



Mbabane, Eswatini
31 October 2023

News release

Emaswati demand more action to advance rights and opportunities for women, Afrobarometer survey shows

Emaswati say the government should do more to promote equal rights and opportunities for women, a new Afrobarometer survey indicates.

While large majorities express support for gender equality in hiring, land ownership, and political leadership, almost half also consider it likely that a woman will suffer criticism, harassment, or family problems if she runs for elective office.

Overall, Emaswati rank gender-based violence and women's under-representation in positions of power as the most important women's-rights issues that their government and society must address.

Key findings

- Three-quarters (75%) of Emaswati "disagree" or "strongly disagree" with the idea that men should be given priority over women in hiring when jobs are scarce, while only 21% endorse this form of gender discrimination (Figure 1).
 - Support for gender equality in hiring is weaker among men (69%) than women (81%).
 - Only 61% of respondents with no formal schooling think women and men should have the same chance of getting a job, compared to 75%-77% of their more educated counterparts.
- More than eight in 10 Emaswati (84%) say that women should have equal rights to land ownership and inheritance (Figure 2). More women (87%) than men (81%) support equal land rights.
- Almost nine in 10 citizens (86%) say that women should have the same chance as men to be elected to political office (Figure 3).
 - More women (89%) than men (83%) favour gender equality in political participation.
 - Younger citizens are less likely to support this position (84% of those aged 18-35, compared to 90% of those over age 55).
- More than two-thirds (68%) of respondents say it is "somewhat likely" or "very likely" that a woman and her family will gain standing in the community if she runs for elected office (Figure 4).
 - But almost half also say that a woman standing for election is likely to be criticised, called names, or harassed by others in the community (45%) and to face problems with her family (45%).

- An overwhelming majority (80%) of Swati citizens say the government should be doing more to promote gender equality in the country, including 51% who want to see “much more” government action on this issue (Figure 5).
- About four in 10 men (42%) and women (41%) cite gender-based violence as the most important women's-rights issue for their government and society to address, followed by low representation of women in influential positions in government (25% vs. 19%), unequal rights of property ownership and inheritance (12% vs. 17%), and unequal opportunities or pay in the workplace (14% vs. 14%) (Figure 6).

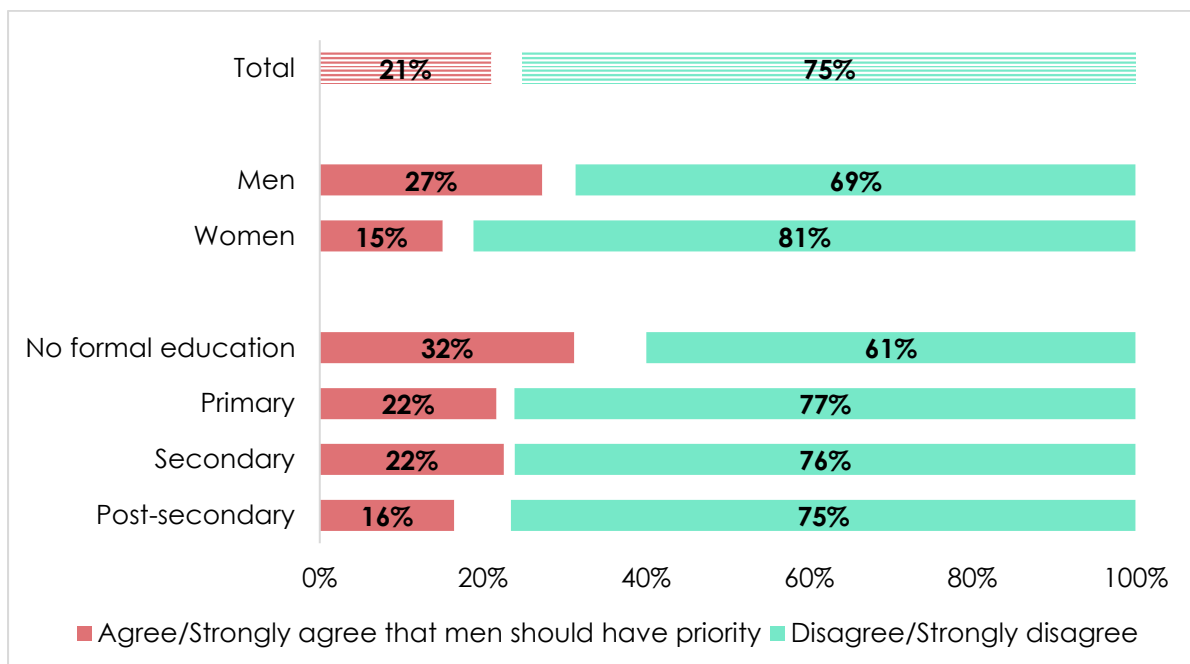
Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, nonpartisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Nine rounds of surveys have been completed in up to 39 countries since 1999. Round 9 surveys are being completed in 2023. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Eswatini, led by QA Strategic Information, interviewed a nationally representative, random, stratified probability sample of 1,200 adult citizens in October-November 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 Eswatini in 2013, 2015, 2018, and 2022.

