



Lets build one house!

What Tanzanians' think about the East African Community



1. Introduction

In July 2000, the East African Community (EAC) was established through a treaty between Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, the three founding signatories of the 1967 East African Federation. Rwanda and Burundi joined the EAC in July 2007. The Customs Union came into effect in 2005, establishing a common external tariff and free trade between members. The Common Market came into effect on July 1, 2010. It provides for “four freedoms”, namely the free movement of goods; labour; services; and capital, which aim to significantly boost trade and investments and make the region more productive and prosperous¹.

Citizen opinion has played a prominent role in Tanzania's recent EAC history. An Afrobarometer survey carried out in 2007-08² found that a majority of citizens favored economic integration but did not support closer political integration. This finding was one of the arguments for Tanzania not to join three other EAC members in the so-called Coalition of the Willing (COW) who are speeding up the pace of regional integration. Several COW meetings in 2013 highlighted specific country responsibilities for the fast-track agenda: according to the East African (31 August, 2013) “Kenya takes the lead on the pipeline and electricity generation and distribution; Rwanda on the Customs, single visa and EAC e-identity card; and Uganda the railway and political federation”.

All of these aspects on the EAC agenda could have a significant impact on the lives and businesses of citizens. How aware are Tanzanians of the EAC agenda and proposals? Do they agree with the proposals? What are the implications of the proposals? Will Tanzania lead, slow down or give up on regional integration?

¹ <http://www.eac.int/commonmarket/>

² Katera, Lucas (2009). Citizens' views on the East African Federation: a Tanzanian perspective. Afrobarometer Briefing Paper, REPOA, Dar es Salaam.



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This brief presents data on Tanzanian citizens’ perceptions of the ongoing East African Community process. We use data from the 23rd round of *Sauti za Wananchi*, Africa’s first nationally representative high-frequency mobile phone survey (www.twaweza.org/sauti). Data were collected in partnership with the Society for International Development through calls to 1,408 respondents in Mainland Tanzania only (excluding Zanzibar) between 13 August and 22 August 2014.

This brief’s key findings are:

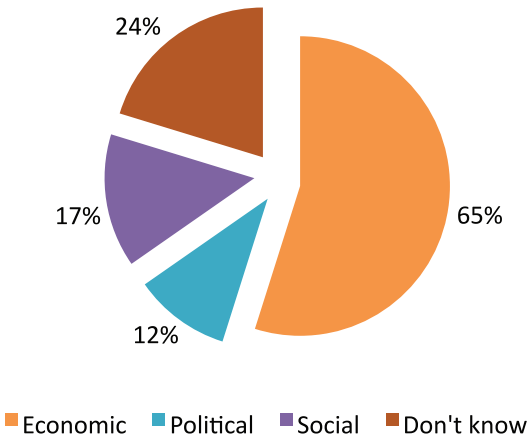
- Eight out of ten citizens believe we should stay in the East African Community
- Two out of three Tanzanians who have heard about the Coalition of the Willing want to be a part of it
- Kenya and Uganda are the most popular integration partners for Tanzanians
- The most popular elements of integration are a single tourist visa across the region, intra-EAC travel with a national identity card, and joint infrastructure projects; eight out of ten citizens support these
- Seven out of ten Tanzanians support free movement of labour within the EAC and the creation of a common passport

2. Seven facts about citizen views on the East African Community

Fact 1: Six out of ten citizens (58%) have heard of the East African Community

Six out of ten Tanzanians (58%) have heard of the East African Community (EAC; data not shown). For those that had heard of the EAC, we asked them to describe the type of integration they believed the EAC aims for. Among these respondents, 65% responded that it was economic, with smaller groups believing it to be social (17%) or political (12%) (Figure 1). It should be noted that the ultimate goal of the EAC is political union in the form of a federation.

