



## **Ipsos Poll: Performance Ratings of Public Institutions and Public Office Holders**

### **4th March, 2014**

### **Most Serious Problem Facing Kenya Today**

As the President and Cabinet retreat for their deliberations in Nanyuki, Kenyans have basically expressed the same views regarding the country's most pressing problems as they did four months ago (November, 2013). Inflation/the high cost of living at present is identified by 50%, slightly down from the 56% who did so last November. Unemployment likewise holds the same second position, though concern with this has increased somewhat, to 19% from the 14% in IPSOS' previous survey.

It is the third most-frequently mention problem, however, that has seen a change, with crime/insecurity and corruption exchanging positions. While the former was identified as the most pressing problem last November by 9% of respondents, the same proportion now give priority to corruption, which was previously so ranked by 7%, the same proportion who now do this for crime/insecurity. (Note that such a change is within the survey's margin-of-error.)

### **Ratings of Officials/Institutions**

The public's willingness to ascribe the highest rating ("a lot of confidence") to leading officials and institutions – even in the private sector - has fallen across-the-board. This drop includes officers within the Executive branch. Ratings for the President and his Deputy have both fallen about one-fifth (i.e., about 10% from around 50% four months ago: from 53% to 41% for the President, and for his Deputy from 48% to 38% currently). But nearly the same proportional declines apply to other key officials/institutions, with drops of 13% for Senators, 15% for County governments, 9% for MPs, and 12% for Cabinet Secretaries (considered collectively). Even the Supreme Court's/other courts' declines of 12% and 7%, respectively, are within this range, perhaps a reflection of recent verbal attacks on several judicial constitutional rulings.

At the same time, it should be noted that key ratings in the private/non-governmental sector have fallen just as much if not even more, given that these were the highest ratings last November: for the media (to 43% currently from 68% in November – a whopping drop of 25%), and religious leaders (to 39% currently from 50% in November, a fall of 11%). Such results raise the question as to what accounts for such widespread negativity over the last few months. Is it more a reflection of an initial, post-election optimism that would simply unrealistically high, or more one based on a focused-scrutiny of performance?



Indeed, looking at the ratings-changes for the entire list of 23 officials and institutions, not one has inspired an increase in confidence, though the KDF's drop of just 2% is basically one of no-change (given the survey's margin-of-error of +/-2%).

But filtering these results through the 'lens' of political party (coalition) alignment suggests just how much such views are influenced by partisan loyalty. Taking ratings for the President, for example, 69% of Jubilee supporters give him the highest rating of "a lot of confidence", compared to those aligned to any of CORD's parties of whom only 13% accord this praise to him. Moving to the Deputy President, the comparable figures are 65% (from Jubilee respondents) to just 11% (from those aligned to CORD).

For ratings of Cabinet Secretaries, such partisan influence is likewise clear. Whereas 18% give them the highest rating ("a lot of confidence") only 5% of CORD loyalists do so. For officials that themselves represent both sides of the current political divide, the figures appear to reflect their distribution quite accurately. For example, while 12% of Jubilee supporters have the highest level of confidence in MPs, only 6% of CORD's backers do so; nearly the same applies to Senators (11% vs. 9%).

A similar, if quite modest, gap is seen with regard to political parties, with supporters of both of the main coalitions nearly equally wary of their role/performance: 8% of Jubilee backers have "a lot of confidence" in them, as opposed to 5% from pro-CORD respondents.

Even the Police, whose mandate is to serve all Kenyans equally, attract marginally more confidence from supporters of those now in power (Jubilee: 14%) than from those who leaders are now on the sidelines (CORD: 8%).

Finally, and quite expectedly, while only 5% of Jubilee loyalists express the highest level of confidence in Raila Odinga, more than half of all CORD supporters do so (54%), though this raises the question (even before the aborted ODM elections of last Friday), if 46% of backers of the coalition which he heads have anything less than "a lot of confidence" in him, how secure is his position, at least in the longer term?

Finally, here moving outside government, we see a reverse situation, with 48% of CORD supporters expressing "a lot of confidence" in the media, whereas only 40% of those aligned with Jubilee do so.

## **Two "Main Achievements of Jubilee So Far"**

In responding to the invitation to identify "two main achievements of the Jubilee government so far", the first finding of note is that those unable (or unwilling) to give the new leadership team any success-credit has dropped only marginally, with 51% now saying there have been "none" (together with 4% "Not sure") as opposed to 54% (with 9% "Not sure") last November.



16%, 14% and 11% identified improvements in health care, the educational system, and infrastructure, respectively. These figures compare with 30%, 11% and 6% for these same three sectors, respectively, last November.

### **Survey Methodology**

The target population for this survey was Kenyans aged 18 years and above. The sample size was 2,031 respondents living in urban and rural areas. The margin-of-error attributed to sampling and other random effects of this poll's sample size is +/- 2.2 with a 95% confidence level. The fieldwork for this survey was conducted between 8th and 15<sup>th</sup> February 2014. Data was collected through face to face interviews using hand held devices (smart phones). Ipsos Synovate funded the survey.

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