and Round 18 (April 2017)

The average approval rating for African presidents as recorded by Afrobarometer in 128 surveys since 1999 is 63%.²

Worldwide, it is common for presidents' approval ratings to decline after initial "honeymoon periods". Pew Research, for example, has shown that approval ratings in the United States declined for nine out of the last eleven presidents during the course of their presidencies³. (Not shown in charts)

Fact 6: Approval for President Magufuli is highest among older citizens and those with less education

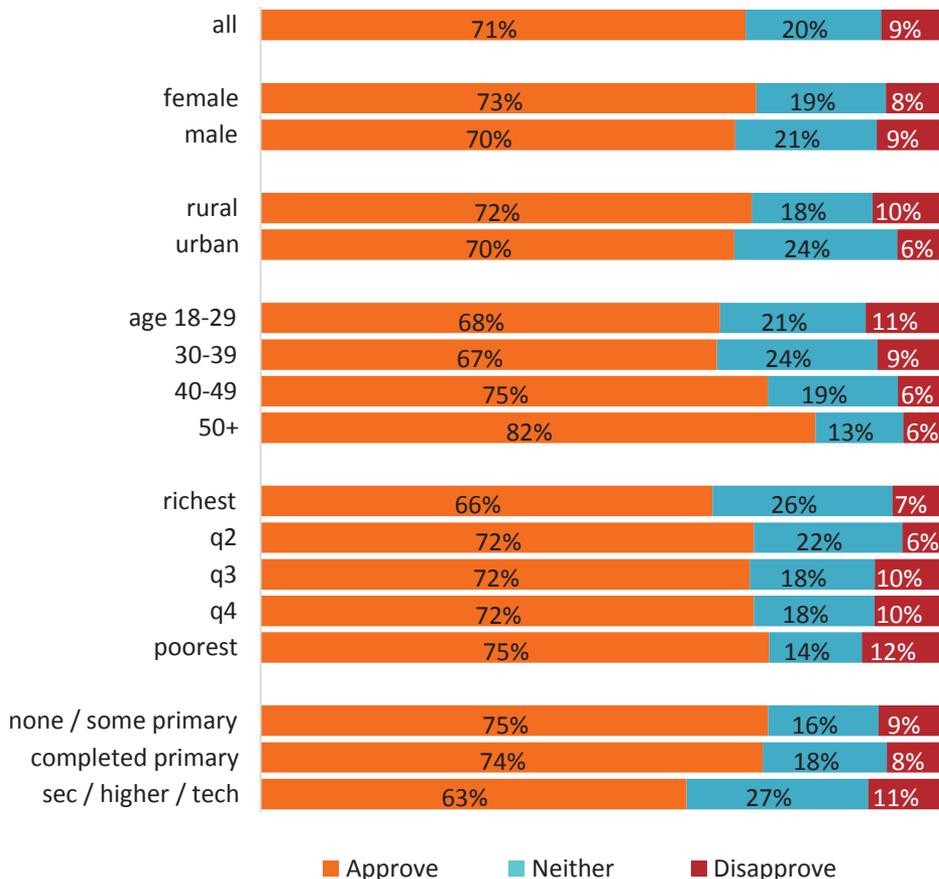
Approval for President Magufuli varies somewhat between different groups in society. The largest gap is between different age groups: 68% of those under age 30 approve of the President compared to 82% of those over 50. Education also plays a significant role, with 75% of citizens with no education or some primary approving of the President compared to 63% of those with secondary education or higher. And approval is slightly higher among poorer citizens (75%) than among the richest (66%).

There is no significant difference in the president's approval ratings between women (73%) and men (70%), or between residents of rural areas (72%) and towns and cities (70%).

² See <http://afrobarometer.org>

³ <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/01/12/presidential-job-approval-ratings-from-ike-to-obama/>

Figure 6: How much do you approve of the way the President has performed his duties since coming to office?

