



Harare, Zimbabwe
17 August 2022

News release

Zimbabweans see gender-based violence as the most important women's-rights issue, say physical force is never justified

Gender-based violence is the most important women's-rights issue that Zimbabweans want the government and society to address, many citing it as a common problem in homes and communities, according to the latest Afrobarometer survey.

Most citizens say it is never justified for men to use physical force to discipline their wives, a view that is shared across all key demographic groups and provinces.

In addition, most say gender-based violence is a criminal matter that requires the involvement of law enforcement authorities, rather than a personal affair that should be handled within the family.

Key findings

- Gender-based violence (GBV) tops the list as the most important women's-rights issue that Zimbabweans want their government and society to address, followed by too few women in influential government positions and unequal rights of property ownership and inheritance (Figure 1).
- More than half (52%) of citizens say GBV is "somewhat common" (35%) or "very common" (17%) in homes or in the community (Figure 2).
 - More women (56%) than men (47%) hold this view. It is less widely shared by older respondents (40%), citizens with post-secondary education (45%), and those experiencing no or low lived poverty (43%) (Figure 3).
- More than six in 10 respondents (61%) say domestic violence is a criminal matter whose resolution requires the involvement of law enforcement agencies, compared to 37% who see it as a private matter that needs to be handled within the family (Figure 4).
- Nearly eight in 10 Zimbabweans (78%) say it is "never justified" for a man to use physical force to discipline his wife (Figure 5).
 - Women are more likely than men to say this behaviour is never justified (83% vs. 73%), as are urbanites compared to rural residents (91% vs. 71%). Opposition to the use of physical force increases with respondents' education level, ranging from 64% among those with primary schooling or less to 89% among those with post-secondary qualifications. Younger citizens (79%-80% of those aged 18-55 years) are more likely to see it as never justified than their older counterparts (70% of those over 55) (Figure 6).
 - Majorities in all provinces say it is never justified for men to physically discipline their wives, ranging from 66% in Mashonaland East to 97% in Harare (Figure 7).

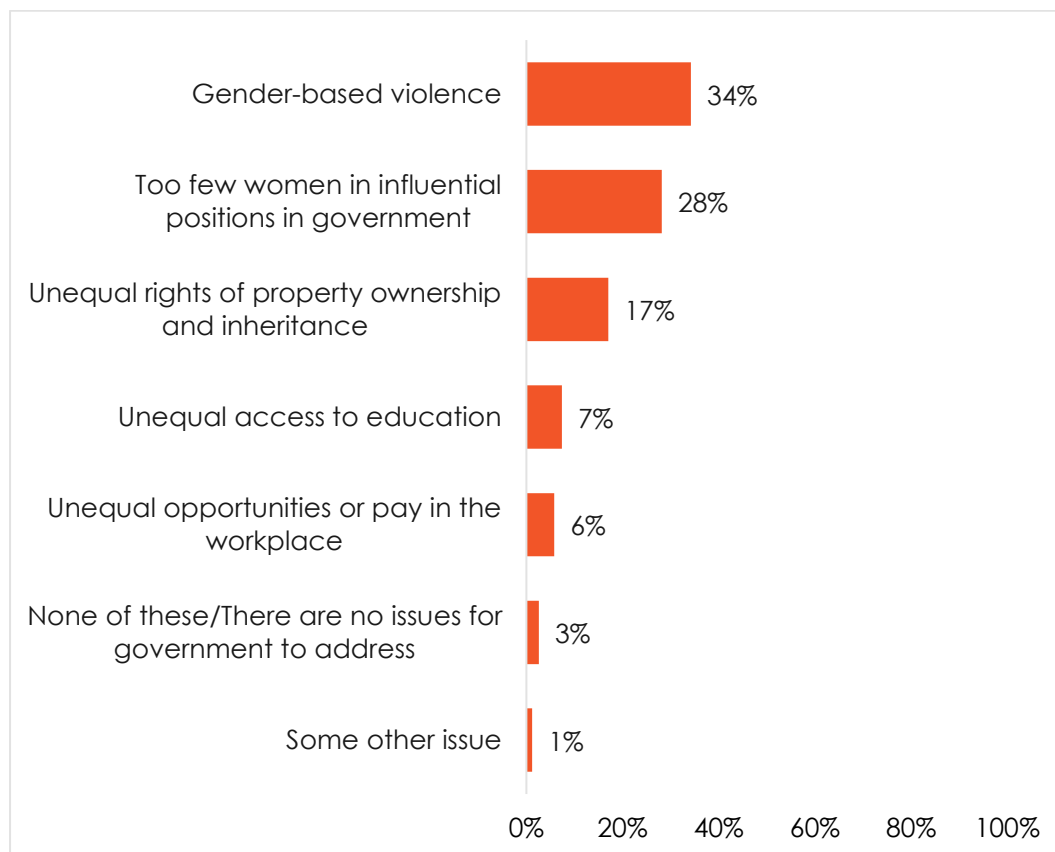
Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Eight survey rounds in up to 39 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 9 surveys (2021/2022) are currently underway. Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Zimbabwe, led by the Mass Public Opinion Institute (MPOI), interviewed 1,200 adult citizens of Zimbabwe between 28 March and 10 April 2022. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous standard surveys were conducted in Zimbabwe in 1999, 2004, 2005, 2009, 2012, 2014, 2017, and 2021.

