



**USAID**



# SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR THE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORMS

WEDNESDAY, 31<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST, 2022

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# PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Background and Context
- Revisiting the Local Government Reforms Agenda
- Way Forward
- Conclusion

# BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- CDD-Ghana and other CSOs have been advocating the election of MMDCEs since the early 2000s.
- In 2000, the NPP under President Kufuor committed to putting forward proposals to amend the Constitution to provide for the election of MMDCEs. His government failed to fulfil that promise until its departure in 2008.
- Between 2009 and 2012, we focused on the review of the Constitution as the avenue to reform local government, even passing a new Local Governance Act 2016 (ACT 936) which essentially aggregated all the various policy steps we had taken on local government since 1988.
- In the run up to the 2016 election the NPP promised to return to the election of MMDCEs agenda while the NDC committed to the implementation of the Constitutional Review Committee recommendation- i.e., MMDCEs to be elected in Metro, in Municipalities 3 Presidential nominees will contest after vetting by Public Service Commission and status quo remain in Districts.
- In 2019 the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP) offered Ghanaians the opportunity to discuss and vote on a referendum to amend Article 55(3) of the 1992 Constitution to allow for the introduction of multi-party competition in local government elections.
- At the same time the agenda sought to amend Article 243(1) of the Constitution through Parliament to allow for the citizens to vote and elect Metropolitan Municipal and District Chief Executives (MMDCEs), positions which are currently appointed by the President.
- However, while the processes were ongoing, the President call for the processes to be halted due to what he described as a “lack of a national consensus”.
- In his address he promised to bring back the proposals at a later time if a bi-partisan consensus was reached.

# BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT (CONTD)

- In a recent indication of his interest in the election of MMDCE agenda, the President in his address to the nation on the occasion of the 30th Anniversary of the Referendum approving the 1992 Constitution, promised to once again reinstate the process for constitutional reforms for local governance in the country.
- Since the truncation of the process, there have been calls from Ghanaians, for holistic reforms to revamp the local government system to enable it to deliver better development outcomes. Indeed the political parties, particularly the two largest parties had committed to the election of MMDCEs in their manifestoes.
- In November 2021, CDD-Ghana and the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG) coalesced with other civil society organizations, local government experts, and other activists to form the CSOs Coalition for Local Government Reforms in Ghana which has since advocated for local government reforms.
- The coalition has undertaken multiple activities to bring back the agenda into public discourse.
- In the next few slides we will look back at the journey to revisit the local government reforms agenda.



# RETURNING TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORMS AGENDA

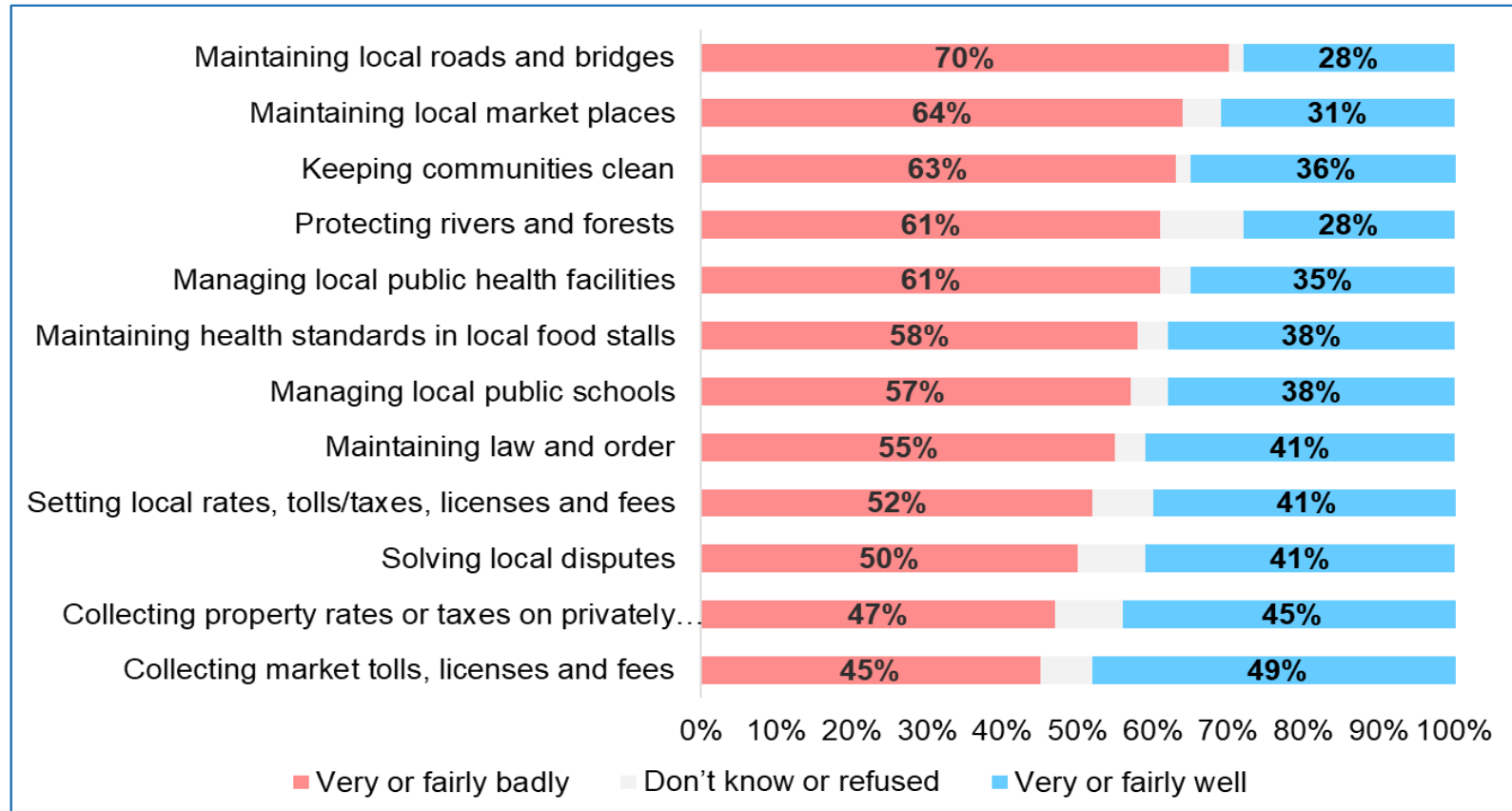
# SURVEY ASSESSING LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN GHANA