Figure 1: Types of integration (among those who have heard of the EAC)

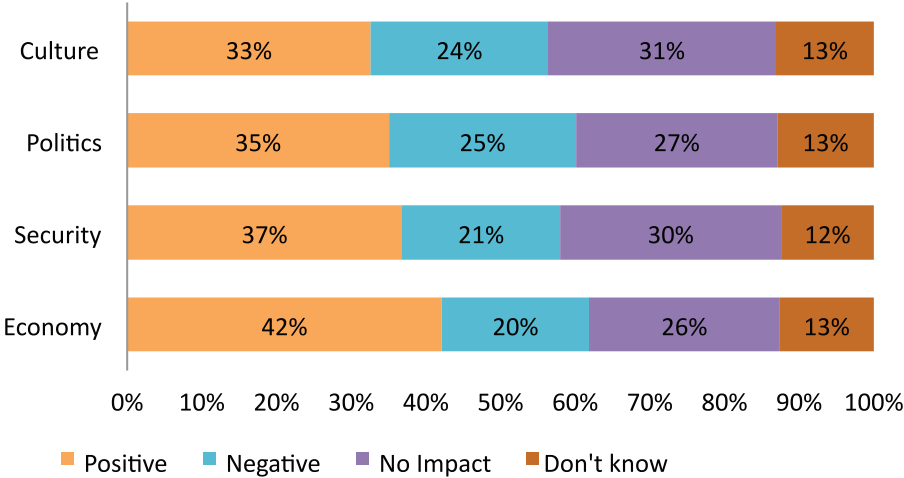


Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, Mobile Phone Survey – Round 23, August 2014.

Fact 2: Most Tanzanians view the impact of the EAC positively

We asked Tanzanians whether they thought the impact of the EAC on Tanzania’s economy, security, politics (or political processes), and culture would be positive or negative. Across this broad set of fields, Tanzanians are more likely to anticipate positive consequences than no impact or negative impact (Figure 2). For example, twice as many citizens expect positive economic impact than those who fear that integration will be economically harmful (42% versus 20%).

Figure 2: What impact do you think the EAC will have on Tanzania’s...?



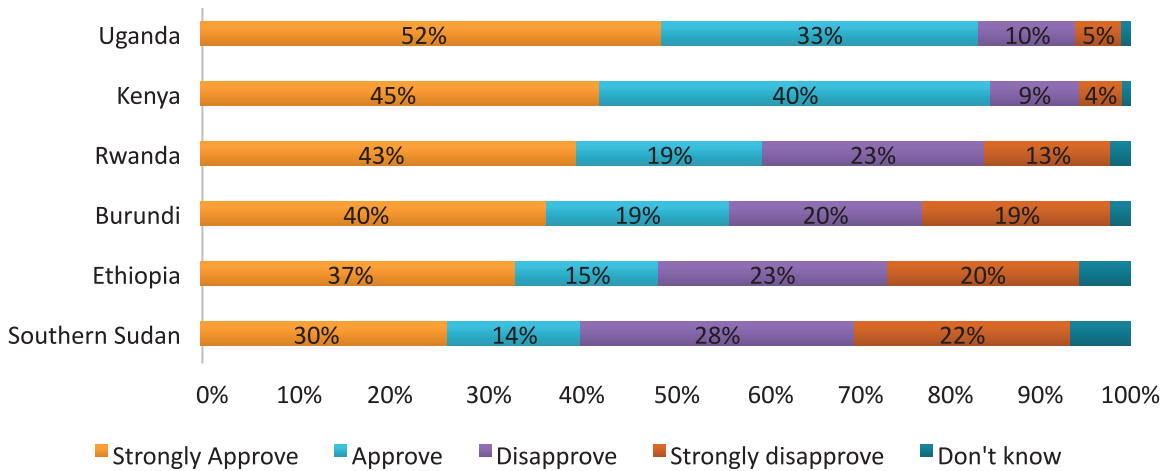
Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, Mobile Phone Survey – Round 23, August 2014.

Fact 3: Kenya and Uganda are the most popular integration partners

In contrast to the common narrative of Tanzania-Kenya antagonism, Kenya is one of the most popular integration partners among neighbouring countries: 85% of Tanzanians report that they either “strongly approve” or “approve” of integration with Kenya (Figure 3). Uganda is equally popular (Figure 3).

