

THE URBAN DREAM AND THE REALITIES OF RURAL TO URBAN MIGRATION IN EAST AFRICA



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Introduction

Africa's population is set to double in the next thirty years to over two billion people, of whom perhaps only one in five will live in rural areas or outside of major urban centres. And while Sub-Saharan Africa is the least urbanised region in the world, it has the highest urbanisation rate globally, and many experts predict that Africa's urban population is set to double every twelve years.

There are lots of reasons for this dramatic demographic shift, including inner-city population growth and a rising rate of movement from rural areas. The growth in urban population is to a large part driven by migrants leaving rural areas to settle in cities with a hope of finding economic opportunities, better social services and livelihoods. Almost one-half of the population surveyed had already migrated at least once, and about one third of the population is considering migrating to an urban area in the near future.

Other factors including natural and human-made crises such as war, disease outbreaks and extreme weather events (such as drought, flooding, and landslides) also contribute to the trend.

East Africa's major cities are reflecting this trend, with all the economic capitals currently growing at around five percent per year. Dar es Salaam, with seven million inhabitants, is twice the size of Kampala and Nairobi and is the ninth fastest-growing city in the world.

However, what is clear is that urban authorities are increasingly becoming overwhelmed, with urban public service infrastructure overstretched and in dire need of fixing.

So, what is likely to happen given the increasing number of migrants from rural areas? What is the effect on public participation, including political engagement with public affairs and governance? And how can city authorities prepare to manage the rapid influx of rural-urban migrants and city populations, given all their great expectations?





Zahara Abdul - Commuting as a way of urban life: Preacher in the train from Namanve, Wakiso district, Uganda

About the Survey

In an effort to understand urbanisation processes in three East African countries, FES commissioned a survey in Kenya (2019), Uganda (2020) and Tanzania (2021), focusing on the interplay between urbanisation, public service delivery and democracy. It is hoped that this survey data will support appropriate interventions to improve public service delivery and urban planning, in East Africa.



The FES urbanisation survey worked with a random, stratified, clustered sample of adult citizens across low- and medium-income areas in the surveyed cities and rural districts. The choice of sample areas makes generalisations difficult. The internal structures of a city differ a lot – each area has its own characteristics. Nevertheless, the sample gives us an understanding of general trends.

The purpose of the survey was to map and analyse differences between urban and rural areas with regards to expectations and experiences of public service delivery and demand for democracy.

The survey design ensured that the two samples were kept distinct and addressed the key questions, excluding urban centres from rural samples and excluding wealthy neighbourhoods from urban samples. In addition, the design sought to capture political and ethnic variations by choosing geographically diverse sample areas and taking into account recent voting trends.

In each sample area a thousand people were interviewed, meaning that in each country two thousand respondents took part in our surveys. Respondents were an equal mix of male and female by gender, aged 18 years and above. Fieldwork was conducted between October and November 2019 in Kenya, September and October 2020 in Uganda, and during March 2021 in Tanzania.

A more detailed discussion of the survey methodology, including how the sample was identified, mapped, selected and implemented, is provided in Annex 1.

Key Findings

- Urbanisation is unstoppable. Our data show that fast movement is happening, and it's not slowing down at all. Nearly half of our respondents were interviewed in a district different from where they were born, and migrants were four times more likely to have moved to an urban area than a rural area.
- Almost a quarter of the surveyed population was considering moving in the next five years, with 14% of respondents thinking about migrating to an urban area and only 8% consider moving to a rural area. This suggests that the movement towards cities is nearly twice that in the opposite direction and the growth in urban populations is not about to slow down any time soon.
- People give three main reasons for migrating to urban areas: to access economic opportunities, to be closer to family members who already migrated, and to live closer to better social services. Half of all incomers cited economic factors as the driving force behind their decision to move, while a fifth attributed their choice to social factors such as joining their spouse or family that had already migrated to an urban area or to pursue better education and other services.
- According to our study's findings, residents in the three main cities are up to eight times more likely to have access to social services such as electricity, piped water, health care, and education and justice than their rural compatriots.
- Residents of the three main cities mentioned an expectation that public service provision would be better in urban areas than in rural areas, but among city dwellers only a slight majority describe actual government service provision in urban areas as "good" or "excellent".
- Our data show that higher levels of expectations among urban migrants go along with a receding social and political engagement once they have arrived in the cities. Only a fifth of all respondents are members of any kind of associations, most in rural areas. Rural areas also ranked higher for contact with leaders. However, urban residents are far more engaged in social media groups (32%) than their rural counterparts (11%).
- Notwithstanding the small number of people who pay direct taxes, the rate of dissatisfaction with government services in relation to the amount of taxes paid remains consistently high across urban and rural settings, with nearly half of respondents across the region saying that they get some services but not enough compared to the amount of taxes paid. Only 13% of respondents, most of them in Tanzania, regard the local and national taxes and other user fees they pay as representing fair value for money.
- Meanwhile a large majority (70% across the region) oppose the idea of government imposing more taxes or user fees for improved public health, education and transport services, be it because of poverty or political mistrust. The result is an "urban paradox" where citizen's rising expectations go along with an almost collective reluctance to provide policy makers with the means to pay for the demanded social services.



People give three main reasons for migrating to urban areas: to access economic opportunities, to be closer to family members who already migrated, and to live closer to better social services.



Migration

Our data show that almost half of East Africans (43%) have ever migrated within their own country (Figure 1), with almost 70% of those on the move choosing to settle in urban areas (Table 1). The majority of those who have chosen to migrate are aged 18-30 (47%), female (46%) and educated beyond secondary school (52%) (Table 1).



Figure 1: Rural to urban migration experiences

Respondents were asked: Where were you born? (Figure 1 shows % who said “In another County or district”)

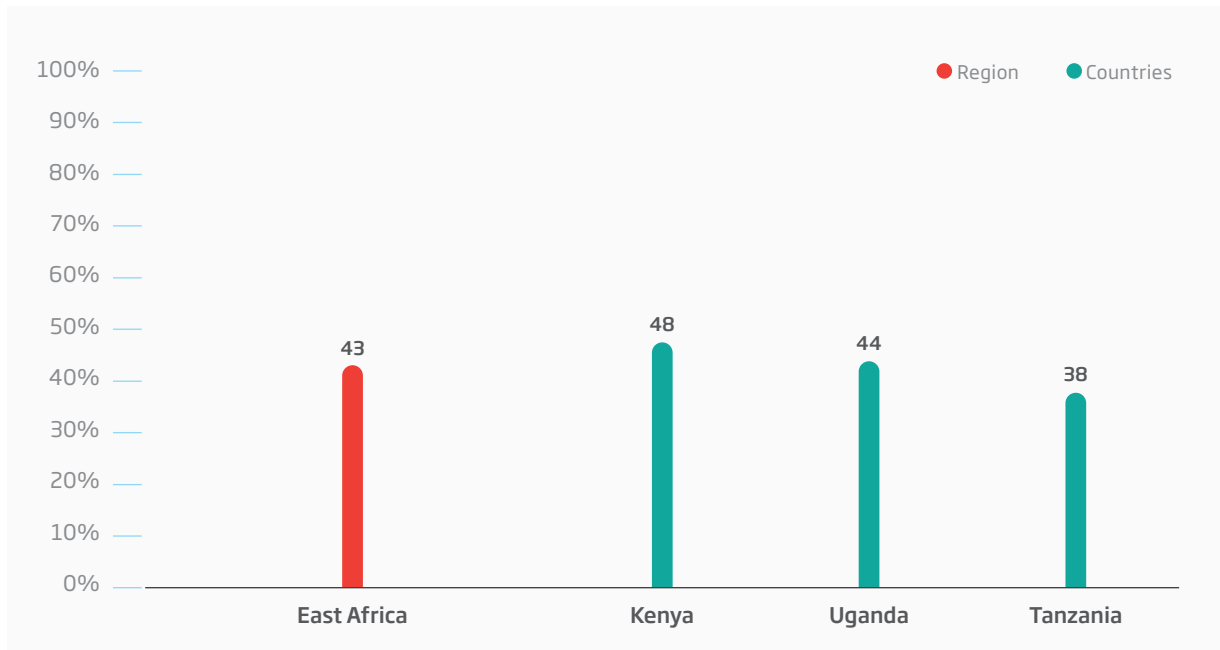


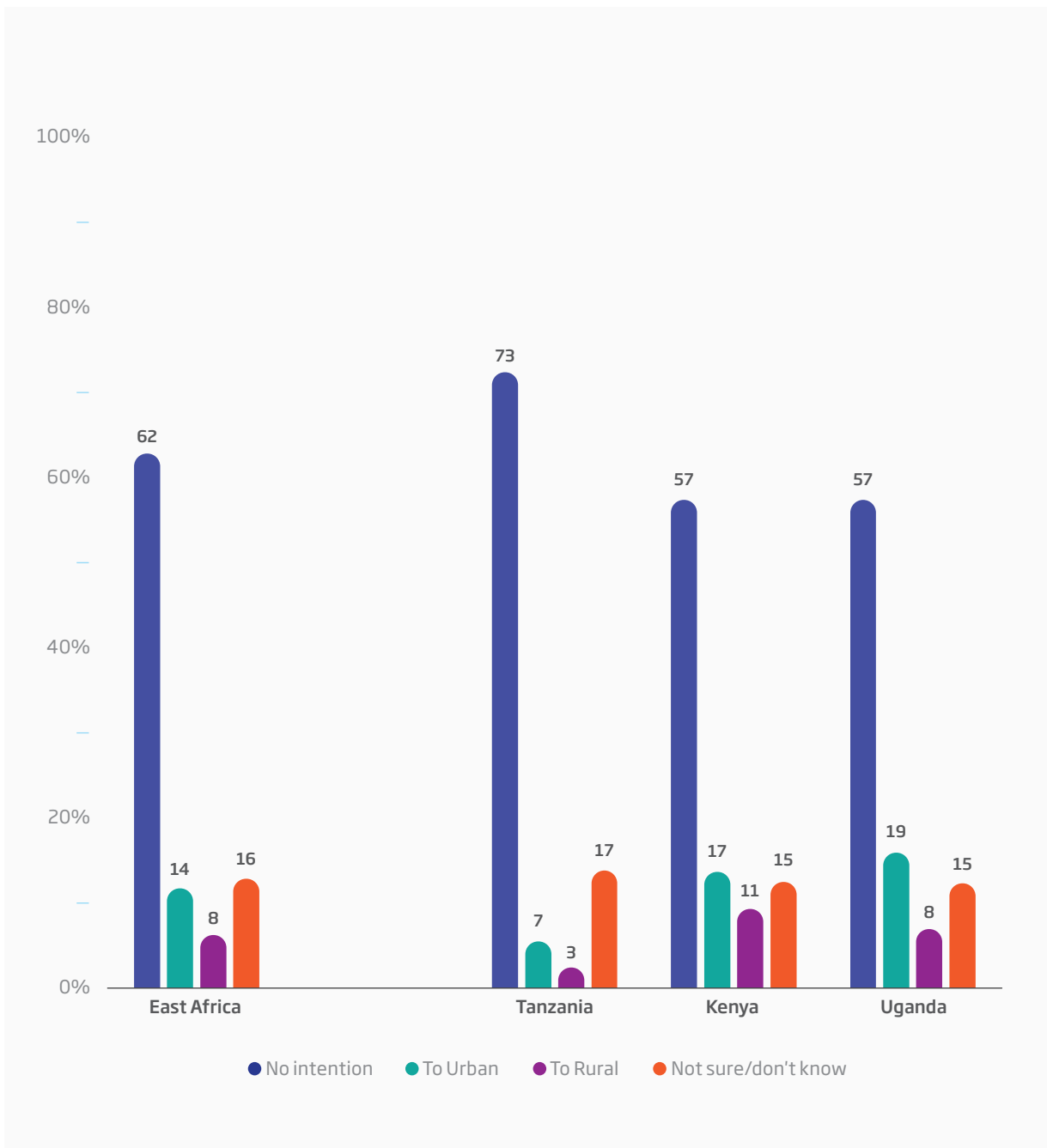
Table 1: Migration experiences by demographics

		TANZANIA	KENYA	UGANDA	EAST AFRICA
Residence	Rural	17%	15%	20%	17%
	Urban	58%	79%	68%	68%
Education	No formal schooling	31%		27%	29%
	Primary schooling	35%	37%	35%	36%
	Secondary schooling	45%	53%	51%	49%
	Post-secondary schooling	46%	54%	54%	52%
Age	18-30 years	40%	52%	48%	47%
	31 years and above	36%	44%	39%	40%
Gender	Male	37%	44%	40%	40%
	Female	39%	51%	47%	46%

According to the data in figure 2, nearly a quarter (22%) of East Africans are currently contemplating some kind of move, split between 14% planning to head for a city and the 8% stating that they are planning to move to a rural area. It is important to note that in this set of data Tanzania is a substantial outlier, with only 7% considering a move to an urban area (Kenya is at 17% and Uganda at 19%) and just 3% thinking to head to a rural area (Kenya, meanwhile, is weighing in at 11% and Uganda at 8% on the same).