- The mission to revamp the local government system to enable it to deliver development outcomes began when CDD-Ghana conducted a Local Government Survey (LGS) in September 2021 which among other things revealed the following:

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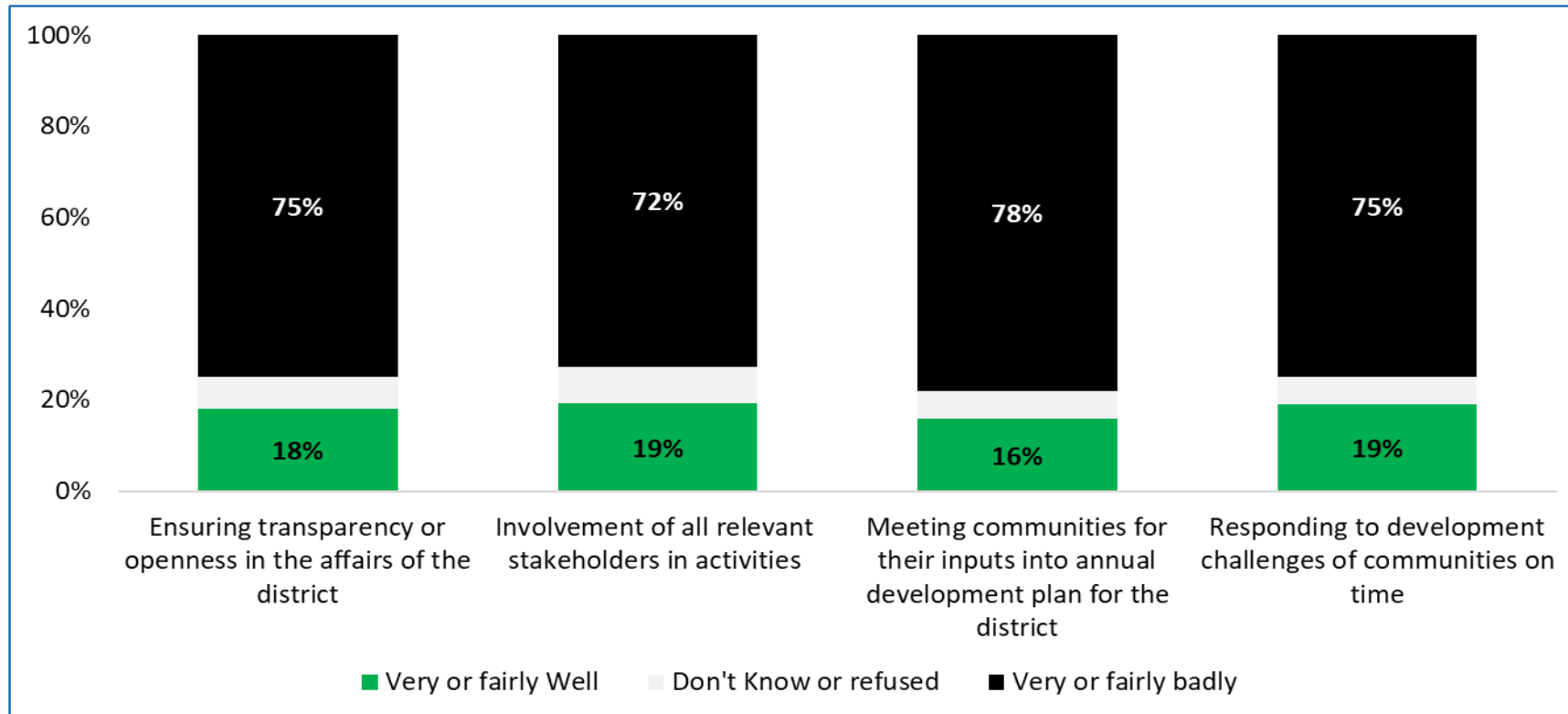
# SURVEY ASSESSING LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN GHANA

