Ebene, Mauritius, February 09 2017, VERDE

National Survey - Expectations of the Public from the Government for the next three years

85% of the population demand public consultation prior to major government decisions

Foreword

VERDE has released the results of a major survey that reveals the population's list of areas they believe should be the focus of government attention for the remaining three years of their mandate. The survey also explores the complex blend of personal, political, and ideological factors that lie behind such a list. The data explores how the perception and convictions of people change according to their level of satisfaction in priority areas they feel the most concerned with. Accordingly, their perception is likely to change depending on how Government delivers on those priority areas and their resulting satisfaction levels.

VERDE national survey reveals the Mauritian people's list of key priorities that need government attention in the next three years of their mandate.

1. The public wants the government to address a diverse set of areas which range from economic growth to social policies like poverty alleviation.
2. Job creation across all layers of society tops the list, followed by economic growth.
3. Broadly based skepticism that government will make progress in key areas.
4. The nation expresses a low satisfaction level towards the accomplishment of the Government so far.
5. The population believes that if the Government delivers on the following five areas, they will be satisfied with the ruling political party's achievements.
6. It is estimated that if the satisfaction levels of the population on the identified priority areas improve over the next three years, there is a high likelihood that two thirds of the 44.2% of people who have today mentioned 'Expected to Change Political Preference' may decrease to 14.4%.

"While it is very easy to ask people to choose a single 'most important priority' and to build a list for the answers, the reality is that government has to address many issues at the same time," said Dirish K. Noonaram, partner at VERDE. "This survey, with data about the public's priorities on a range of policy issues, provides policy makers with rigorous data as they seek to understand the public's outlook on where the country is now and what the action agenda should be for the years to come."

Key findings of the survey include:

[From last elections (December 2014) until today]

1. The public's preferred priorities are (1) Job creation, (2) Health care reforms and (3) Improve law and order, while they feel that government has mostly focused on (1) Job creation, (2) Review the education system and (3) Decrease corruption levels.

2. Few have faith in the current political parties in government, with low marks on government performance in priority areas. For example, only education has achieved a score above 50 on 100. The lowest score is obtained for Law and Order, Safety and Crime at 28.3. 85.2% of the population believe the government is doing a poor job in listening to what they want and what they feel would most have an impact on their day to day living.

3. The overall general satisfaction of the population towards the Government is 26.2 on 100. 72% of the population believe that the government is not heading in the right direction.

[From last elections (December 2014) until today, there has been an evolution in political preference]

The priority list of the population is presently different to that of the government and the observed low satisfaction levels have had a broadly negative impact on confidence.

1. In December 2014 elections, according to the data, 63.9% of the population changed their political preference.
2. Today, 19.4% of the population mention that they have already changed their political preference based on the performance of government over the past two years.
3. Another 44.2% say that they expect to change their political preference.

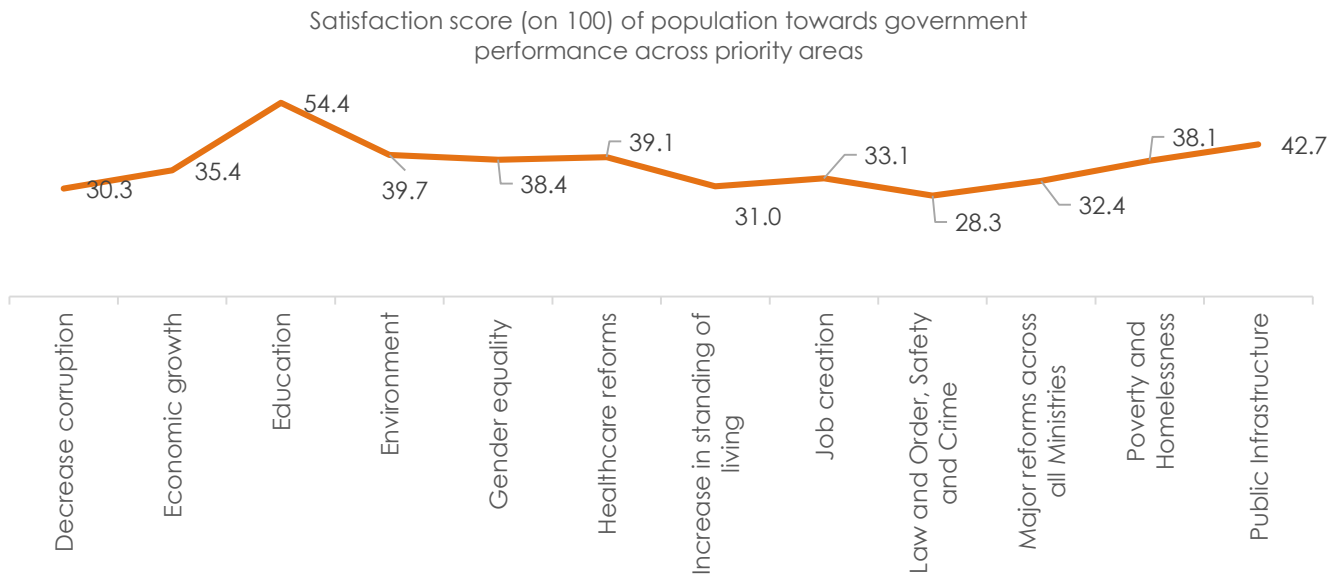[Today onwards – what the population is really looking for]

