

## News Release

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### African Women Lag Men in Activism, Fear Campaign Violence

Africans' support for women's equality on the continent is widespread and growing, but the day-to-day reality for many women remains characterized by disadvantage and discrimination. And while most African governments get generally good marks for their performance in empowering women, the battle for equal rights and opportunities for women is far from won especially for women in North Africa.

One concern that remains is that women are less likely to be active citizens. Not only are they less likely to be registered to vote and to vote in an election than men; but they are also significantly less likely than men to report that they have contacted leaders and to engage in other forms of participation.

Furthermore, women are also more likely to fear becoming a victim of political intimidation or violence, more so than men in countries where fear of political intimidation and violence – among both men and women – are highest.

The findings, published today (27 March 2014) in the report "Support for African Women's Equality Rises: education, jobs & political participation still unequal" reveals that women remain at a marked disadvantage compared to men in their daily lives in spite of significant progress made by government and civil society.

#### Key Findings

- Nearly three-quarters (72%) of women in 34 countries say women should have the same rights as men rather than being subject to traditional law. In 15 countries<sup>1</sup> where Afrobarometer has asked about equal rights since 2002, support for equality has increased, from 68% in 2002 to 73% in 2012.
- Similarly, 68% believe women are as capable as men of being political leaders, including fully 74% of East Africans, but just 50% of North Africans.

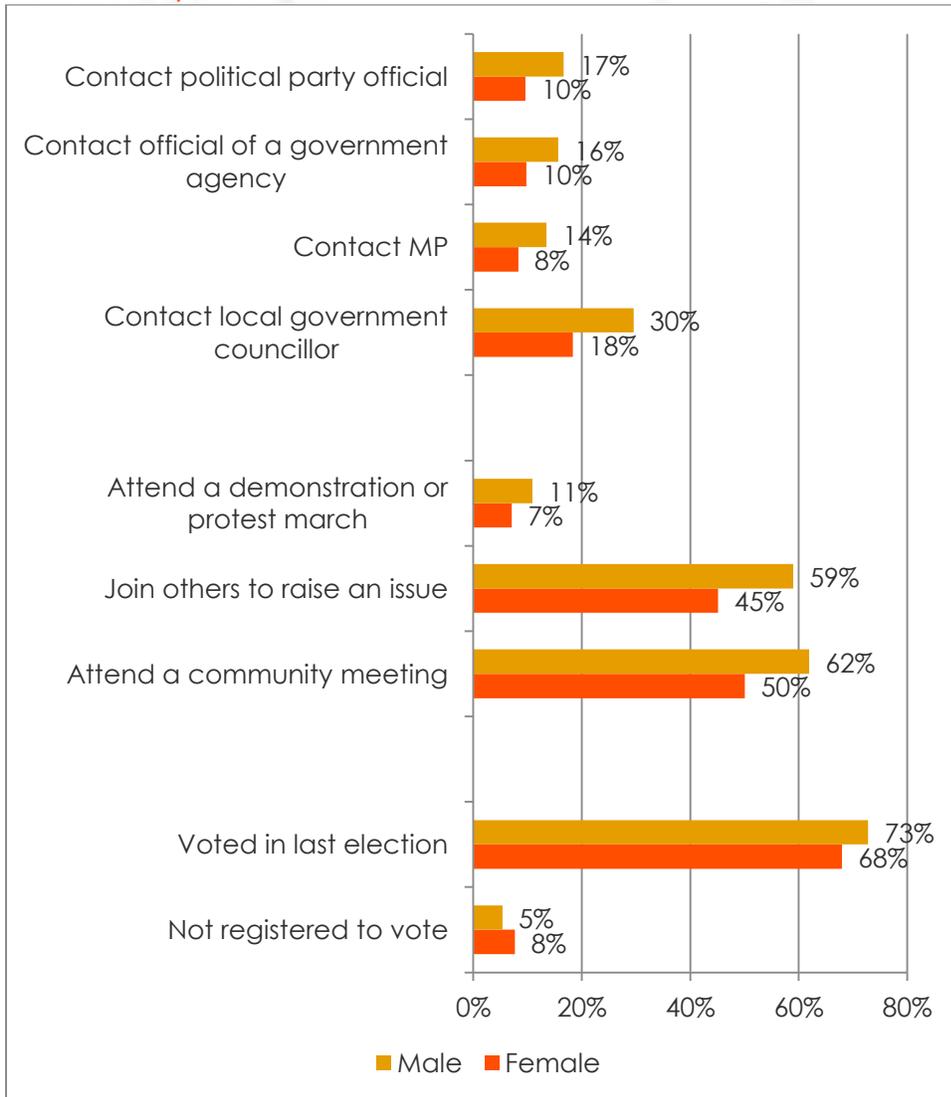
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<sup>1</sup> Botswana, Cape Verde, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia

