

Abuja, Nigeria  
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## News release

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### **Nigerians reject use of physical force against women but see gender-based violence as a private matter**

More than three-fourths of Nigerians say it is never justified for a man to physically discipline his wife, the latest Afrobarometer survey shows.

But most citizens consider domestic violence a private matter to be resolved within the family rather than as a criminal matter that involves law enforcement agencies.

A majority of Nigerians say that violence against women and girls is not very common in their communities and that the police are likely to take cases of gender-based violence (GBV) seriously.

But about half of respondents say women who report such violence to the police are likely to be criticised, harassed, and shamed.

#### **Key findings**

- A majority (58%) of Nigerians say violence against women is “not very common” or “not at all common” in their community, but 41% of citizens disagree (Figure 1).
- About eight in 10 Nigerians (79%) say it is “never justified” for a man to physically discipline his wife (Figure 2).
- Almost half (47%) of respondents consider it “somewhat likely” (28%) or “very likely” (19%) that a woman will be criticised, harassed, or shamed if she reports an incident of GBV to the authorities. Far fewer (24%) say this is “very unlikely” (Figure 3).
- But most respondents (79%) believe that the police are likely to take cases of GBV seriously (Figure 4).
- More than two-thirds (68%) of Nigerians say domestic violence should be treated as a private matter to be resolved within the family rather than as a criminal matter that involves law enforcement agencies (Figure 5).

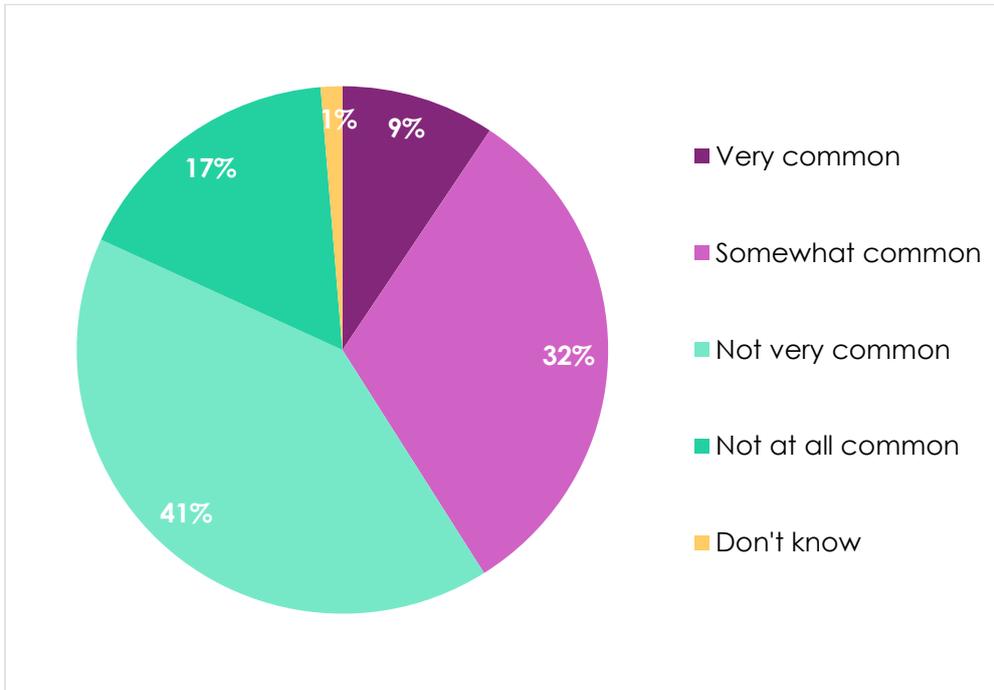
#### **Afrobarometer surveys**

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 Nigeria, led by NOIPolls, interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,600 adult citizens in March 2022. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-2.5 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys were conducted in Nigeria in 1999, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, and 2020.

