

Khartoum, Sudan
18 January 2024

News release

Sudanese oppose the use of physical force against women, but see gender-based violence as a private matter

A large majority of Sudanese say men are never justified in using physical force to discipline their wives, the latest Afrobarometer survey shows.

But while a majority of citizens say violence against women and girls is not a common occurrence in their community, most say domestic violence should be treated as a private matter to be resolved within the family rather than as a criminal matter.

In Sudan, gender-based violence (GBV) ranks second to unequal access to education among the most important women's-rights issues that citizens say their government and society must address.

Although most citizens believe that the police take reported cases of GBV seriously, many also think community members will criticise or harass complainants for seeking help from the police.

Key findings

- Three-fourth (74%) of Sudanese say it is “never justified” for a man to use physical force to discipline his wife (Figure 1).
 - Women are more likely than men to condemn the use of physical force against women (82% vs. 68%).
- In Sudan, gender-based violence (GBV) ranks second among the most important women's-rights issues that citizens say their government and society must address, behind unequal access to education (Figure 2).
- Almost four in 10 Sudanese (37%) say violence against women and girls is “somewhat common” or “very common” in their community, although a majority (63%) disagree (Figure 3).
- More than three out of four Sudanese (78%) consider domestic violence a private matter that needs to be resolved within the family. Only 20% believe it should be seen as a criminal matter that requires the involvement of law enforcement agencies (Figure 4).
- Almost two-thirds (63%) of citizens see it as likely that the police will take reported cases of GBV seriously, while 36% consider it unlikely (Figure 5).
- A majority (55%) of respondents say a woman who reports GBV to the authorities is likely to be criticised, harassed, or shamed by others in the community. Women are particularly likely to expect such negative consequences (61%).

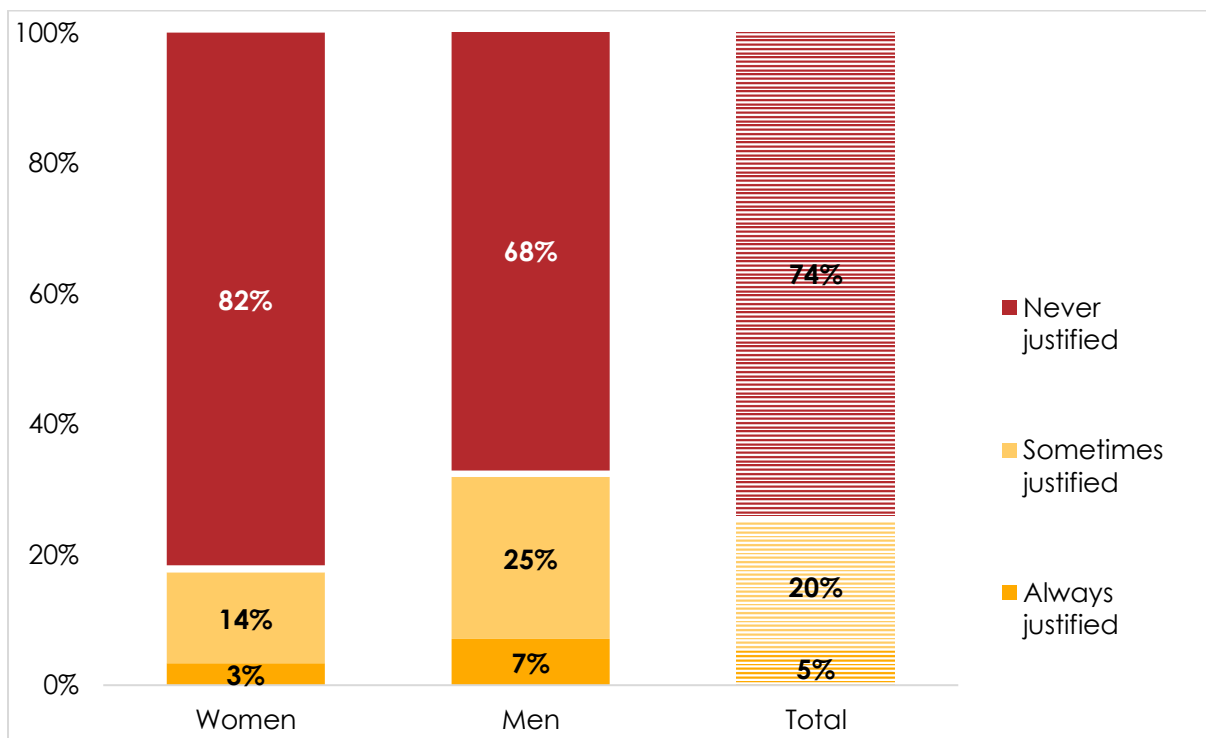
Afrobarometer surveys

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 42 countries since 1999. Round 9 surveys (2021/2023) cover 39 countries. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Sudan, led by Sudan Polling Statistics Center (SPSC), interviewed a nationally representative, random, stratified probability sample of 1,200 adults in November-December 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 Sudan in 2013, 2015, 2018, and 2021.