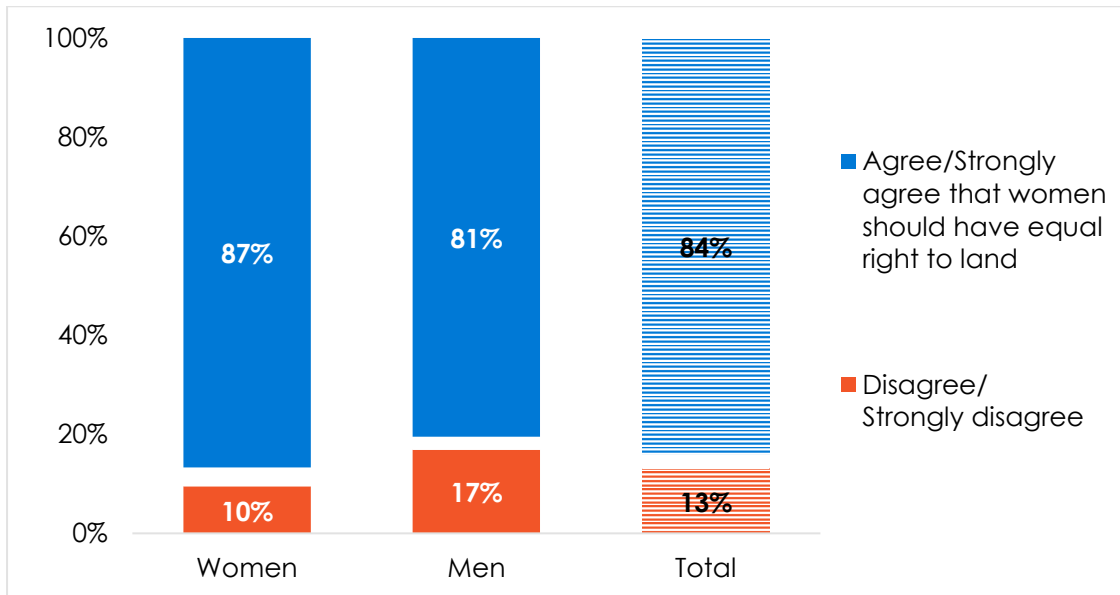
Charts

Figure 1: Should men have priority for scarce jobs? | by gender and education
 | Eswatini | 2022



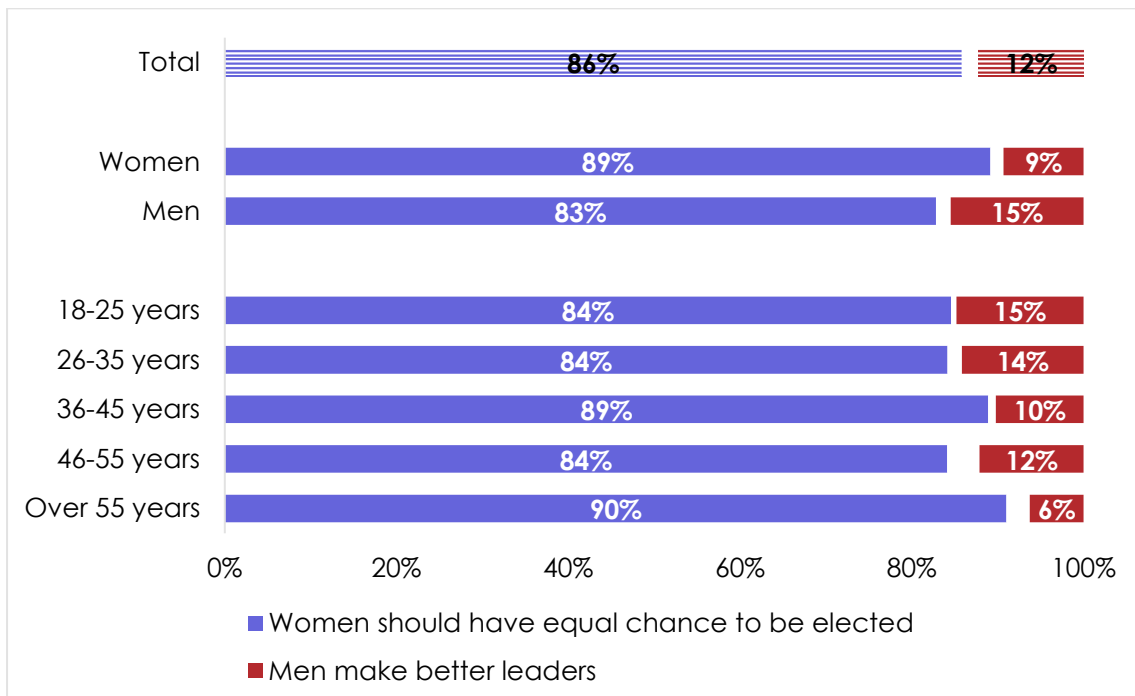
Respondents were asked: For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you disagree or agree: When jobs are scarce, men should have more rights to a job than women.

