



NEW FACES, SAME CHALLENGES?

GOVERNMENT OF MALAWI PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT 2020–2025

An evidence-based assessment of Malawi's progress on 204 electoral promises across the Economy, Governance, Corruption, Climate Change, and Social Services sectors.

Purpose of the report

- Assess the Government of Malawi's performance in fulfilling **204 electoral promises** made by the Malawi Congress Party (MCP) from **2020–2025**.
- Based on the actions tracked on the African Citizen Watch, the team produces annual assessment reports.
- Track progress across five key sectors: **Economy, Governance, Corruption, Climate Change, and Social Services**.
- Provide evidence-based insights to inform **citizens, civil society, and policymakers** ahead of the September 2025 elections.
- The final assessment report gives an overall score of what the government would have worked on during its entire term of office.

MALAWI GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

2020–2025 OVERVIEW



Malawi's Government Transition and Election Timeline

Key events from 2019 election to 2020 rerun



The promises that we are tracking are derived from the commitments that Malawi Congress Party (MCP) made in their manifesto, as well as other key policy pronouncements. We evaluate each promise using a scale ranging from not commenced to implemented.



TIME SINCE INAUGURATION

1879DAYS 20HOURS 46MINUTES

SUMMARY OF PROMISES

204	138	42	0	10	14
TOTAL PROMISES	IN PROGRESS	NOT COMMENCED	MODIFIED	BROKEN	IMPLEMENTED

PROMISE AREA

ECONOMY	GOVERNANCE	CORRUPTION	CLIMATE CHANGE	SOCIAL SERVICES
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Methodology

Where do the promises come from?

Promises are primarily extracted from the **Malawi Congress Party (MCP) 2019 election manifesto**.

Additional policy pronouncements made during the government's term (2020–2025) are also included.

These promises are grouped into five key sectors: **Economy, Governance, Corruption, Climate Change, and Social Services**.



MALAWI CONGRESS PARTY

MANIFESTO

2019-2024



Methodology

Where do the actions come from?

Actions are tracked using official publications, from:

- Government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (e.g. Ministry of Finance, Public Sector Reforms)
- Trusted media outlets (e.g. Nation Online, Zodiak, Malawi24)
- International organisations (e.g. FAO, UNICEF, World Bank)

Only verifiable and publicly documented actions are recorded. If an action isn't published, it's excluded from the tracker.

All reported actions are triangulated and fact-checked across multiple sources before being recorded on the Malawi Citizens Watch.

Methodology

Where does the score come from?

Each promise is assessed using a standardised scoring framework:

- Implemented: Fully delivered (Score = 14)
- In Progress: Partial fulfilment (Score = 1–13 based on depth and quality of action)
- Broken / Not Commenced: No action or opposite action taken (Score = 0)

Scoring considers:

- Legal frameworks, budget allocations, institutional capacity, timelines, and cross-sector collaboration.

Sectoral scores are calculated by averaging the scores of all promises within each sector. The overall government score is derived from aggregating these sectoral averages.

ACTION		MAXIMUM SCORE 14 points possible
New Strategy		Yes = 1 No = 0
Policy Reform (+) Incentive	2x weight	Yes = 2 No = 0
Policy Reform (-) Dis-enabler	2x weight	Yes = 2 No = 0
Does it fit in an existing Legal Framework?		Yes = 1 No = 0
Has a new law been established?		Yes = 1 No = 0
Has budget implications: New resources have been allocated		Yes = 1 No = 0
Fits within an existing ministry		Yes = 1 No = 0
Cross ministry/agency collaboration established		Yes = 1 No = 0
Time-frame-fits within current annual planning cycle	2x weight	Yes = 2 No = 0
Is it a fully implemented policy?	5x weight	Yes = 5 No = 0
Barometer Action Score		TOTAL

MALAWI GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

The 2025 Malawi Barometer reveals that the Government of Malawi, led by President Lazarus Chakwera, has made uneven progress in fulfilling its 204 electoral promises, achieving an overall implementation score of 39%. While 14 promises were fully delivered and 138 are in progress, 10 were broken and 42 remain unaddressed.