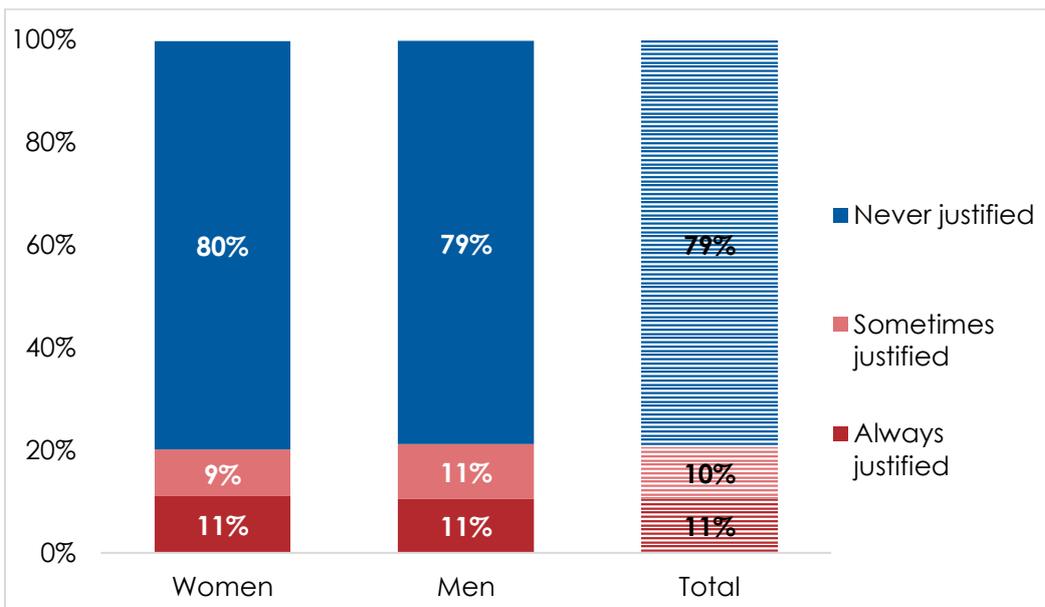
**Charts**

**Figure 1: Frequency of gender-based violence | Nigeria | 2022**



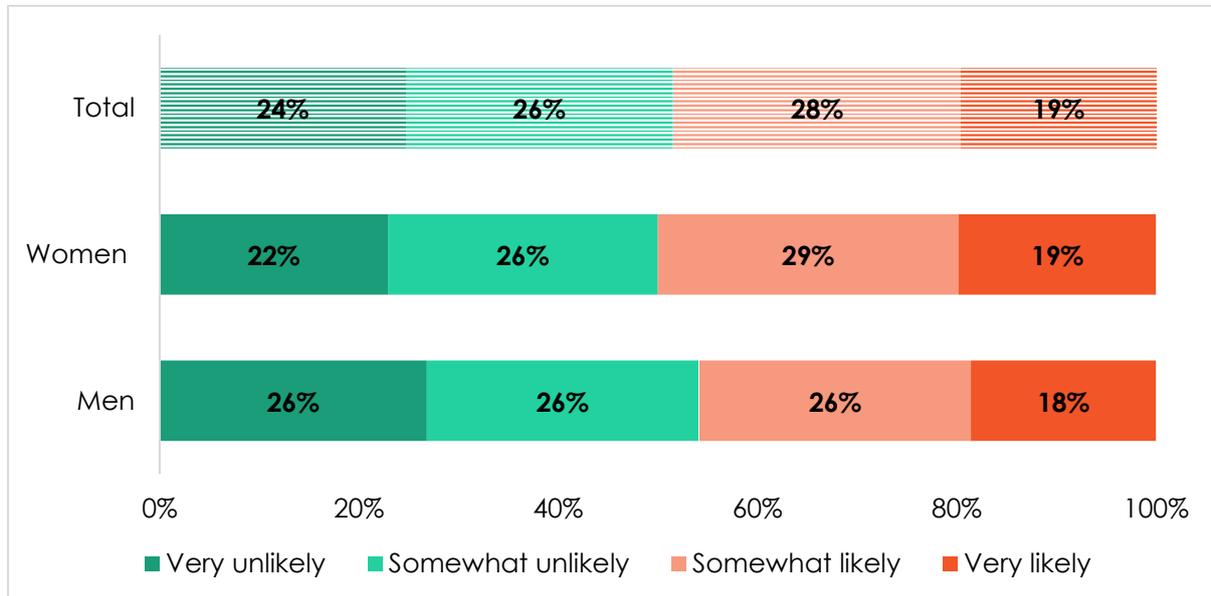
**Respondents were asked:** In this area, how common do you think it is for men to use violence against women and girls in the home or the community?

