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News release

Africans back gender equality, but gaps persist: Governments urged to do more

A majority of Africans express support for gender equality in politics, land ownership, and hiring, the latest [Afrobarometer Pan-Africa Profile](#) shows.

But the report, based on nationally representative surveys in 39 African countries, also documents persistent gender gaps, showing that women continue to trail men in education, ownership of key assets, and control over household financial decisions.

And while most citizens say women should have the same chance of being elected to public office as men, a majority also think women who seek election are likely to face criticism or harassment.

African governments receive relatively positive ratings for their efforts to promote gender equality, but nearly two-thirds of citizens say more needs to be done.

Key findings

- On average across 39 African countries, a sizeable and (slowly) growing majority (75%) of citizens say women should have the same chance of being elected to public office as men (Figure 1).
 - But more than half (52%) say that a woman who runs for office is likely to be criticised or harassed (Figure 2).
- Almost three-quarters (73%) of Africans say women should have the same rights as men to own and inherit land. But views vary widely by country, with support for equality dropping as low as 31% in Mauritania (Figure 3).
 - A narrower majority (58%) endorse women's equal right to jobs, with support ranging from 32% in Madagascar to 80% in Cabo Verde.
- Among persistent gender gaps documented in survey findings, women are less likely than men to have secondary or post-secondary education (51% vs. 59%) (Figure 4).
 - Women also trail men in ownership of key productive assets such as motor vehicles (15% vs. 31%) and bank accounts (34% vs. 43%).

- Similarly, women are less likely than men to say they make household financial decisions themselves (35% vs. 44%).

- Governments get relatively positive marks (56% approval) for their efforts to promote gender equality (Figure 5), but nearly two-thirds (63%) of citizens say their governments should be doing more (Figure 6).

