

Weak support and limited participation hinder women's political leadership in North Africa

Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 131 | Pauline M. Wambua

Summary

Politics is still largely a male domain. Gains in women's political leadership have been real but not rapid (Ndlovu & Mutale, 2013). Globally, the share of national parliamentary seats held by women has nearly doubled over the past two decades, reaching 23% in 2016, but that still means that more than three out of four parliamentarians are men (UN Women, 2016a; World Bank, 2016a).

African countries have been among the pacesetters in the push for greater political decision-making power for women, boosted by the widespread use of electoral gender quotas (Bauer, 2013). Of the world's 20 countries with the greatest female representation in their parliaments, seven are in Africa, led by Rwanda (64%). In sub-Saharan Africa, the proportion of female parliamentarians doubled between 2000 and 2016, from 12% to 24% – better than the United States (19%) and many European and Asian countries. Over the same period, the share of women holding seats in Parliament in the Arab World, which includes North African countries, has increased from 4% to 18% (World Bank, 2016a). Again outpacing the United States, seven African countries have had women in top executive positions (president, acting president, prime minister), most notably Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (since 2006).

Despite these achievements, women's political representation in Africa continues to fall far short of the African Union (AU) call for 50% women at all levels of political decision-making positions by 2015 (Bosha, 2014). Although women constitute a majority of the population in most African countries, significant barriers still limit their political leadership. This paper uses Afrobarometer survey data to examine public attitudes and experiences related to women's political participation in five North African countries. All five countries have quotas that have helped raise women's representation in the national legislatures: Algeria (32% of parliamentary seats are held by women), Egypt (15%), Morocco (17%), Sudan (31%), and Tunisia (31%) (World Bank, 2016a; El Arabiya News, 2012; iKnowPolitics, 2014).

Yet if lasting change ultimately depends on citizens' attitudes, the news is less encouraging: Among 36 African countries surveyed in 2014/2015, the North Africa region expresses the lowest level of support for women's political leadership. Compared to North African men as well as to women in other regions, North African women are less likely to vote, to be involved in pre-election processes or political activism, and to contact leaders to express their views. And North Africans are less likely than citizens in other regions to rate their governments as effective advocates for women.

Afrobarometer survey

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues across Africa. After five rounds of surveys between 1999 and 2013, results of Round 6 surveys (2014/2015) are currently being published. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples.

In North Africa, Round 5 (2013) and Round 6 (2015) surveys in Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, and Tunisia used national samples of 1,200, yielding country-level results with a margin of sampling error of +/-3% at a 95% confidence level. (See Appendix Table A.1 for a list of Round 6 survey dates.)

Key findings

- While two-thirds (66%) of Africans say women should have the same chance as men to be elected to political office, only half (49%) of North Africans agree – the lowest level of support for equal opportunity of any region.
- Support for women's leadership opportunity is close to the continental average in Morocco (65%) and Tunisia (62%), but Egypt (42%), Sudan (42%), and Algeria (36%) rank dead last among 36 surveyed countries.
- As is true across all surveyed countries, North African women (59%) are more likely than men (40%) to support equal opportunity for women to be elected. The gap between women's and men's views is greatest in Morocco (at 32 percentage points) and smallest in Tunisia (6 percentage points). Support for equal opportunity for women is stronger among better-educated, wealthier, younger, and urban North Africans.
- On average across North Africa, as well as across the continent, women are less likely than men to be interested in public affairs, to discuss politics, and to be involved in political and civic activities.
- Compared to other regions, North African women are about average in their level of interest in and discussion of public affairs, but they generally rank lower when it comes to voting and other political and civic engagement.
- There are significant differences among North African countries. Tunisian women stand out in their relatively high interest in public affairs; Egyptian women are most likely to have voted; and Sudanese women are most likely to engage in pre-election and civic activities.
- North Africans are as supportive as citizens in other African regions of equal rights and equal treatment for women, but they are more likely to say that women suffer discrimination and less likely to see their government as effective in empowering women.

