



Monrovia, Liberia
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News release

Gender-based violence a high priority in Liberia; many citizens say it is a common occurrence

Liberians see gender-based violence (GBV) as the most important women's-rights issue that their government and society must address, the latest Afrobarometer survey shows.

Citizens are divided on how often GBV occurs: Fully half say violence against women and girls is a common occurrence in their community.

Majorities say that it is never justified for a man to use physical force to discipline his wife and that domestic violence should be treated as a criminal matter, rather than a private matter to be resolved within the family.

To address GBV, the Liberian government has passed legislation, including the Domestic Violence Act and the Rape Amendment Act, and created courts with specific jurisdiction over matters of gender-based and sexual violence.

Key findings

- Liberians see gender-based violence (GBV) as the most important women's-rights issue that the government and society must address (Figure 1).
- When it comes to how often GBV occurs in their community, Liberians are divided: Half (50%) say violence against women is "somewhat common" (21%) or "very common" (29%), while just as many think it is "not very common" (35%) or "not at all common" (15%) (Figure 2).
- A majority (56%) of Liberians say it is "never" justified for a man to use physical force to discipline his wife. But more than four in 10 think it is "sometimes" (29%) or "always" (16%) justified (Figure 3).
- About two-thirds (65%) of Liberians say domestic violence should be treated as a criminal matter, rather than a private matter to be resolved within the family (Figure 4).

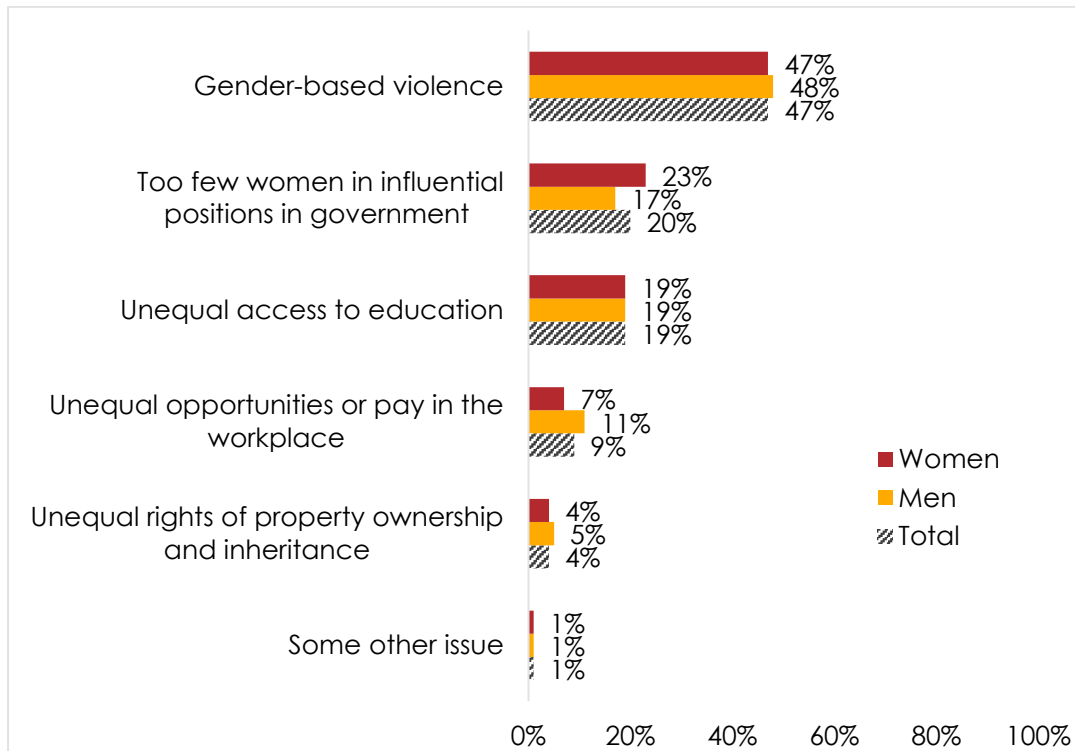
Afrobarometer surveys

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 are being completed in 2023. Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Liberia, led by the Center for Democratic Governance (CDG), interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,200 adult citizens between 25 August and 2 September 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 Liberia in 2008, 2012, 2015, 2018, and 2020.

