

Citizens' priorities:

Kenyans' biggest concerns and priorities for public spending

This brief explores the issue of national concerns and priorities, from the perspective of citizens. The data comes from Twaweza's *Sauti za Wananchi* survey, a nationally-representative, high-frequency mobile phone panel survey of public opinion and citizens' experiences. Further details are available from www.twaweza.org/sauti.

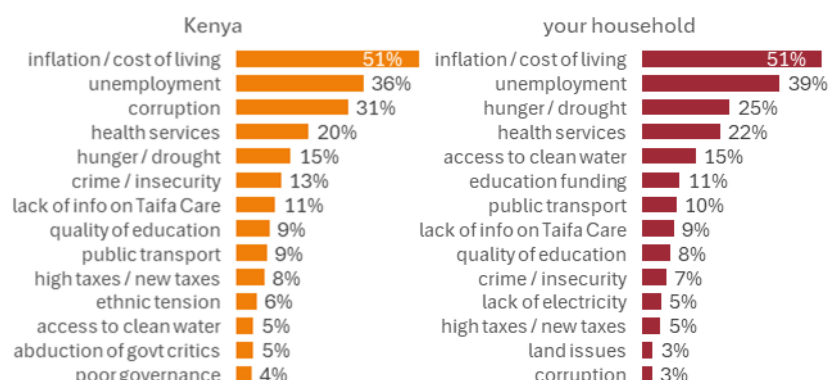
Insight 1. Kenyans rank the cost of living and unemployment as the country's biggest challenges

Citizens see the cost of living and unemployment as the biggest challenges facing both their own households and the country as a whole.

Corruption, health services and hunger also rank high on the list.

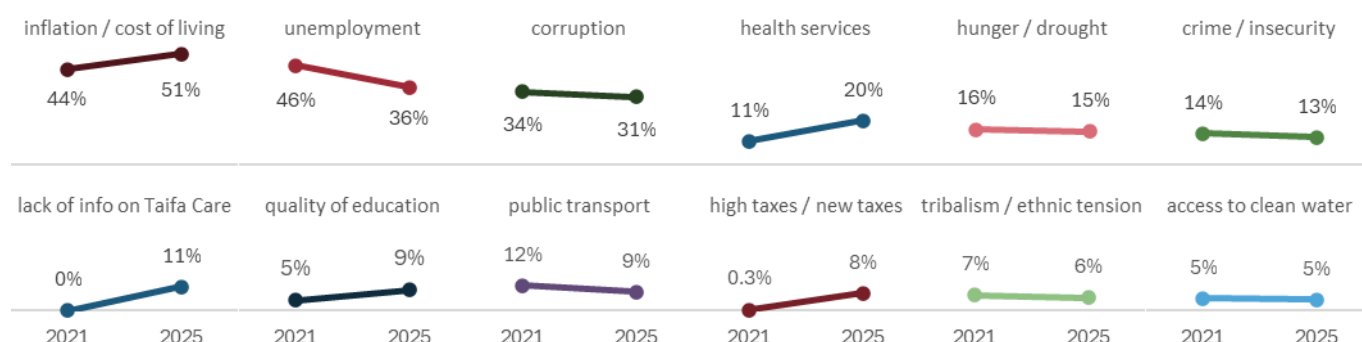
Compared to 2021, concerns around the cost of living, health services, Taifa Care and the level of taxation have risen, while concerns around unemployment has fallen a little.

What are the three most serious problems facing Kenya / your household today?



Source: Sauti za Wananchi special panel round 13, March-April 2025

What are the three most serious problems facing Kenya today?