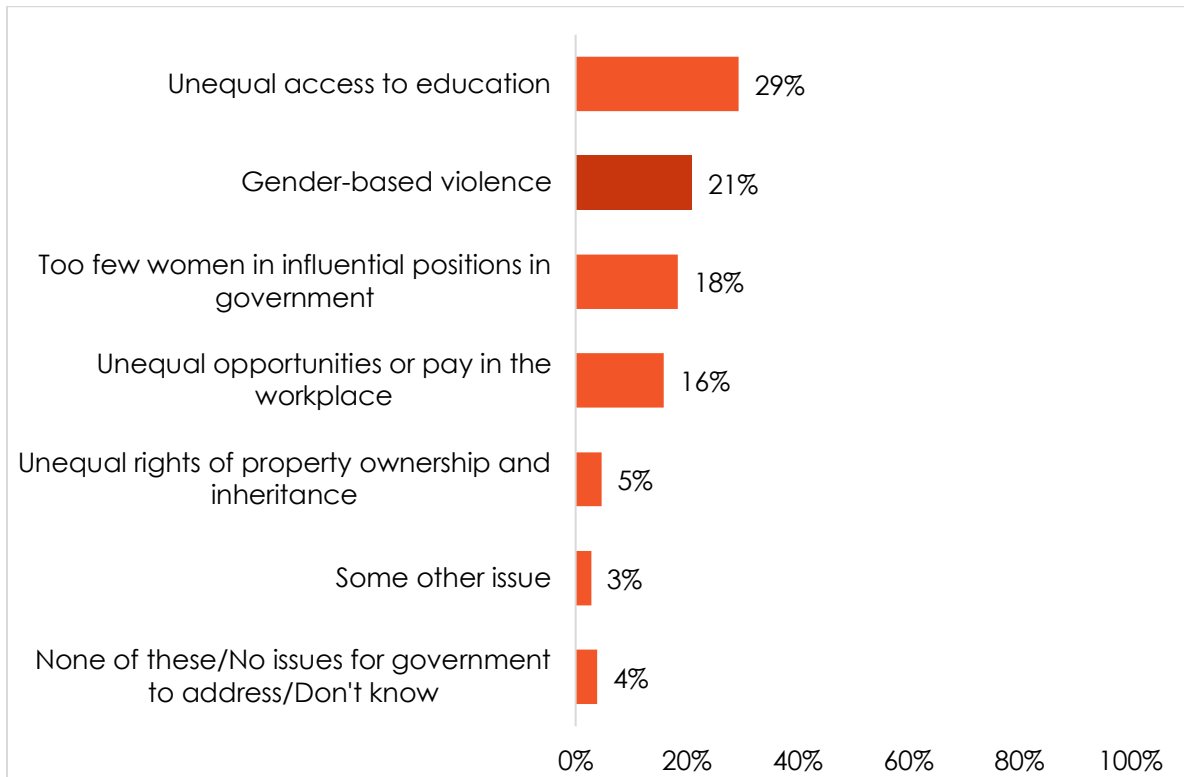
Charts

Figure 1: Is it justified for men to physically discipline their wives? | by gender
 | Sudan | 2022



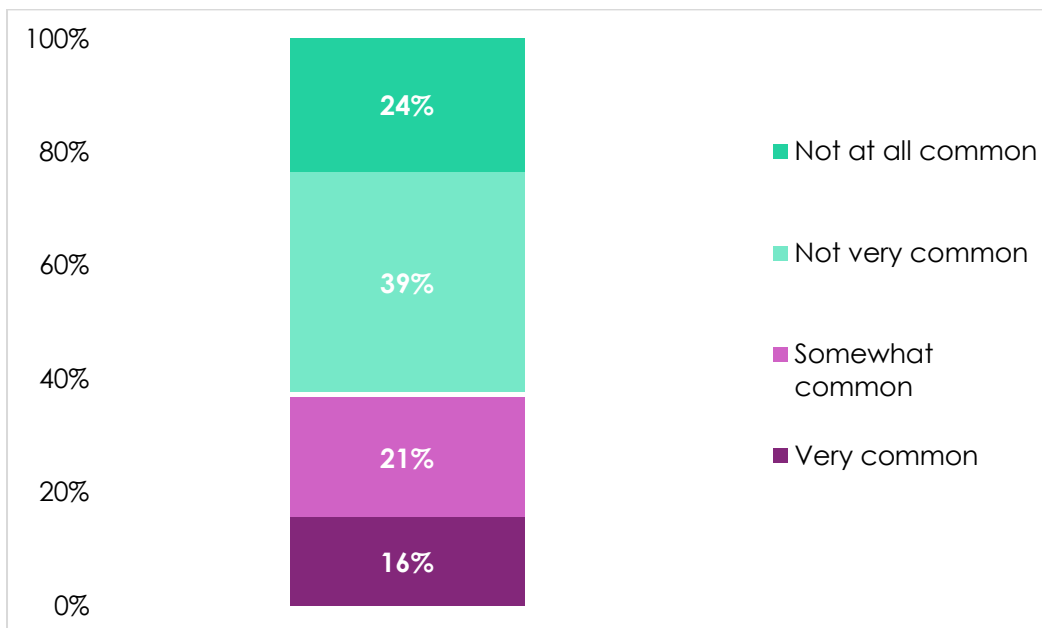
Respondents were asked: For each of the following actions, please tell me whether you think it can always be justified, sometimes be justified, or never be justified: For a man to use physical discipline on his wife if she has done something he doesn't like or thinks is wrong?