Figure 2: Intention to move in the next 5 years

Respondents were asked: Do you have plans to move away from here within the next 5 years? (% of all responses)



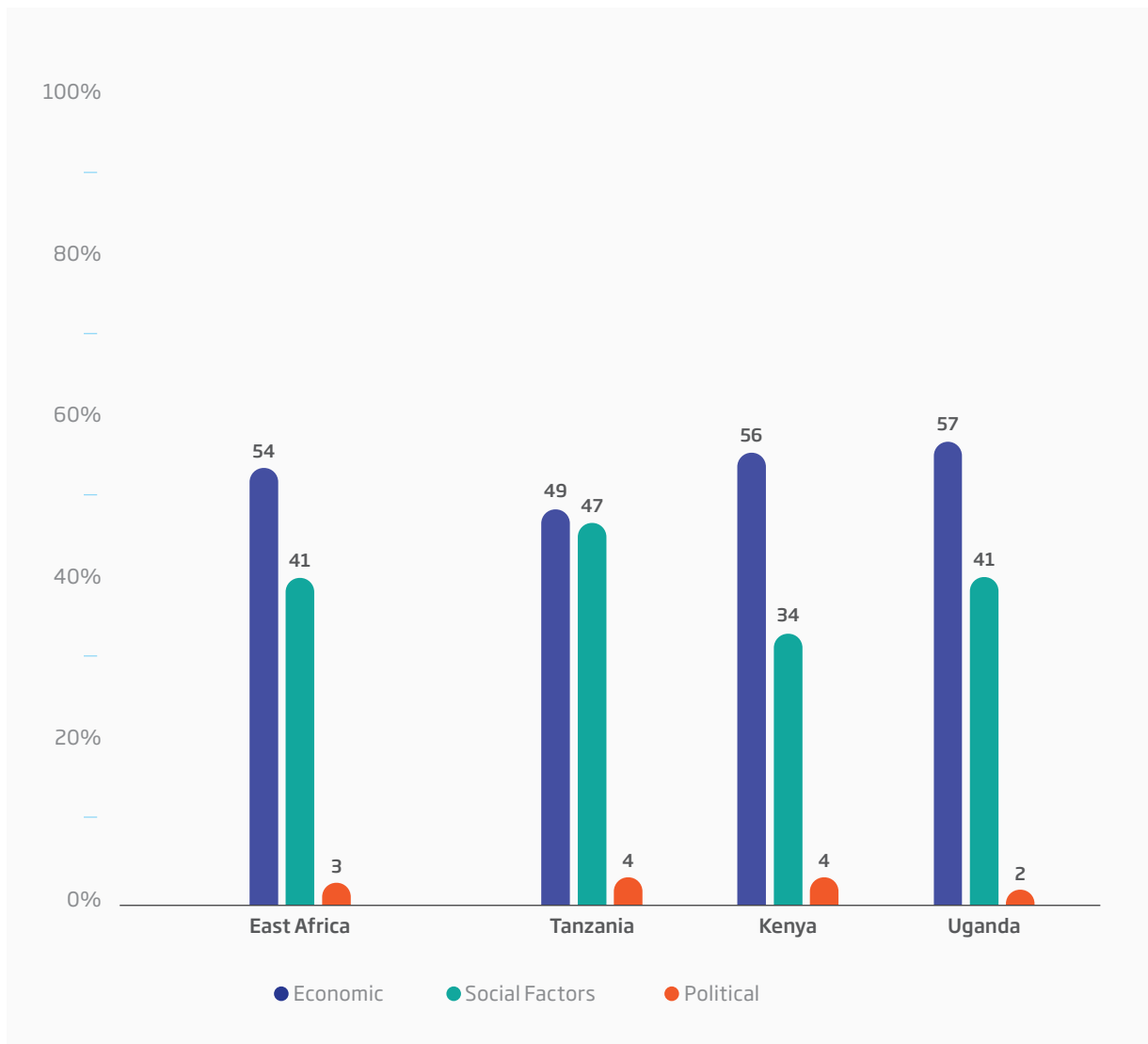
Motivation to Migrate

Survey respondents regard cities as job markets. When asked to indicate the most important reasons behind peoples' choice to move from one place to another, the data is pretty clear: economic reasons (such as looking for a job or other opportunities) ranked highest, accounting for more than half (54%) of the reasons

mentioned. This need to find paid work, to tap into other work-related opportunities or to escape rural poverty was given as the top reason for choosing to migrate in all three surveyed countries; in Kenya it was 56%, 57% in Uganda and 49% in Tanzania (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Reasons for migration

Respondents were asked: What would you say were the most important reasons why you moved here?
(% of all responses grouped)



Also notably two-fifths of all responses (41%) reported that they had made the decision to relocate due to social factors (Figure 3). As indicated in figure 4, over half of our respondents (56%) reported that their family played a key role in their decision to migrate these reasons included joining a spouse or family member who had already made the journey (14%), accessing better quality

services (12%) and pursuing education opportunities (8%). Only a small proportion (3%) indicated that their decision to move away from home was driven by political or security factors such as seeking a more democratic environment or freedom from violent conflicts and insecurity (Figure 5).

Figure 4: Family role in decision to migrate

Respondents were asked: What role would you say your family played in your decision to move here?
(% who say: "Somewhat an important role" or "Very important role")

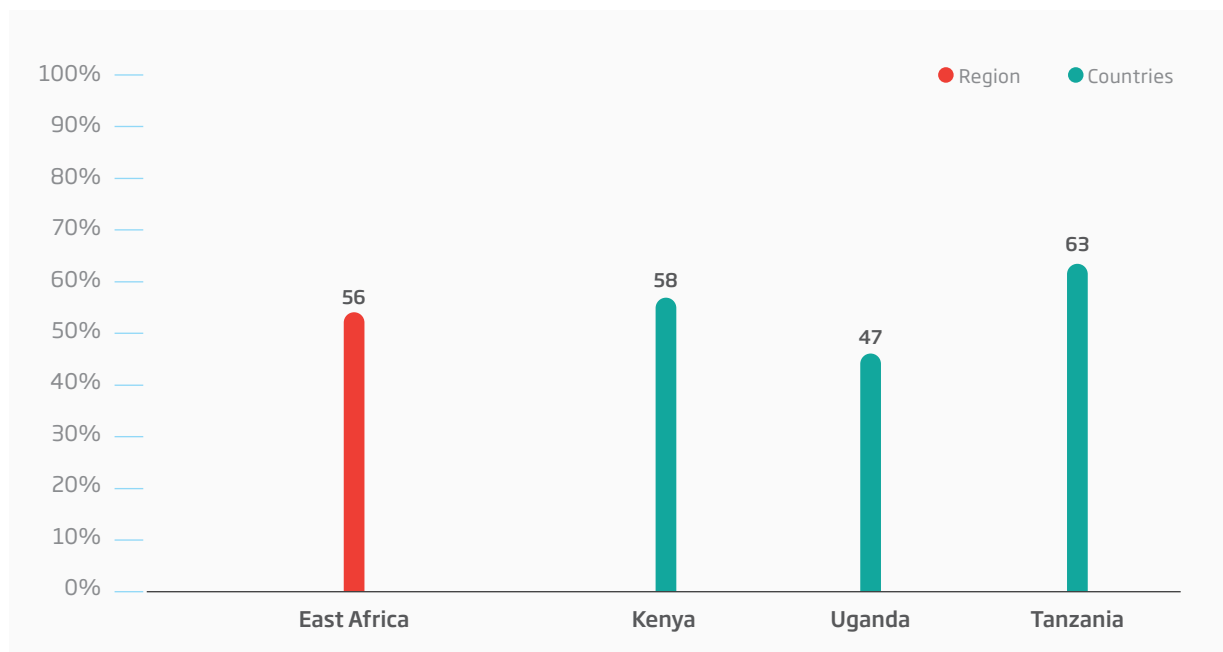
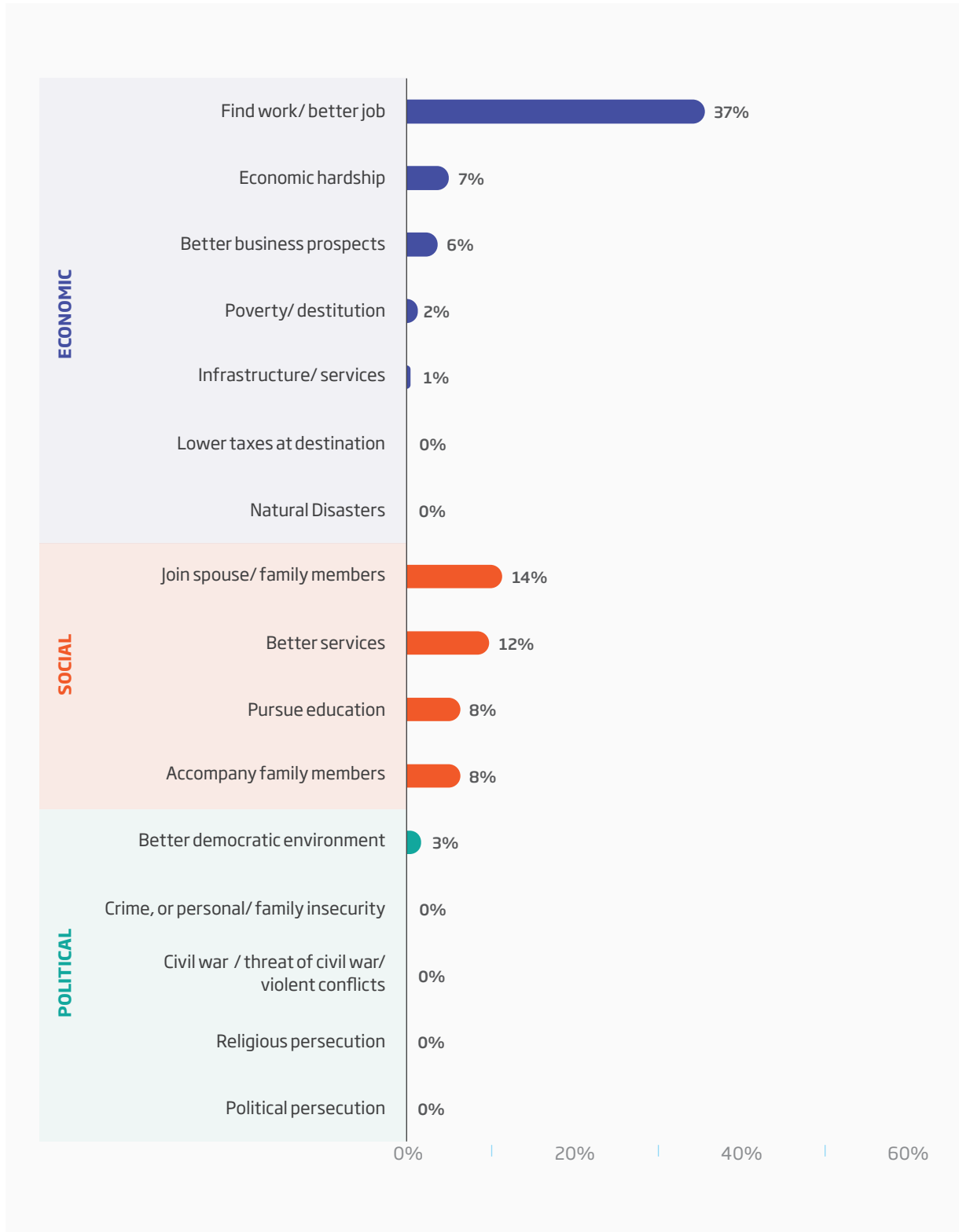


Figure 5: Most important reason for migrating in East Africa.