In general, Ghanaians rated MMDAs performance in service delivery and revenue mobilization over the past 5 years negatively.



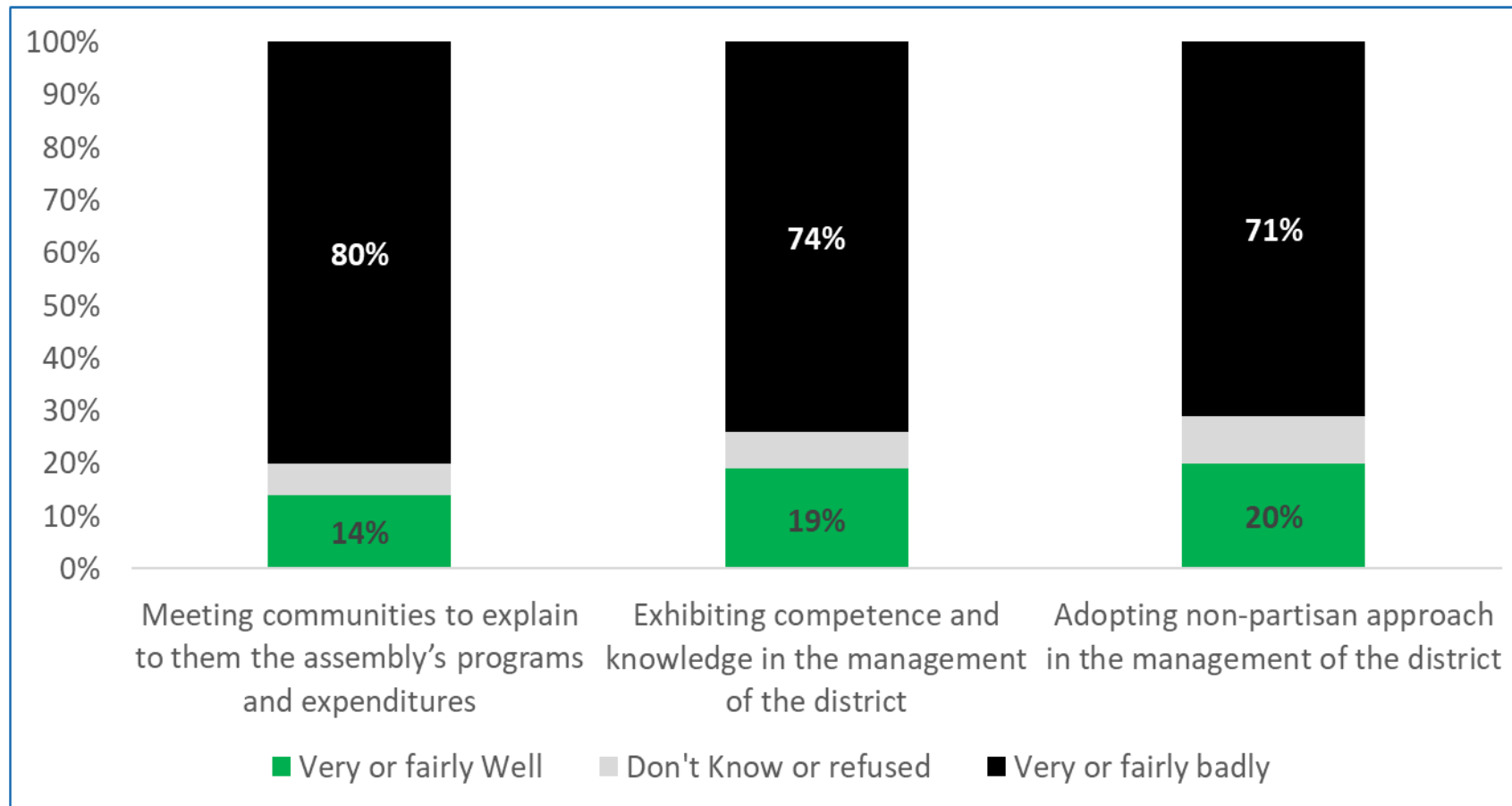
# SURVEY ASSESSING LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN GHANA

Majority of Ghanaians believe MMDAs have for the past 5 years performed “very or fairly badly” in a number functions.