204 Promises

Extracted from the MCP manifesto
Started Tracking 15 June 2020

68%

138 Promise in
Progress

7%

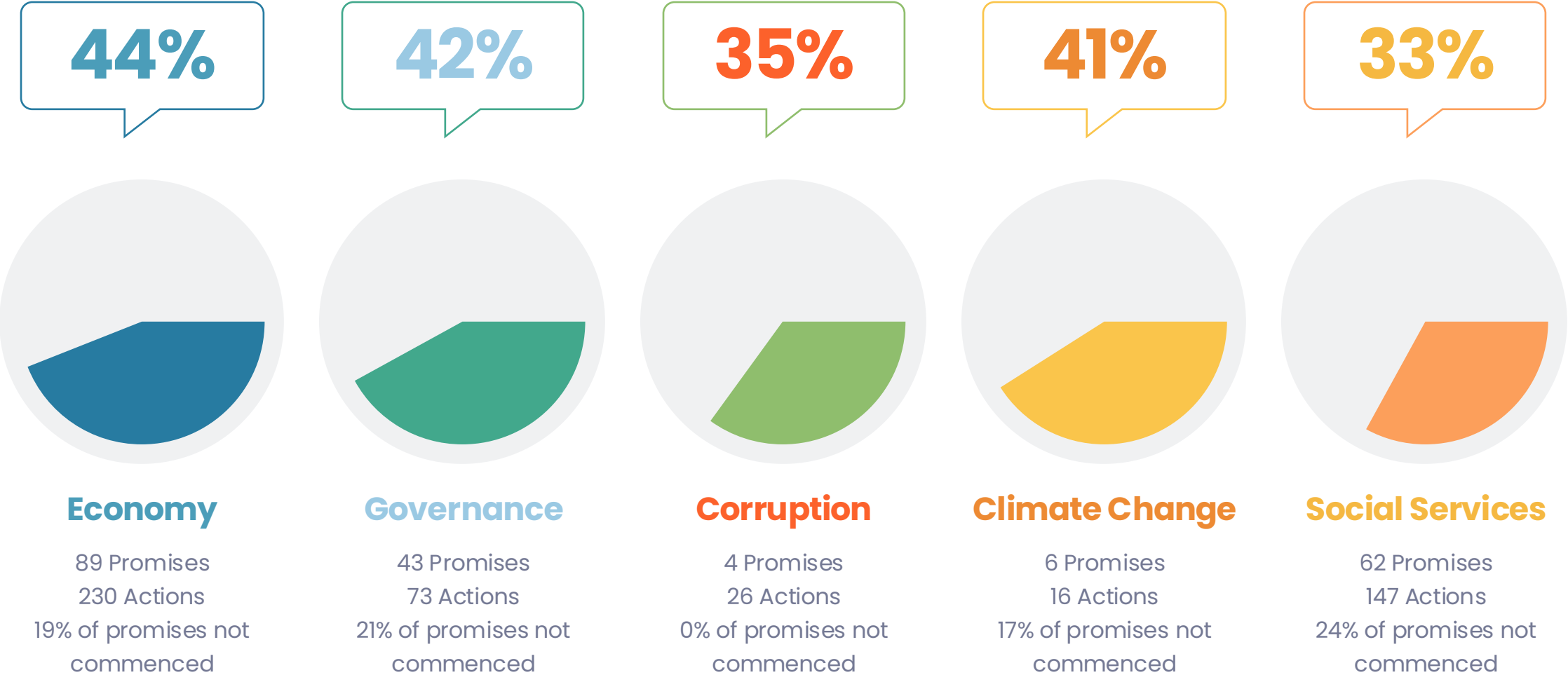
14 Promises
Implemented

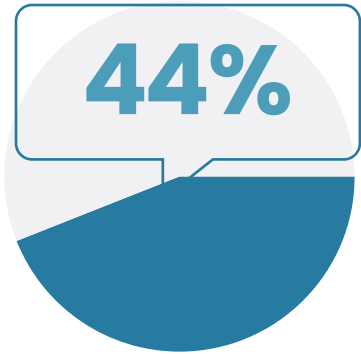
39%

Promise Fulfilment

MALAWI GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

Sectoral Assessment



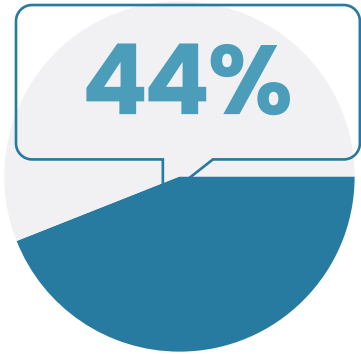


Economy

This was the strongest-performing sector, with notable progress in infrastructure, tourism, ICT, and agriculture. However, debt ballooned and key fiscal promises—like reducing public debt—were broken, revealing a gap between ambition and financial discipline.

