

## Press release

### **Survey - African populations' greatest fears regarding the Covid-19 pandemic are primarily economic and social.**

**Paris, 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 2020** – Deloitte, research firm OpinionWay, and consulting agency 35°Nord have revealed the results of the first survey conducted in Africa on the perception of the Covid-19 pandemic. The “African public opinion on the Covid-19 crisis” study highlights, first and foremost, **deep anxiety about the economic and social consequences, as well as fears regarding the spread of the virus and its health consequences. It also shows deep trust in government action in response to the crisis and in support of economies and populations.**

Carried out between 2 and 14 May 2020 in eight countries (Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Morocco, Nigeria, and South Africa), the survey polled the opinions of 4,017 people – an average of 500 per country – representing the population aged 18 and over.

While the level of worry about being infected by the Coronavirus is 81% (64% are very worried and 17% somewhat worried), 60% of respondents believe that the economic situation in their country will deteriorate and 12% that it will not change, even though the continent has been on a path of sustained economic growth and confidence in the future for the past 20 years or so. **53% also anticipate deterioration in their company or career situation.** Furthermore, 54% of respondents fear a decline in their personal financial situation. **Individuals with the lowest incomes are more inclined to think that their professional financial situation will deteriorate** (59% versus 49% for those with the highest incomes), as are those living in rural areas (60% versus 49% in urban areas).

*“Worry over the economic situation is lower than the 88% recorded in France and 76% in Italy, for example. This demonstrates a remarkable sense of responsibility and African resilience, driven mainly by the responsiveness of many African governments which, in addition to early implementation of health preventive measures, rapidly adopted plans to support the economy and provide social support to their populations,”* says Brice Chasles, Managing Partner for French-speaking Africa at Deloitte. *“In this crisis, Africa is demonstrating its collective intelligence in the cooperation and mobilization of all actors and resources. The stakes are considerable, both in terms of public finance and human resources. Africa has the opportunity to accelerate the transformations underway with the following main priorities: strengthening health systems; pursuing the digital transformation; more resilient and sustainable urbanization; developing competitive and self-sufficient agricultural, industrial and service sectors; social and financial inclusion of the informal sector; and making pan-African integration effective and operational.”*

Despite government responsiveness, however, very specific concerns about the consequences of the crisis are emerging. For example, **54% of respondents fear a food crisis and 84% fear**

**poverty will increase.** In South Africa, 82% of respondents consider this risk to be 'high' (of which 56% say 'very high'), while in Nigeria it is 78% (68% 'very high'), in Côte d'Ivoire 63%, in Ethiopia 66% and in the DRC 59%. These worries mainly concern staple foods such as rice (23%), flour (17%), vegetables (13%), and oil (11%).

According to Hugues Cazenave, CEO of OpinionWay, *"The spectre of resurgent food riots, such as those that erupted in some countries in 2008, is likely to contribute to these concerns and boost these results. These fears reflect the very real economic problems caused by this pandemic. Lastly, the trust placed in the various African governments contrasts sharply with the situation recorded in France"*.

The Deloitte OpinionWay 35°Nord study confirms a high rate of compliance with prevention measures (82% for lockdown, 81% for curfew) and trust in governments (81%) 'to contain the effects of the epidemic'. The government that inspires the most trust is that of Morocco (97%, with 66% 'completely trustworthy'), followed by Côte d'Ivoire (87%), South Africa (88%), and Democratic Republic of Congo (89%). By way of comparison, the French government only enjoys the trust of 39% of respondents in a similar survey conducted by OpinionWay.

*"The African governments with the highest trust rates have been very active in terms of communication both with their international partners and with the population,"* explains Philippe Perdrix, partner at 35°Nord. *"By engaging in direct dialogue with their citizens, some African states have succeeded in ensuring that the pandemic was handled by both those who govern and those who are governed, and so far this has transcended the political divisions and tensions that can sometimes be seen on the continent"*.

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#### **About OpinionWay**

Founded in March 2000, OpinionWay is a pioneer in the digitalisation of studies, innovating marketing and opinion research and developing agility in its methods (Online Panels, Digital Communities, Data Hybridisation and Social Media Research).

Created in France and with a capacity to operate on all five continents, OpinionWay has offices in North Africa (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia), Eastern Europe (Poland) and Sub-Saharan Africa (Côte d'Ivoire). The company specialises in understanding audiences, markets and brands, and in researching products and services for clients operating in France and abroad with BtoB and BtoC targets. OpinionWay is an active member of Esomar, which has been ISO 20252 certified since 2009 by AFNOR and a member of CroissancePlus.

#### **About 35°Nord**

35°Nord is a consulting and strategic communication agency focused on the African continent and specialising in steering its clients towards opinion leaders, spheres of influence and circles of power in Europe and Africa. Its added value results from its command of the communication and decision-making channels on both continents, and its deep knowledge of the national contexts in Africa. 35°Nord guarantees political, economic and institutional decision-makers higher editorial visibility and optimisation of their channels of influence. It works with national, pan-African and international media. The agency has expertise in the entire value chain: strategic consulting, advocacy, media planning, press conferences and tours, content production (op-eds, press releases and press kits, etc.), digital communication, financial communication, public affairs and lobbying.

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