Figure 2: Most important women’s-rights issue | Sudan | 2022



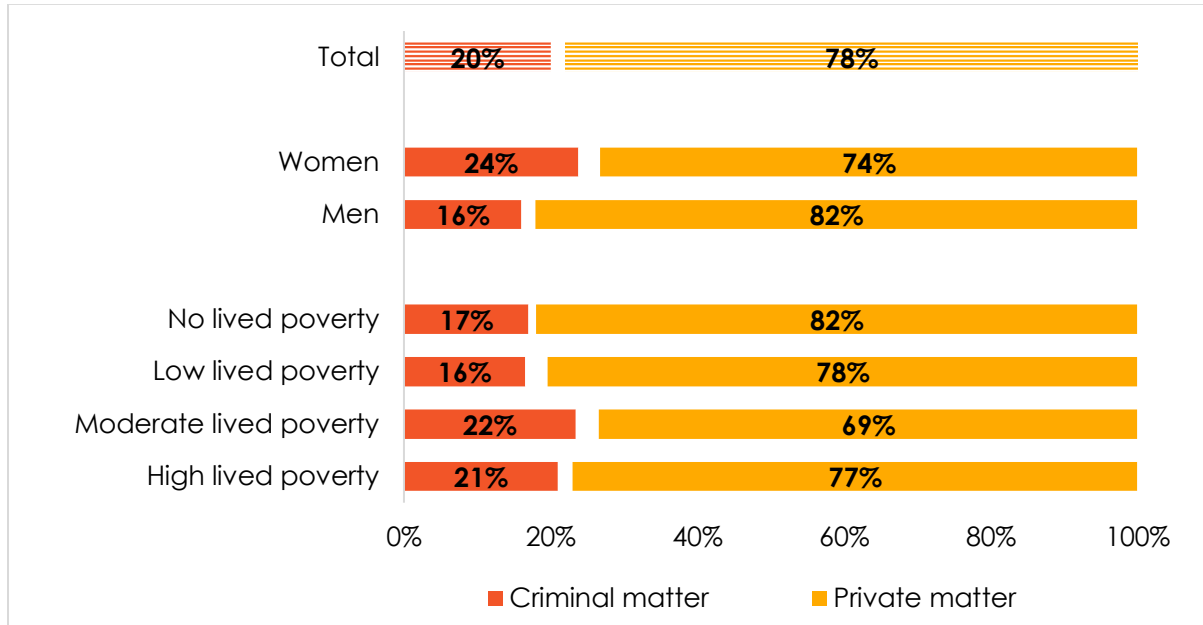
Respondents were asked: In your opinion, which of the following issues related to women's rights and equality do you think is the most important for our government and society to address?