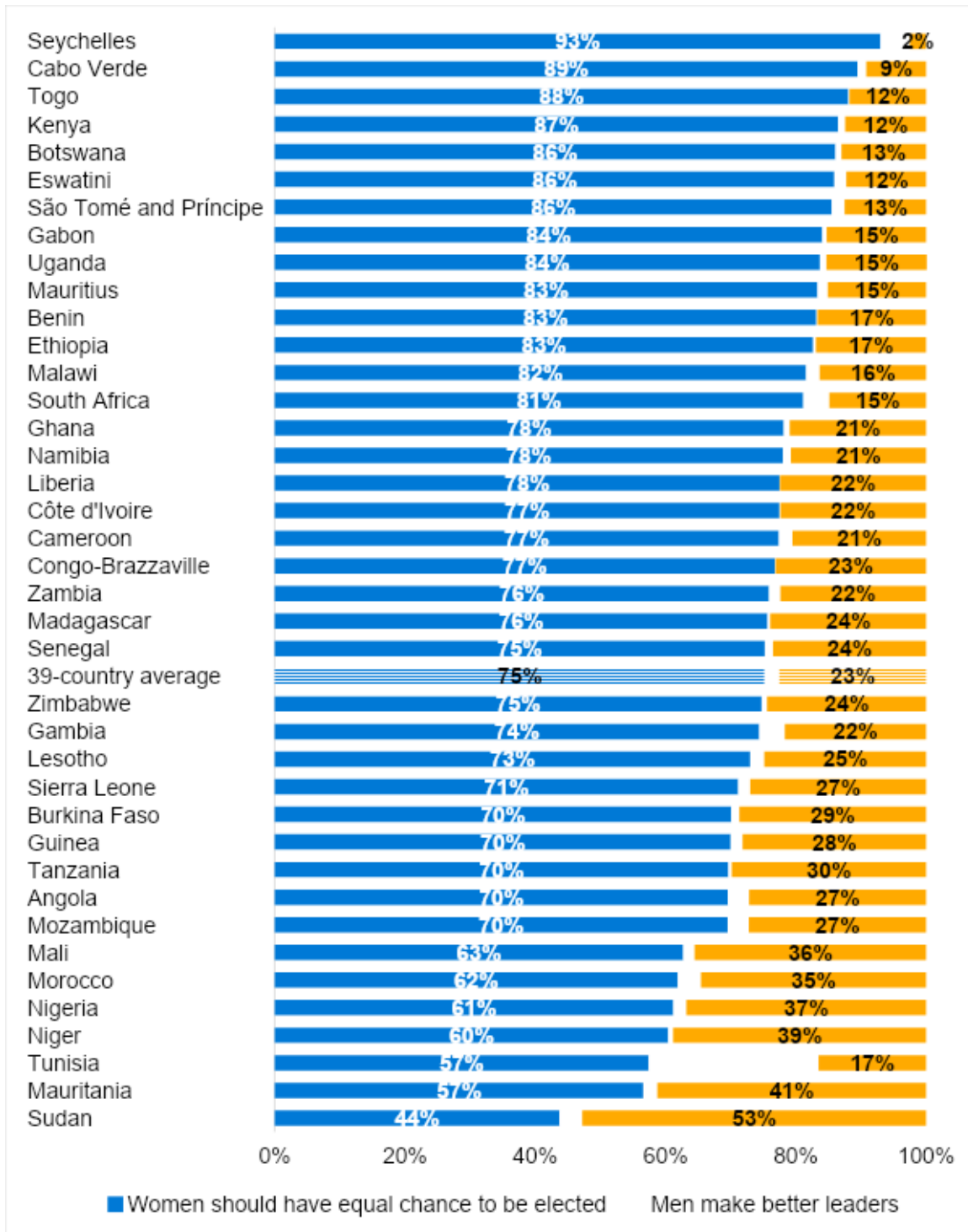
Afrobarometer surveys

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. Nine survey rounds in up to 42 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 9 surveys (2021/2023) include 53,444 interviews in 39 countries.

Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice that yield country-level results with margins of error of +/-2 to +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. The data are weighted to ensure nationally representative samples. When reporting multi-country averages, all countries are weighted equally (rather than in proportion to population size).

Charts

Figure 1: Should women have an equal chance to be elected? | 39 countries
 | 2021/2023



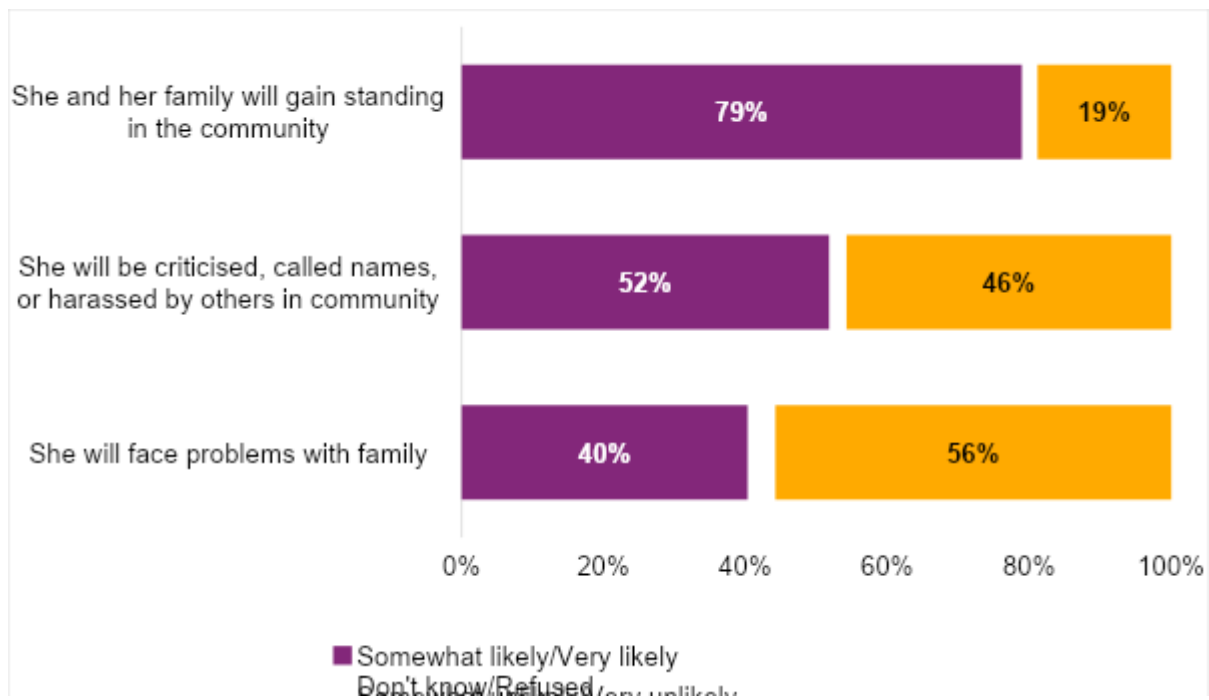
Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

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.