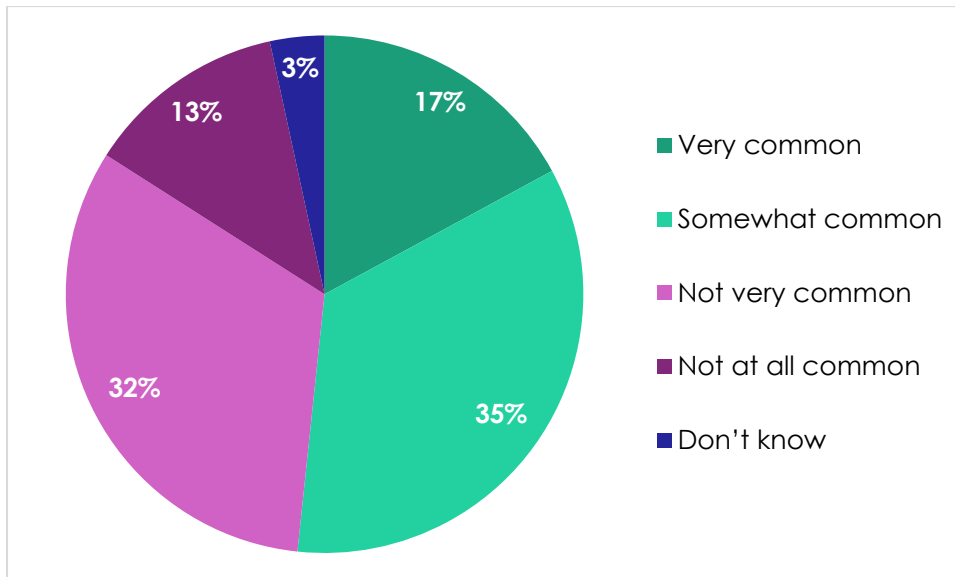
Charts

Figure 1 : Most important women's-rights issue | Zimbabwe | 2022



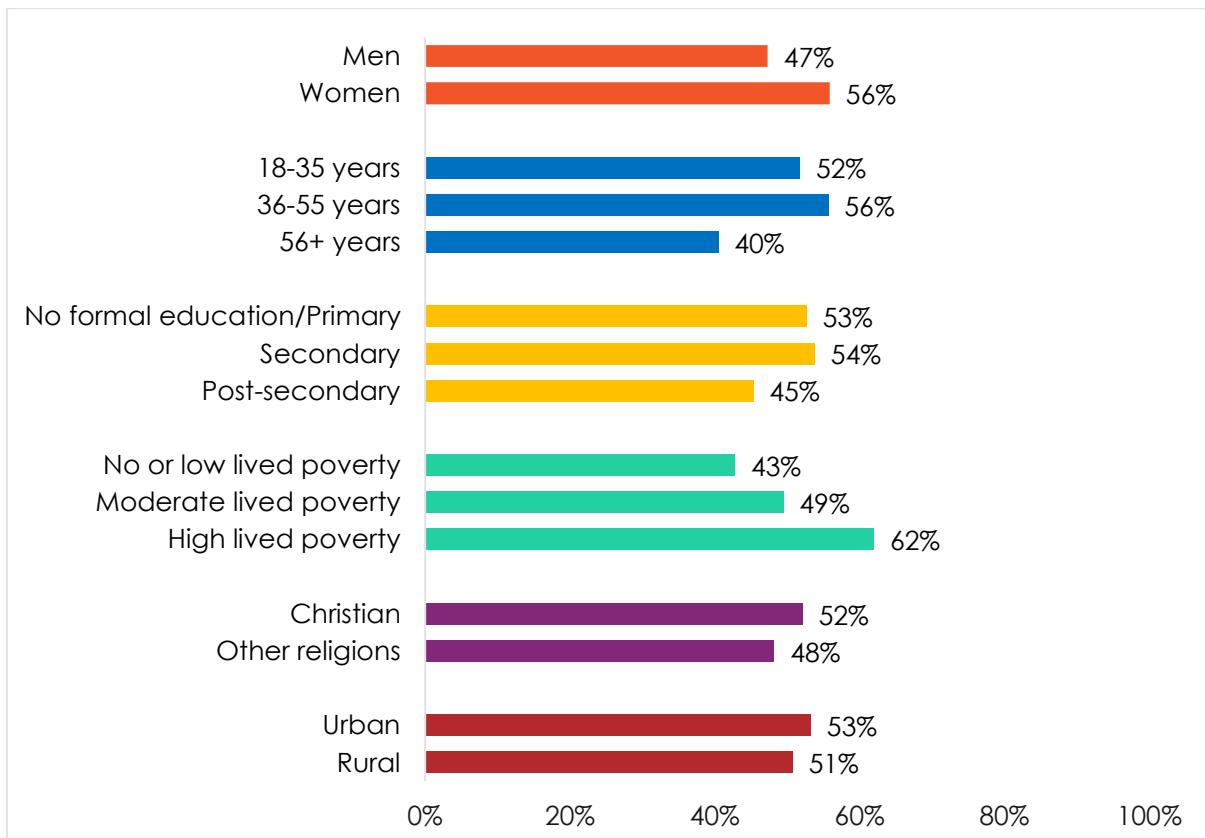
Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, which of the following issues related to women's rights and equality do you think is the most