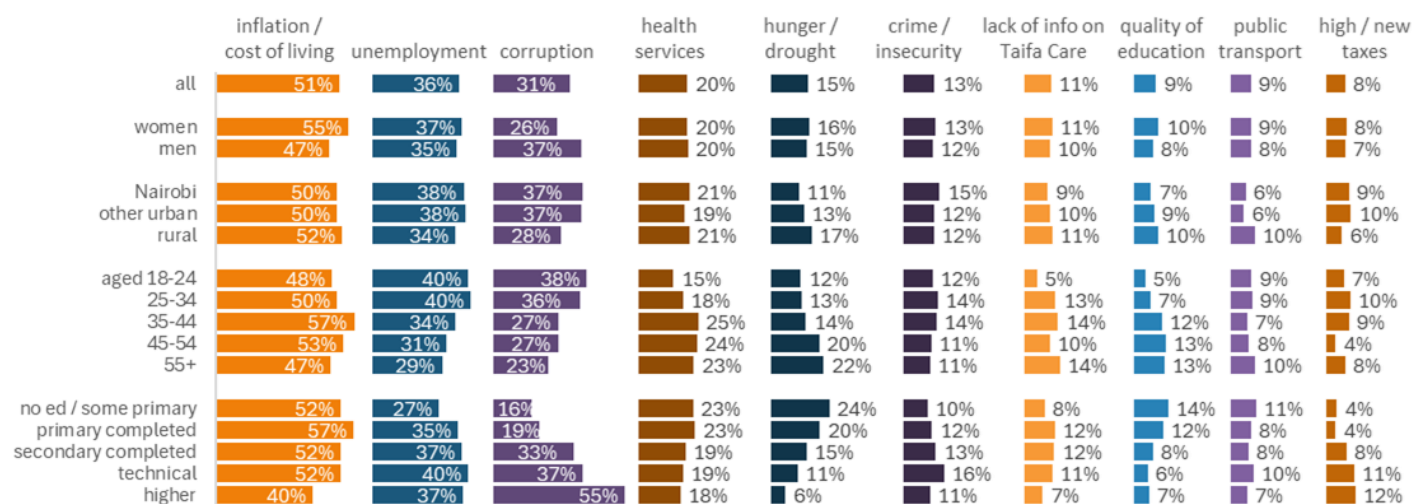
Source: Sauti za Wananchi special panel round 13, March-April 2025

Insight 2. Different demographic groups have markedly different concerns

Citizens' concerns differ considerably across different demographic groups. The differences are particularly marked when it comes to citizens' education levels. The cost of living and unemployment are concerns shared by most, but those

with higher levels of education are much more likely to point to corruption as being among the top three problems currently facing Kenya. Conversely, those with lower levels of education are much more likely to highlight hunger / drought as an issue.

What are the three most serious problems facing Kenya today?



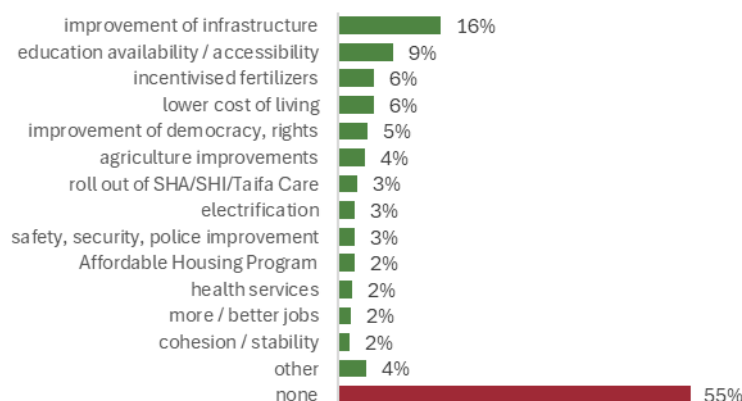
Source: Sauti za Wananchi special panel round 13, March-April 2025

What are the two biggest positive changes in the country in the past two years?

Insight 3. Citizens point to infrastructure as an areas where there has been progress, though many are unable to identify anything positive

The most widely-cited positive change in the country in recent years is improvement of infrastructure, cited by one out of six citizens (16%), followed by increased availability and accessibility of education.

However, these numbers are dwarfed by the large number of citizens (55%) who said they were unable to identify any positive change in the country in the past two years.