Respondents were asked: What would you say were the most important reasons why you moved here? (% of all responses)



Respondents were asked: When disaggregated by gender (Table 2), results indicate that more men (60%) than women (48%) mention economic reasons for deciding to migrate, perhaps reflecting economic pressures being unequally distributed by gender. Similarly, more women (47%) than men (33%) attribute their choice to move to the city to social reasons. And in a curious twist, the data for Uganda reveal that rural residents intending to migrate have many of the same aspirations and priorities as those who have already migrated (Table 2), perhaps indicating that these aspirations are often not realized and that migration may not always bring all of the hoped-for benefits. Conversely, in Kenya the proportion of urban residents who mention economic reasons for choosing to migrate (60%) is twice that in rural areas (28%) while one-half of urban residents in Tanzania (53%) compared to 36% in rural areas, cite economic reasons (Table 2).

Table 2: Reasons for decision to migrate, grouped by selected demographics

Note: ECO means Economic reasons; POL means Political reasons and SOC means Social reasons

		UGANDA			KENYA			TANZANIA			EAST AFRICA		
		ECO	POL	SOC	ECO	POL	SOC	ECO	POL	SOC	ECO	POL	SOC
Gender	Male	63%	3%	34%	62%	4%	27%	56%	4%	39%	60%	4%	33%
	Female	52%	1%	46%	50%	5%	40%	42%	3%	55%	48%	3%	47%
Residence	Urban	58%	2%	41%	60%	5%	29%	53%	3%	44%	57%	3%	38%
	Rural	56%	3%	41%	28%	2%	69%	36%	5%	59%	40%	3%	56%
Education	No Formal Schooling	66%	0%	34%				32%	6%	62%	49%	3%	48%
	Primary	61%	3%	36%	59%	5%	32%	52%	4%	44%	57%	4%	37%
	Secondary	57%	2%	41%	61%	5%	29%	49%	5%	47%	56%	4%	39%
	Post-secondary	49%	2%	49%	48%	4%	41%	44%	1%	55%	47%	2%	49%
Age	18 - 30 years	56%	2%	42%	52%	4%	38%	49%	3%	47%	52%	3%	42%
	31 and above	59%	3%	39%	60%	5%	30%	49%	4%	47%	56%	4%	39%

Data in Table 2 above further show that despite small country-level differences, across East Africa the economic, social and political considerations for deciding to migrate do not vary between the youth (aged 18 - 30 years) and the non-youth (aged 31 years and older). A similar trend exists across the education profile, although attaining primary or secondary school education appears important for economic reasons to migrate.

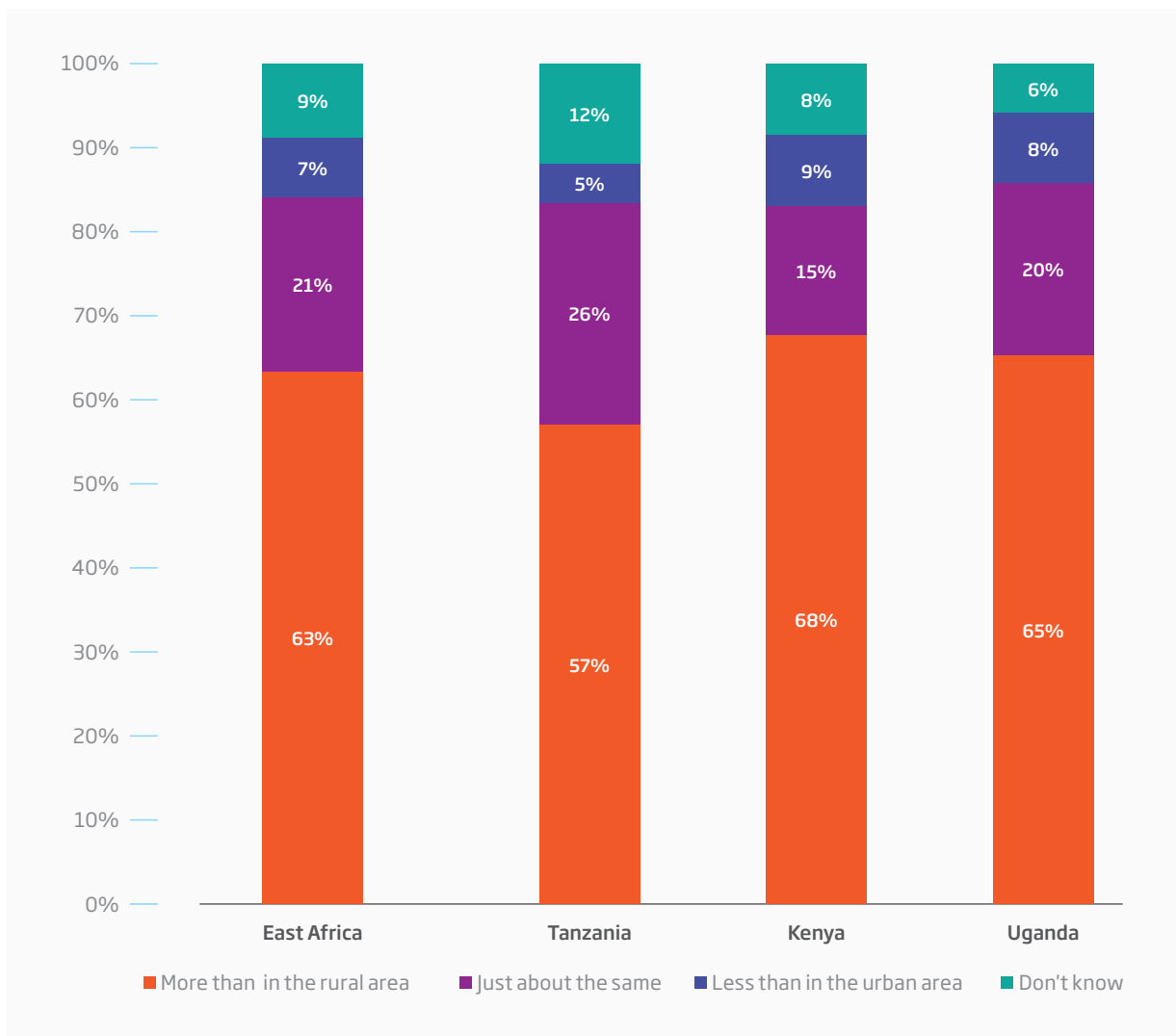


Expectations and Social Services

Most respondents in rural areas of East Africa (63%), expect better public services provision in urban areas than in rural areas. This expectation is highest among Kenyans (68%), Ugandans (65%) and slightly lower among Tanzanians (57%). (Figure 6)

Figure 6: Rural respondents' public services expectations

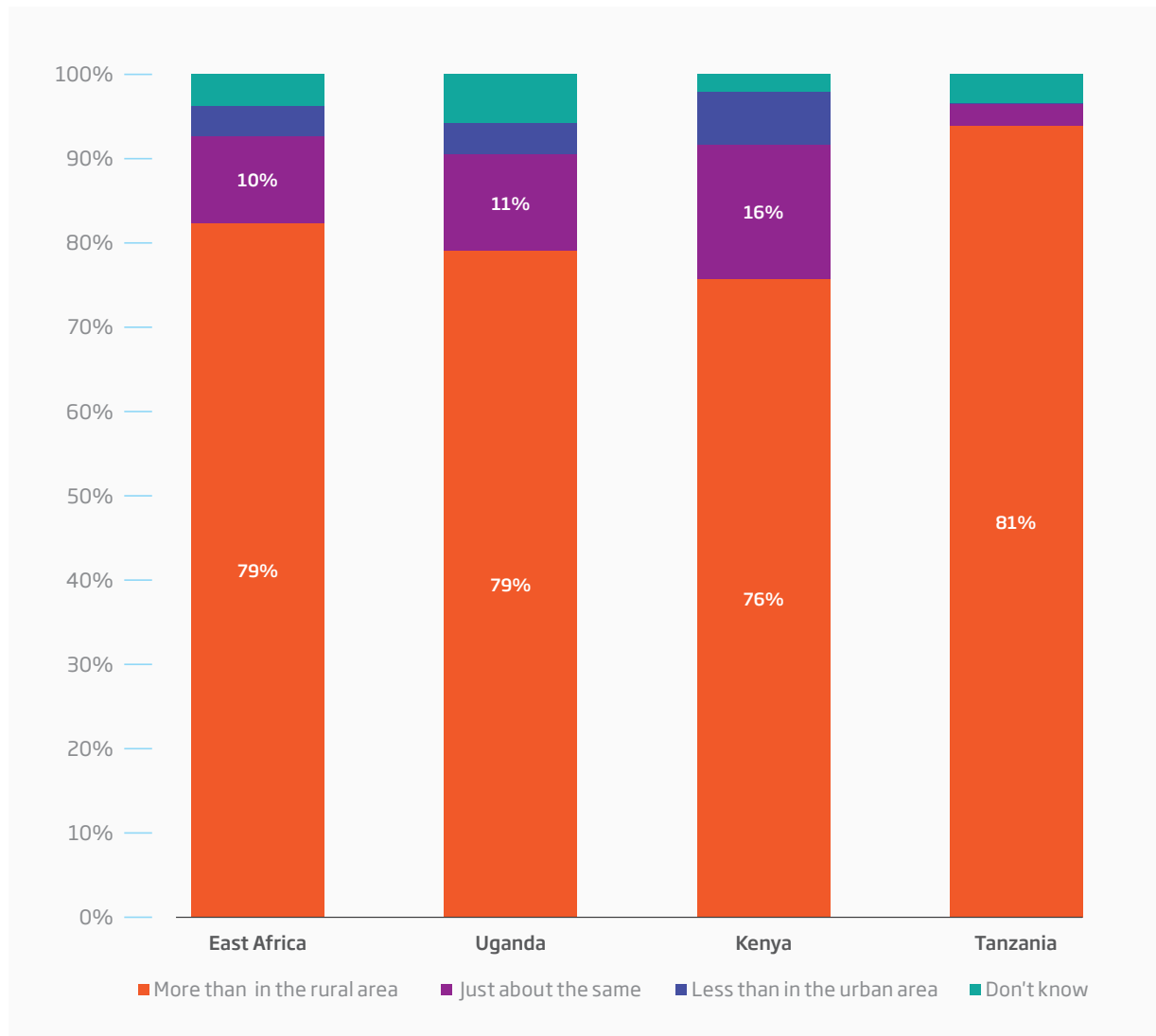
Respondents were asked: Suppose you were to move into an urban area, would your expectation regarding public service delivery change (% of all responses)



On the other hand, as shown in Figure 7, most migrants (79%), after moving to urban areas, expect even better public services provision. Upon migrating to the cities, expectations are highest among Tanzanians (81%), compared to Ugandans (79%) and Kenyans (76%).