important for our government and society to address?*

Figure 2: Frequency of gender-based violence | Zimbabwe | 2022



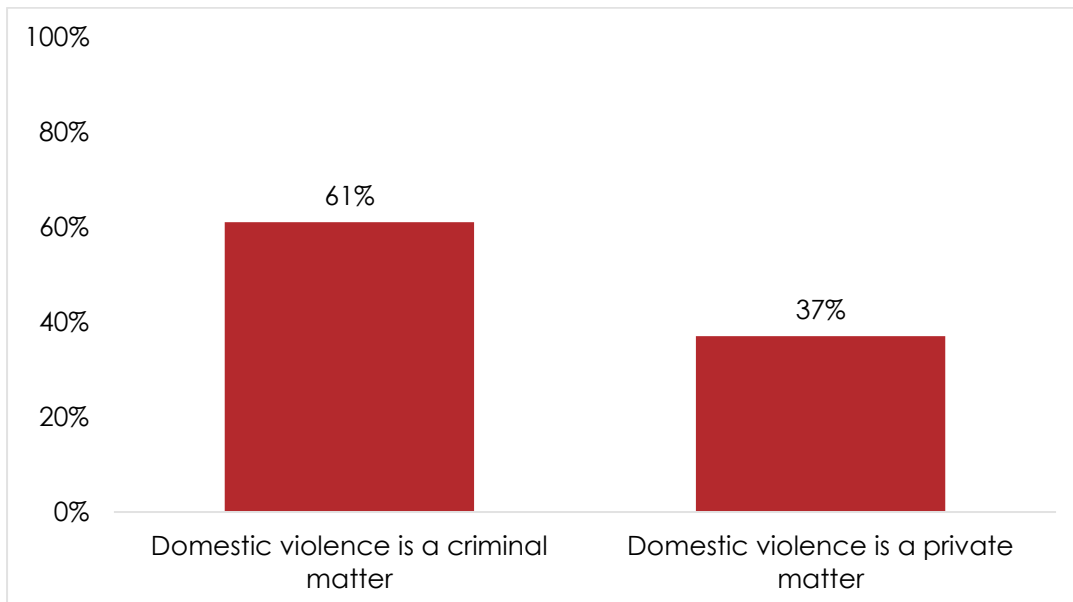
Respondents were asked: In this area, how common do you think it is for men to use violence against women and girls in the home or the community?