Support for women's leadership opportunity in North Africa

On average across 36 African countries surveyed in 2014/2015, two-thirds (66%) of respondents "agree" or "agree very strongly" that women should have the same chance as men to be elected to political office, while one-third (32%) believe that "men make better political leaders than women, and should be elected rather than women." But support for equal opportunity is far lower in North Africa (49%) than in the other four regions¹ (Figure 1).

¹ Afrobarometer regional groupings are: Central Africa (Cameroon, Gabon, São Tomé and Príncipe), East Africa (Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda); North Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia), Southern Africa (Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe), West Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo).

Figure 1: Should women have the same chance of being elected as men?
 | by region | 36 countries | 2014/2015



Respondents were asked: Let's talk for a moment about the kind of society you would like to have in this country. Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement 1 or Statement 2.

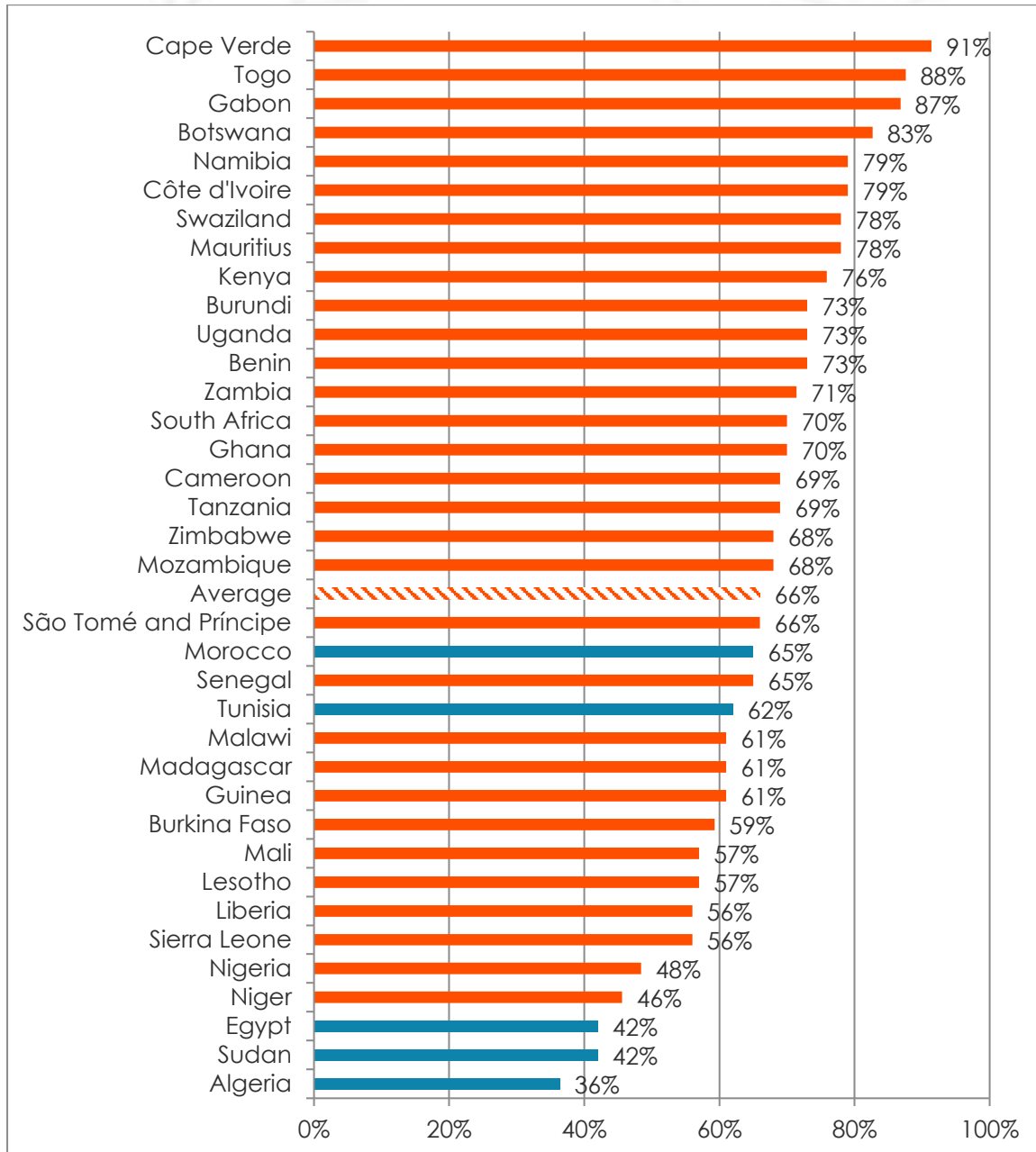
Statement 1: Men make better political leaders than women, and should be elected rather than women.