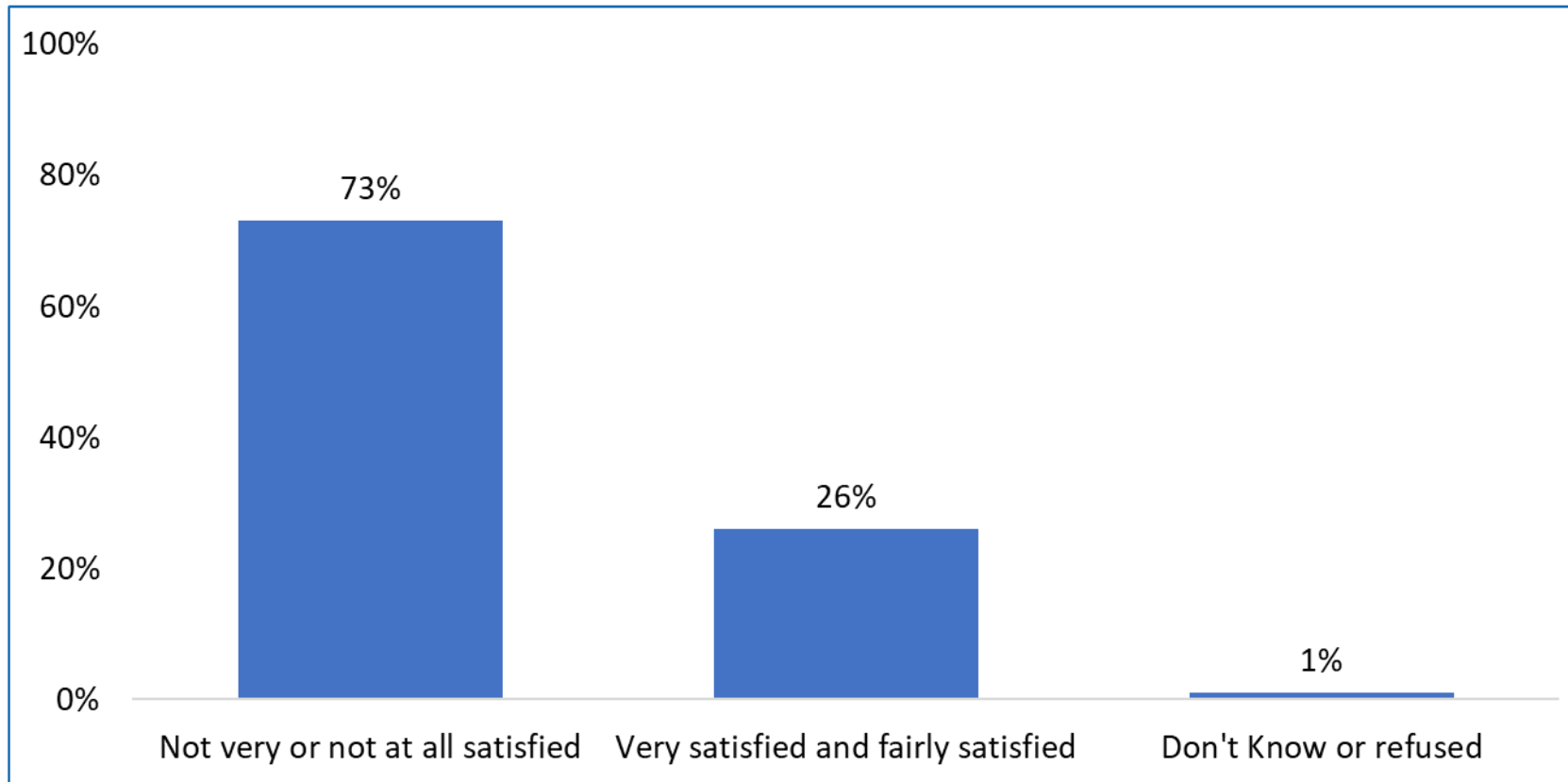


# SURVEY ASSESSING LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN GHANA



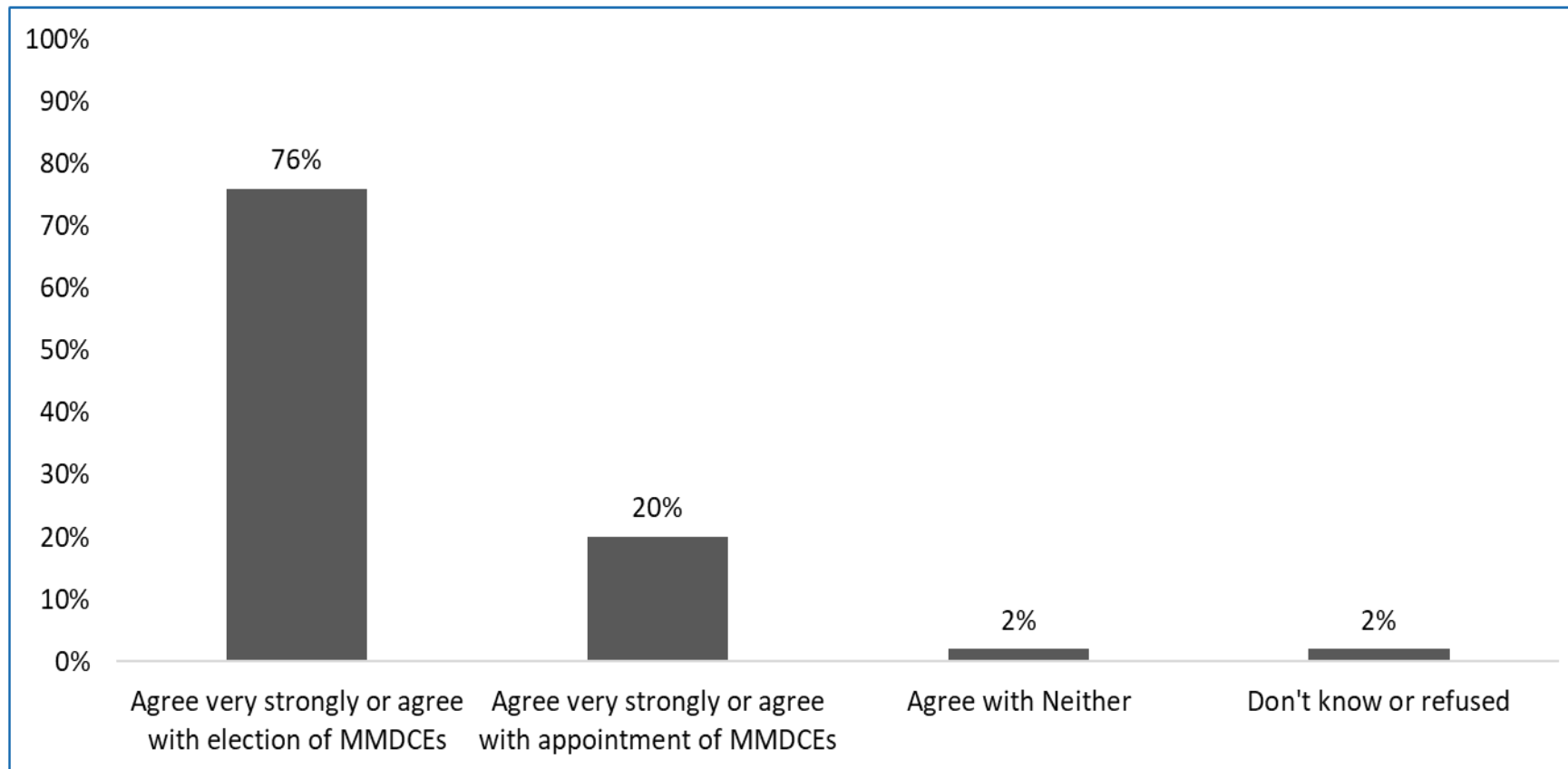
# SURVEY ASSESSING LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN GHANA

Most Ghanaians are largely dissatisfied with how MMDAs have dealt with development challenges in their communities over the past 5 years