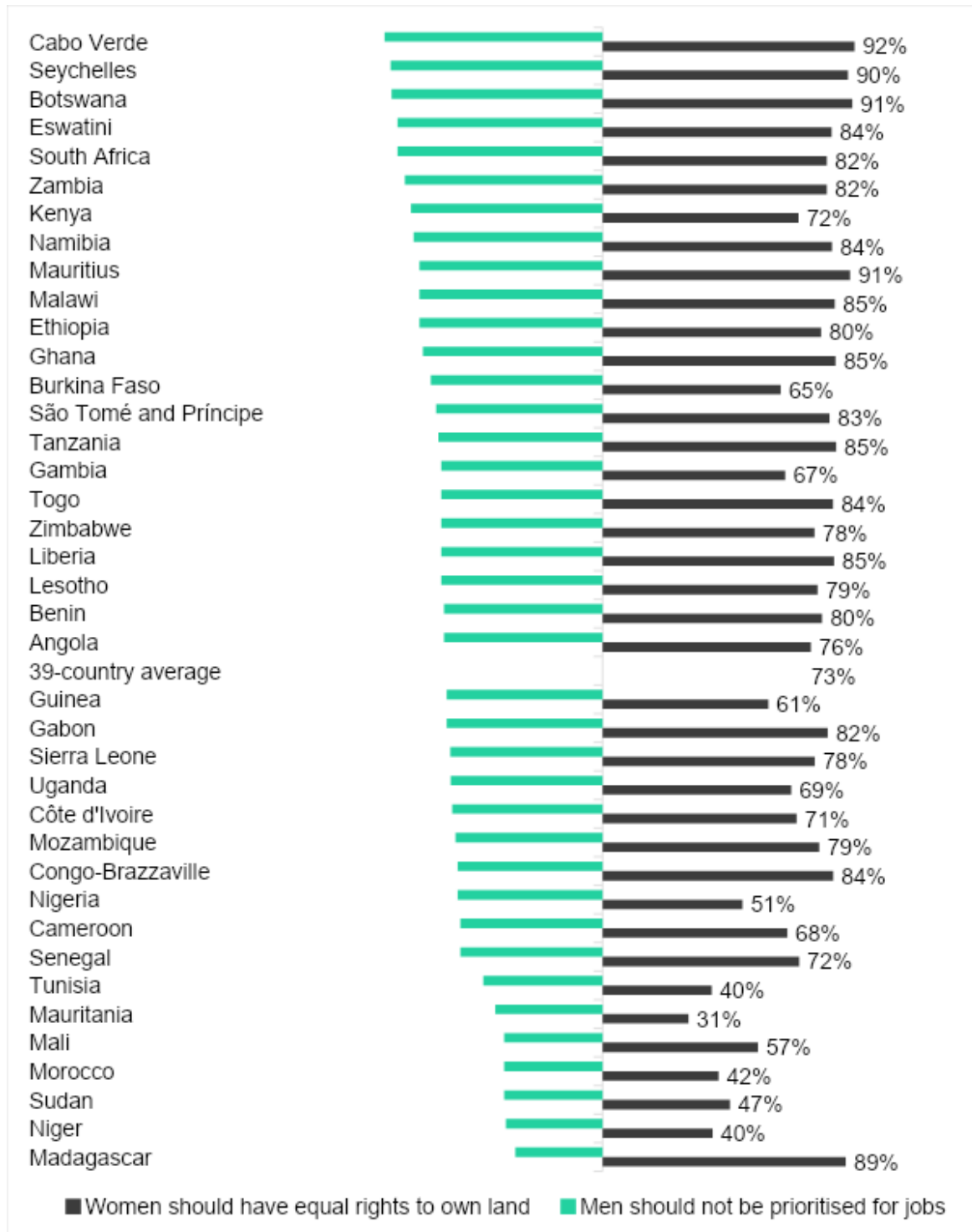
(% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with each statement)

Figure 2: For better or for worse: How running for elected office might affect women's lives | 39 countries | 2021/2023



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 3: Should women have equal rights to jobs and land? | 39 countries
 | 2021/2023

