**Webinar Questions and Responses**

* To Prof. Kayuni and Chunga: (1) What exactly were the people's expectations from the legislature? (2) Would you agree with me that Malawians "over-expect" or expect too much from their parliamentarians, which would affect the so-called "levels of trust?" Do Malawians really know the roles of MPs?

Perhaps we should start by pointing out that Afrobarometer assesses performance evaluation on one hand and trust on the other using two different sets of questions. This is important because the issues in question (over-expectation) seems directly linked to performance approval.

Regarding levels of expectation, we would respond in the broader context of patronage politics. While it may be argued that Malawians expect “too much” from their parliamentarians, one needs to appreciate that those are to a greater degree jointly defined and perpetuated by both sides. Particularistic goods (in some cases in from of direct handouts) are an integral part of the campaign during elections. Not only do the candidates promise but they also start delivering the same before assuming office of the MP. As such, it would be argued that public levels of expectation are linked to the promises. As such dissatisfaction with their performance (and perhaps in turn the level of trust cannot be entirely blamed on over-expecting citizens).

* Have the results from this paper been presented to the institutions being assessed and if yes, have they proposed actions to address the issue?

Dissemination of findings is an important feature of the Afro barometer surveys. Each round of surveys is followed by a series of dissemination engagements some of which are to the general public while others are targeted at key policy makers. While this paper hasn’t been shared yet because it is part of a larger book not yet out, these results were released. For instance, after Round 8, we had a meeting with all chairpersons of parliamentary committees where these findings and other policy critical results were discussed. Participants shared their reflections on the same

Have people surveyed suggested solutions?

The structure of survey questions on this matter does not ask respondents for solutions.

Are the increases and decreases in trust linked to specific events?

We did not analyse this in the paper, but it is possible to do some kind of process tracing and link sharp turns in the trends to specific events.

Could there underlying drivers to trust, such as levels of education, political beliefs, economic status etc? Loads of questions for this very interesting topic!

Again, we did not deal with effect of demographics on trust in this paper, but it is possible because Afrobarometer captures all these.

* Hi, Tim Brewer here from Water Witness. Just looking at the early slides, trust is described as the ratio of expectation to performance. Does this suggest that a) trust just means competence (or an index of competence and corruption perception) or is there a separate way of validating it as a separate thing? and/or b) that lowering expectations increases the measure of trust?

We would like to underline the concept of “normative expectation” as the refence point for people’s evaluation. While objective ‘competence’ of the leaders may suggest otherwise, people’s assessment may be a function of many other factors. That is why part of this paper deals with the role of government handling of certain public policy questions in shaping trust. In the same vein, it was not our intention to link corruption (and competence) to trust. We have treated these as possible drivers.

* How do you see citizen trust in your current location in Scotland? How does it compare with trends in Africa, and Malawi in particular?

This was handled by Prof Mattes and David.

* Prof Kayuni and Joseph, thank you for bringing the importance of trust for the fore in governance. What is the impact of limited or absence of trust building actions in  accountability or transparency  in leadership of Malawi on the governance ecosystem  between 1999-2019?

In this paper we discuss possible implications of declining levels of trust focusing on confidence in elections as a method of choosing leaders, support and satisfaction with democracy, and public views on compliance to law enforcement .

* To Prof. Kayuni and Chunga: Did you manage to compare the trust data from rural and urban settings?

We did not in this paper. However, if required this is possible because Afrobarometer data can be disaggregated by location of the respondents

* Thank you for the presentations. The time period you are covering is 1999 - 2019. Do you know when the surveys for 2020-2021 will be available and have you any early indications on how these will look?

Data for the next round is yet to be collected. We hope to go to the field in January of 2022.

* How critical is the role of civil society in sustaining trust considering that CSO activism has equally been on the rise in the period 1999 to 2019?

There are possibly two ways of looking at this. First, the rise of CSO activism and a wave of protest action may be in response of the declining trust in state institutions as presented in this paper. For this point of view, one would argue that the rise of CSOs is basically organised form of expression of the loss of trust.

On the other hand, it can be argued that CSO critical of government action and inaction can raise public awareness of ‘failure’ of the concerned institution thereby fanning discontent among the citizens leading to the expressed levels of trust.

* It seems reasonable to argue that social media that lack quality control promote cynicism.  That having been accepted, I wonder how participants view the online Nyasa Times: does it have proper editorial standards?

Afrobarometer has interesting questions about the role of social media. As Prof Mattes commented in his reflection on the paper, social media is playing an important role in shaping public opinion. However, in this paper, we did not deal with this aspect.

* Trust requires holding one accountable if expectations are not met. In this context do we see any political will to build accountability mechanism to ensure good governance? or are these accountability mechanisms available with citizens choosing to lose trust and not push for accountability?

We do not address this question in this paper. But we can make a comment or two. First, it is possible that Malawians do not utilize existing modes of accountability for various reasons. For example, a good proportion of Malawians surveyed by Afrobarometer say they fear retaliation/ sanctions if they reported cases of corruption. Second, data on the extent to which these elected officials ‘listen’ to what constituents have to say shows that Malawians feel their leaders do not listen. In addition, it could be argued that Malawians are not passively losing trust; they are doing something to push for accountability. The rise of protect actions in the past few years which reached unprecedented levels in 2020 could be some evidence of this view.