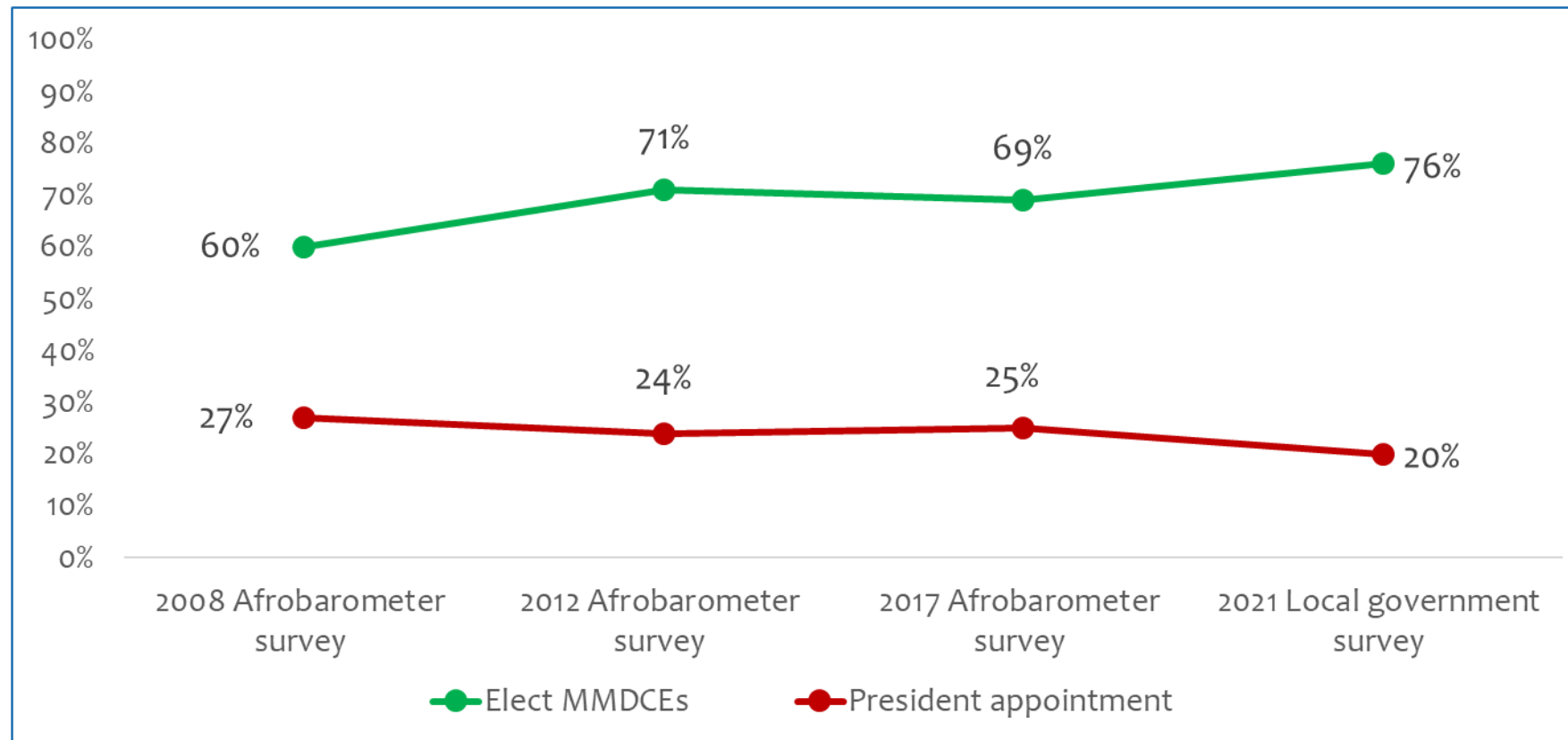
# SURVEY ASSESSING LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN GHANA

At least 7 in 10 Ghanaians (76%) are in favour of election of MMDCEs. Just 20% still want MMDCEs to be appointed by the President.



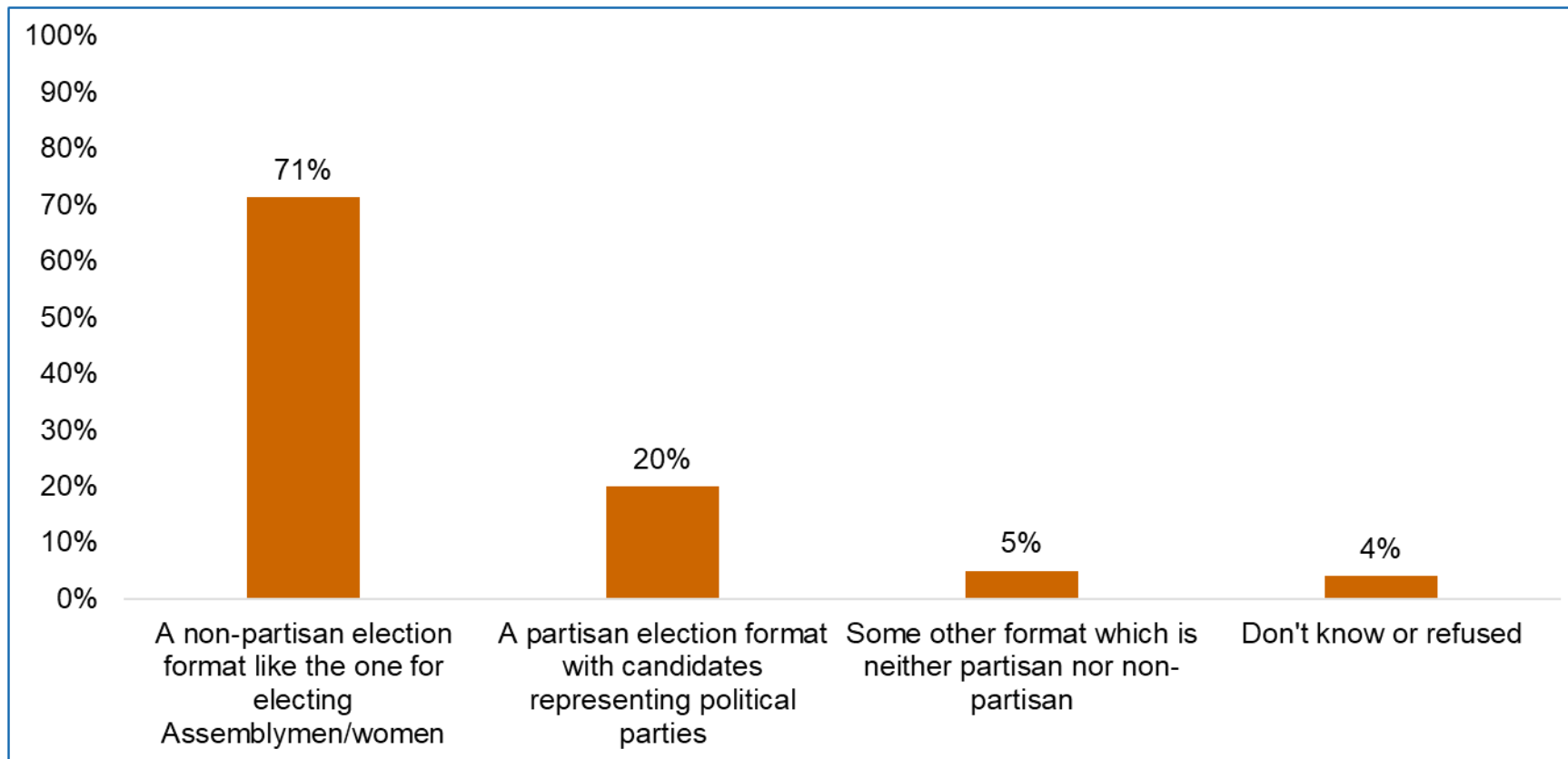
# SURVEY ASSESSING LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN GHANA