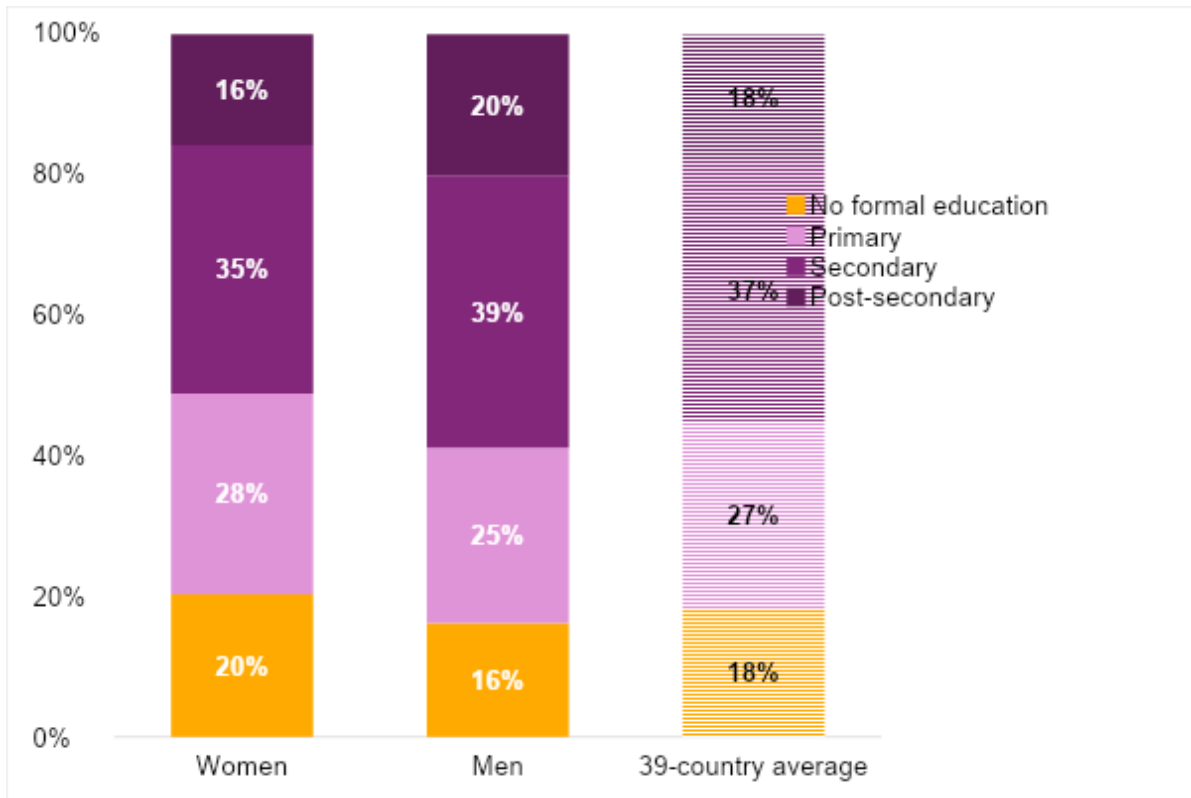


Respondents were asked: For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you disagree or agree:

When jobs are scarce, men should have more rights to a job than women. (% who “disagree” or “strongly disagree”)