Statement 2: Women should have the same chance of being elected to political office as men. (% who "agree" or "agree very strongly" with each statement)

All five North African countries rank below the 36-country average in support for equal opportunity for women to be elected. Morocco (65%) and Tunisia (62%) are close to the continental average, but Algeria (36%), Sudan (42%), and Egypt (42%) rank at the very bottom among 36 surveyed countries (Figure 2).

To further explore this data, please visit Afrobarometer's online data analysis facility at www.afrobarometer.org/online-data-analysis.

Figure 2: Support for equal opportunity for women’s leadership | 36 countries
 | 2014/2015



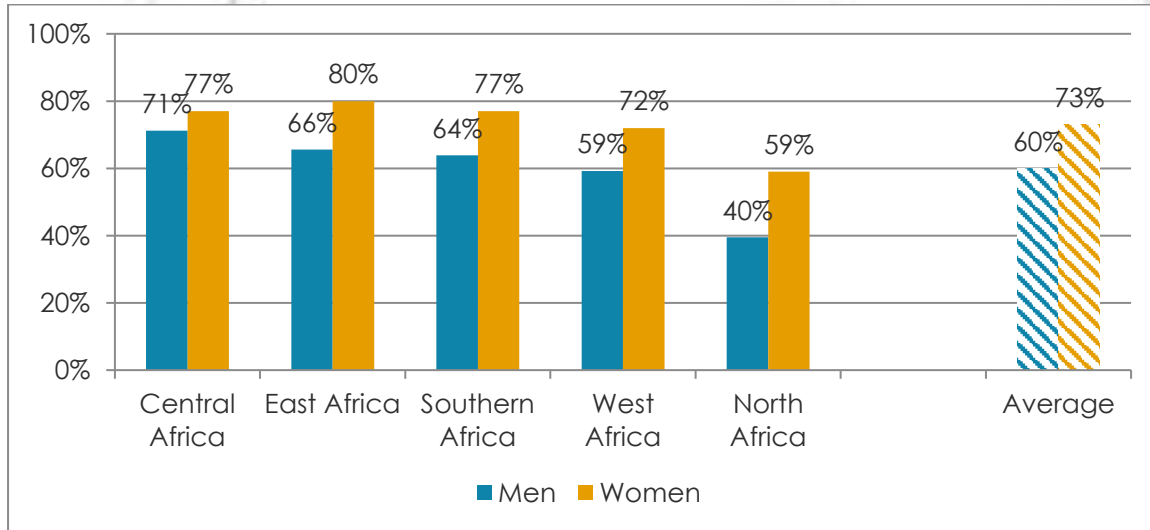
Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 Statement 1: Men make better political leaders than women, and should be elected rather than women.
 Statement 2: Women should have the same chance of being elected to political office as men. (% who "agree" or "agree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

Across all regions, more women (73%) than men (60%) support equal opportunity for women to be elected. In North Africa, too, more women (59%) than men (40%) support women's leadership, but both are far below levels of support in other regions (Figure 3).

Even among these five North African countries, there are wide variations in how strongly women and men support equal opportunity for women's leadership. In Morocco, eight of 10