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



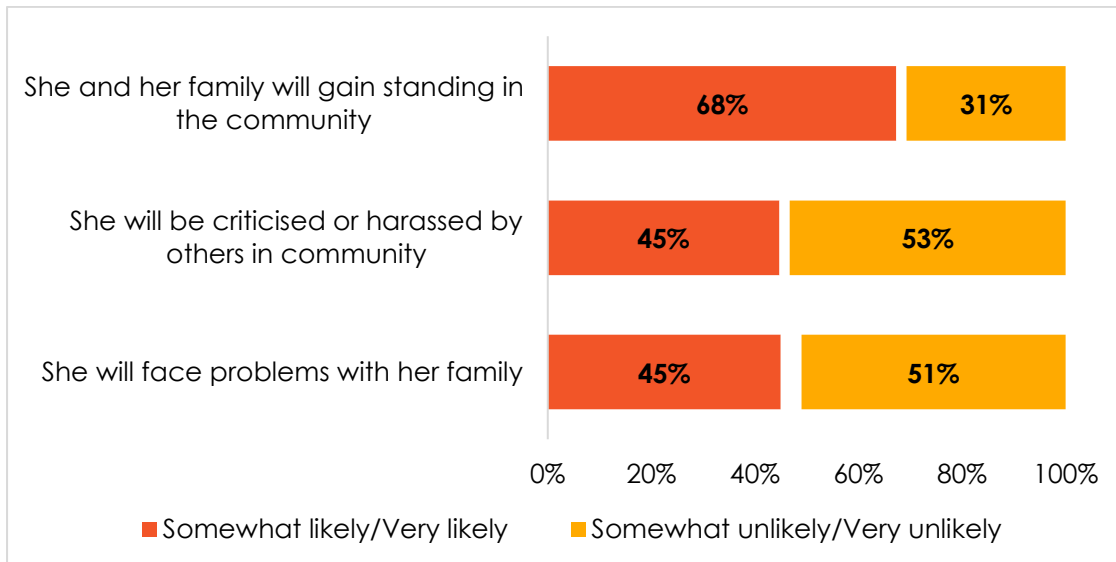
Respondents were asked: For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you disagree or agree: Women should have the same rights as men to own and inherit land.

Figure 3: Should women have an equal chance to be elected? | by gender | Eswatini | 2022



Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 Statement 1: Men make better political leaders than women and should be elected rather than women.
 Statement 2: Women should have the same chance of being elected to political office as men.
 (% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with each statement)

