

Afrobarometer
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News release

African women lag in asset ownership, financial decision-making in household, Afrobarometer survey finds

African women lag behind men in ownership of assets and are substantially less likely to have decision-making power over household resources, according to the latest Afrobarometer survey.

These findings from national surveys in 34 countries are part of a **soon-to-be-released Pan-Africa Profile** analysis based on a special gender-equality survey module carried out by Afrobarometer in partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The new report will also examine popular support for gender equality, government performance on women's rights and opportunities, and persistent gender gaps in education, employment, and access to technology.

Key findings

- On average across 34 African countries, women are significantly less likely than men to own key assets such as mobile phones (an 11-percentage-point gap compared to men), a radio (18 points), a television (7 points), a bank account (10 points), a car or motorcycle (16 points), and a computer (6 points) (Figure 1).
- But ownership patterns vary by country. The average gender gap across these six assets is less than 5 percentage points in Madagascar, Namibia, and Cabo Verde but reaches 27 points in Benin, followed by Mali (24 points) and Burkina Faso (23 points) (Figure 2).
- Women are also less likely than men to hold financial decision-making power in the household. Asked who decides how to use money they have or earn, more than half (52%) of male respondents say they make these decisions themselves, compared to 38% of female respondents (Figure 3). Another 40% of women and 38% of men say they decide jointly with their spouse or other family members. One in five women (22%) have no role in deciding how their money will be used, more than twice the number among men (9%).
- Women have particularly weak voices when it comes to financial decision-making in Morocco (38-point gap compared to men), Burkina Faso (39 points), and Sudan (35 points).

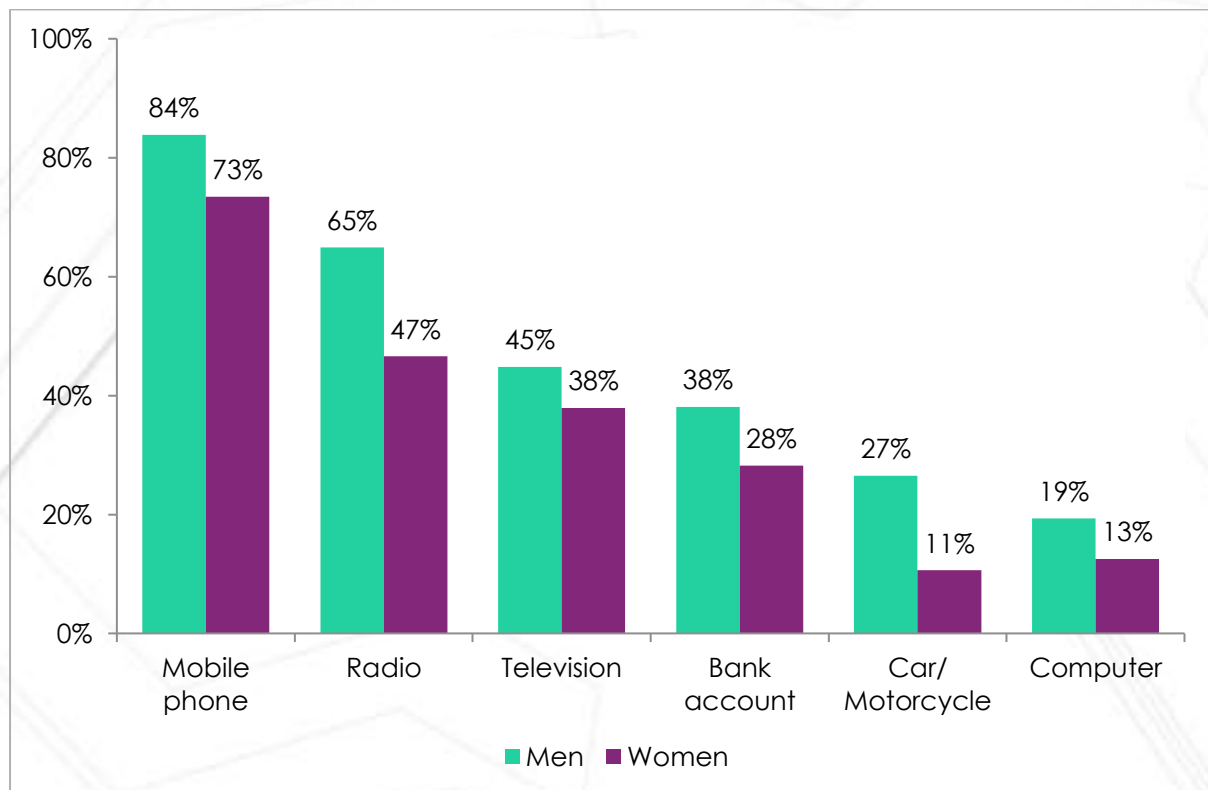
Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer directs a pan-African, nonpartisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues in African countries. After six rounds of surveys in up to 38 countries between 1999 and 2015, Round 7 surveys included 45,823 interviews completed in 34 countries between September 2016 and September 2018. Round 8 surveys in 2019/2020 are planned in at least 35 countries. Interested readers may follow our releases, including our Pan-Africa Profiles series of cross-country analyses, at #VoicesAfrica and sign up for our distribution list at www.afrobarometer.org.

Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples that yield country-level results with margins of error of +/-2 to +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.

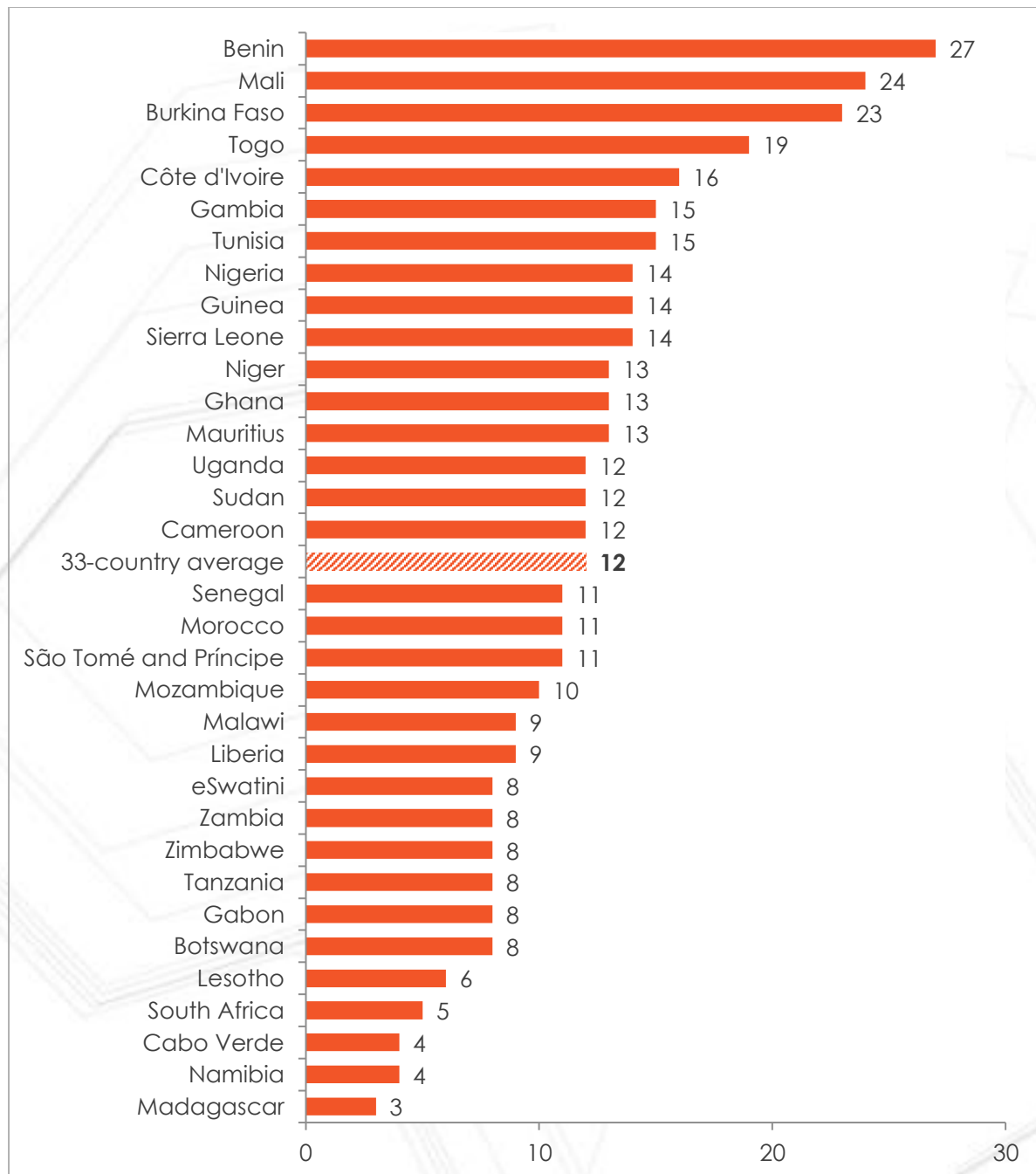
Charts

Figure 1: Asset ownership | 33 countries* | 2016/2018



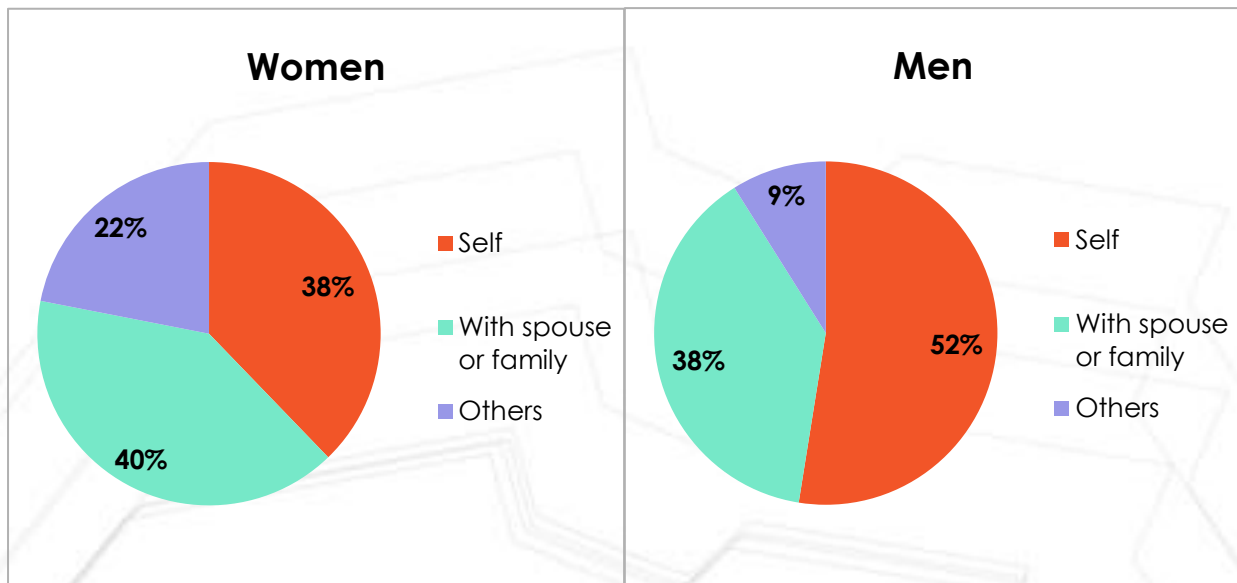
Respondents were asked: Which of these things do you personally own? (% "yes")
 (* Data not available for Kenya, the first country surveyed in the round, because these questions were revised for subsequent countries.)

Figure 2: Gap in average asset ownership (percentage points) | 33 countries*
 | 2016/2018



Respondents were asked: Which of these things do you personally own? (Figure shows the difference between men and women in the average % who personally own each of six assets.)
 (* Data not available for Kenya.)

Figure 3: Who decides how money is used | 34 countries | 2016/2018



Respondents were asked: What is the main way that decisions are made about how to use any money that you have or earn, for example from a job, a business, selling things, or other activities?

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