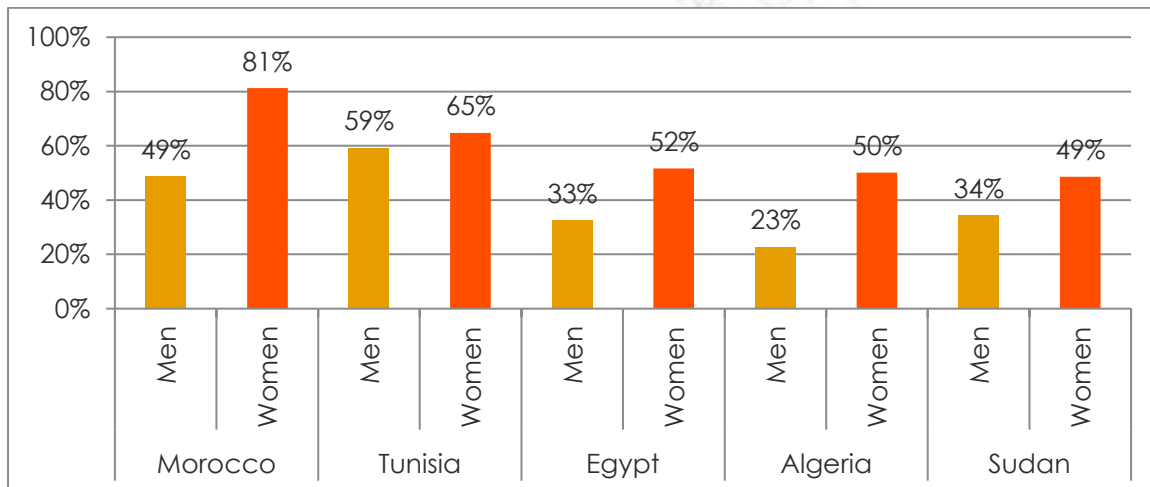
women (81%) support women's leadership, compared to two-thirds (65%) of women in Tunisia and only about half of women in Egypt (52%), Algeria (50%), and Sudan (49%) (Figure 4). Among men, the greatest support for equal opportunity is in Tunisia (59%), while less than one-fourth (23%) of Algerian men agree that women should have the same chance as men to be elected. The gap between women's and men's views on this fundamental question is greatest in Morocco, at 32 percentage points, and smallest in Tunisia (6 percentage points).

Figure 3: Support for equal opportunity for women's leadership | by region and gender | 36 countries | 2014/2015



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 "agree very strongly" that women should have the same chance as men)

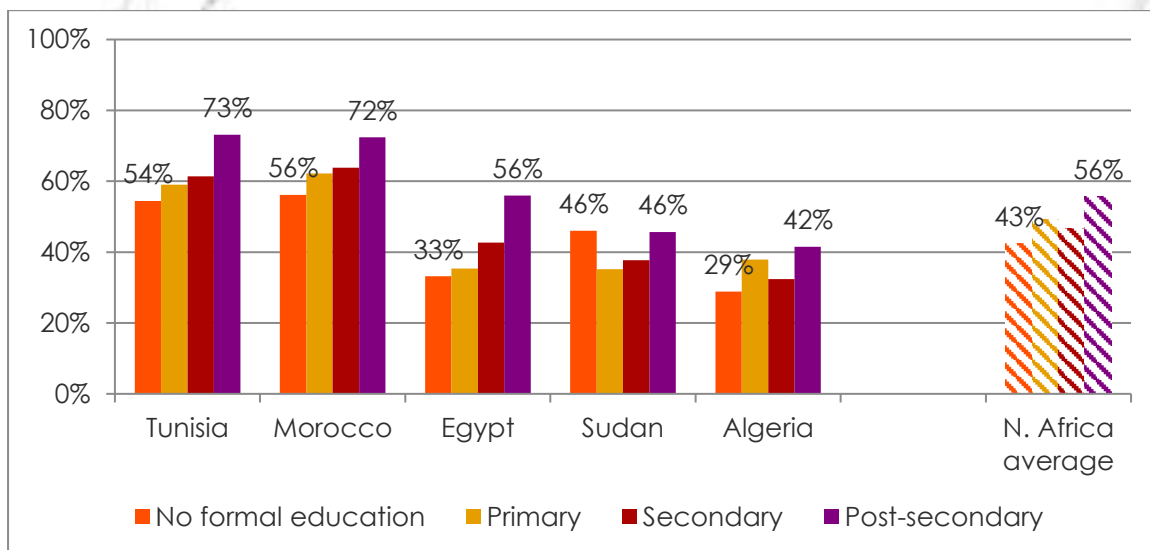
Figure 4: Support for equal opportunity for women's leadership | by gender | 5 North African countries | 2015



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 "agree very strongly" that women should have the same chance as men)

Support for equal opportunity in North African countries also varies by other demographic factors. The clearest differences are by respondents' educational attainment and economic level. Across the region, better-educated citizens are more likely to support equal opportunity, ranging from 56% of those with post-secondary education to 43% of those with no formal education (Figure 5) The pattern holds for individual countries, too, with the exception of Sudanese without formal education, who are as likely to support equal opportunity as their compatriots with post-secondary qualifications.