Figure 7: Urban migrants' public services expectations

Respondents were asked: Now that you have moved into an urban area, would you say your expectations toward public service delivery has changed? (% of all responses)



Regarding provision of public services within urban and rural areas, Figure 8 shows that over one-half of all survey respondents (56%) rate government service provision in urban areas as "good" or "excellent". The same figure, on the other hand, shows that only 20% of survey respondents rate government service provision in rural areas as "good" or "excellent". Tanzanians rate government service provision in urban areas highest (72%), followed by Uganda (49%) and Kenya (46%). However, although public services are rated as excellent, they still rank third to economic reasons, among the key factors contributing to rural - urban migration across East Africa as indicated in Figure 5.

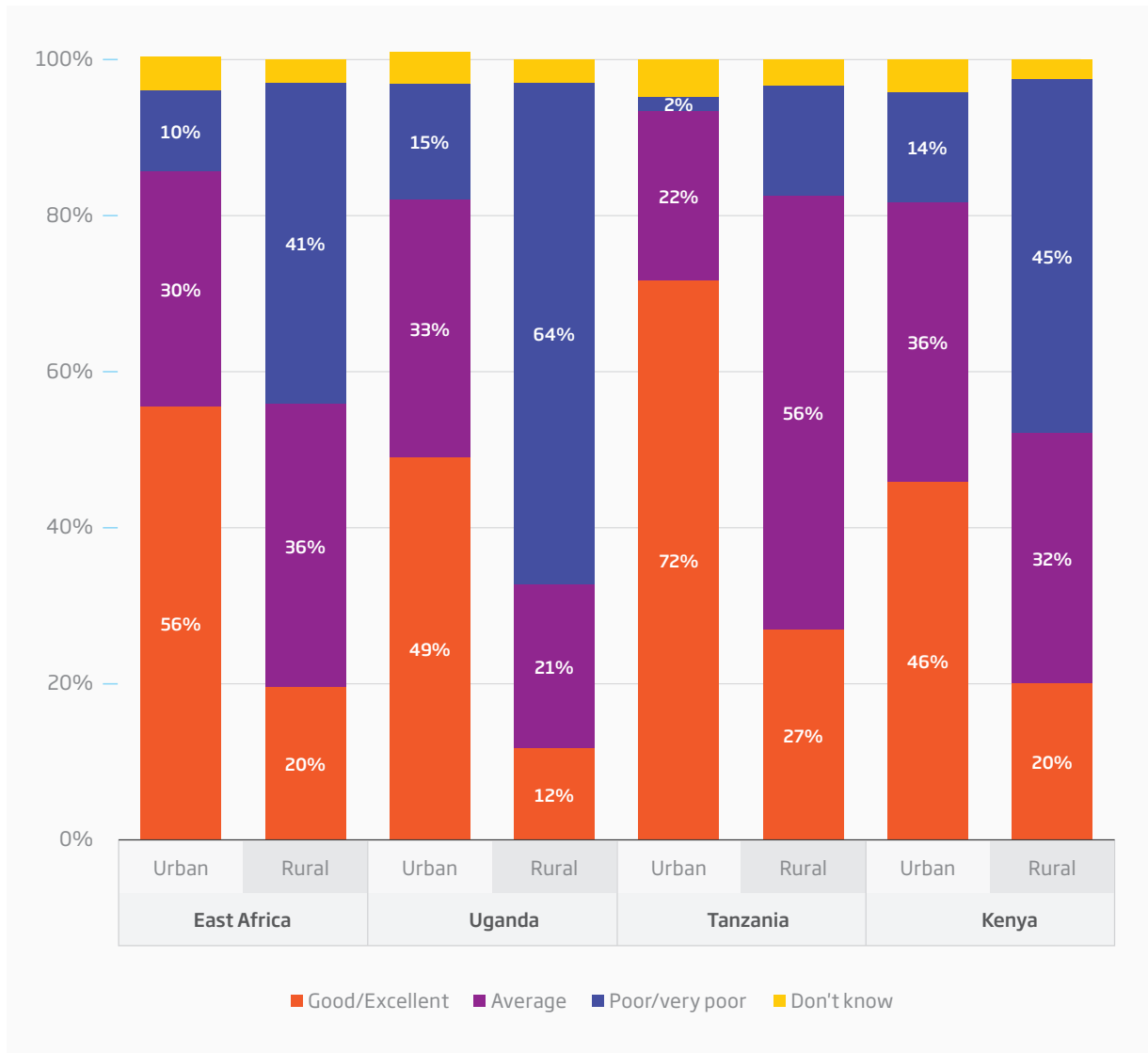


People give three main reasons for migrating to urban areas: to access economic opportunities, to be closer to family members who already migrated, and to live closer to better social services.



Figure 8: Rating of government services in urban and rural areas

Respondents were asked: Speaking about government services generally, what would be your rating of service provision by government in the following areas? A) Urban area, B) Rural area (% of all responses)



A comparison between figures 7 and 8 reveals that whereas many (79%) expect better service provision in urban areas, fewer (56%) find the provision of government services in the urban better than in rural areas.

Data show gross gap in availability of services infrastructure between urban and rural areas. Urban areas have more public services infrastructure than rural areas particularly electricity and piped water. From the data in Figure 9, an electricity grid was reported to be present in 77% of all urban areas sampled compared to only 46% of the rural whereas a piped water supply system was observed in 72% of urban areas and only in 32% of rural areas. Access to mobile phone services, though still below three-quarters, didn't differ much across the urban-rural divide (68% urban vs 65% Rural).

However, to appreciate the size of this gap in quality or quantity of services, the geographical land area size comparison of the urban and rural sample should be put into context. Table 3 shows that across the entire East Africa sample, although the rural portion covers a geographical area 7 times the size covered by the urban sample, it is home to only one-third of the population in the urban sample. Thus, the urban areas sampled are far more densely populated, and have more numerous social services being concentrated in a much smaller geography, which makes access much easier than in rural areas.

Figure 9: Observed public service infrastructure at village level

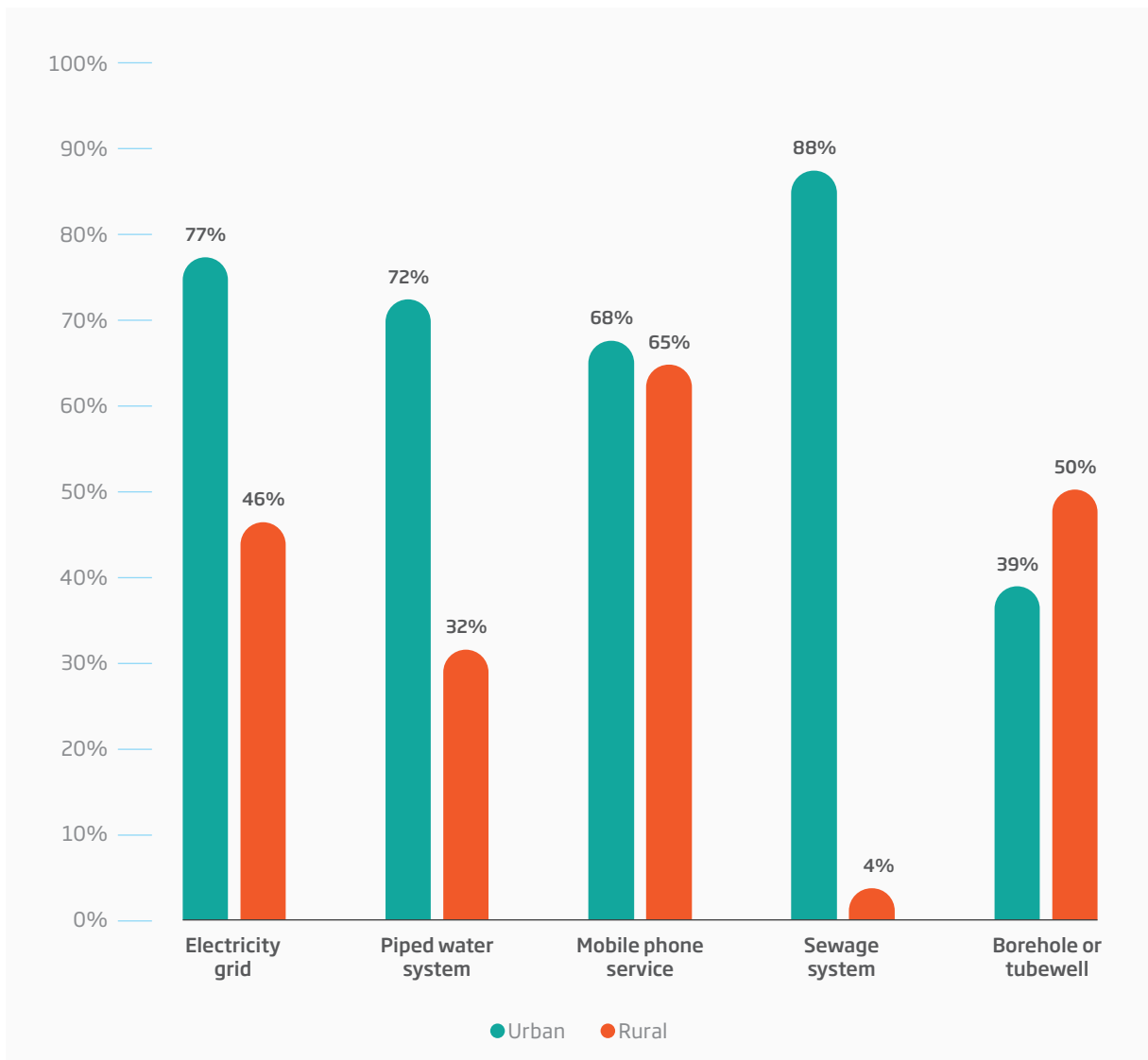


Table 3: Relative land area size for the urban and rural sample by country

COUNTRY	DISTRICT / COUNTY	Land area size (KM2) by sample		Population by sample	
		URBAN	RURAL	URBAN	RURAL
UGANDA	Kampala district	189		1,650,800	
	Bushenyi district		942		246,100
	Masaka district		1,296		328,900
	Kamuli district		1,557		545,900
	Gulu district		3,452		316,600
Uganda subtotal		189 ^a	7,247 ^b	1,650,800	1,437,500 ^c
KENYA	Nairobi County	696		4,397,073	
	Migori County		2,586		1,116,436
	Tharaka Nithi County		2,609		393,177
Kenya subtotal ^d		696	5,195	4,397,073	1,509,613
TANZANIA	Dar es Salaam region (districts of Temeke, Ilala, Ubungo, Kinondoni and Kigamboni)	1,393 ^e		5,781,557 ^f	
	Arusha Region (Karatu district)		3,300		263,976
	Njombe Region (Makete district)		5,800		101,208
Tanzania subtotal		1,393	9,100 ^g	5,781,557	365,184
East Africa total		2,278	21,542	11,829,430	3,312,297

Hyperlinked Sources:

