Good Governance Africa is a registered pan-African non-profit organisation. Through cutting edge research and trend analysis, regular publications and advocacy work, we aim to improve governance across our five key areas:

- Local Governance • Natural Resources • National Security •  
- Child Development and Youth Formation • Ethical Values and Spirituality

Striving to improve the lives of all citizens
What the people really think: GGA National Government Survey

How satisfied are South Africans with the current government’s performance? In the light of the forthcoming local elections, Good Governance Africa (GGA) commissioned MarkData, a research company, to conduct a nationally representative survey on citizens’ perceptions of the country’s government.

The feedback from the survey is clear: South Africans are losing faith in their government. Less than 15% of participants sympathetic to the present government with regard to accountability, competency, service delivery, law and order and employment. This is very significant, especially given that 62% of those who voted in the last election supported the current government. Almost 60% of respondents agreed that “people are giving up hope that the government will listen to them”. The most positive feedback to government was on pensions and social grants, the latter gaining a 61.2% positive rating. This was even higher among black respondents at 76.6%.

Eight out of 10 people surveyed blame government, not other factors, for the state of the economy. Some 46% of respondents rated the government negatively on health against 31% who rated it positively. On education, 36% gave the government a thumbs up but 44% a thumbs down. Disturbingly, law and order stands at 57% negative and 17% positive.

It is startling that in a democracy, just under half of our respondents (48%) believe that the government respects democratic freedoms (of speech, the press, religion, assembly and the right to a fair trial). Overall, our survey shows that government has lost the trust of the people and that it now rests on the people to hold government to account and to bring health to our democracy.
Government Performance Index (GPI): the good, the bad and the ugly

GGA has also engaged in cutting-edge research on municipalities in South Africa to provide information on service delivery, administration and economic development. We have developed the Government Performance Index, which ranks South Africa’s 234 local and metropolitan municipalities using 15 indicators across three key areas: service delivery, economic development, and administration.

The top performing municipality is Swellendam in the Western Cape, which is led by a Democratic Alliance-African Christian Democratic Party coalition. Of the top 20 municipalities, 15 are in the Western Cape, eight DA-led, four ANC-led and the others by coalitions. The worst performing municipality is Mbizana in the Eastern Cape. Of the 20 bottom ranked municipalities, 12 are in the Eastern Cape, six in KZN, and one each in Limpopo and the North West.

The main factors affecting performance included electricity, refuse removal, individual monthly income, water and sanitation. Whereas 80.3% of households nationally have electricity, the average drops to 66% in KZN. Provincially, the Eastern Cape is hardest hit, where 20 out of 100 people do not have access to piped water, as compared to the best functioning province where only one out of 100 people do not. Although education was less significant in explaining the different rankings, Mpumalanga’s good performance is noteworthy. Two of its municipalities, Mbombela and Steve Tshwete, are in the top 10 for education.

When we consider government performance as a whole, most strikingly, the lowest functioning municipalities lie in the former homeland areas. One would have expected these areas to be prioritised in the new democracy. Yet, Mbizana, the birthplace of Oliver Tambo, remains at the bottom of the pile. GGA’s purpose with this work is to take the initiative and not to finger-wag, but to help citizens and government alike. See the latest online edition of our journal Africa in Fact on local government.
We research and analyse information to develop accessible fact-based knowledge resources. Our main publications are the *Africa Survey*, an annual statistical guide covering economic, political and social indicators across 55 African countries, and *Africa in Fact* a bi-monthly journal covering specific themes on governance across Africa.

**Africa Survey**: a comprehensive collection of 1,600 indicators from over 80 sources for all African countries. Updated annually with figures and infographics, and with our offer of tailored research, the Survey is an exceptional tool for researchers, analysts, investors, business people, governmental and NGO representatives.

**Africa in Fact**: freely available as both an online and print publication has a global readership approaching 10,000 subscribers, including politicians, the media, diplomats, business people and academics. Each edition covers a unique topic of interest, from health to stock markets, the courts and justice to local government.