Figure 3: Frequency of gender-based violence | by demographic group | Zimbabwe | 2022



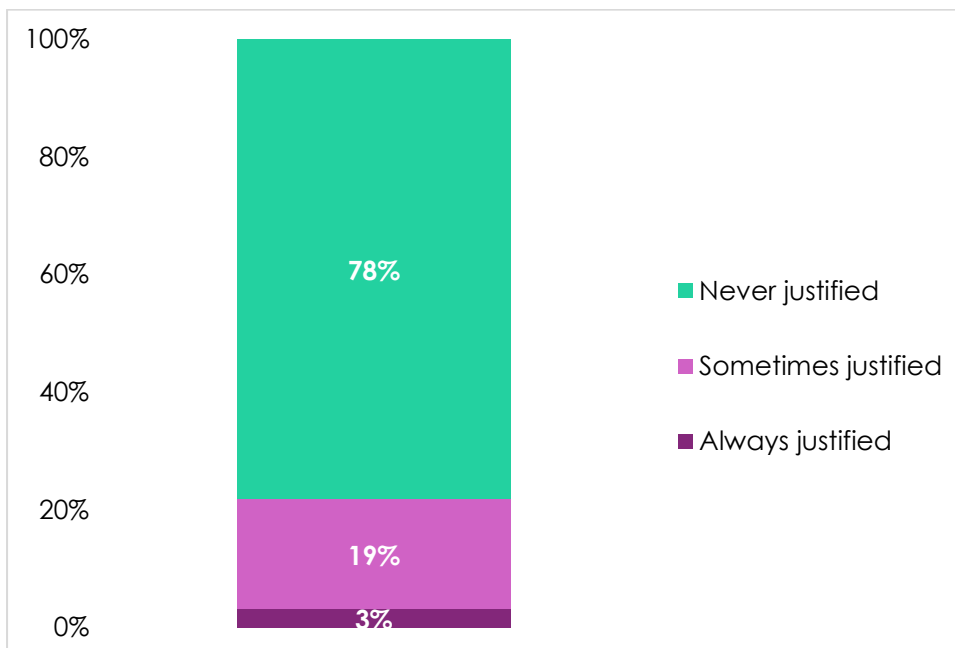
Respondents were asked: In this area, how common do you think it is for men to use violence against women and girls in the home or the community? (% who say "somewhat common" or "very common")

Figure 4: Is domestic violence a criminal or private matter? | Zimbabwe | 2022



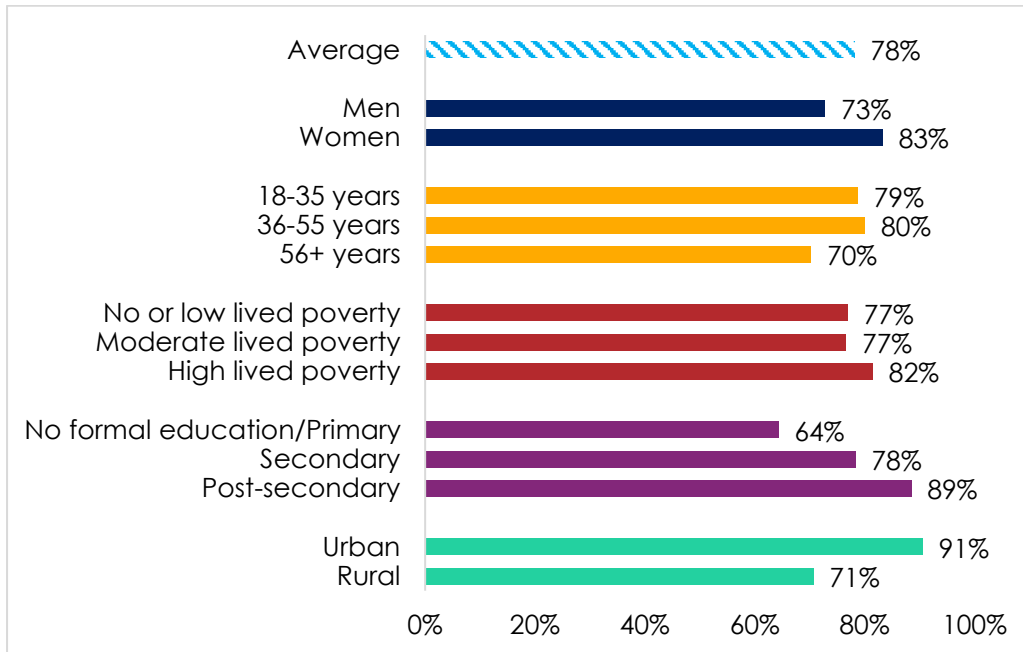
Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 Statement 1: Domestic violence is a private matter that needs to be handled and resolved within the family.
 Statement 2: Domestic violence is a criminal matter whose full resolution requires the involvement of law enforcement agencies.
 (% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with each statement)