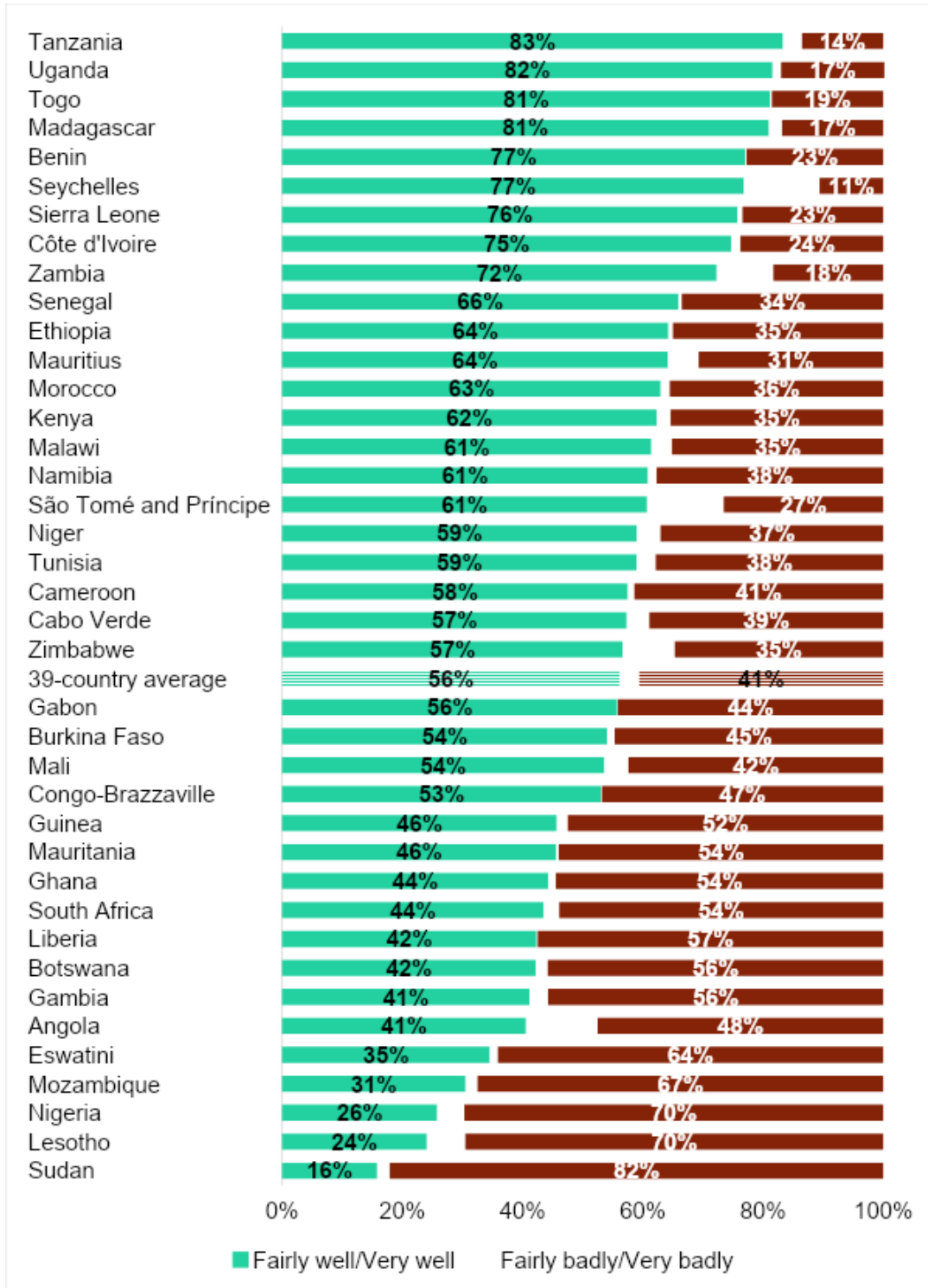
Women should have the same rights as men to own and inherit land. (% who “agree” or “strongly agree”)

Figure 4: Educational attainment | by gender | 39 countries | 2021/2023



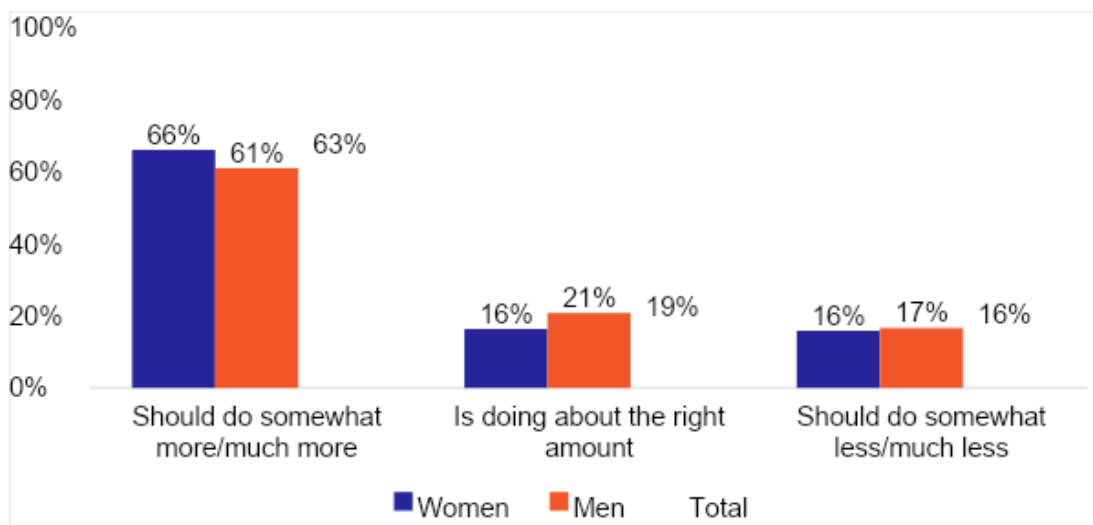
Respondents were asked: What is your highest level of education?

Figure 5: Government performance in promoting equal rights and opportunities for women | 39 countries | 2021/2023



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 | 39 countries | 2021/2023



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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