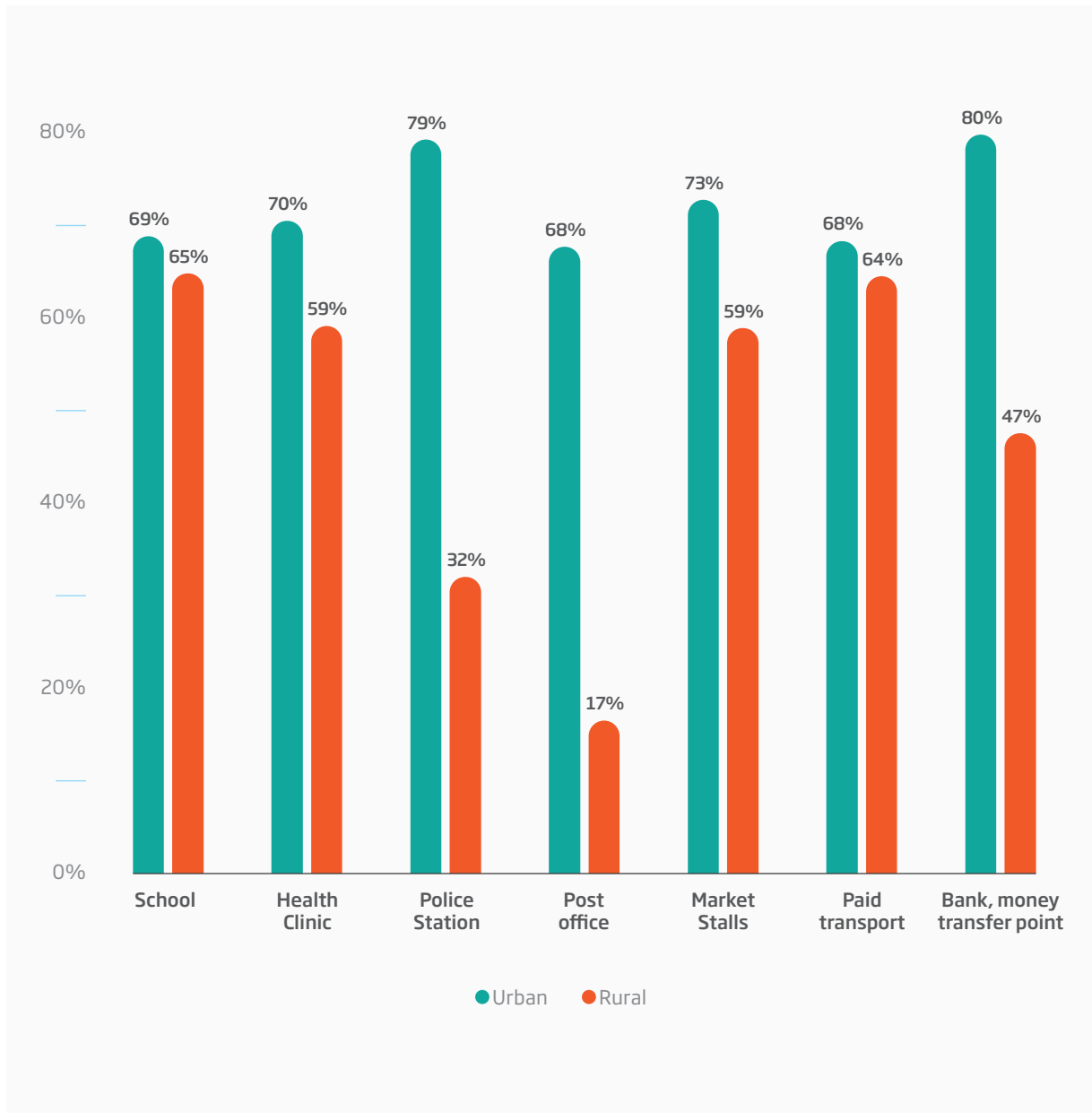
- [Kampala Statistical Abstract, 2019 \(page 3\)](#)
- [Uganda 2014 district profiles: Gulu district, Kamuli district: Masaka district and Bushenyi district](#)
- [Uganda 2019 population projections](#)
- [Kenya 2019 Population and Housing Census Report, Volume 1](#)
- [Dar es Salaam land area estimated from online sources](#)
- [Tanzania 2017 population projections](#)
- [Land area for Karutu district and Makete district estimated from the district online resources](#)



Private and public service facilities (schools, police and other services, health clinics) were also more numerous in the urban compared to the rural sample. Data shows in Figure 10 that for example, health clinics (private or public) were reported in seven out of ten urban villages surveyed (70%), but less numerous in the rural sample

(59%). Similarly, more schools were reported in the urban (69%) than in rural sample (65%) It should be noted that services in urban areas are much more numerous, concentrated in a smaller area, mainly due to high population density making access and use much easier (Table 3).

Figure 10: Observed public and private facilities at village level





Services in urban areas are much more numerous, concentrated in a smaller area, mainly due to high population density making access and use much easier

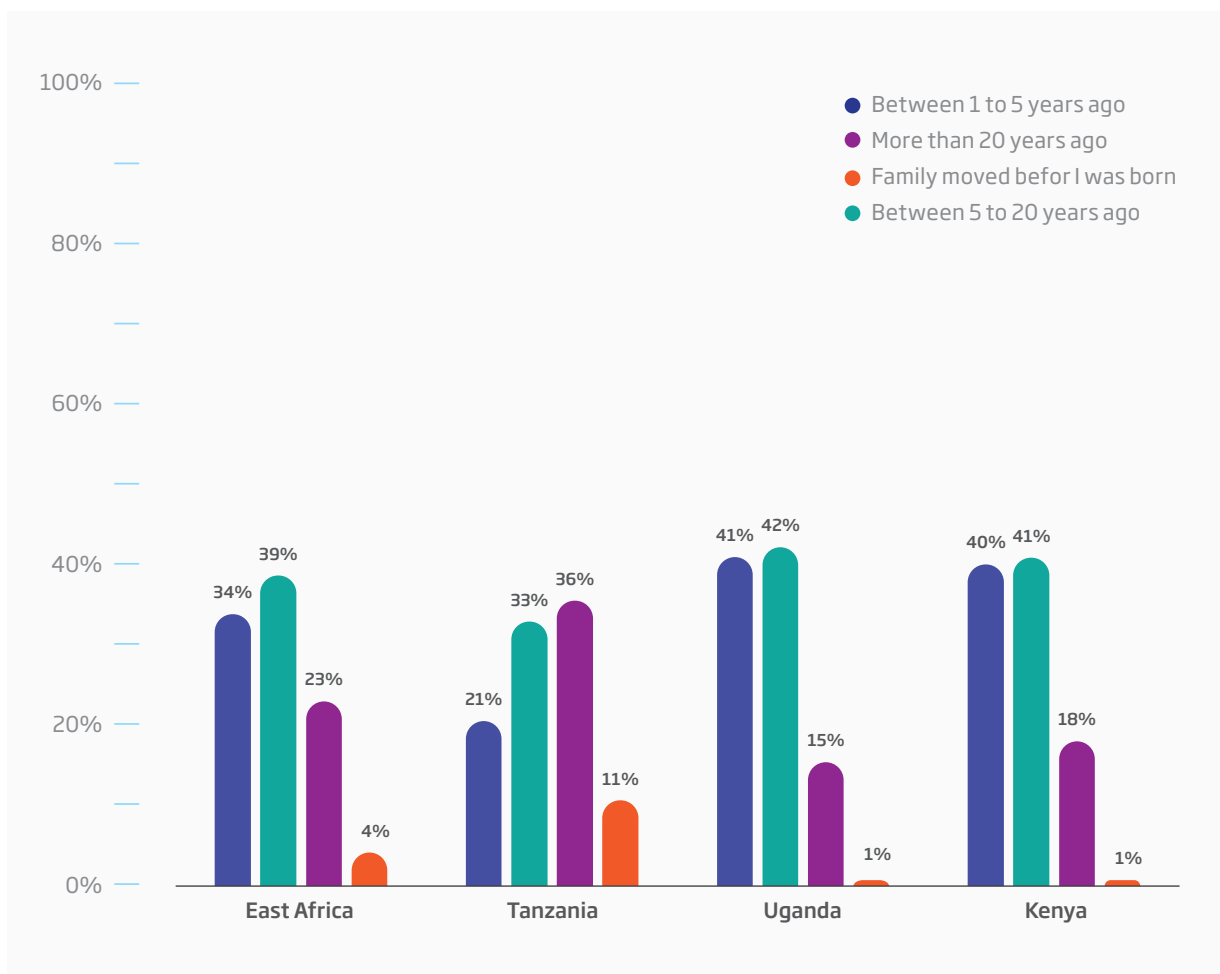
Experiences in the Capital Cities (Conurbation)

Our data in Figure 11, underline the fact that large population movements are a continuing trend of the 21st century – almost three-quarters (73%) of all migrants made their move in the past twenty years, while 34% had moved recently, in only the last five years (prior to the survey). Only about a quarter of respondents (23%)

claimed to have moved more than twenty years ago. Interestingly there is a big disparity: while in Kenya and Uganda a majority (41%) and (42%) of urban residents arrived in the city less than twenty years ago, in Tanzania the trend is more mature, with the biggest share (36%) having relocated twenty or more years ago.

Figure 11: How many years ago did you migrate?

Respondents were asked: How many years ago did you move here? (% of all responses)



Meanwhile data show a substantial proportion of urban residents (12%) indicating their intention to relocate back to rural areas (Table 4). This seems to indicate a certain level of dissatisfaction with the very factors that contributed to their initial decision to head for the cities. If the assumption is correct it bears further examination

as it would emphasise the importance of national and local governments in the three East African countries to prioritise equitable social service delivery, particularly in rural areas, both for the good of citizens and also to meaningfully contribute to better-planned national urbanisation strategies.