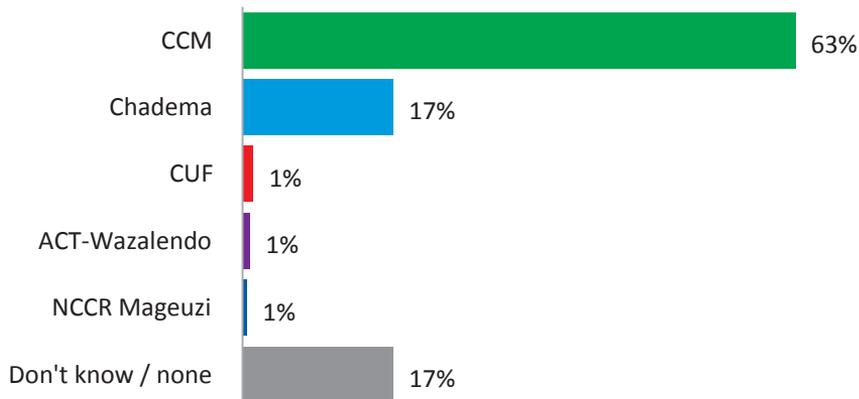


Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, mobile phone survey, Round 18 (April 2017)

Fact 7: Six in ten citizens feel closer to CCM than to any other party

A clear majority of citizens (63%) feel closer to CCM than to any other party. One in six (17%) feel closest to Chadema, and a small number feel closest either to CUF (1%), ACT-Wazalendo (1%) or NCCR Mageuzi (1%). One in six (17%) say they don't feel closer to any particular party.

Figure 7: Which political party do you feel closest to if any?



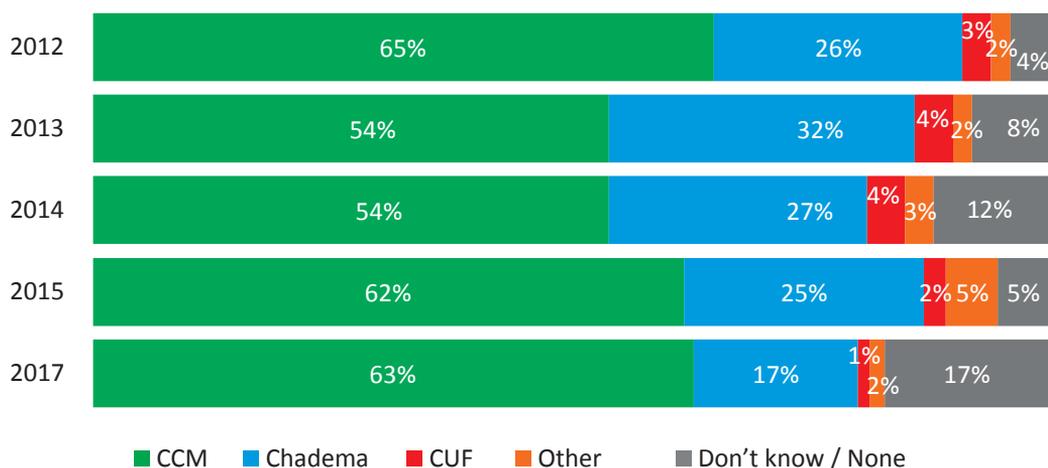
Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, mobile phone survey, Round 18 (April 2017)

Fact 8: Support for Chadema has declined since 2013

One in six citizens (17%) feel closer to Chadema than to any other party, compared to one in three (32%) who felt closest to Chadema four years ago, in 2013. Over the same period, support for CCM has risen slightly, from 54% to 63%, after an earlier drop, and support for CUF in Tanzania Mainland has declined from 4% to 1%.

One in six citizens (17%) say they don't feel close to any particular party, compared to fewer than 5% who felt this way in previous years.

Figure 8: Which political party do you feel closest to if any?

