



Freetown, Sierra Leone
8 December 2022

News release

Sierra Leoneans welcome government efforts to address gender inequalities, call for more

A majority of Sierra Leoneans say the government is doing a good job of promoting equal rights and opportunities for women, but most want it to do more, the latest Afrobarometer survey shows.

Citizens endorse equal rights for women to own and inherit land, to get a job, and to run for public office. Most think that a woman who runs for office will gain standing in the community, but a significant number also consider it likely that others in the community will criticise or harass her.

Believers in equal rights for women are celebrating Sierra Leone's just-passed Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Act, which mandates equal pay for equal work, maternity leave, financial inclusion, and a 30% quota of women in government appointments and private institutions with more than 25 employees.

Key findings

- In Sierra Leone, women are less likely than men to have post-secondary education (7% vs. 20%) and more likely to have no formal schooling at all (46% vs. 34%) (Figure 1).
- Large majorities of Sierra Leoneans say women should have the same rights as men to own and inherit land (78%) (Figure 2) and to be elected to public office (71%).
- But support for equal rights to a job is considerably weaker – 56% for, 39% against (Figure 3).
- Eight in 10 respondents (82%) think a woman will gain standing in the community if she runs for office. But more than four in 10 (42%) consider it likely that others in the community will criticise or harass her, and 21% think she will probably face problems with her family (Figure 4).
- Three-fourths (76%) of Sierra Leoneans say the government is doing “fairly well” or “very well” in promoting equal rights and opportunities for women (Figure 5).
- But almost two-thirds (64%) want it to do more (Figure 6).

Afrobarometer surveys

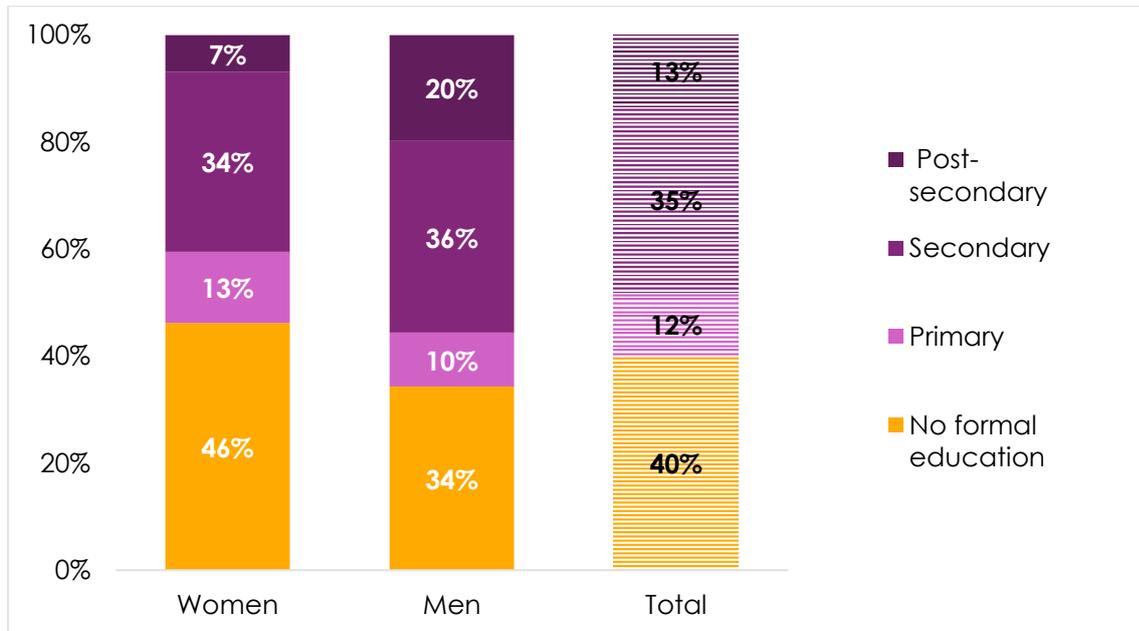
Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Eight survey rounds in up to 39 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 9 surveys (2021/2022) are currently underway.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

The Afrobarometer team in Sierra Leone, led by the Institute for Governance Reform (IGR), interviewed 1,200 adult citizens of Sierra Leone between 13 June and 9 July 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 surveys were conducted in Sierra Leone in 2012, 2015, 2018, and 2020.