Table 4: Intention to move in the next five years by demographics

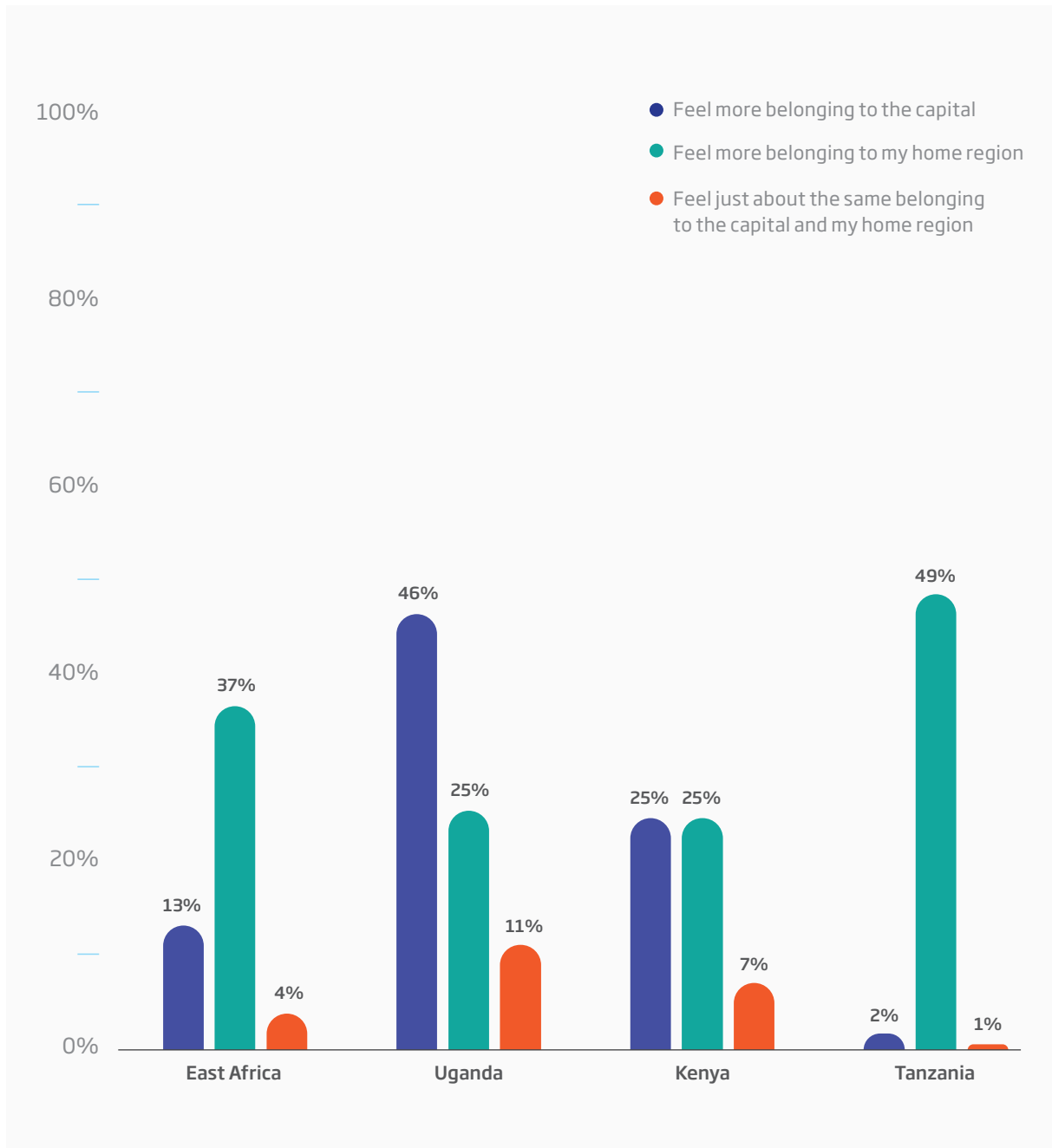
		TO URBAN				TO RURAL			
		TZ	KE	UG	EA	TZ	KE	UG	EA
Intention to move in next 5 years		7%	17%	19%	14%	3%	11%	8%	8%
Gender	Male	8%	18%	20%	15%	9%	9%	9%	9%
	Female	5%	16%	18%	13%	8%	8%	8%	8%
Residence	Urban	7%	18%	26%	17%	4%	19%	13%	12%
	Rural	6%	15%	14%	12%	2%	4%	4%	3%
Education	No Formal Schooling	1%		10%	6%	2%		5%	3%
	Primary	4%	7%	15%	9%	3%	9%	7%	6%
	Secondary	12%	20%	24%	18%	3%	12%	10%	8%
	Post-secondary	18%	26%	24%	23%	2%	13%	12%	9%
Age	18 - 30 years	11%	25%	27%	21%	11%	10%	7%	9%
	31 and above	5%	9%	11%	8%	5%	12%	10%	9%

As people move their homes, do they move their identities as well? The statistics from our survey as shown in Figure 12 reveal that it depends a lot on the country. In Uganda, almost half (46%) of respondents declared that they felt more at home in the urban area than their district of origin. Meanwhile in Tanzania only 2% felt this way, dwarfed by the 49% of recently-urbanised residents who responded that they felt like

they belonged more to their home district than the city. Kenya evens it out, meeting in the middle with a quarter each stating that they feel more at home in rural and urban environments. Overall, across the region there is a clear bias towards retaining a strong sense of origin, with an average of 37% of respondents stating that they felt a stronger sense of belonging to their home region.

Figure 12: Identity / Belonging

Respondents were asked: Since you moved here, do you feel more belonging to the capital than your home district? (% of all responses)



This sense of attachment to areas of origin should not come as a surprise, since many regional cultural norms and traditions attach significant meaning to the ancestral home as family, belonging and even burial grounds, but the discrepancy between the countries is intriguing. Many citizens consider their links to their home areas as a social safety net, a place to go in times of trouble.

Engagement and Civic Action

Despite the optimism with which such journeys are embarked upon, our survey reveals that people become measurably less engaged in the governance process upon their arrival in the 3 major urban cities of Kampala, Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. They contact their leaders less than their rural counterparts and score lower on associational membership, and yet they still show similar levels of frustration with service delivery as their rural counterparts.

In the section of the survey dealing with questions of democratic engagement, respondents were asked to indicate if they were active or inactive members of a variety of associations ranging from religious organisations to self-help groups, to trade unions, political groupings or social media and other networks. The purpose of this question was to determine the mechanisms through which individuals exercise their democratic rights to freely speak out and engage in active citizenship, for example by demanding access to equitable social services.

Associational membership and contact with leaders

Results from the three East African countries indicate that only about a fifth of respondents (19%) are members of one or more such groups or associations. Whereas in Kenya and Tanzania there is only a slight difference between urban and rural areas in rates of associational membership, the data reveal a rather more pronounced contrast in Uganda, where urban respondents are substantially less involved in associational or group membership (11%) than their rural counterparts (17%). (Figure 13 and Table 5)

Figure 13: Membership to at least one group

Respondents were asked: Now I am going to read out a list of groups that people join or attend. For each one, could you tell me whether you are an active member, an inactive member, or not a member (% that are members to at least one group)

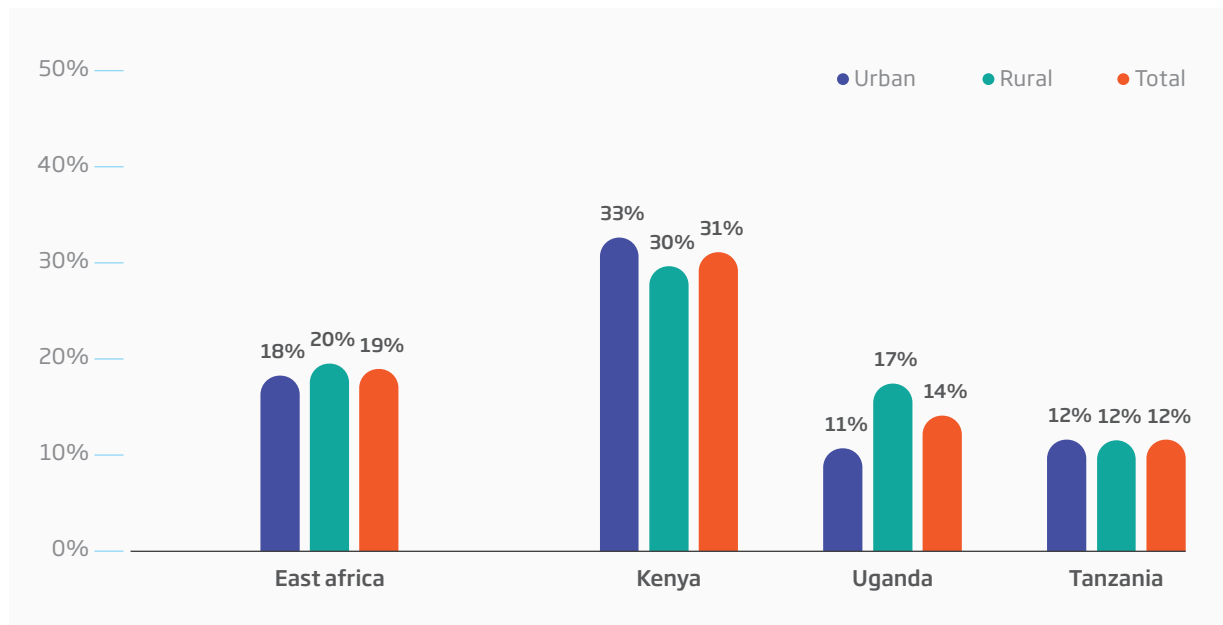


Table 5: Membership to each group by demographics

	Tanzania		Kenya		Uganda		East Africa	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Religious group	12.0%	14.7%	39.6%	49.4%	12.9%	14.9%	21.5%	26.3%
Neighbourhood group	14.3%	25.1%	31.9%	43.4%	10.0%	32.2%	18.7%	33.6%
Voluntary grouping	9.3%	11.5%	26.2%	25.8%	3.0%	11.1%	12.8%	16.2%
Investment group	14.0%	16.7%	53.1%	50.4%	20.1%	33.7%	29.1%	33.6%
Political group	9.4%	5.9%	9.9%	7.5%	5.1%	14.0%	8.1%	9.1%
Trade Union	3.3%	2.7%	11.3%	9.2%	3.0%	10.2%	5.9%	7.4%
Social media group	19.1%	4.6%	56.7%	22.2%	20.8%	6.2%	32.2%	11.0%

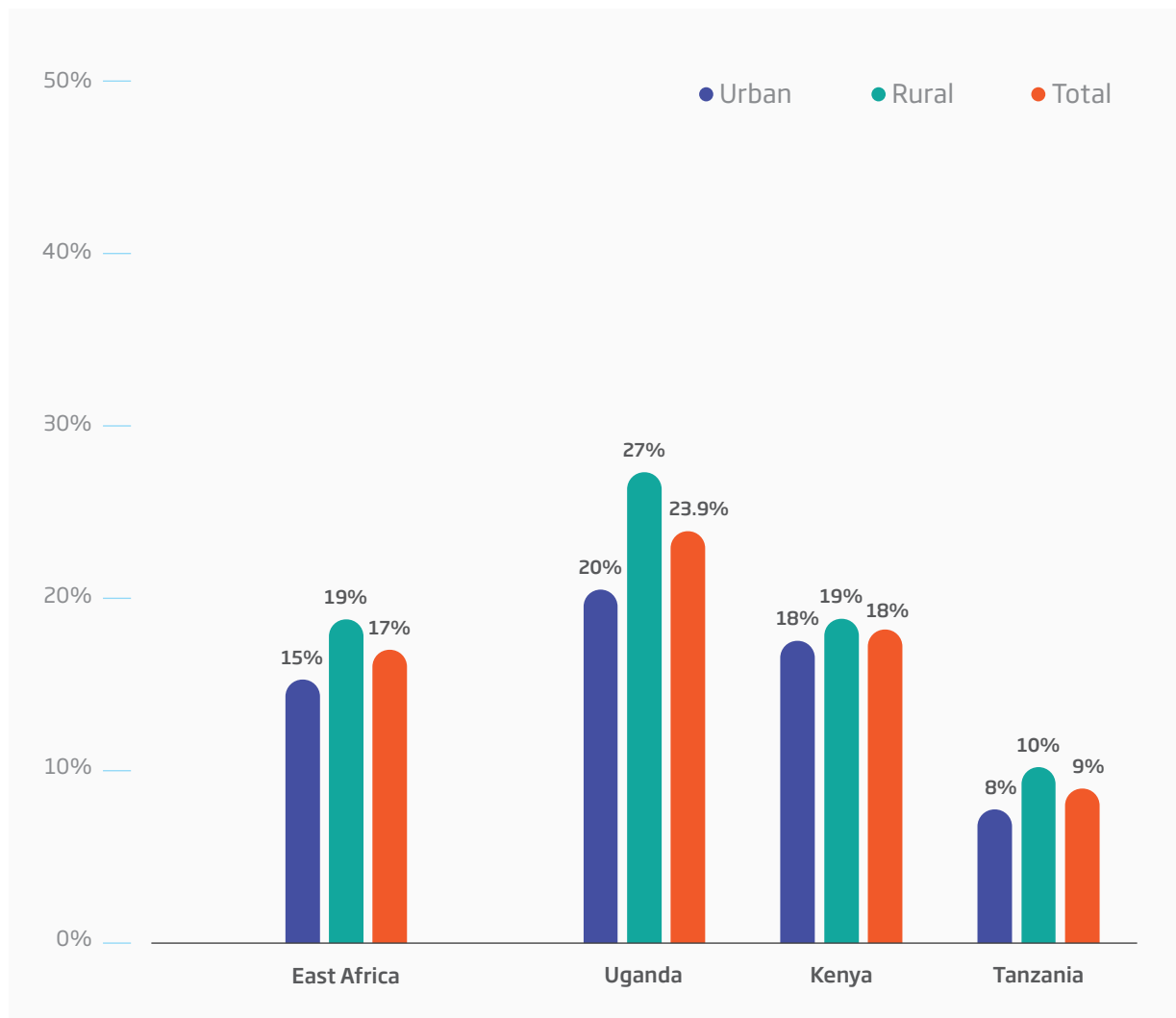


Watsemba Miriam Elizabeth - Citizens' engagement: Local leaders at Nakawa market, Kampala, discussing urban transport issues

Contact with leaders is also an interesting metric to examine. Only about a fifth of those we surveyed (17%) said that they had contacted a local political or social leaders once or more in the twelve months before the survey. But urban respondents were more unlikely to contact a leader in their community - they admitted making less contact (15%) than their rural counterparts (19%). (Figure 14)

Figure 14: Contact with leaders

Respondents were asked: During the past year, how often have you contacted any of the following persons about some important problem or to give them your views? (% that ever contacted at least one leader)



Perhaps some of the most interesting data relating to citizen engagement are about urban membership of social media groups (Table 5). While in almost every category of group membership urban residents are significantly less engaged than their rural counterparts, this trend is sharply bucked in social media, where urban membership

(32%) is triple its rural equivalent (11%). This might be taken to indicate engagement in digital conversations while abandoning real-world actions. On the other hand, connectivity and social media engagements are not affordable for everyone.