1. The highest ranked priorities of the population for the government are (1) Creation of sustainable jobs and reducing graduate unemployment, (2) Economic growth, (3) Increase in the standard of living, (4) Healthcare reforms and (5) Law and Order, Safety and Crime.
2. In fact, the three lowest-rated issues are: Major reforms across Ministries, Protection and Preservation of the Environment and Gender Equality.
3. The population still has expectations that government can deliver and will be satisfied if they deliver on the fundamental needs that will have a direct impact on their day to day living. In this context, the population have cited the following:
    a. Improve standard of living (a combination of: jobs for all with reasonable salaries, traffic decongestion, water availability and meritocracy).
    b. Prevailing law and order, and safety across the island (a combination of law enforcement, severe punishment, effective legal framework and surveillance systems).

1.   2015 – 2017, Priorities of Government vs. Population's priority expectations from the Government
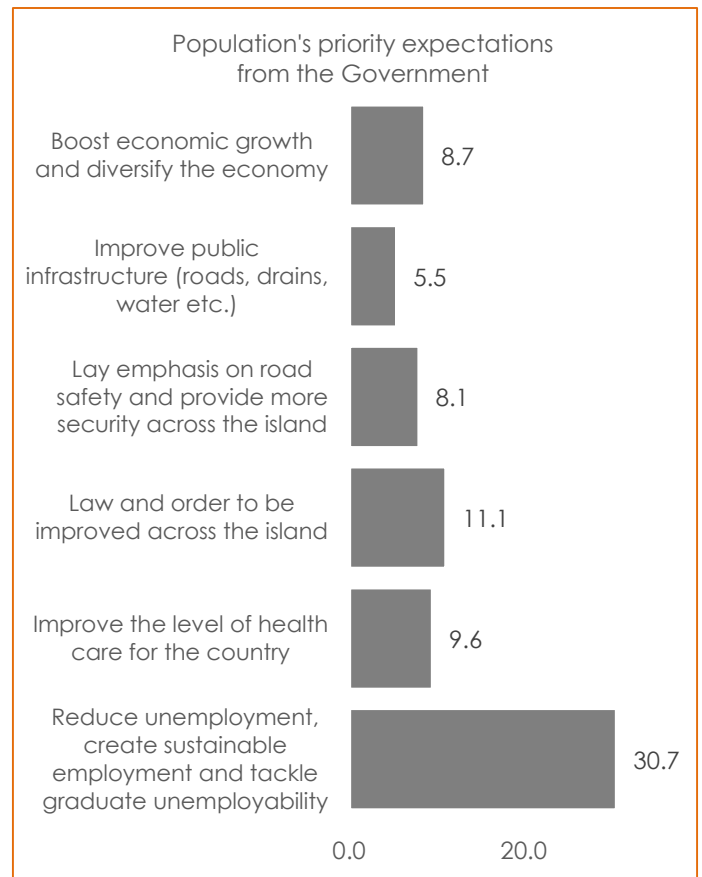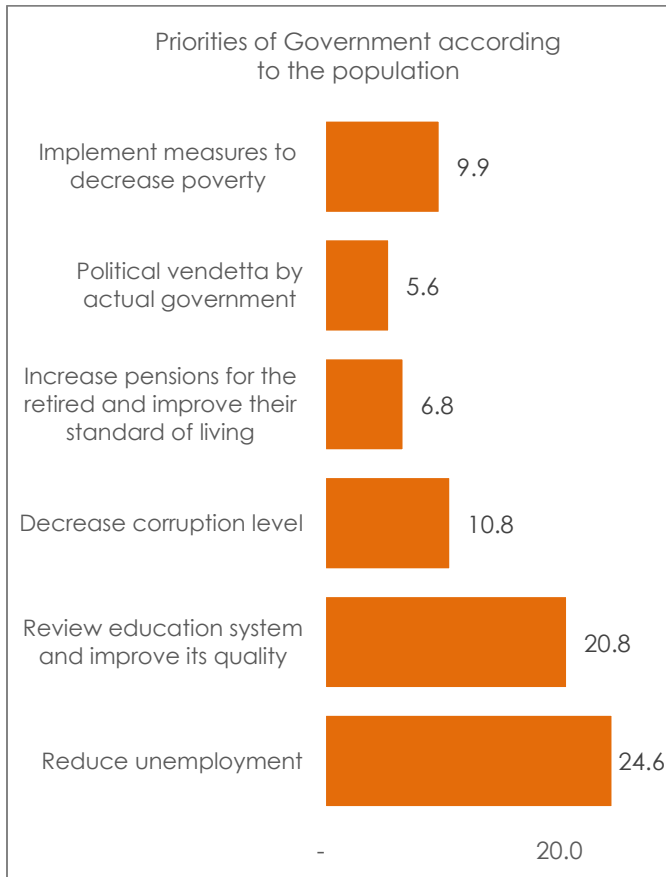
Insights: Highest score is achieved for job creation. There is a clear alignment from the population and the Government in terms of this priority area. In second, population would have preferred that Government improves on the level of healthcare through nationwide reforms, followed by improving law and order. However, according to the population, the government has focused on the implementation of the 9 year schooling and the fight against corruption. The satisfaction level on those two areas are provided next. Note: A number of other priorities were enumerated by respondents. Only the top 6 highest ranked are provided in this analysis.