**Figure 2: Is it justified for men to physically discipline their wives? | by gender | Nigeria | 2022**



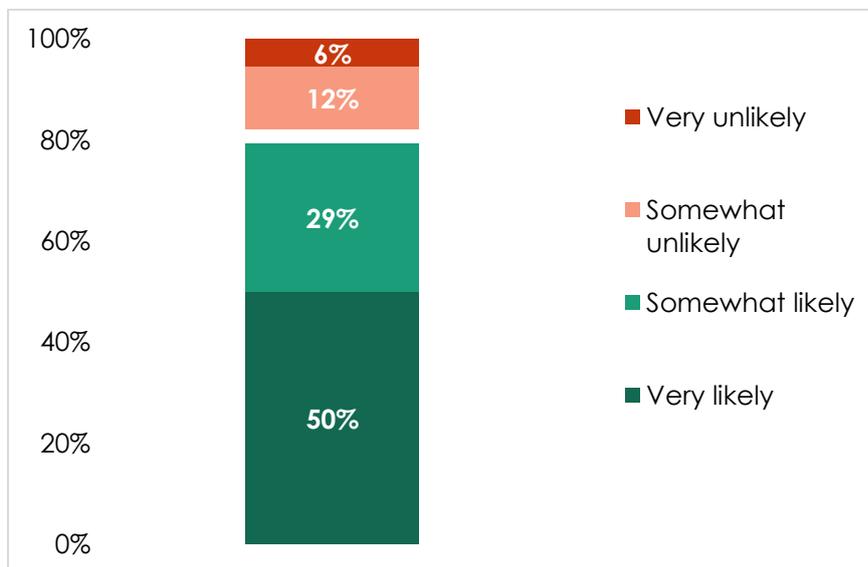
**Respondents were asked:** For each of the following actions, please tell me whether you think it can always be justified, sometimes be justified, or never be justified: For a man to use physical discipline on his wife if she has done something he doesn't like or thinks is wrong?

**Figure 3: Will a woman be criticised, harassed, or shamed for reporting GBV?**  
 | by gender | Nigeria | 2022



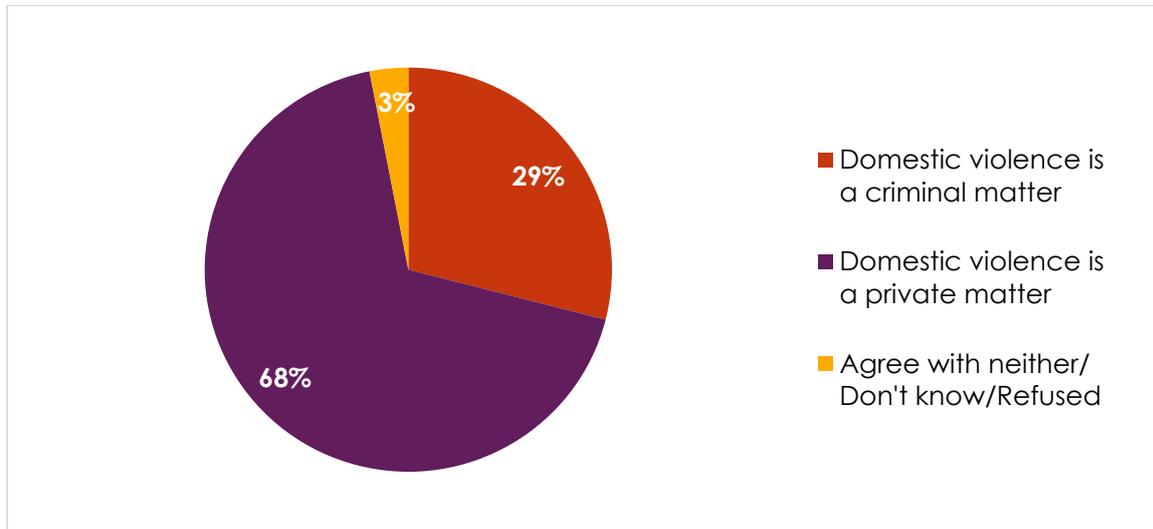
**Respondents were asked:** *If a woman in your community goes to the police to report being a victim of gender-based violence, for example, to report a rape or report being physically abused by her husband, how likely or unlikely is it that the following things might occur: She will be criticised, harassed, or shamed by others in the community?*

**Figure 4: Do police take GBV cases seriously?** | Nigeria | 2022



**Respondents were asked:** *If a woman in your community goes to the police to report being a victim of gender-based violence, for example, to report a rape or report being physically abused by her husband, how likely or unlikely is it that the following things might occur: Her case will be taken seriously by the police?*

**Figure 5: Is domestic violence a criminal or private matter? | Nigeria | 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)

**For more information, please contact:**

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