Between 2008 and 2017, support for election of MMDCEs significantly increased by 16 percentage points, while support for appointment by the president declined by 7 percentage points.



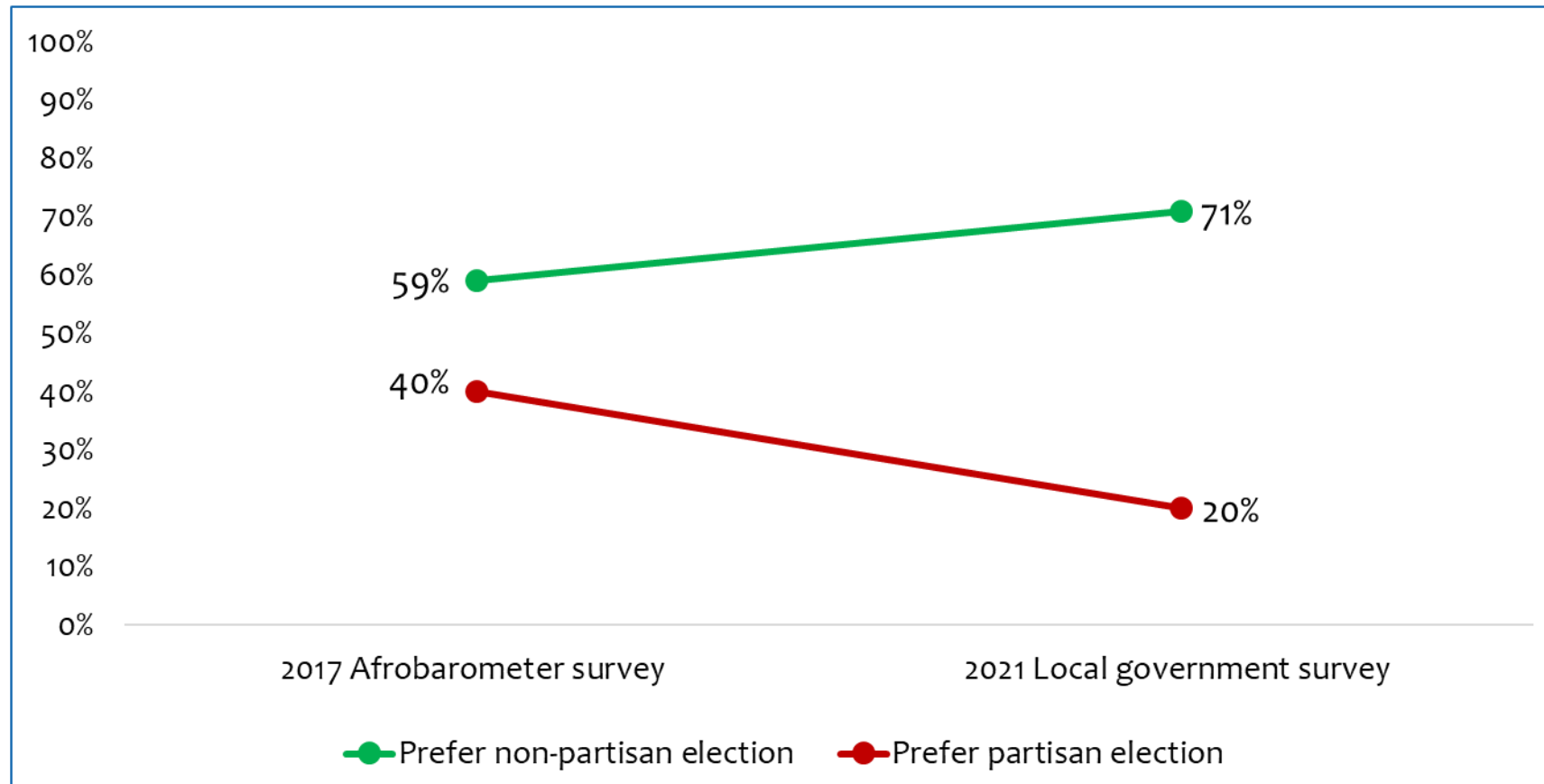
# SURVEY ASSESSING LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN GHANA