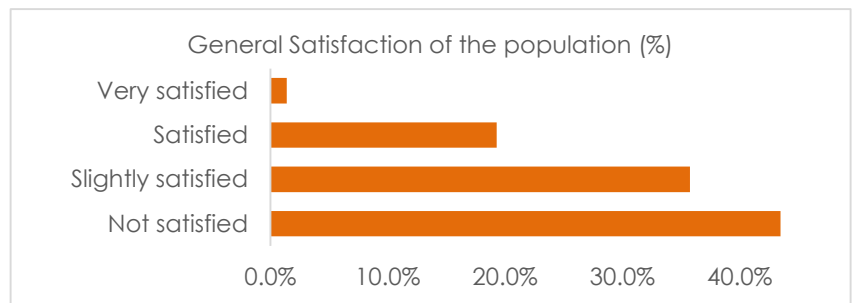
2. **2015 – 2017, Satisfaction level of the population towards the Government for identified priority areas**

Satisfaction score (on 100) of population towards government
performance across priority areas

- Decrease corruption: 30.3
- Economic growth: 35.4
- Education: 54.4
- Environment: 39.7
- Gender equality: 38.4
- Healthcare reforms: 39.1
- Increase in standing of living: 31.0
- Job creation: 33.1
- Law and Order, Safety and Crime: 28.3
- Major reforms across all Ministries: 32.4
- Poverty and Homelessness: 38.1
- Public Infrastructure: 42.7

Insights: Only Education has achieved a satisfaction score above 50 on 100 for the identified areas, with the general trend across priority areas being a low satisfaction level. Public infrastructure is second ranked with a score of 42.7. Even though Job creation was a top priority for both government and the population, its satisfaction score is only 33.1. The latest figures reveal an unemployment rate of 7.6% as at latest figures published for the third quarter of 2016 (7.9% in December 2014). Graduate un-employability remains high with 2016 figures standing at 11,000 (7,800 in 2014). Over-estimates from members of parliament have possibly also impacted negatively on people's opinions. The population still recalls that, by 2016, there should have been "two jobs for every person" and that, by 2019, there will be the creation of 100,000 new jobs.