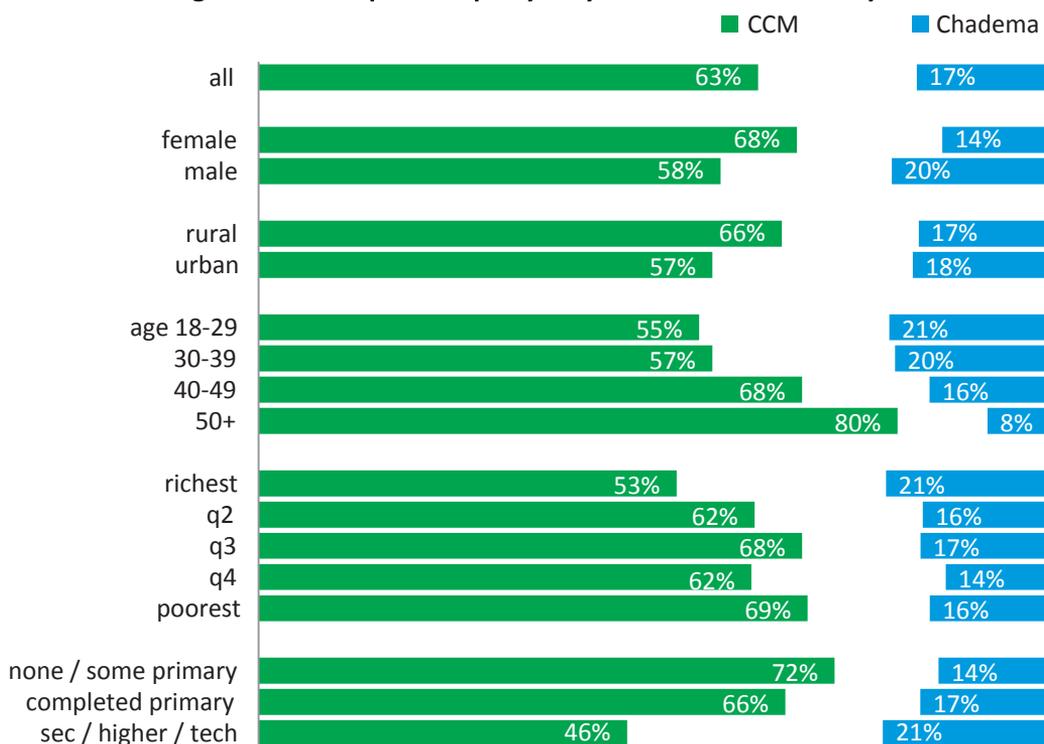


Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, mobile phone panel survey: Baseline Survey (October-December 2012), Panel 1 Round 10 (October 2013) and Round 24 (September 2014), Panel 2 Round 1 (August-September 2015) and Round 18 (April 2017)

Fact 9: Support for CCM is higher among older citizens, those with less formal education, the poor, women and rural residents

Support for CCM is highest among older people (80%), compared to 55% among younger citizens. It is also higher among women (68%) than men (58%), in rural areas (66%) than urban areas (57%), among poorer citizens (69%) than among the relatively rich (53%). The one group where less than half (46%) support CCM is those with secondary, technical or higher education.

Figure 9: Which political party do you feel closest to if any?



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, mobile phone survey, Round 18 (April 2017)

Support for Chadema generally follows the opposite pattern: higher among men, the young, the relatively wealthy and those with higher levels of formal education. In some cases, however, lower support for CCM does not translate directly into higher support for Chadema, notably in urban areas and among the well-educated. Among both these groups, citizens with no strong affiliation to any particular party (not shown in chart) outnumber those who feel closest to Chadema.

3. Conclusion

This brief provides several bits of evidence to support the mainstream narrative of life under the administration of President Magufuli – both the positives and the challenges.

On one hand, citizens see corruption as a much less serious problem than was the case in previous years. This fits with the president's strong public posture against corruption and mismanagement that has seen many public servants fired or suspended. Citizens also see health, education and water as less serious problems than before, which may reflect government actions on public services and/or perceived improvements.

At the same time, however, citizens see food security as a much more serious problem than had previously been the case. This provides additional support to the findings of a previous Sauti za Wananchi survey from February 2017, which found that eight out of ten citizens reported food shortages in their area.

It is unfair to blame anyone for erratic rainfall patterns. However, some may feel the government's response to food security issues may not have reflected the seriousness of the situation as experienced by citizens. And it has always been the case that political leaders will face some public blame for events that lie beyond their control, just as they are given credit for good things that happen, whether or not they are indeed responsible.

The 25 percentage point decline in citizens' approval of the president's own performance may well in part reflect the public's assessment – fair or otherwise – that he has not dealt effectively with the food security situation. It may in part also reflect criticisms made by opposition parties and others that the president does not give appropriate weight to democracy and human rights, or that the country's economic conditions have tightened.

This brief shows clear signs of growing discontent. The president's sky-high approval rating of 2016 (96%) has dropped sharply. Citizens may be signalling disappointment with the administration's handling of their most basic needs: food and income and that they have adjusted their expectations sharply downwards. But, the public don't appear to be warming to any other party. Citizens are clearly saying to all politicians, that politics must be made to work for them in very concrete ways, by understanding and responding to their top priorities, and by tangibly improving their lives.

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- 4 Sauti za Wananchi – *Hunger pangs: Food (in)security in Tanzania*, February 2017. See <http://www.twaweza.org/index.php?i=1506>.
 - 5 Sauti za Wananchi – *The People's President? Citizens' assessment and expectations of the fifth phase government*, September 2016. See <http://www.twaweza.org/go/sauti-government-performance-2016>