The least popular country is South Sudan: only 44% of Tanzanians report being in favor of integration with this country (Figure 3).

Figure 3: To what extent do you approve/disapprove of Tanzania's integration with...?



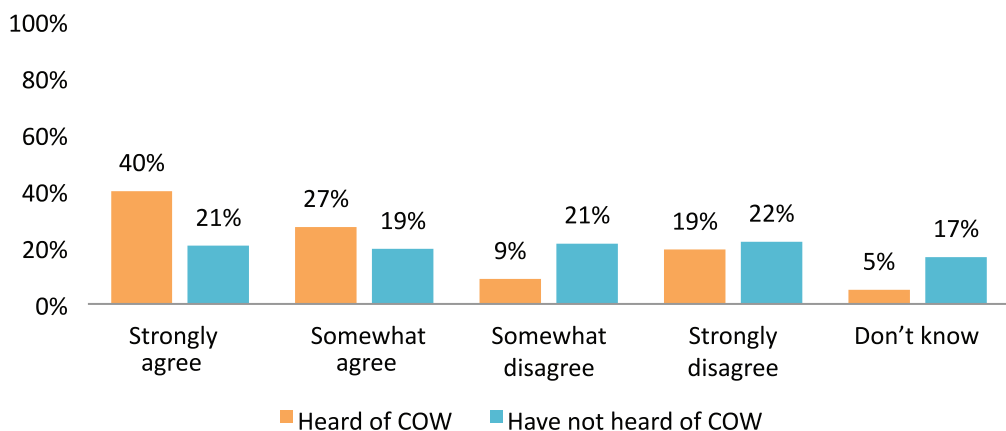
Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, Mobile Phone Survey – Round 23, August 2014.

Fact 4: Most citizens support speeding up integration processes

Eight out of ten Tanzanians (80%) had not heard of the so-called “Coalition of the Willing” (data not shown). We explained briefly that three countries (Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda) had come together to fast track certain integration processes around infrastructure, and certain immigration and political issues, and that Tanzania is not part of this group.

When asked about whether Tanzania (and Burundi) should join, respondents who had not heard about this development were fairly evenly split (Figure 4). However, respondents who had heard were more likely to have favorable opinions towards it: 67% of this group reported that they believe Tanzania should be part of this group, against 28% who did not want to join (Figure 4).

Figure 4: How much do you agree with the statement: Tanzania (and Burundi) should be part of the “Coalition of the Willing?”



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, Mobile Phone Survey – Round 23, August 2014.

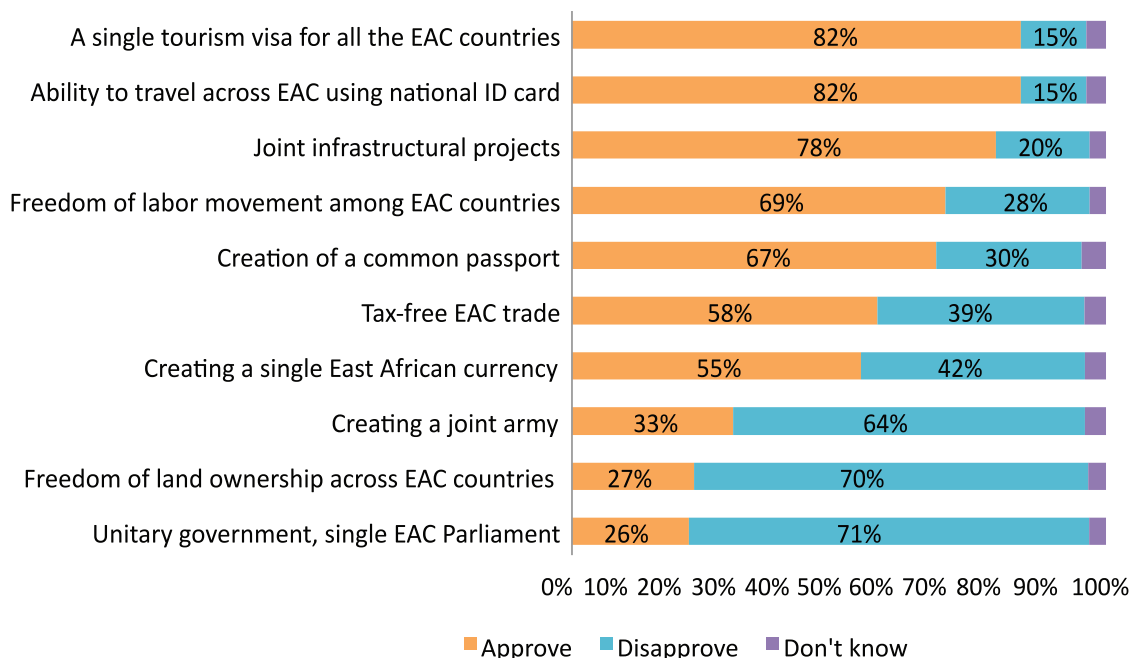
Fact 5: The most popular aspects of the EAC are single tourism visas and regional travel with a national ID card

