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News release

A majority of Liberians want the rich to pay more taxes but find it difficult to know how tax revenues are used, study shows

A majority of Liberians want the government to levy higher taxes on the rich to pay for development programs to benefit the poor, the latest Afrobarometer survey shows.

However, most citizens say it is difficult to find out what taxes and fees they are supposed to pay and how the government uses tax revenues.

More than half of Liberians think that the rich pay too little in taxes and that taxing the wealthy at higher rates than ordinary people is fair.

A majority of citizens think the government generally uses tax revenues for the well-being of the citizenry.

Key findings

- Majorities say it is difficult to find out what taxes and fees they are supposed to pay to the government (71%) and how the government uses the revenues from people's taxes and fees (73%) (Figure 1).
- More than half (52%) of Liberians say rich people pay too little in taxes. Only 20% think ordinary people pay too little in taxes, while 31% think they pay too much (Figure 2).
- Almost two-thirds (64%) of citizens say it is fair to tax the rich at higher rates than ordinary people in order to help pay for government programs to benefit the poor (Figure 3).
- A majority (54%) say the government usually uses the tax revenues it collects for the well-being of citizens, though more than four in 10 (42%) disagree (Figure 3).

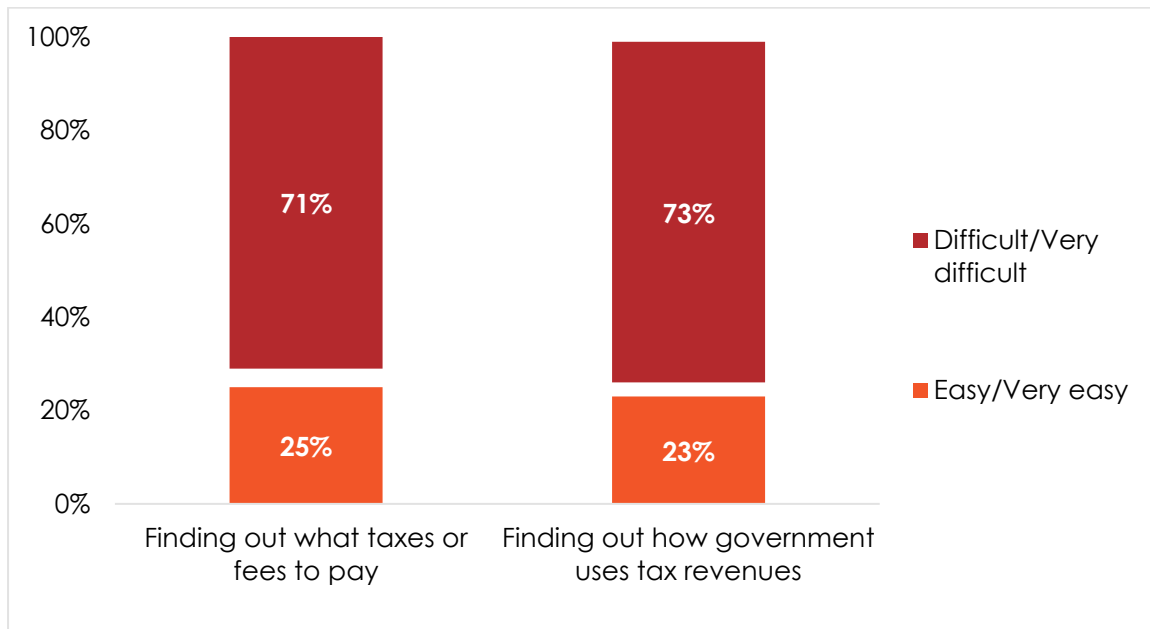
Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, nonpartisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Seven rounds of surveys were conducted in up to 38 countries between 1999 and 2018, and Round 8 surveys (2019/2021) covering 34 countries are close to completion. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Liberia, led by the Center for Democratic Governance, interviewed a nationally representative, random, stratified probability sample of 1,200 adult Liberians between October and December 2020. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys were conducted in Liberia in 2008, 2012, 2015, and 2018.

