



Press Release

1 April 2015

As referendum deadline draws near, citizens are undecided about their vote However they are firm in their desire for stronger accountability in a new constitution

1 April 2015, Dar es Salaam: As the deadline to hold a referendum on the proposed constitution draws near, citizens' views are largely split. Just over half of citizens (52%) say they would vote *For* the proposed draft. One out of four (26%, or half of those in favour) say they will vote *Against*. *Slightly more than one in five* (22%) are undecided.

In 2014, when the second draft from the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) was being debated by the Constituent Assembly, a larger group (65%) said that they would vote for the CRC draft to pass and fewer citizens (21%) said they would vote *Against* the proposed draft at the time. Although the numbers still indicate that the proposed constitution would pass on Mainland Tanzania, the margins have tightened.

Citizens' views also reflect the uncertainty surrounding the whole process. Just over a month before the deadline, the voter registration process is incomplete. Half of citizens (47%) think that the next general elections will take place under a new constitution, but a significant minority (30%) think the elections will take place under the current constitution.

These findings were released by Twaweza in a research brief titled *Towards the Referendum: Tanzanians' views on the proposed draft of the constitution*. The brief is based on data from *Sauti za Wananchi*, Africa's first nationally representative high-frequency mobile phone survey. The findings are based on data collected from 1,399 respondents across Mainland Tanzania (Zanzibar is not covered in these results) in January and February 2015. Previous rounds of *Sauti za Wananchi* (Fifth round: July 2013 and Fourteenth Round: February / March 2014) are used to track trends over time. It is important to note that polling covered a representative sample of all citizens in Mainland Tanzania.

The smaller gap between the "yes" and "no" vote that has emerged between the March 2014 and February 2015 surveys may reflect the many twists and turns in the constitutional review process. The substantive changes between the second CRC draft and the proposed draft appear to have created some uncertainty among citizens. Four out of ten citizens (39%) prefer the proposed draft and a similar number (41%) prefer the second CRC draft.

There are significant differences between the two drafts. When citizens were asked about specific clauses or issues, the results are much clearer. Eight out of ten citizens (80%) disagree with the removal of the clause that allows citizens to oust their MP for non-performance. A similar number (78%) disagree with the removal of openness, transparency and accountability from the list of national values. Seven out of ten (70%) disagree with the removal of the clause that sets three-year term limits for MPs. On the other hand, far fewer citizens (36%) disagree with the removal of the three government structure for the Mainland and Zanzibar.

Do citizens support the UKAWA boycott of the Constituent Assembly and its calls for citizens to boycott the referendum itself? Among those who had heard about the UKAWA boycott of the Constituent Assembly, 66% were against it. A similar number of citizens (68%) are against the boycott of the actual referendum and a full three-quarters (75%) of citizens say they will not participate in the boycott.

Elvis Mushi, Coordinator of *Sauti za Wananchi* commented on the findings *“The uncertainty around the conclusion of the constitutional review process, and the dramatic turns in the process so far have led to uncertainty among citizens. Citizen opinion is split on a number of key issues.”*

Aidan Eyakuze, Executive Director of Twaweza, added *“There are three clear messages from citizens in these data. First, a Yes vote for the proposed draft of the constitution is not a sure bet. The margins are small and citizens’ views have, rightly, been changing throughout the constitutional review process. Second, there is a clear call for a constitutional emphasis on transparency and accountability. Citizens have been hugely supportive of articles that enhance accountability. Chronic service delivery challenges and revelations of large-scale corruption have clearly taken their toll and citizens are looking for ways to hold leaders responsible for their actions. Third, citizens remain unconvinced by more assertive and robust collective action. UKAWA’s call to boycott the referendum has not resonated with them. Most citizens are against it. These messages should challenge the confidence of leaders across the board that their positions represent the views of citizens.”*

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Notes to Editors

- This brief and the data contained can be accessed at www.twaweza.org, or www.twaweza.org/sauti
- Twaweza works on enabling children to learn, citizens to exercise agency and governments to be more open and responsive in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. We have programs, staff and offices across all three countries, and a globally respected practice of learning, monitoring and evaluation. Our flagship programs include *Uwezo*, Africa’s largest annual citizen assessment to assess children’s learning levels across hundreds of thousands of households, and *Sauti za Wananchi*, Africa’s first nationally representative mobile phone survey. We undertake effective public and policy engagement, through powerful media partnerships and global leadership of initiatives such as the Open Government Partnership
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