Economic Growth and Development

	# Promises	# Actions	Assessment Score	
Management of the Economy	20	40	38%	62%
Agriculture and Food Security	11	36	47%	53%
Energy Access and Security	8	27	40%	60%
Trade Commerce and Industrial Development	13	24	40%	60%
Mining and Resource Governance	11	21	50%	50%
Tourism	7	23	53%	47%



Economy

This was the strongest-performing sector, with notable progress in infrastructure, tourism, ICT, and agriculture. However, debt ballooned and key fiscal promises—like reducing public debt—were broken, revealing a gap between ambition and financial discipline.

Infrastructure Development	# Promises	# Actions	Assessment Score	
Road Transport Network	20	40	38%	62%
Water Transport	11	36	47%	53%
Air Transport	8	27	40%	60%
Information Communication Technology	13	24	40%	60%
Urban Development and Planning	11	21	50%	50%



Image from [NyasaTimes](https://www.nyasatimes.com)

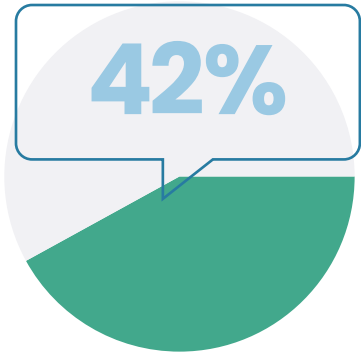
Agriculture – Universal Farm Input Subsidy Program (AIP)

- **Promise:** Introduce a universal subsidy program for smallholder farmers.
- **Action Taken:**
 - Launched the Affordable Inputs Programme (AIP) in 2021, targeting 3.7 million households with subsidised fertiliser and hybrid seed.
 - Initial success: Maize production surged by 24% in 2021.
 - Challenges emerged: Delivery delays, corruption concerns, and climate shocks (notably the 2024 drought) reversed gains.
 - By 2024/25, the program was scaled down to 1.1 million households due to fiscal strain.
- **Key Insight:** Bold policy ambition met structural and climatic constraints. AIP improved yields temporarily but exposed the fragility of rain-fed agriculture and the need for subsidy reform.

Economy Summary

- **Assessment Score:** 44%
- **Total Promises:** 89
- **Key Themes:**
 - Infrastructure development, energy access, trade, agriculture, and ICT.
 - Largest promise cluster, with 222 tracked actions.
- **Notable Actions:**
 - Implemented: National Tourism Masterplan, Export Strategy II.
 - In Progress: Electricity expansion via MEAP (90,550 households connected).
 - Broken: Debt reduction promise reversed—public debt rose to MK15.2 trillion.
- **Challenges:**
 - Fiscal overspending and debt escalation.
 - Climate shocks (e.g. cyclones and drought) undermined agricultural gains.
- **Insight:**
 - Strong ambition and partial delivery, but fiscal strain, debt escalation, and policy reversals undermined credibility.





Governance

Governance reforms showed mixed results: some institutional changes like the Malawi School of Government and land law amendments were implemented, but promises to reduce presidential powers and depoliticise appointments largely stalled.

	# Promises	# Actions	Assessment Score	
Governance	19	81	46%	54%
Public Administration	10	14	28%	72%
Homeland Security	10	23	50%	50%
Foreign Policy and International Relations	4	6	36%	64%

(Published 31st March, 2022)

Act

No. 5 of 2022

I assent

DR. LAZARUS MCCARTHY CHAKWERA
PRESIDENT
31st March, 2022

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

SECTION

1. Short title and commencement
2. Amendment of s. 2 of Cap. 57:01
3. Replacement of s. 3 of the principal Act
4. Replacement of s. 7 of the principal Act
5. Insertion of ss. 9A and 9B into the principal Act
6. Amendment of s.11 of the principal Act
7. Amendment of s. 12 of the principal Act
8. Insertion of s. 20A into the principal Act
9. Replacement of s. 37 of the principal Act
10. Repeal of s. 38 of the principal Act
11. Replacement of s. 39 of the principal Act
12. Insertion of ss. 44A and 44 B into the principal Act

An Act to amend the Land Act

ENACTED by the Parliament of Malawi as follows —

1. This Act may be cited as the Land (Amendment) Act, 2022, and shall come into force on a date appointed by the Minister by notice published in the *Gazette*.

Short title and commencement

2. The Land Act (hereinafter referred to as the “principal Act”) is amended, in section 2, by—

Amendment of s. 2 of Cap. 57:01,

Governance – Review of the Land Act to Safeguard Malawian Ownership

- **Promise:** Reform land laws to protect indigenous ownership.
- **Action Taken:**
 - Passed the Land (Amendment) Bill in 2022, prohibiting land ownership by non-citizens.
 - Initiated a national review of foreign-owned land and launched sensitisation campaigns.
 - Additional reforms in 2024 included the Property Evaluation Bill to regulate land pricing and establish oversight mechanisms.
- **Key Insight:** The government fulfilled its promise by reinforcing legal protections for Malawians, though concerns remain about investor confidence and implementation clarity.