26.2/100

General Satisfaction Score attributed
to government (2015 – 2017)

General Satisfaction of the population (%)

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Slightly satisfied
- Not satisfied
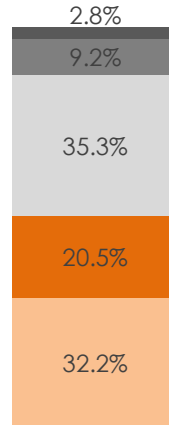
0.0% 10.0% 20.0% 30.0% 40.0%

3. **Confidence and perception of the population today**, as a consequence of (1) diverging priorities and (2) low satisfaction scores across priority areas

Confidence level in Government
December 2014

12.2%	
41.3%	
16.7%	
29.9%	
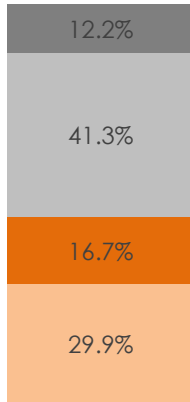
- ■ Can't say
- ■ Not confident
- ■ Confident
- ■ Very confident

Confidence level in Government
Today

2.8%

9.2%	
35.3%	
20.5%	
32.2%	

- ■ Increased significantly
- ■ Increased slightly
- ■ Same
- ■ Decreased slightly
- ■ Decreased significantly

72.1%

Government is not heading in the right direction

4. **Evolution of political preference between December 2014 and today**, as a result of changed confidence and perception

Evolution of political preference of the population
2 years ago vs. Today

Today	36.3%	19.4%	44.2%
2 years ago	36.1%	63.9%	

0%   10%   20%   30%   40%   50%   60%   70%   80%   90%   100%

■ Not Changed   ■ Changed   ■ Expected to Change

5
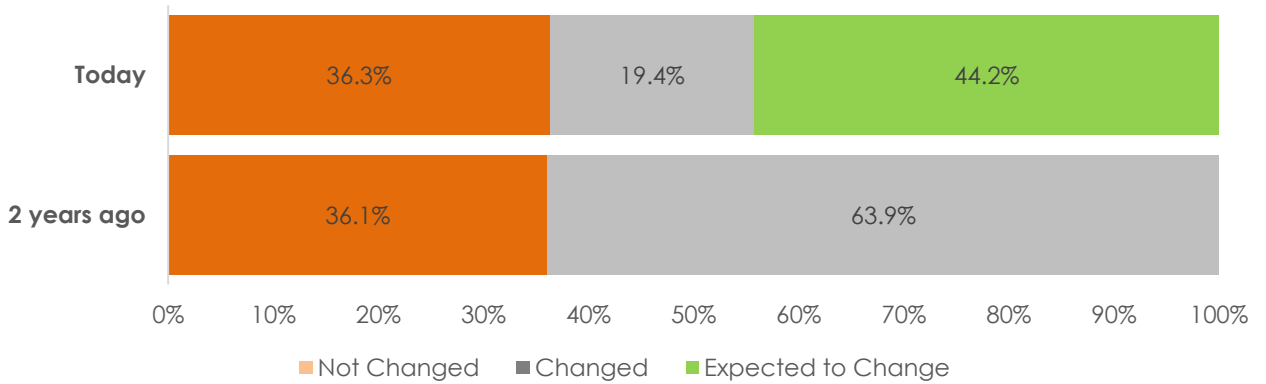
Evolution of political preference between December 2014 and today, by district

Political preference

District	Not Changed	Changed	Expected to change
Port Louis: Today	34%	17%	48%
Port Louis: Dec 2014	44.8%	55.2%	
Pamplemousses: Today	34%	28%	38%
Pamplemousses: Dec 2014	24.3%	75.7%	
Plaines Wilhems: Today	38%	23%	39%
Plaines Wilhems: Dec 2014	45.5%	54.5%	
Moka: Today	27%	10%	63%
Moka: Dec 2014	17.9%	82.1%	