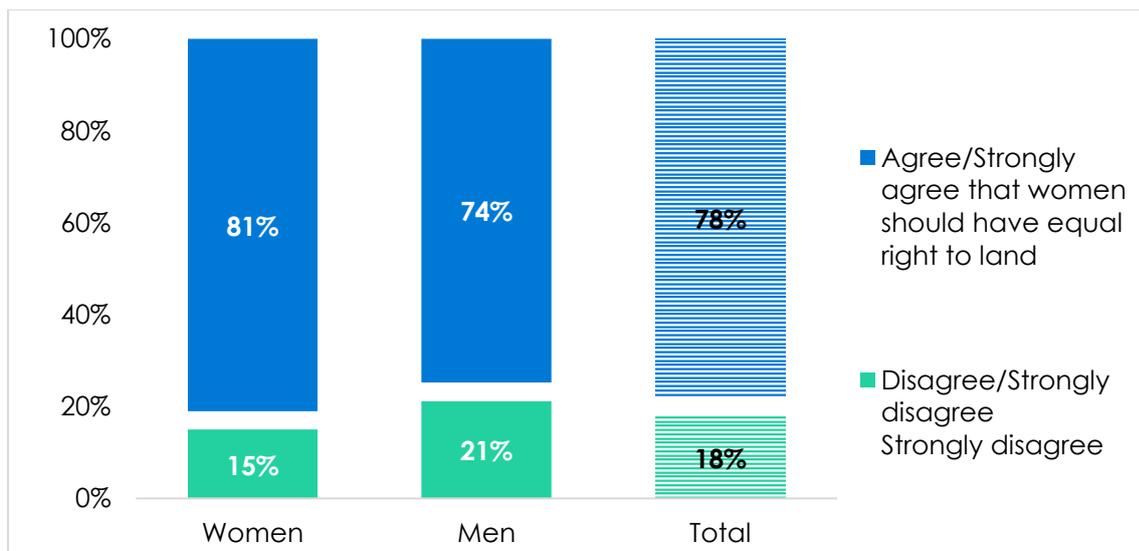
Charts

Figure 1: Educational attainment | by gender | Sierra Leone | 2022



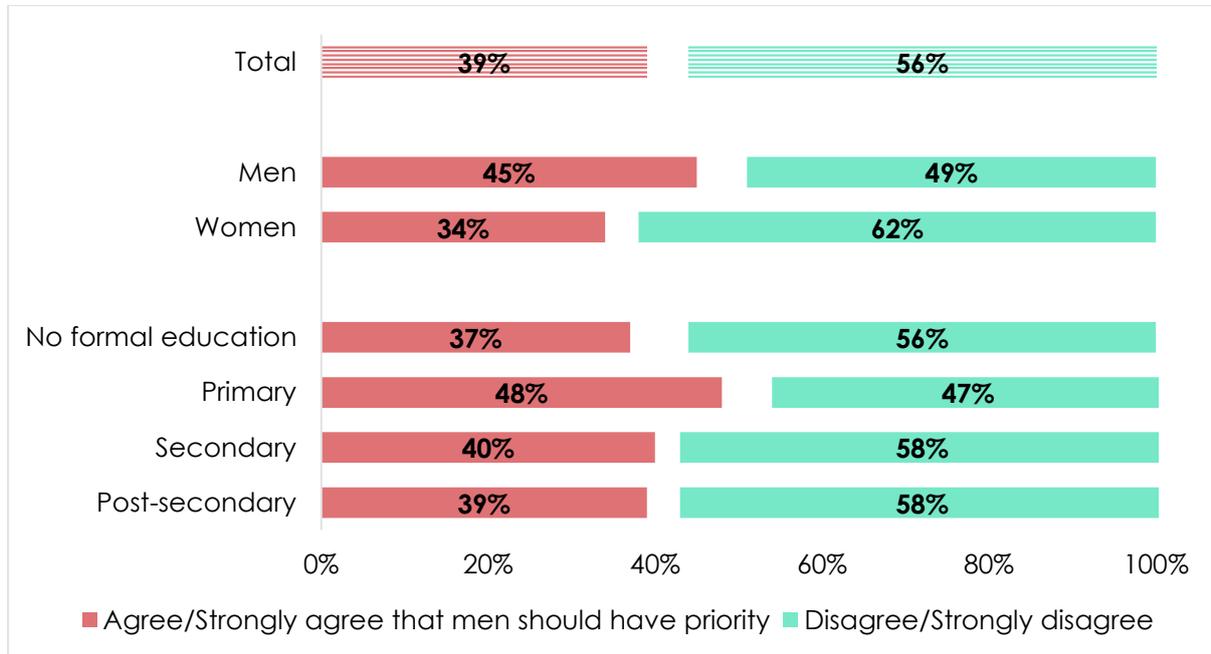
Respondents were asked: What is your highest level of education?