Only 20% of Ghanaians who want MMDCEs elected, prefer a partisan election format. The majority (71%) opted for a non-partisan election format similar to the one used in local government councillors' election.



# SURVEY ASSESSING LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN GHANA

Between 2017 and 2021, preference for election of MMDCEs on a non-partisan basis increased by 12% while preference for partisan election format declined by 7%.



## BRIEFING ON FINDINGS WITH MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

- The Center held briefing with relevant stakeholders on the outcome of the local government survey and the need to bring back the agenda for public discourse.
- On September 28, 2021, Dr. Kojo Asante of CDD-Ghana and IDEG's Mr. Kwesi Jonah led a delegation to the Ministry of Local Government, Decentralization and Rural Development for a briefing on the findings of the survey.

## BRIEFING WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

- Subsequently, on September 29, 2021, the team held a briefing with selected civil society organizations on the LGS findings.
- **Key Takeaways**
  1. Among other things, the meeting agreed to form a CSO Coalition platform to strategically cultivate a unified voice to pursue advocacy.
  2. It was also suggested that the Coalition leverages the current composition of Ghana's hung parliament to amend article 243.





## WORKSHOP FOR CSOS ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORMS

- The Center held a workshop for selected leaders of CSOs and individuals on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021 to explore options and the possibility of coalescing into a CSO group that will advance advocacy on local government reforms to discuss and build consensus on a common position on local governance system including the electoral processes.



## LAUNCH OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORMS IN GHANA

- On Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021, the CSO Coalition for Local Government Reforms in Ghana was launched to advocate for reforms that will ensure greater transparency, efficacy, and accountability in our local government systems to make them responsive to development outcomes.
- Additionally, the Coalition was purposed to champion and sustain data-driven advocacy for the re-introduction and passage of the proposed local government reforms.





## REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE FORUMS: REVISITING THE AGENDA FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORMS

- Between November and December 2021, the CSO coalition conducted a nationwide regional level consultation in all 16 regions with identifiable key stakeholders such as traditional leaders, political parties, youth groups, the media, and Community Based Organizations to gain additional insights from the various groups about their perspectives, interests, and positions.
- Additionally, the regional consultations were to derive possible proposals for policy consideration that can feed into the ongoing discourse on local government reforms.



## STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

- Following the findings of the regional consultations on local government reforms, the Center convened a Steering Committee meeting to discuss/validate the outcomes and findings produced by the regional consultations.
- **Key Takeaways**
- The 2021 survey on local government revealed that 71% of Ghanaians prefer a nonpartisan election format for MMDCEs and the Regional Consultations delivered similar results with most target groups across the regions expressing strong preference for non-partisan elections.
- The majority of participants agreed that assembly members should be elected on a nonpartisan basis, including the 30% which are currently appointed by the President. However, there was some disagreement as to the format and method of elections.



## STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING' CONTD

- *Incremental Implementation of reforms – Majority Opposed*
- *Decoupling MMDCEs elections from Assembly Members elections (Majority opposed)*
- *Mixed/Proportional Representation (Majority Opposed)*



## MULTI-STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORMS

- This conference, seeks to forge consensus on key areas for comprehensive local government reforms as well as develop an implementation plan for proposed reforms following the views expressed by Ghanaians during the regional consultations on local governance.
- Objectives of this conference will specifically:
  - i. Build consensus amongst CSOs and local government experts on the content and priority of local government reforms
  - ii. Develop a roadmap for the implementation of the reforms and
  - iii. Build and sustain a CSO coalition to champion local government reforms



# CONCLUSION



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



Made possible with the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Ghana.





THANK YOU