



Press Release

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## **Citizens demand greater accountability from MPs**

### **Majority of Mainland Tanzanian citizens support this and other key clauses from the draft constitution**

**4 December 2013, Dar es Salaam:** Over a third (36%) of Tanzanians on the Mainland have participated in the constitutional review process through community meetings, SMS, interviews, letters and email. The vast majority of these participated through community meetings organized by the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC). In addition, almost half of Mainland Tanzanians can explain what a constitution is.

These findings were released by Twaweza in a research brief titled *Drafting the law of the land: Reflections of citizens in Mainland Tanzania on the draft constitution*. The brief is based on data from *Sautiza Wananchi*, a nationally representative mobile phone survey of households across Mainland Tanzania.

The data show relatively high rates of awareness of the constitution and participation in the review process. In addition, almost seven out of ten (67%) of Mainland Tanzanians are aware that the draft constitution was launched, although less than three out of ten (23%) know how to access a copy of the draft.

One of the major areas of debate has been around the state of the union between the Mainland and Zanzibar. On this topic, *Sauti za Wananchi* found opinion to be divided, with half (51%) agreeing and half (48%) disagreeing to the establishment of three governments. However when probed further, support for three governments among Mainland Tanzanians was equal to support for one government, both at 19%. *Sauti za Wananchi* was also able to compare these findings to an Afrobarometer survey conducted in the whole country (including Zanzibar) in 2012. In 2012 almost half (47%) of Mainland Tanzanians supported no change in union matters, however in July of this year, just over one out of four (26%) Mainland Tanzanians chose this option. In contrast, less than one out of ten (8%) supported increased autonomy for Zanzibar in 2012 while one out of three support this course in 2013. *Sauti za Wananchi* is only carried out on the Mainland so no data for Zanzibar are available.

There have been a number of other clauses in the draft constitution that have been debated extensively in the media. Citizens are largely in agreement with the draft on all of these. Almost all (91%) Mainland Tanzanians want to be able to oust their MPs for performance failure, demonstrating a strong preference for greater accountability and making this the most endorsed clause in the draft. Other areas that receive broad public support are:

- A presidential candidate must be over 40 years old (84% agree)
- Ministers and Deputies should be appointed by the President and endorsed by Parliament (77% agree)

- Parliament should be composed of 75 members, with two members from each region in the Mainland and Zanzibar (76% agree)
- The Speaker and Deputy Speaker should not be a leader of a political party five years before seeking this position (72% agree)
- Ministers and deputies should not be councilors, MPs or members of the house of representatives (70% agree)
- MPs should not be in office for more than 15 years (70% agree)
- Independent presidential and parliamentary candidates should be able to stand in General Elections (67% agree)
- There should be an independent electoral commission, appointed by the President (65% agree)

*Sautiza Wananchi* also asked Mainland Tanzanians about their support for the draft constitution. Unsurprisingly, given broad agreement, with the major issues, the majority of them would vote for the current draft. In addition about two thirds (65%) believe that the next General Election will be carried out under a new Constitution.

Rakesh Rajani, Head of Twaweza, said *“The constitution is meant to be informed by the views and values of the people. The Sauti za Wananchi survey is one useful instrument to elicit citizen views in a credible and scientific way. We hope that those drafting the constitution will listen carefully.”*

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**For more information:**

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**Notes to Editors**

- This brief and the data contained can be accessed at [www.twaweza.org](http://www.twaweza.org), or [www.twaweza.org/sauti](http://www.twaweza.org/sauti)
- Twaweza is a ten year citizen-centered initiative, focusing on large-scale change in East Africa. Twaweza believes that lasting change requires bottom-up action, and seeks to foster conditions and expand opportunities through which millions of people can get information and make change happen in their own communities directly and by holding government to account.
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