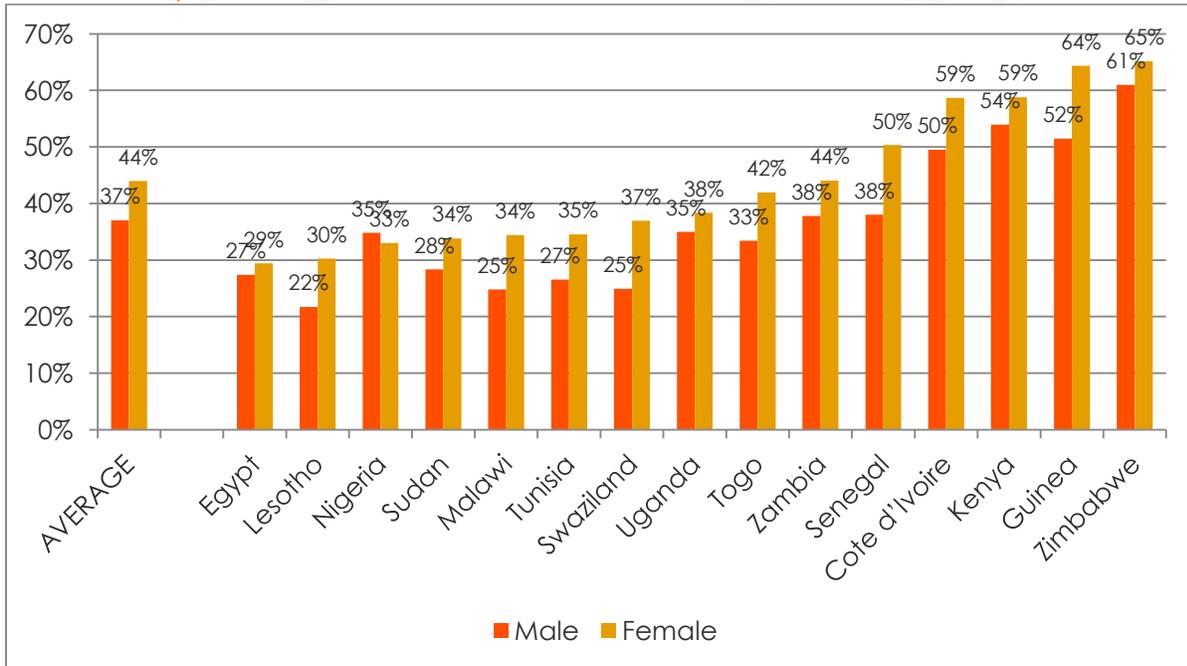
- Yet, across 34 countries, 26% of women reported never having any formal education, compared with 19% among men. Sixteen percent of men have post-secondary schooling, compared with just 11% of women.
- Women are also less likely to exercise their political rights than men. They are less likely to be registered to vote (8% unregistered for women, vs. 5% for men) and less likely to vote (68% vs. 73%). Women are also significantly less likely to contact leaders or to engage in other forms of political participation.
- Women also face widespread discrimination as they go about their daily lives. Four in ten Africans (40%) say women are 'often' or 'always' treated unfairly by employers. A similar number (41%) say traditional leaders hand down unfair treatment, and one in three (33%) say the police and courts do not treat women equally.
- While large numbers report gender inequalities, most people (59%) say their governments are doing 'fairly' or 'very well' in empowering women, including majorities in 27 of 34 countries. Notable exceptions include Nigeria and Egypt, where 65% say their governments are doing 'fairly' or 'very poorly'.
- Women fare markedly worse in North Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia). These countries collectively report the lowest levels of support for women's leadership, and the highest frequency of discrimination. There are also wide gaps between men and women on many issues, including the ability of women to serve as president or prime minister of a Muslim country (55% support among women, 36% among men) and support for equal rights for women in initiating a divorce (56% support among women, 39% among men).

**Charts**

**Figure 1: Active Citizenship by Gender, 34 countries, 2011-2013**



**Figure 2: Countries with highest level of political intimidation, by Gender, 15 countries, 2011-2013**



## Afrobarometer

Afrobarometer measures the social, political, and economic atmosphere in Africa. Afrobarometer surveys are conducted in many African countries including Tunisia and are repeated on a regular cycle. The survey instrument asks a standard set of questions in all participating countries, but there are also a set of country-specific questions that address relevant issues within each country.

Data for Afrobarometer Round 5 was collected across the continent from 2011 to 2013. The survey asks questions on a wide range of issues including democracy and governance, economy, approval ratings of leaders and institutions, decentralization and local government, living conditions, perceptions of corruption, security, national and ethnic identity, as well as media and election preferences.

Together with its National Partners in each country, Afrobarometer is a joint enterprise of the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana), the Institute for Empirical Research in Political Economy (IREEP) in Benin and the Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi in Kenya. The project receives technical support from Michigan State University (MSU) and University of Cape Town (UCT).