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



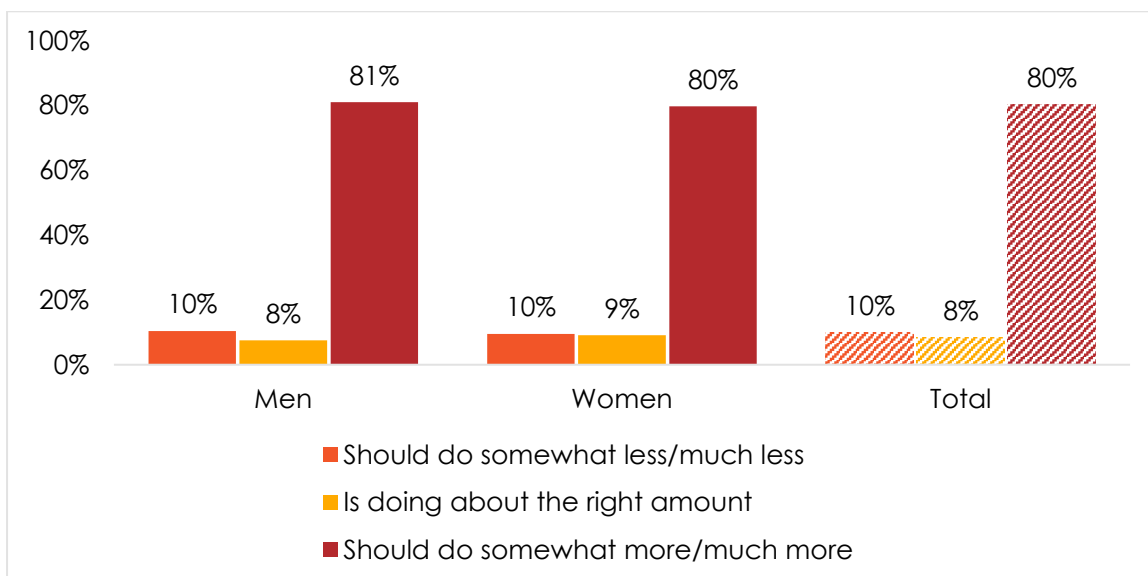
Respondents were asked: *If a woman in your community runs for elected office, how likely or unlikely is it that the following things might occur:*

She and her family will gain standing in the community?

She will be criticised, called names, or harassed by others in the community?

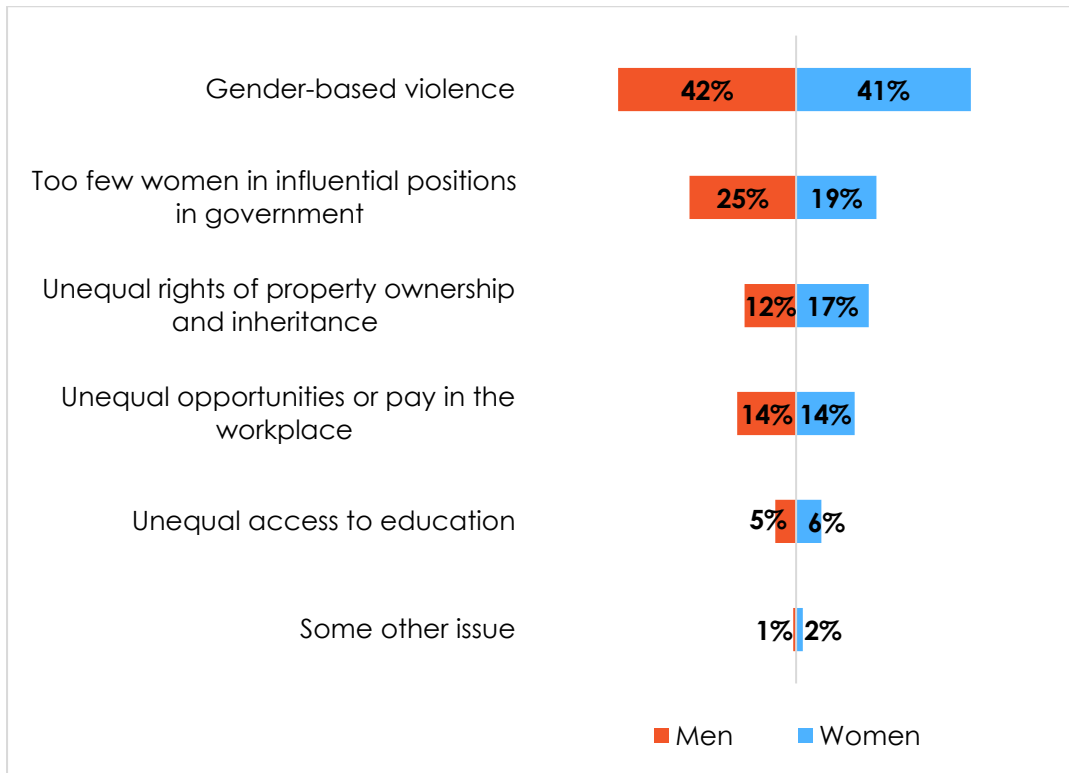
She will face problems with her family?

Figure 5: Should the government do more or less to promote equal rights and opportunities for women? | by gender | Eswatini | 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?*

Figure 6: Most important women’s-rights issue | by gender | Eswatini | 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?*

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