We described for respondents the major features of the proposed East African Federation. These include economic and political integration which could have important consequences on people's daily lives. Interestingly, the most popular aspects of the Federation are (1) introducing a single tourism visa for visitors coming to any EAC country (82% of Tanzanians approved of this), and (2) the ability of EAC citizens to travel across the EAC partner states using only their national ID card (82%) (Figure 5). Other prominent proposals, supported by a large majority, are the free movement of labor within the EAC; joint infrastructural projects; and the creation of a common passport.

It is interesting to note the stability of the support for some of these proposals. Free movement of labor has 69% support in 2014 (our survey), free movement of people, goods and services had 67% support in 2008 (REPOA). Although a Common Market has been in place since 2010, the free movement of labor is not yet (fully) a reality, as demonstrated by the periodic rounding up and expulsion from Tanzania of "illegal" workers from other EAC countries. Such nationality based discrimination does not appear to be supported by a majority of citizens.

The least popular proposals are: creating a joint army (64% disapprove), allowing land ownership by EAC citizens in other countries across the region (70% disapprove), and a unitary government with a single EAC Parliament (71% disapprove) (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Approval levels for each aspect of the EAC



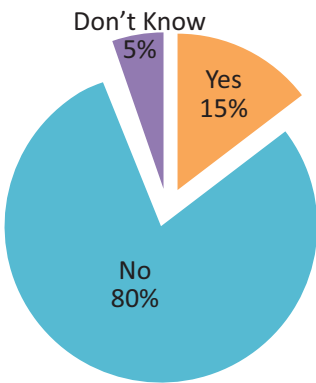
Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, Mobile Phone Survey – Round 23, August 2014.

Fact 6: Eight out of ten Tanzanians believe we should stay in the EAC

In general, Tanzanians are optimistic about the EAC and its potential to bring benefits to the country. Eight out of ten (80%) believed Tanzania should not withdraw (Figure 6).

Despite this optimism, when we asked Tanzanians to name the country’s three greatest opportunities, only 12% listed “trading with the EAC” as one of them. (The most popular responses for this question were tourism (57%) and mining valuable extractives (57%); data not shown).

Figure 6: Should Tanzania withdraw from the EAC?

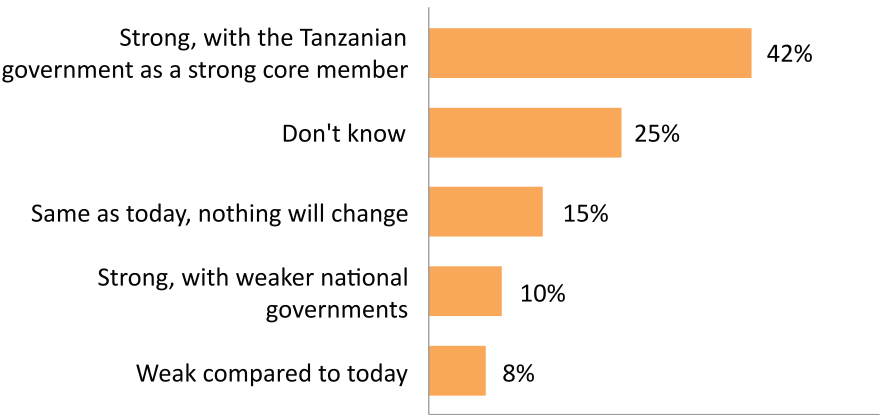


Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, Mobile Phone Survey – Round 23, August 2014.