Figure 2: Should women have equal rights to land? | by gender | Sierra Leone | 2022



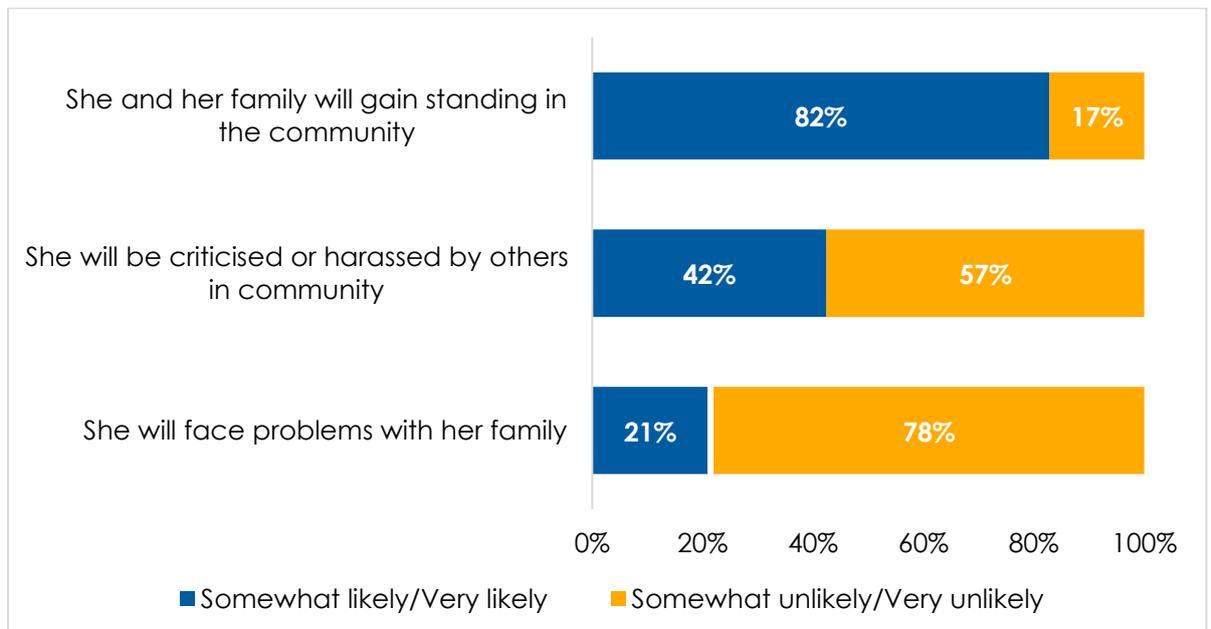
Respondents were asked: For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you disagree or agree: Women should have the same rights as men to own and inherit land.

Figure 3: Should men have priority for scarce jobs? | by gender | Sierra Leone | 2022



Respondents were asked: For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you disagree or agree: When jobs are scarce, men should have more rights to a job than women.