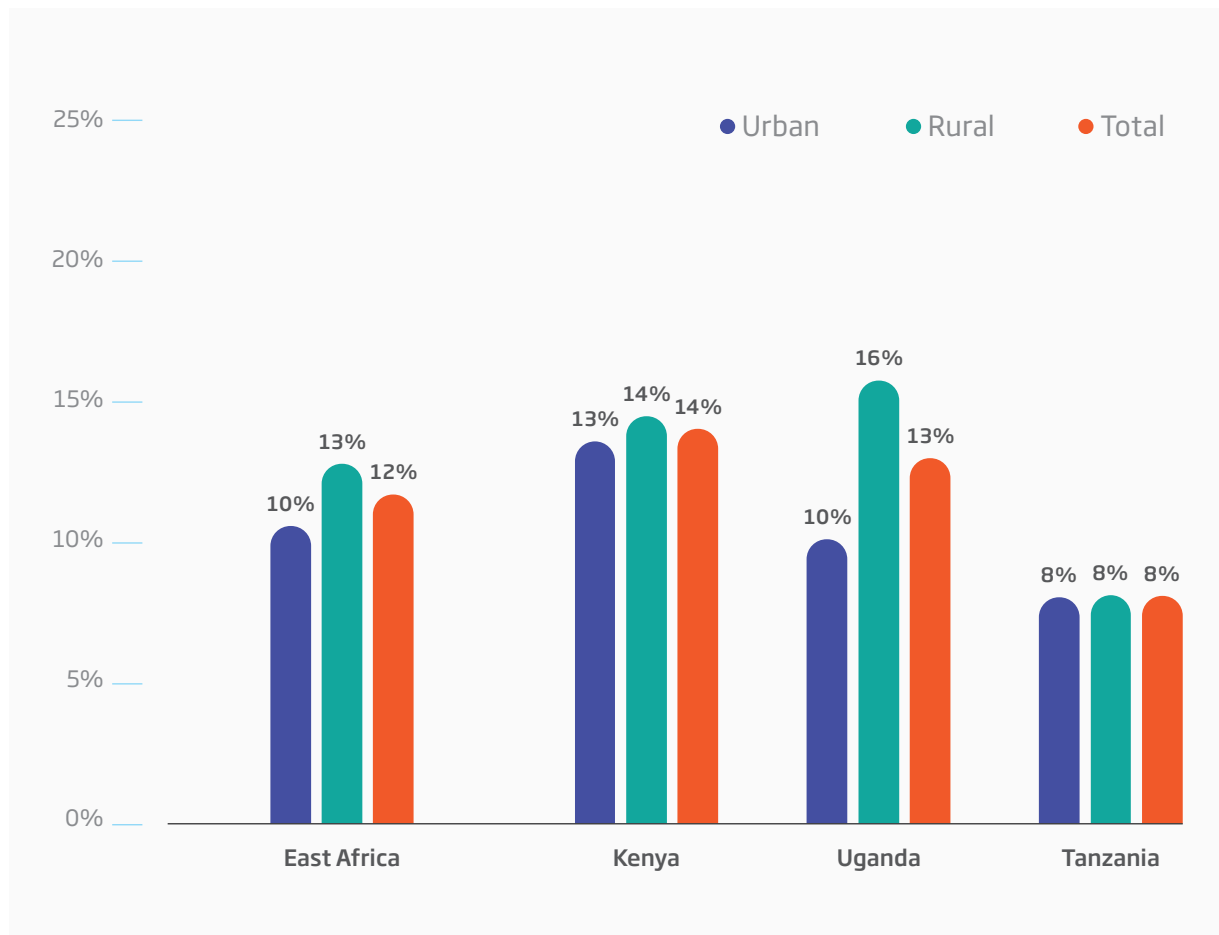
The survey results show that amongst East African populations there is a mixed response to the possibilities of protest. Around 12% of citizens (have engaged in some kind of protest to express their dissatisfaction with an aspect of government performance, while two-fifths indicate that they would protest if they had the chance. (Figure 15)

The results in Figure 15 also show that fewer Tanzanians (8%) than Ugandans (13%) or Kenyans (14%) have ever taken part in actions in protest at their government's performance.

And while Tanzania shows no difference between urban and rural communities in rates of citizen action, Uganda shows a stark difference. 16% of rural respondents in Uganda report having taken part in at least one citizen action, while their urban counterparts trail behind on only 10%. It should be noted that in the recent years following the Arab spring of 2011, many African governments including Uganda, increased policing and crowd control preparedness in all major towns and cities. This could discourage urban communities to participate in civic engagement.

Figure 15: Civic action when dissatisfied with government performance

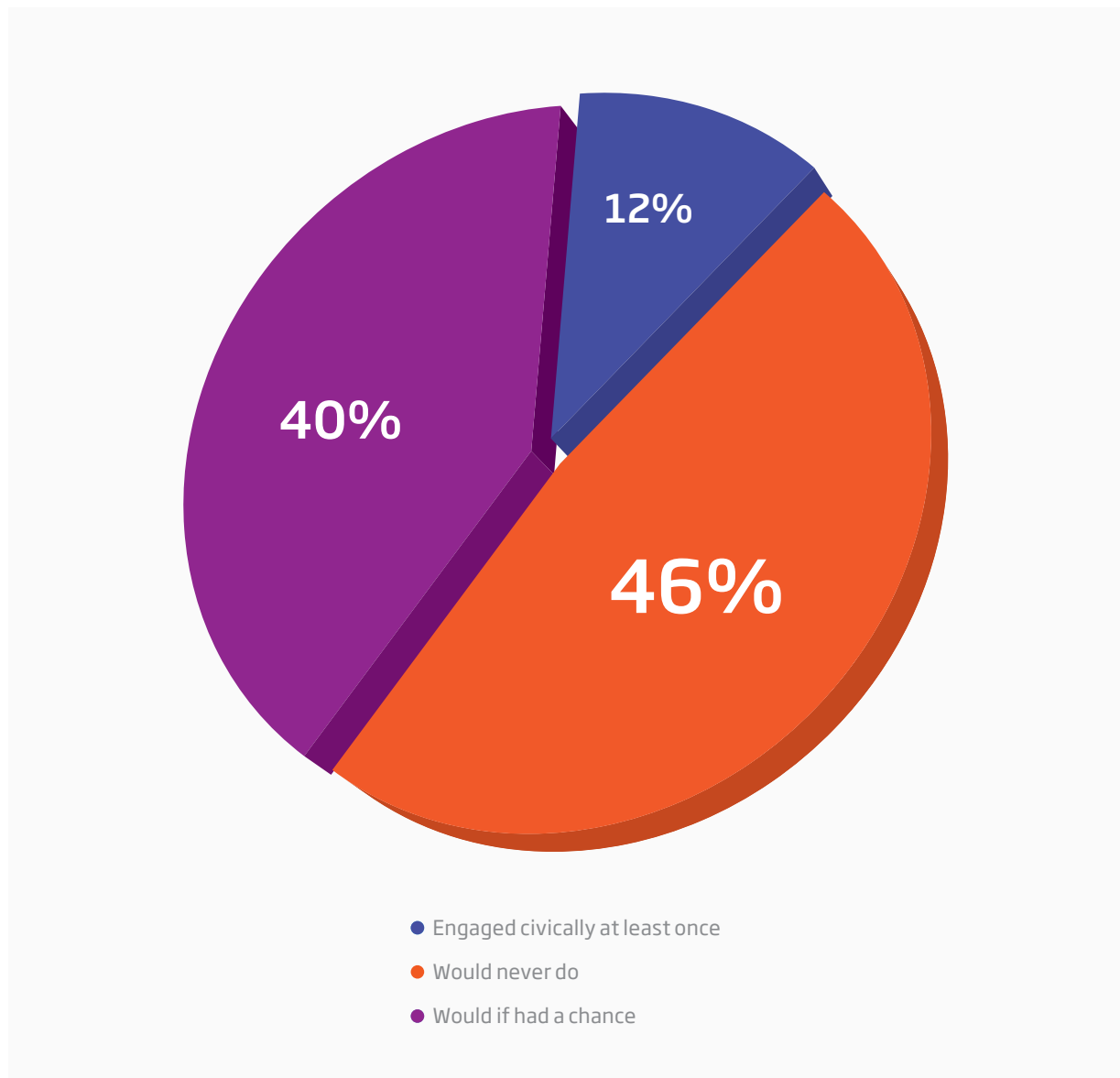
Respondents were asked: Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens when they are dissatisfied with government performance. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the last 3 years. If not, would you do this if you had the chance? A) Joined others in your community to request action from government. B) Contacted the media, like calling a radio program or writing a letter to a newspaper. C) Contacted an NGO for advice or to pass information. D) Contacted a government official to ask for help or make a complaint E) Refused to pay a tax or fee to government. F) Participated in a demonstration or protest march. G) Filed a petition in court (% that did at least one)



Almost half (46%) of the people we surveyed, as shown in Figure 16, responded that they would never take any citizen action (Tanzanians diverge from Kenyans and Ugandans in stating that local leadership systems serve as channels through which their issues can be heard, but as Figure 14 shows, they also contact their leaders much less than their neighbours).

Figure 16: Civic action when dissatisfied with government performance

Respondents were asked: Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens when they are dissatisfied with government performance. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the last 3 years. If not, would you do this if you had the chance? A) Joined others in your community to request action from government. B) Contacted the media, like calling a radio program or writing a letter to a newspaper. C) Contacted an NGO for advice or to pass information. D) Contacted a government official to ask for help or make a complaint E) Refused to pay a tax or fee to government. F) Participated in a demonstration or protest march. G) Filed a petition in court (% that did at least one)



Services and Taxes

Finally, when asked whether they felt that they and their families receive a fair amount of public services considering the money they contribute to the state in terms of taxes, user-fees and other payments, only slightly more than one in ten of our respondents (13%), as shown in Figure 17, said yes with 42% feeling that they get “some, but not a fair amount”. Kenyans expressed

the most dissatisfaction, with only 6% answering that they receive a “fair amount” of public services, compared to 12% in Uganda and 20% in Tanzania. Interestingly, a disaggregation of these results shows no marked in-country differences between urban and rural respondents (Table 6). This would mean that the expectation of getting better in the city is not fulfilled.