Governance – Summary

- **Assessment Score:** 42%
- **Total Promises:** 43
- **Key Themes:**
 - Public administration, homeland security, foreign policy, and institutional reform.
- **Notable Actions:**
 - Implemented: Land Act reforms to protect Malawian ownership; the Malawi School of Government was established.
 - In Progress: Civil service depoliticisation and public finance reforms.
 - Broken: Presidential convoy reduction promise contradicted by new vehicle purchases.
- **Challenges:**
 - Coalition breakdown (UTM's exit from the Tonse Alliance) weakened reform momentum.
 - Centralised decision-making raised concerns about transparency and accountability.
- **Insight:**
 - Governance reforms showed promise but were undermined by political turbulence and slow institutional transformation.



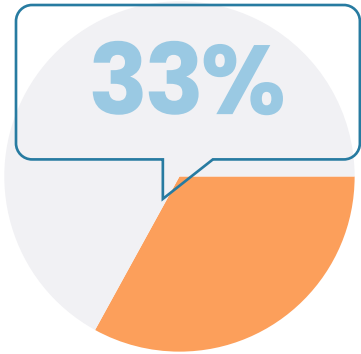
Corruption



ACB Anti-Corruption
Bureau, Malawi

A Corrupt-free Malawi

- **Assessment Score:** 35%
- **Total Promises:** 4
- **Key Focus Areas:**
 - Establishment of Anti-Corruption Courts
 - Transparency in mining licenses and urban land allocation
 - Financial accountability in public institutions
- **Notable Actions:**
 - Created the Financial and Economic Crimes Division in the High Court.
 - Arrested high-profile officials (e.g. Minister Kezzie Msukwa) for illegal land allocation.
 - Investigations were launched into procurement and fuel contract irregularities.
- **Challenges:**
 - Persistent corruption scandals, including the misuse of funds in fuel deals and agricultural subsidies.
 - Limited progress in executive-level accountability and procurement reform.
- **Insight:**
 - Despite institutional reforms, corruption remains deeply entrenched. Political will and enforcement mechanisms need strengthening to restore public trust.



Social Services

This was the weakest-performing sector, with partial delivery on education, youth development, and social protection. While initiatives like ICT labs and the reintroduction of the JCE were commendable, funding shortfalls and uneven implementation hampered broader impact.

	# Promises	# Actions	Assessment Score	
Education	17	29	29%	71%
Water and Sanitation	4	23	45%	55%
Gender Equality and Social Inclusion	10	16	24%	76%
Social Protection	5	13	41%	59%
Youth Development	10	26	45%	55%
Housing	2	13	49%	51%
Health	14	16	25%	75%

Social Services Summary

- **Assessment Score:** 33%
- **Total Promises:** 62
- **Key Themes:**
 - Education, health, youth development, gender inclusion, water and sanitation.
- **Notable Actions:**
 - Implemented: Reintroduction of Junior Certificate of Education (JCE), ICT labs in rural schools.
 - In Progress: National Youth Service launched; social cash transfers expanded.
 - Challenges: Funding gaps, weak health sector delivery, and limited gender inclusion.
- **Challenges:**
 - The health sector is underfunded; long wait times and a lack of medical supplies persist.
 - Gender and disability inclusion efforts remain limited.
- **Insight:**
 - Despite some wins in education and youth, this was the weakest-performing sector. Financial constraints and uneven implementation slowed progress.





Social Services – Protection of Persons with Albinism

- **Promise:** Fully operationalise the National Action Plan (NAP) to protect persons with albinism.
- **Action Taken:**
 - Allocated K300 million in the 2022/23 budget (later reduced to K200 million).
 - Constructed 57 secure houses for persons with albinism.
 - Public reaffirmation of commitment and reduced incidents of violence reported.
- **Key Insight:** While not fully realised, the government made measurable progress. Budget cuts and limited transparency suggest continued vigilance is needed to ensure full delivery.