Figure 5: Is it justified for a man to physically discipline his wife? | Zimbabwe | 2022



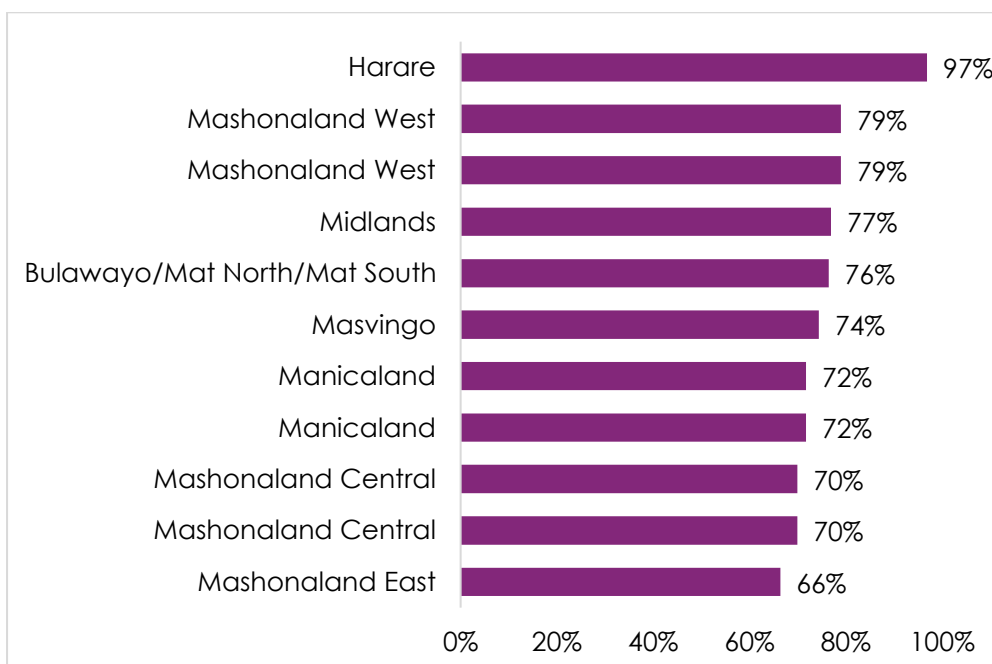
Respondents were asked: For each of the following actions, please tell me whether you think it can always be justified, sometimes be justified, or never be justified: For a man to use physical discipline on his wife if she has done something he doesn't like or thinks is wrong?

Figure 6: Never justified for a man to physically discipline his wife | by demographic group | Zimbabwe | 2022



Respondents were asked: For each of the following actions, please tell me whether you think it can always be justified, sometimes be justified, or never be justified: For a man to use physical discipline on his wife if she has done something he doesn't like or thinks is wrong? (% who say "never justified")

Figure 7: Never justified for a man to physically discipline his wife | by province | Zimbabwe | 2022



Respondents were asked: For each of the following actions, please tell me whether you think it can always be justified, sometimes be justified, or never be justified: For a man to use physical discipline on his wife if she has done something he doesn't like or thinks is wrong? (% who say "never justified")

For more information, please contact:

Mass Public Opinion Institute
E.V. Masunungure
Telephone: +263-242-771358
Email: info@mpoi.org.zw

Visit us online at:

www.mpoi.net

www.afrobarometer.org

Follow our releases on #VoicesAfrica.

