

Accra, Ghana
8 March 2023

News release

Creating digital equity: Afrobarometer Twitter Spaces zoom in on gender-based violence and women's rights

The African Union (AU) recognises gender equality as a fundamental human right and an integral part of regional integration, economic growth, and social development, AU gender specialist Tapiwa Uchizi Nyasulu-Rweyemamu said Tuesday on the eve of International Women's Day.

Nyasulu-Rweyemamu, head of the Women and Gender Policy & Development Division of the AU's Women, Gender and Youth Directorate, made the statement during a Twitter Spaces event hosted by Afrobarometer to mark International Women's Day on the theme "DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality."

"While gender equality is simply focused on providing men and women with the same opportunities, gender equity works to correct the historical wrongs that have left women behind, such as societal restrictions on employment," she said.

Addressing the discussions on gender equality and gender-based violence, Afrobarometer CEO Joseph Asunka underscored the significant gaps that still exist in opportunity and access for women. Asunka noted that as an institution that seeks to elevate the voices of citizens, Afrobarometer places gender equality at the core of its initiatives. The data "consistently show large gaps between women and men, and the digital divide is particularly worrying," he said.

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 rounds of surveys have been completed in up to 39 countries since 1999, and the ninth round is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2023.

Afrobarometer Round 9 findings from 28 African countries highlight stark gender disparities in education, economic empowerment, political participation, and leadership. More than four in 10 Africans (41%) say that if jobs are scarce, men should have more rights to employment than women. When it comes to financial autonomy, women are almost twice as likely as men to defer decisions about how household money is spent to their spouses or other family members (16% vs. 9%). On average across 28 African countries, men are still somewhat more likely than women to have post-secondary qualifications (20% vs. 15%).

On gender-based violence, the data show that 50% of Africans think it should be treated as a private matter to be handled within the family, while 48% consider it a criminal matter. Fatou Jagne Senghore, founder of the Center for Women's Rights and Leadership, explained that "due to societal stereotypes, cases of gender-based violence are often covered up and not addressed properly."

Although there is much left to be done, Asunka provided a positive outlook. "With determination, constant reminders, and learning opportunities like today's event, I am convinced we will make good progress and set the tone for the next generation."

Bronwyn Nielsen, founder of the Nielsen Network and former executive director at CNBA, facilitated an insightful conversation that provided valuable insights into women's rights.

About Afrobarometer

Afrobarometer (AB) is a trusted source of high-quality data and analysis on what Africans are thinking. With an unmatched track record of 350,000+ interviews in 39 countries, representing the views of 80% of the African population, AB is leading the charge to bridge the continent's data gap. AB data inform many global indices, such as the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer, and the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators. The data are also used for country risk analyses and by credit rating and forecasting agencies such as the Economist Intelligence Unit. All AB data sets are publicly available on the website and may be analysed free of charge using AB's online data analysis tool.

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