Figure 3: Frequency of GBV | Sudan | 2022



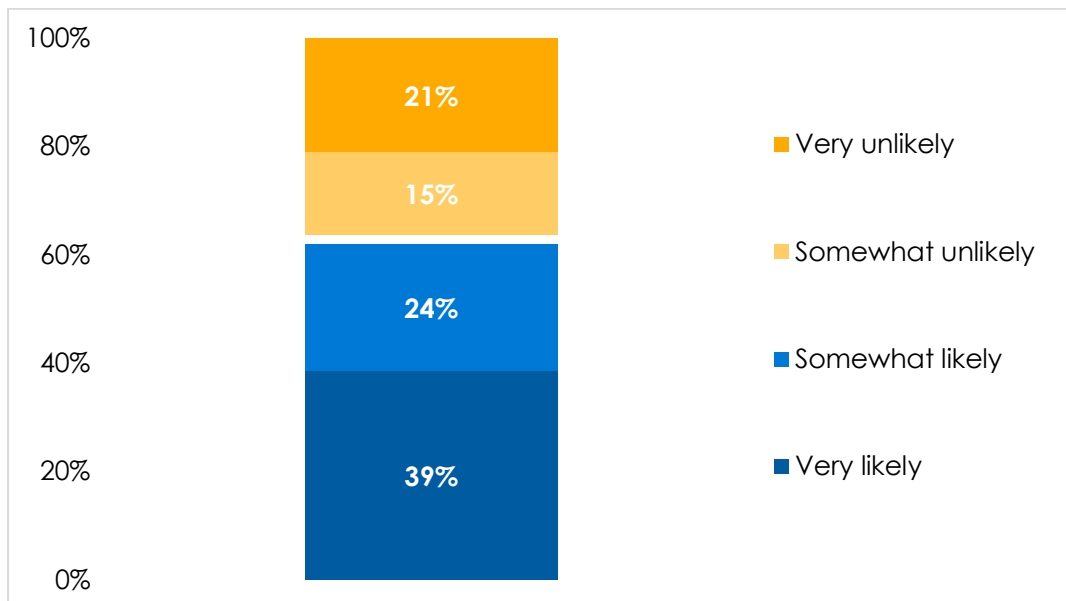
Respondents were asked: In this area, how common do you think it is for men to use violence against women and girls in the home or in the community?

Figure 4: Is GBV a criminal or private matter? | by gender and lived poverty
 | Sudan | 2022



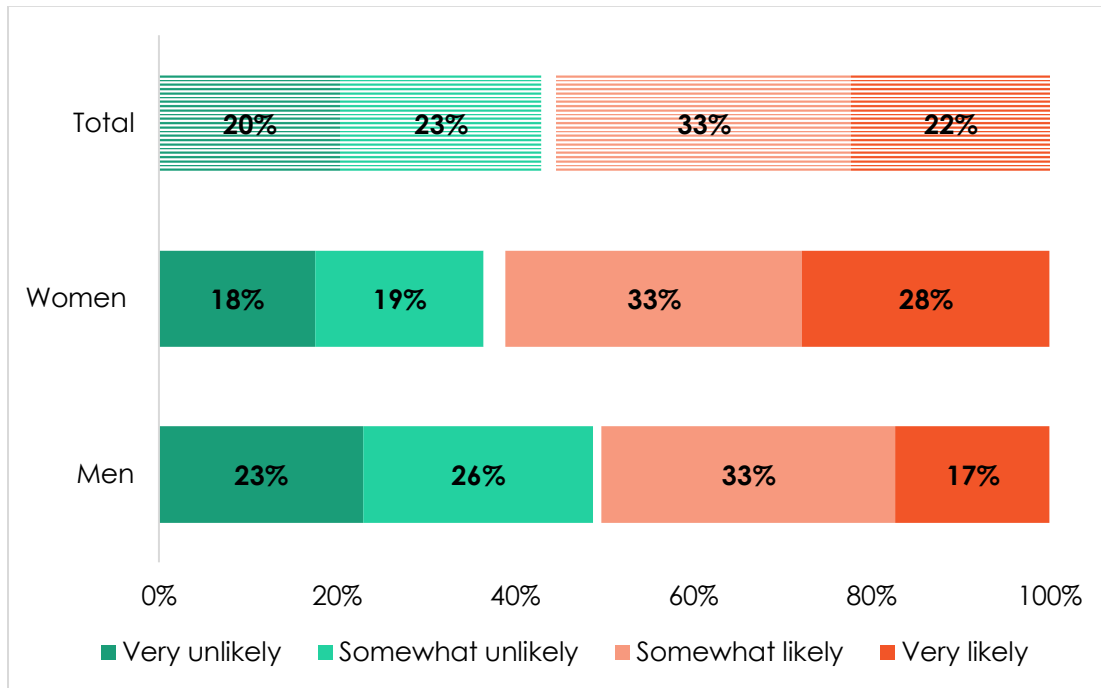
Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 Statement 1: Domestic violence is a private matter that needs to be handled and resolved within the family.
 Statement 2: Domestic violence is a criminal matter whose full resolution requires the involvement of law enforcement agencies.
 (% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with each statement)

Figure 5: Will the police take reported GBV cases seriously? | Sudan | 2022



Respondents were asked: If a woman in your community goes to the police to report being a victim of gender-based violence, for example, to report a rape or report being physically abused by her husband, how likely or unlikely is it that the following things might occur? Her case will be taken seriously by the police?

Figure 6: Likelihood that women will be criticised for reporting GBV | by gender
 | Sudan | 2022



Respondents were asked: *If a woman in your community goes to the police to report being a victim of gender-based violence, for example, to report a rape or report being physically abused by her husband, how likely or unlikely is it that the following things might occur? She will be criticised, harassed, or shamed by others in the community?*

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