Fact 7: Tanzanians are optimistic about the survival of the EAC

When asked about how they envisioned the EAC in ten years (that is, in 2025), most Tanzanians were optimistic: they imagined a strong EAC, with Tanzania remaining a core member (Figure 7). Two thirds of Tanzanians see the future EAC either as “strong” or “the same as today”, but 25% are unsure what to expect.

Figure 7: In 10 years, what will the East African Community be?



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, Mobile Phone Survey – Round 23, August 2014.

3. Conclusion

Most Tanzanians know about the East African Community and have clear opinions about it. The headline results from the August 2014 round of Twaweza's Sauti za Wananchi mobile phone survey on the EAC are that:

- Tanzanians have positive views of the EAC, the economic opportunities offered by it and the likely impact
- Tanzanians do not want an East African army or government – but they do support closer administrative integration including a common passport, the ability to travel with national identity cards and freedom of labor movement within the EAC.
- Looking ahead to 2025, two thirds of Tanzanians see the EAC being at least as strong as, if not stronger than, it is today.

Large majorities are positive about integration with the largest and economically most important EAC members, Kenya and Uganda. A large majority of Tanzanians (80%) are not aware of (the acrimonious debates around) the Coalition of the Willing: among those who have heard about the Coalition, 67% want to be part of it.

On the substantive issues, large majorities approve of introducing a single tourism visa for visitors coming to any EAC country; and the ability of EAC citizens to travel across member states using only their national identity card. Furthermore, large majorities approve of joint (cross-border) infrastructure projects and the free movement of labor.

These last four items are fundamental and promise large and sustained economic benefits to Tanzanians, both individually and economy-wide. Removing hurdles on cross-border movement of people will make traveling easier, for both workers and for tourists. In a truly free internal labor market, workers will be allowed to use their talents anywhere in the EAC, without costly permits that are currently often required. This would provide two sets of benefits: one for Tanzanians who can get work in, for example, Rwanda or Kenya.

The second one is for Tanzanians who make use of services – think of English lessons for their children – offered by Kenyans, Ugandans and other EAC citizens in Tanzania. This last point is often overlooked in discussions about labor permits (and illegal immigrants). One of the huge benefits of EAC labor market liberalization is on the demand side: Tanzanian citizens can benefit from an increased supply of talent and quality in their own country. This benefit is immediate as well as dynamic, with improved supply spurring greater competition in services and learning far into the future.

There are other EAC benefits such as critical joint cross-border infrastructure investments that allow Tanzanian exporters to lower their costs and boost competitiveness. A report on the drivers of economic growth and poverty reduction in Africa, edited by Professor Benno Ndulu, currently the Governor of the Bank of Tanzania, states: “On the side of trade, evidence shows that integration with global markets is associated with higher growth, underpinning the need for growth strategies to emphasize scaling up and diversifying exports. Enhanced competitiveness and reduced barriers to trade are the two critical areas of action.”³

³ Ndulu Benno, Lopamudra Chakraborti, Lebohlang Lijane, Vijaya Ramachandran, and Jerome Wolgin (2007). Challenges of African Growth: opportunities, constraints and strategic directions. World Bank, Washington, D.C.

Citizens agree with experts on the economic benefits offered by the EAC. However, there is a risk of losing opportunities that are part of the current EAC momentum. For the well-being of the current and future generations, Tanzania clearly cannot afford to miss out on any of the drivers of economic growth offered by further integration. It is time for Tanzania's economic diplomats to safeguard and enhance these opportunities for their citizens to enjoy.