■ Not Changed ■ Changed ■ Expected to change

Political preference

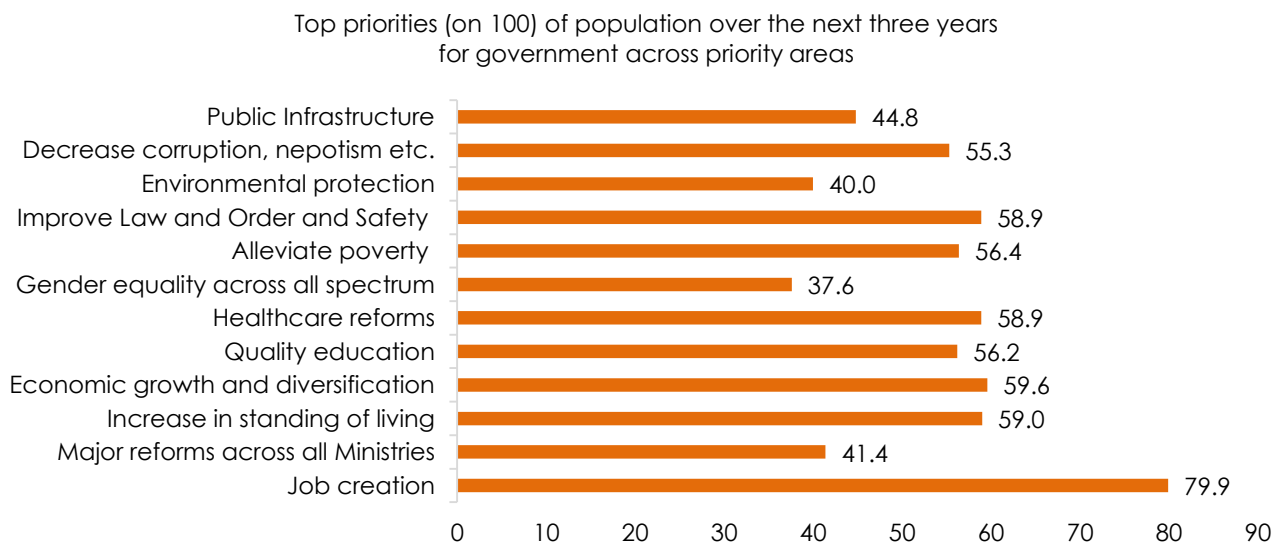| District	Not Changed	Changed	Expected to change
Flacq: Today	44%	17%	39%
Flacq: Dec 2014	27.8%	72.2%	
Savanne: Today	0%	20%	80%
Savanne: Dec 2014	15.8%	84.2%	
Black River: Today	25%	13%	63%
Black River: Dec 2014	25.0%	75.0%	
Grand Port: Today	43%	20%	37%
Grand Port: Dec 2014	41.2%	58.8%	
Riviere du Rempart: Today	38%	13%	50%
Riviere du Rempart: Dec 2014	43.8%	56.3%	

■ Not Changed ■ Changed
■ Expected to change

Insights: The data reveals that voting preference as compared to 2 years ago has changed the least in Pamplemousses and Flacq. Detailed analysis on the other districts are available on the news wall of verdefrontier.mu.
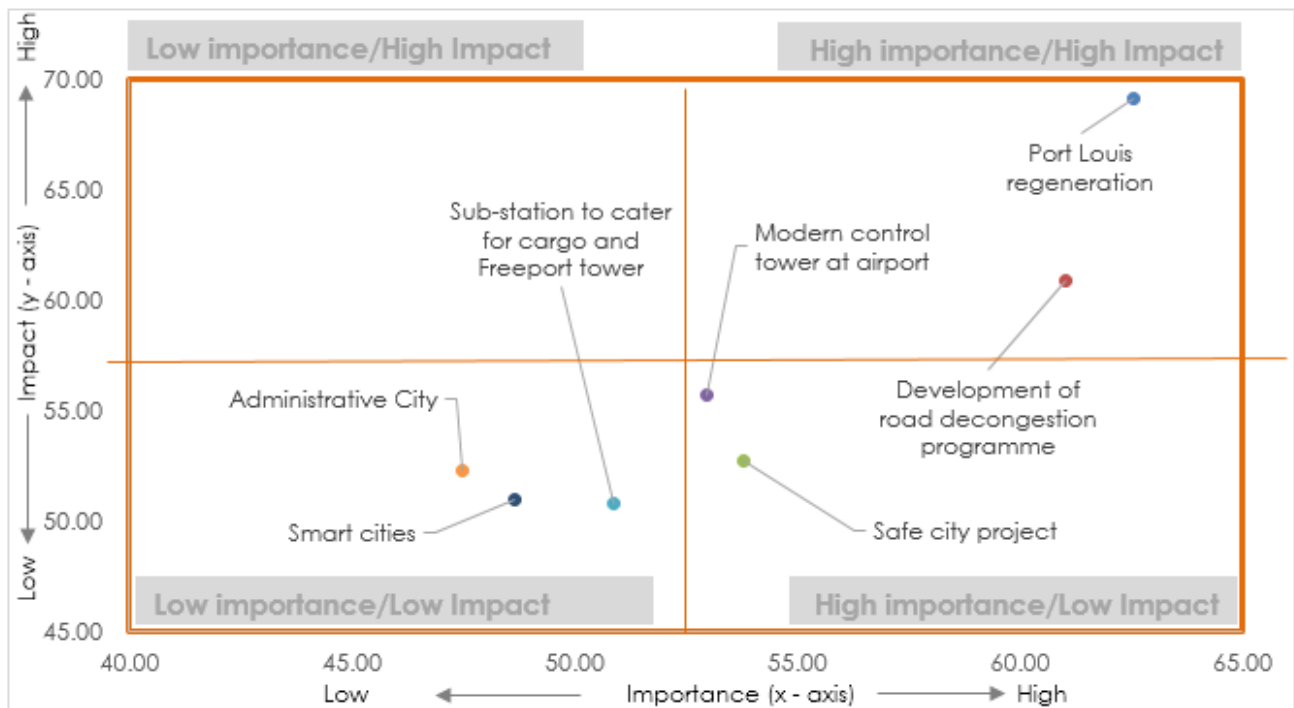
5.   Expected priorities of the population towards the government for the next three years