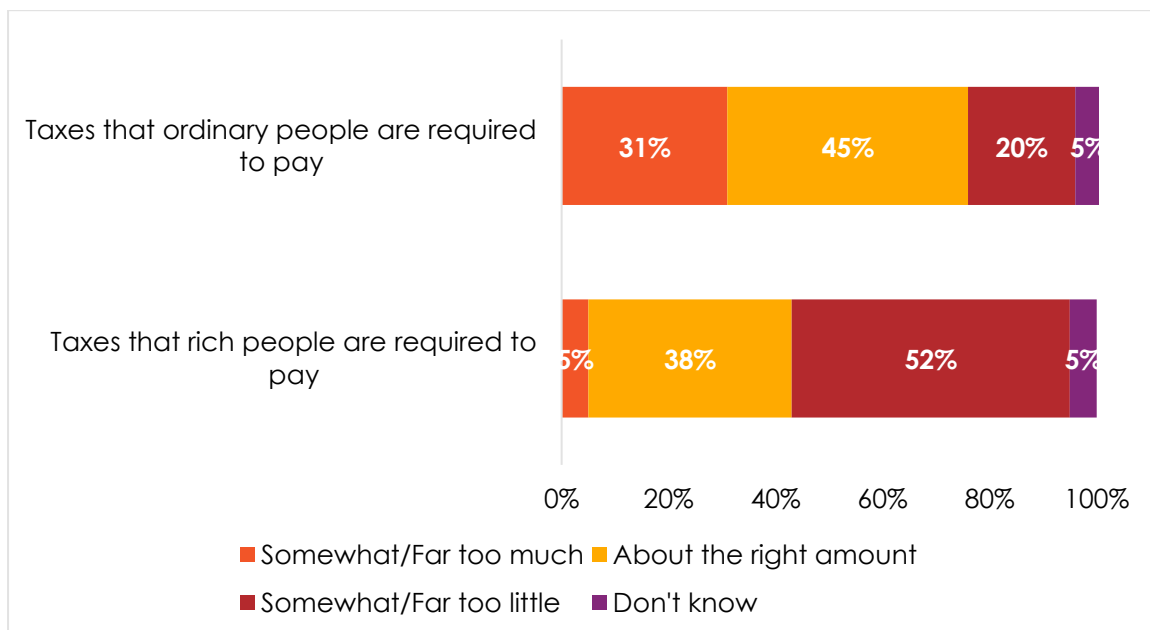
Charts

Figure 1: Access to information on taxes | Liberia | 2020 |



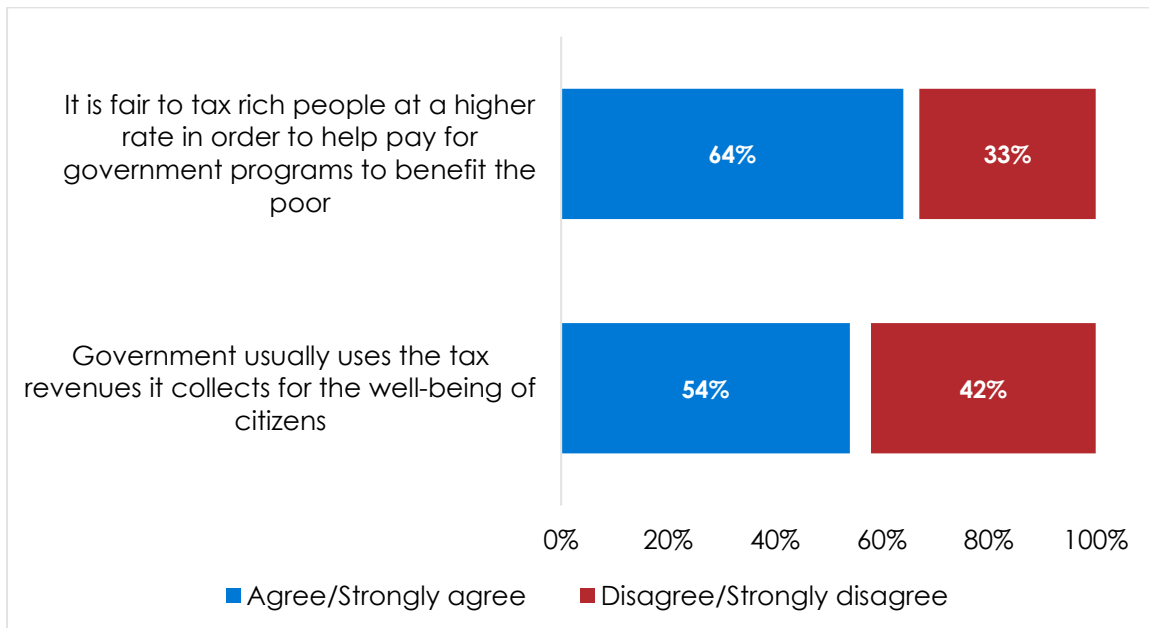
Respondents were asked: Based on your experience, how easy or difficult is it to do each of the following: To find out what taxes and fees you are supposed to pay to the government? To find out how government uses the revenues from people's taxes and fees?

Figure 2: Taxes paid by the rich vs. by ordinary people: Too little or too much? | Liberia | 2020



Respondents were asked: Do you think that the amount of taxes that ordinary people in Liberia are required to pay to the government is too little, too much, or about the right amount? Do you think that the amount of taxes that rich people in Liberia are required to pay to the government is too little, too much, or about the right amount?

Figure 3: Popular views on taxes | Liberia | 2020



Respondents were asked: Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

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