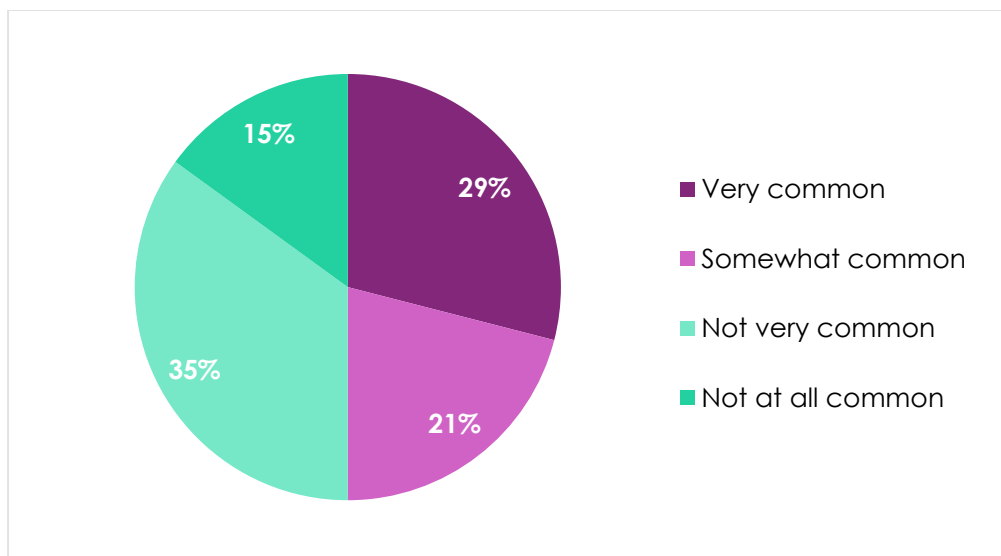
Charts

Figure 1 : Most important women’s-rights issue | by gender | Liberia | 2022



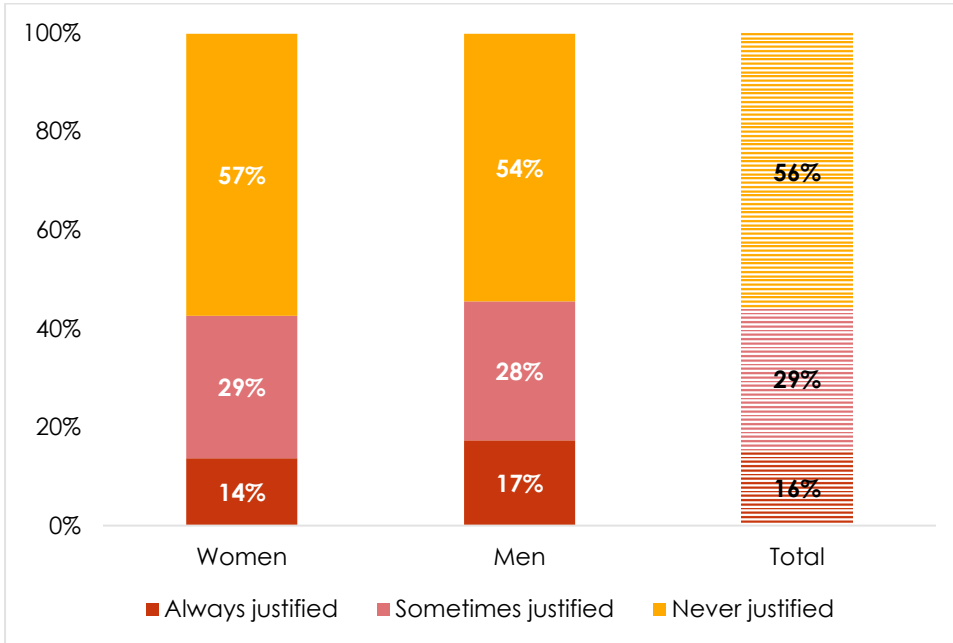
Respondents were asked: In your opinion, which of the following issues related to women's rights and equality do you think is the most important for our government and society to address?

Figure 2: Is gender-based violence a common occurrence? | Liberia | 2022



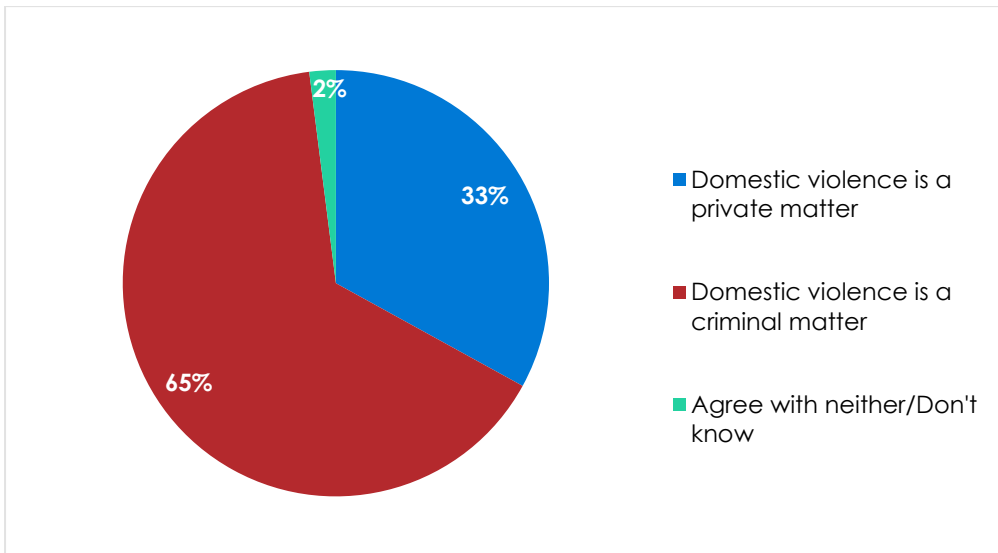
Respondents were asked: In this area, how common do you think it is for men to use violence against women and girls in the home or the community?

Figure 3: Is it justified for men to physically discipline their wives? | by gender
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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 4: Is domestic violence a criminal or private matter? | Liberia | 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)

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