Climate Change – Summary

- **Assessment Score:** 41%
- **Total Promises:** 6
- **Key Focus Areas:**
 - Climate-smart agriculture (e.g. irrigation, winter cropping)
 - Disaster preparedness and early warning systems
 - Capacity-building for local governments and communities
- **Notable Actions:**
 - Signed a US\$52.3 million climate resilience project with FAO and Green Climate Fund; Malawi contributed US\$9.4 million.
 - Trained journalists to improve public communication on climate risks.
 - Launched catchment conservation campaigns to promote alternative farming practices.
 - Tree planting initiatives by Lilongwe Water Board (2,000 trees planted out of 8,000 target).
- **Challenges:**
 - No action taken to finalise and implement the national climate change policy framework.
 - Limited progress on afforestation and enforcement of environmental regulations.
- **Insight:**
 - Progress is visible in adaptation and awareness, but policy and institutional gaps remain. Climate resilience efforts are promising but require stronger follow-through.



Photo by [SINAL Multimédia](#)

MALAWI'S SOCIO- ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES SINCE 2020

Key factors affecting Malawi's
policy implementation and
growth

**Fragile economic
growth amid
environmental shocks**

- GDP growth slowed to 1.8% in 2024 due to drought.

**Rising poverty levels
worsening socio-
economic conditions**

- Poverty rate increased to 71.2% with growing vulnerability.

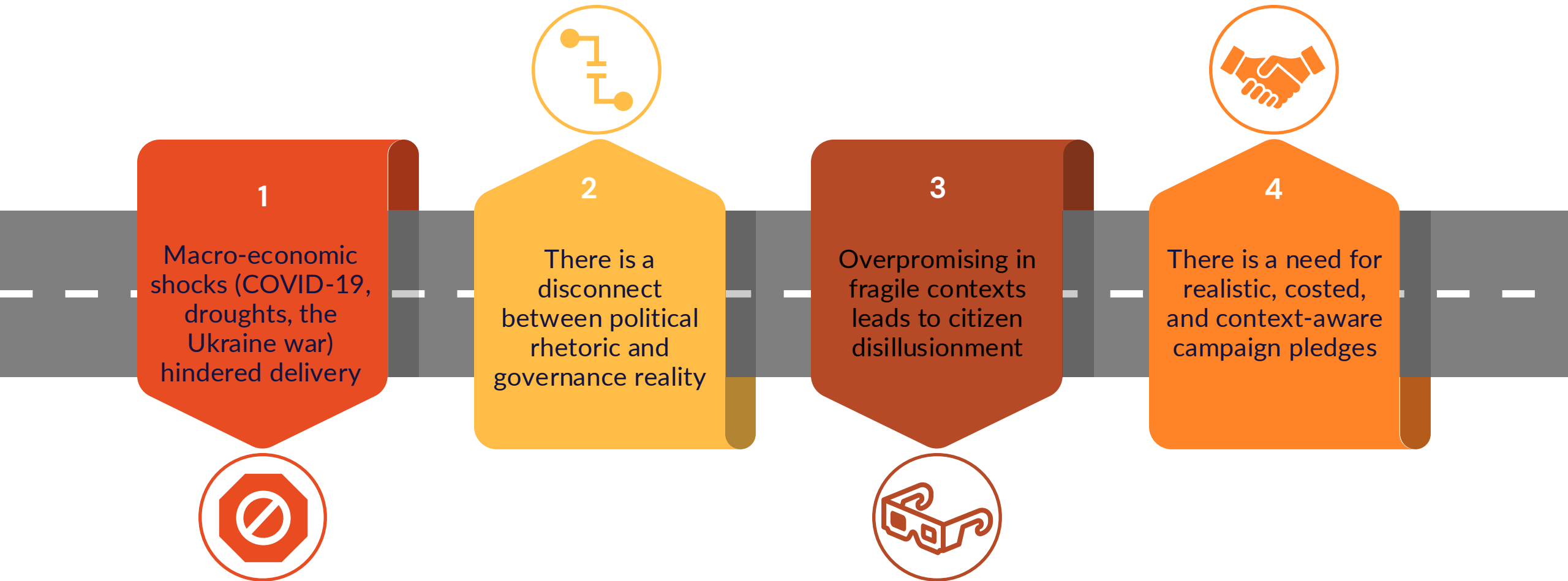
**Inflation and debt
hinder fiscal stability**

- Inflation over 30%, public debt at 85% of GDP.

**Agriculture's
vulnerability affects
livelihoods and GDP**

- Agriculture employs 64% labor, exposed to climate shocks.

Lessons Learnt



Read the full report

The full report with all the findings is found on the SIVIO Institute website (www.sivioinstitute.org/insights)

[DOI: 10.59186/SI.JN99GHGX](https://doi.org/10.59186/SI.JN99GHGX)

