

Press Release
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Half of Kenyans (48%) are dissatisfied with the country's current direction on curriculum reform

At the same time a substantial number (36%) say they are satisfied with the current course

Tuesday 14 February 2023, Nairobi: More Kenyans are unhappy (48%) than are happy (36%) with the country's direction in terms of curriculum reform.

These findings were released by Twaweza a research brief titled *What we teach our children: Kenyan citizens' experiences and opinions on curriculum reforms* based on data from *Sauti za Wananchi*, Africa's first nationally representative high-frequency mobile phone survey. The panel for this research was established through random sampling from a database of contacts from previous surveys to establish a new representative panel of the country's population. For this brief, data were collected from 3,000 respondents in the third round of the special *Sauti za Wananchi* panel, conducted between 3 and 17 November, 2022.

Citizens are reasonably well informed about Kenya's new competency-based curriculum: almost all (96%) say they have heard of it. Views on whether it is better than the previous one are fairly divided although more Kenyans are supportive of the competency-based curriculum. Almost half (47%) of citizens say the competency-based curriculum is better (36%) or much better (11%), while 4 out of 10 (38%) say the previous curriculum was better (22%) or much better (16%).

The most significant challenge of the competency-based curriculum, according to three out of four citizens (74%), is the cost. The second most cited challenge is the demands the curriculum places on parents (42%). Other challenges are mentioned by fewer citizens, including teachers not being well-trained (14%), children getting complicated assignments (12%) and implementation not being clear (10%).

When asked what should change about the current implementation of the competency-based curriculum, more than half of citizens (54%) cite reducing the cost to parents. Just one in four refer to making more resources and equipment available (23%) as a means to improve implementation of the new curriculum. Interestingly, 2 out of 10 (17%) say that we should do away with the competency-based curriculum altogether as a means of improving it.

Citizens are also aware of the Presidential Working Party set up to review the new curriculum and the process of implementation. Two out of three citizens are aware of the working party (66%) and nearly half are optimistic that it will achieve its objectives (44%). A range of reasons are given as to why the working party may not be able to discharge its mandate including limited public participation (5%) and that government has a pre-set position on the issue (4%).

James Ciera, Country Lead for Twaweza in Kenya, said: *"It is encouraging to see these high levels of awareness among citizens on curriculum reforms including recent developments such as the establishment of the working party. But it is not clear whether research into the roll out and*

challenges of the competency-based curriculum has considered citizens' views and perspectives. We know that in order for children to learn, all the main stakeholders - parents, teachers, school leaders and students – need to play their part. We are calling for an inclusive public dialogue with an emphasis on citizens' views that can inform the working party's deliberations. It is critical that the often-neglected opinions of parents come to the fore of this important public reform.”

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Notes to Editors

- This brief and the data contained can be accessed at www.twaweza.org / www.twaweza.org/sauti
- Twaweza works to demonstrate how citizens can come together to collectively address their problems, and make government work better for them; enable citizens' voices, interests and experiences to be heard and taken seriously in decision-making; promote and protect open civic space which enables citizens to freely assemble or organise, speak and act in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. @TwawezaKenya (Facebook), @Twaweza_Ke (Twitter), Twaweza East Africa (Instagram).