

IDASA STATEMENT

Pretoria, 29 March 2012



In October and November 2011 the field work for the South Africa country study of the Afrobarometer was conducted. Amongst the battery of questions asked in South Africa and in all other countries where the Afrobarometer is conducted are a set of questions asking citizens about whether they engage in various types of protest action.

A sudden reported upsurge in protest in the last week, coming on top of the large Cosatu led protests against tolling and labour brokers, has focused attention on this subject in South Africa. While the Afrobarometer cannot answer questions about why there has been such an upsurge in reported protest recently, it can look more closely at the personalities and perceptions of those who say they were involved in protest in 2011.

The attached paper “time trends and characteristics of protestors” begins with an assessment of trends in protest participation over the last decade in South Africa before providing insights into protestors’ demographic characteristics, perceptions of government accessibility, and political behaviour.

Idasa is an independent public interest organisation committed to building sustainable democratic societies in collaboration with African and global partners.

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