Figure 17: Satisfaction with amount of services vs amount of tax/fees/other payments

Respondents were asked: Looking at your case and that of your family. Do you think you get a fair amount of public services considering the money you contribute to the state in terms of taxes, fees and other payments? (% of all responses)



Table 6: Satisfaction with amount of services vs amount of tax/fees/other payments

	TANZANIA		KENYA		UGANDA		EAST AFRICA	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Yes, I get a fair amount of public services	23%	17%	7%	5%	12%	12%	14%	11%
Yes, I get some services but it's not enough	50%	52%	40%	39%	41%	32%	44%	41%
No, so far, only the rich benefit from government	4%	7%	24%	26%	44%	54%	24%	29%
No, only a few people	21%	22%	28%	30%	-	-	24%	26%
Don't know/ Haven't heard [DNR]	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%

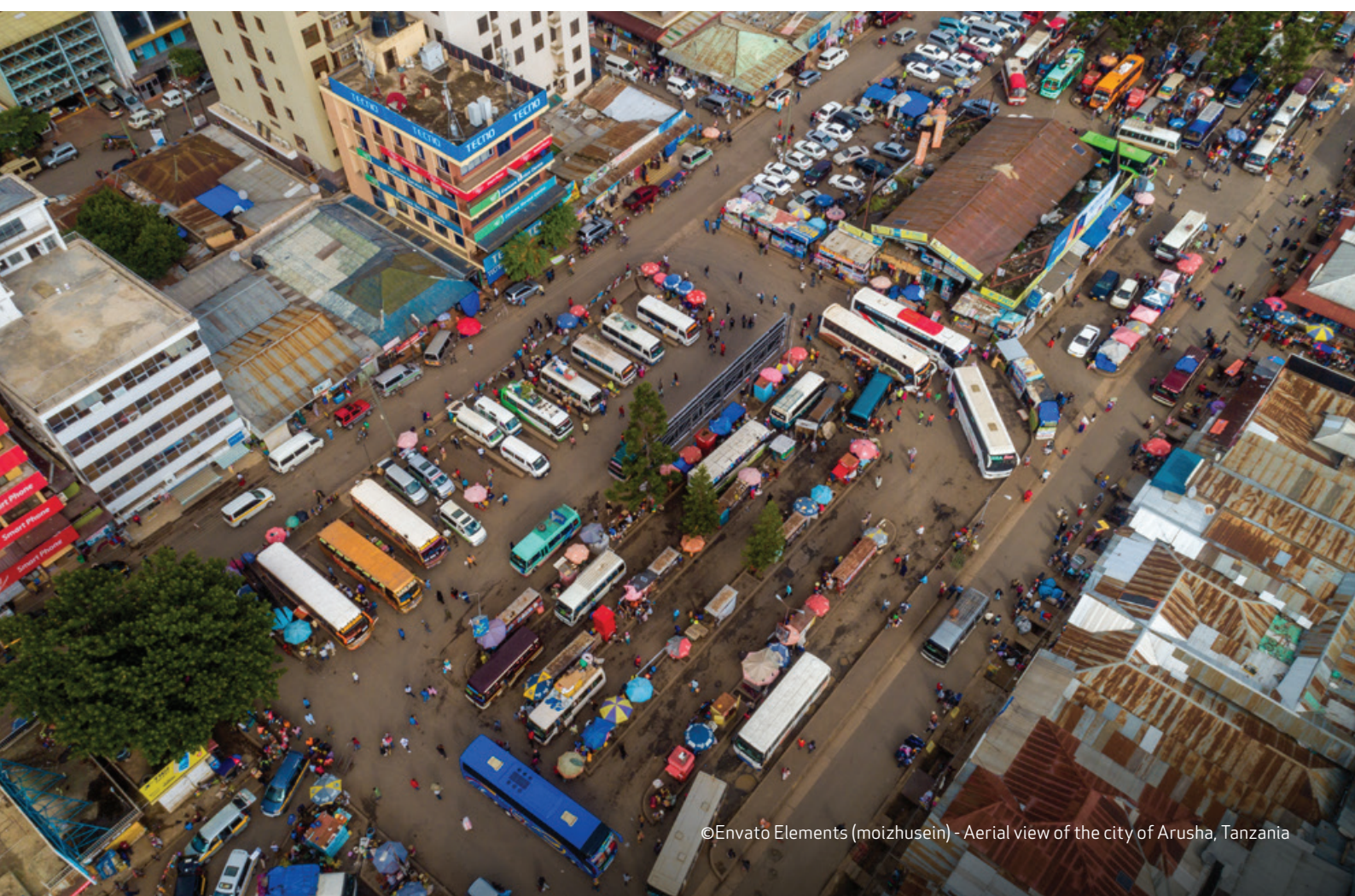
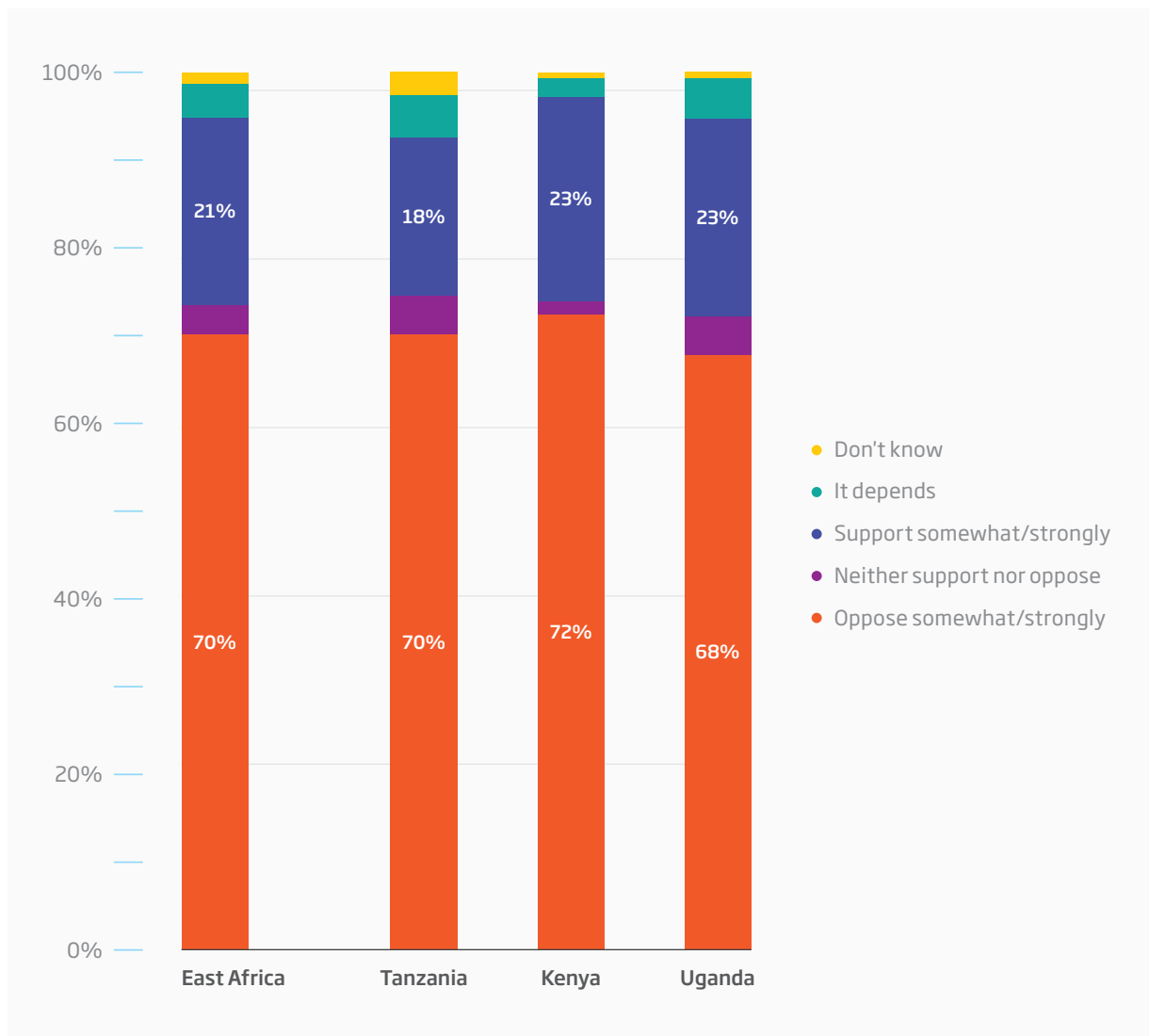


Figure 18: More taxes for more services?



This same data also shows that a surprisingly uniform rate of around 70% of citizens across East Africans would strongly oppose proposals to fund improvements in public services through an increase in government taxation (Figure 18). However, rural respondents (73%) (70% Tanzania, 73% Kenya and 74% Uganda) were marginally more in opposition to any tax increase than their urban counterparts (68%) (70% Tanzania, 72% Kenya and 61% Uganda).

The reason for opposing payment of more taxes to increase on spending on public services needs further research.

Conclusion

East Africans are on the move – and mainly into the economic capitals. They are moving into those cities because they see them as promising labour markets. The general pattern seems to be that the mostly male head of a household moves first, followed by his spouse and other members of his family.

The survey data analyzed in this report shows that people from rural areas also migrate to those cities because they expect better services. Our respondents still appear to regard social service provision in urban areas as being far better than in rural areas, including the delivery of economic goods as a basket of services which government provides to promote economic growth and improve livelihoods. The data in Figure 9 and Figure 10 show a stark contrast between presence of social service infrastructure in rural and urban areas. Both public and private infrastructure for provision of education and health, supply of water and electricity, and availability of transport, markets and access to justice, are far more reliable in urban areas compared to rural areas.

Yet having arrived in the city the rate of dissatisfaction with government services remains as high as it was in the rural areas, with nearly half of respondents saying that they get some services but not enough. This suggests that the urban reality they encounter is not just, it is falling short of their great expectations to the extent that a significant number are even considering making a new move in the near future to either other new urban areas or back to the rural areas.

With so many rural citizens planning or considering a move into the (economic) capital or intermediary cities, governments and development actors should build the capacity of local government authorities in rural areas to more ably respond to public service demands and therefore consider policies designed to slow down the rate of rural to urban movement. In particular, local authorities and planners should promote more inclusive non-farm rural economies, targeting women and young people especially in rural areas, with a focus on sustainable and practical skills development and decent employment.

Given the numbers and motivations from our survey, authorities in so called “secondary or intermediary cities” should adopt policies, laws, and ordinances to make small and medium enterprise employment opportunities more equitable to the vulnerable and low-income earners, recalibrate tax and incentive structures in order to encourage economic and industrial development in new urban areas.

Yet as things stand now the move to the main city leads to a growing urban frustration. Urban migrants are contacting their leaders less than their rural counterparts and are less involved in associational membership, but they show similar – or even rising – levels of dissatisfaction.

Our data show that higher levels of expectations among urban migrants go along with a receding social and political engagement once they have arrived in the cities. At the same time government authorities show little sign of responsiveness to these growing frustrations concerning service delivery.

It remains an open question if the receding social and political engagement or seeming “depoliticisation” of urban migrants, as shown by our data, will become a more permanent feature of life in East African cities or if the existing frustrations will find more dramatic pathways to express themselves.

Finally, perhaps the most crucial finding from the survey points to an “urban paradox” where citizens’ rising expectations go along with an almost collective reluctance to pay taxes. Demand for services is growing, but the people fueling the demand are either not capable or not prepared to pay more taxes and user fees. To what extent this reflects urban poverty or political distrust of the authorities needs further study. Yet, how government will be dealing with this paradoxical relationship between rural to urban migration, service delivery and taxation, how they will address the pent-up frustrations of old and new urban citizens will determine the path (East) Africa’s urbanisation will take.



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