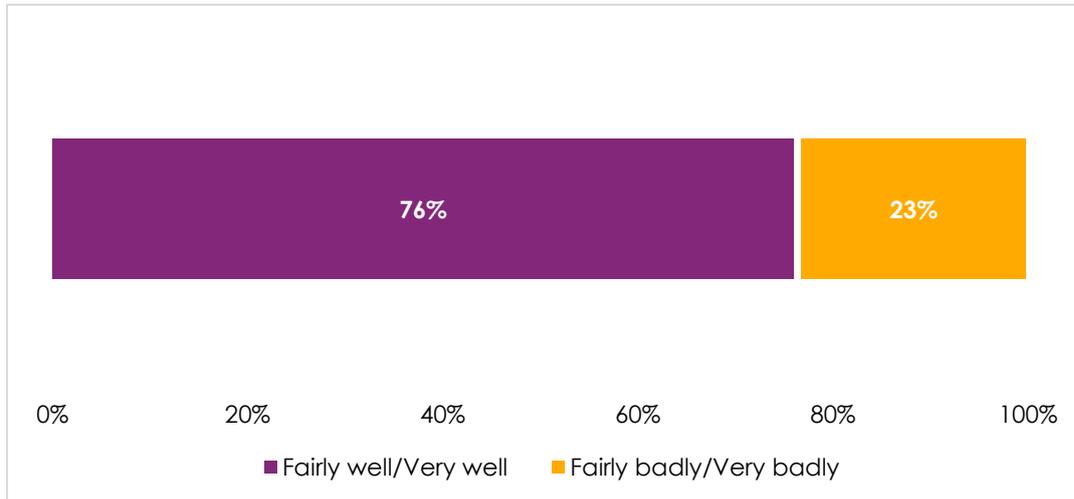
Figure 4: For better or for worse: How running for elected office might affect women's lives | Sierra Leone | 2022



Respondents were asked: If a woman in your community runs for elected office, how likely or unlikely is it that the following things might occur:

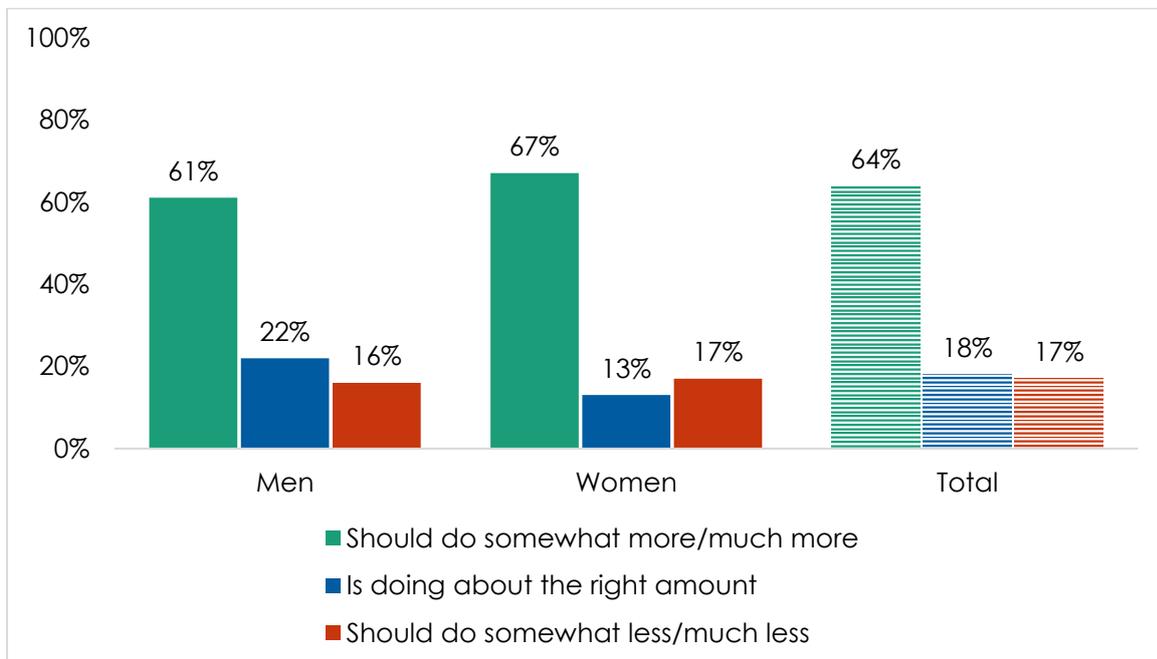
- She and her family will gain standing in the community?
- She will be criticised, called names, or harassed by others in the community?
- She will face problems with her family?

Figure 5: Government performance in promoting equal rights and opportunities for women | Sierra Leone | 2022



Respondents were asked: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Promoting equal rights and opportunities for women?

Figure 6: Should the government do more or less to promote equal rights and opportunities for women? | by gender | Sierra Leone | 2022



Respondents were asked: In your opinion, should government and elected officials be doing more than they are doing now to advance the rights and equality of women, or should they be doing less, or are they doing about the right amount?

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