Top priorities (on 100) of population over the next three years
for government across priority areas

Priority area	Value
Public Infrastructure	44.8
Decrease corruption, nepotism etc.	55.3
Environmental protection	40.0
Improve Law and Order and Safety	58.9
Alleviate poverty	56.4
Gender equality across all spectrum	37.6
Healthcare reforms	58.9
Quality education	56.2
Economic growth and diversification	59.6
Increase in standing of living	59.0
Major reforms across all Ministries	41.4
Job creation	79.9

Insights: Job creation stands out as the top priority. The population has not seen any concrete action being taken on employment so far and would like more government focus. People believe that, with jobs, it is essential that economic growth and diversification (ranked second) follows. Subsequently they would like government to focus on improving their standard of living (ranked third). Lowest ranked priorities, according to respondents, are: Major reforms in ministries, Environment protection and Gender equality, which is not believed to bring about major changes in the way they live.

6.   Projects for the next three years and general expectations

Priorities for projects often differ from overall impact expected from the population. The juxtaposition of these two provides the above quadrant – importance of a project vs. the projects' expected impact according to the population – which provides a unique perspective on how people view those projects. The accompanying illustration maps each project's relative level of importance (the vertical axis) and their relative expected impact (the horizontal axis). The Port Louis regeneration project is classified as being highly important and with high potential for impact.

Bottom line

There is a series of events which resulted in changing perceptions and opinions. The public appears to be relatively unsatisfied with the priorities that they believe the government has been focusing on since 2015. The importance assigned to each of those priorities suggests that job creation should continue to be the government "main" focus with simultaneous consideration given to broadly improving the standard of living of all. Even though

a number of projects have been announced, people tend to believe that those are not directly impacting on their day to day living. Further analyses reveal that satisfaction is a major determinant of political preferences. According to the data and analysis of respondents' comments and confidence levels, it is observed that, if government performs well on priorities and that they are satisfied with is done over the next three years, the 44.2% who today reveal 'Expected to Change' political preference, may decrease to 14.4%.

About the survey

Results for this VERDE survey poll are based on face to face interviews and online questionnaires conducted between Jan. 18-31, 2017, with a random sample of 400 adults, aged 18 and older, living in all districts of Mauritius.

For results based on the sample of national adults, the margin of sampling error is ±5 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. The sample of national adults includes 30% of online respondents and 70% face to face respondents. The sample is weighted to match the national demographics in terms of gender, age and region. Demographic weighting targets are based on the most recent Population Census.

In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion surveys.

Open-ended questions were included to gather information on how respondents feel about particular issues which are not necessarily highlighted in the questionnaire. Sentiment analysis and other statistical tools have been used in the analyses. The goal of this survey is to determine the top priorities for the public, their level of satisfaction about each priority, and to provide details about how those affect the confidence and perception towards the Government. The survey was not designed to gather public's prescriptions for solving those priorities, but rather to provide a solid list of priority areas and expectations of Government and stakeholders to focus on for the next three years.

Additional information including the survey report, other coverage of the survey results and the survey's complete topline findings can be found on the VERDE website at www.verdefrontier.mu.