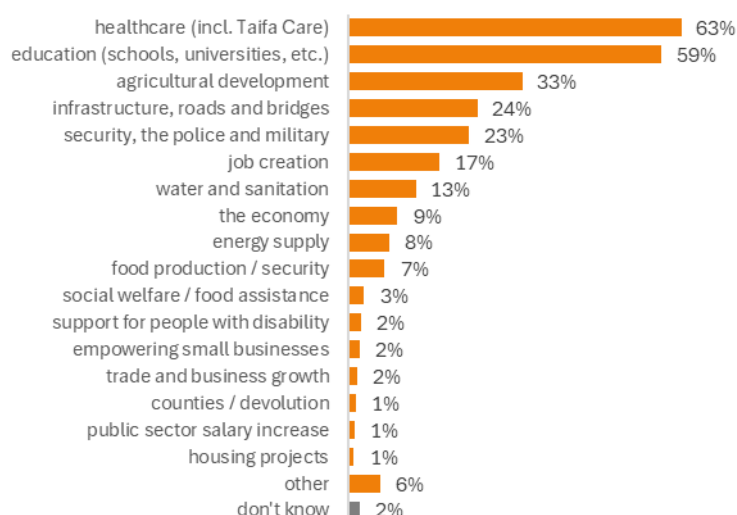
Source: Sauti za Wananchi special panel round 13, March-April 2025

Insight 4. Citizens' priorities for increased public spending are health and education services

Asked where the government should prioritise any increase in public spending, citizens give two clear answers: healthcare (63%) and education services (59%). In each case, six out of ten citizens point to these areas.

Other areas where substantial numbers of citizens think the government should prioritise increases in public spending include agricultural development (33%), infrastructure (24%), security (23%), job creation (17%) and water and sanitation (13%).

If the government could increase spending, what should be high priority?



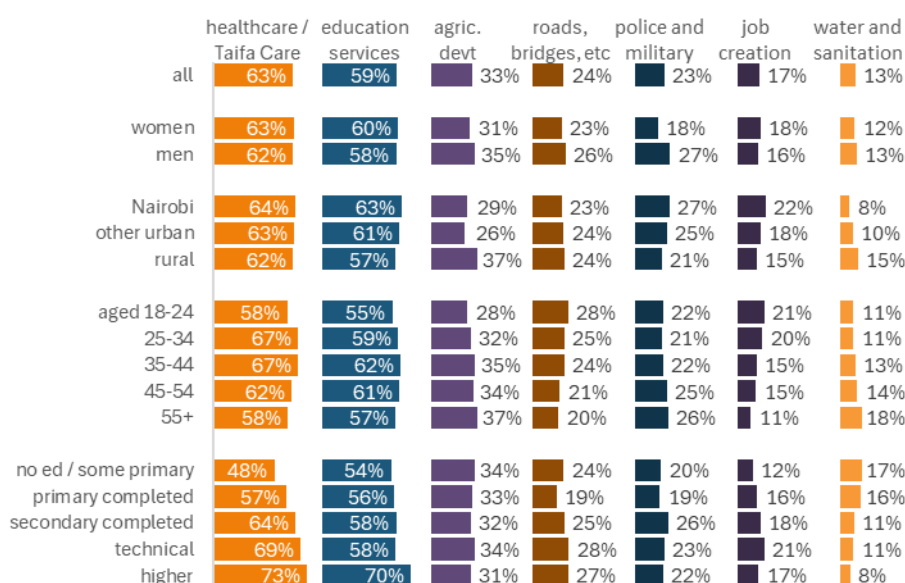
Source: Sauti za Wananchi special panel round 13, March-April 2025

Insight 5. These priorities are broadly shared across different demographic groups, though with some variation

Healthcare and education services are the top priorities of all major demographic groups when it comes to any increase in public spending. However, the most well-educated are even more likely than other citizens to point to these areas.

Those with lower levels of education are more likely than other citizens to point to water and sanitation as being in need of increased spending. Young people are more likely than others to prioritise job creation, and men are more likely than women to suggest more spending on police and the military.

If the government could increase spending, what should be high priority?



Source: Sauti za Wananchi special panel round 13, March-April 2025

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Sauti za Wananchi