Figure 5: Support for equal opportunity for women's leadership | by education level | 5 North African countries | 2015



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 "agree very strongly" that women should have the same chance as men)

The association of poverty² and views on women's leadership opportunity is equally clear. Across the North Africa region, respondents who experienced no lived poverty (i.e. who suffered no deprivation) are more likely to support women's leadership (55%) than those with low lived poverty (48%) and moderate/high³ lived poverty (44%) (Figure 6). The same effect is seen in all five countries.

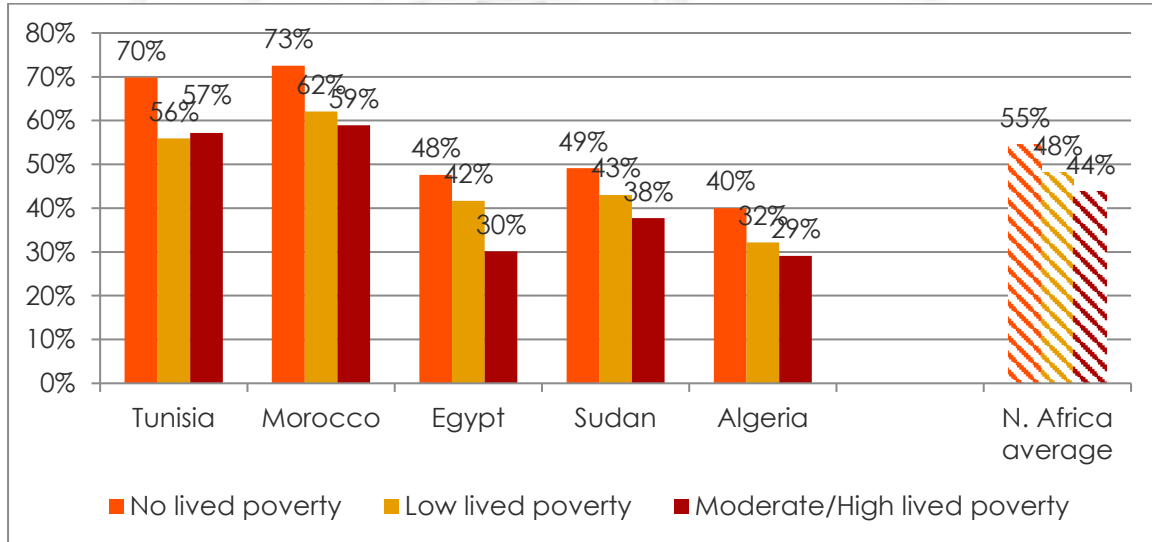
People in urban areas are more likely to support women's leadership opportunities (52%) than their rural counterparts (47%), but this is primarily due to an 11-percentage-point urban-

² Afrobarometer assesses poverty through its Lived Poverty Index (LPI), an experiential measure based on how frequently respondents or their families went without five basic necessities (enough food, enough clean water, medicines or medical treatment, enough cooking fuel, and a cash income) during the year preceding the survey. Using response options of "never," "just once or twice," "several times," "many times," and "always," LPI scores calculated for individuals or countries reflect the extent of deprivation ranging from no lived poverty to high lived poverty. For more on lived poverty, see "Africa's growth dividend? Lived poverty drops across much of the continent," Afrobarometer Policy Paper No. 29, available at <http://www.afrobarometer.org/publications/pp29-africas-growth-dividend-lived-poverty-drops-across-the-continent>.

³ The moderate and high lived poverty categories were combined to ensure that the sample is large enough (N>100) to report.

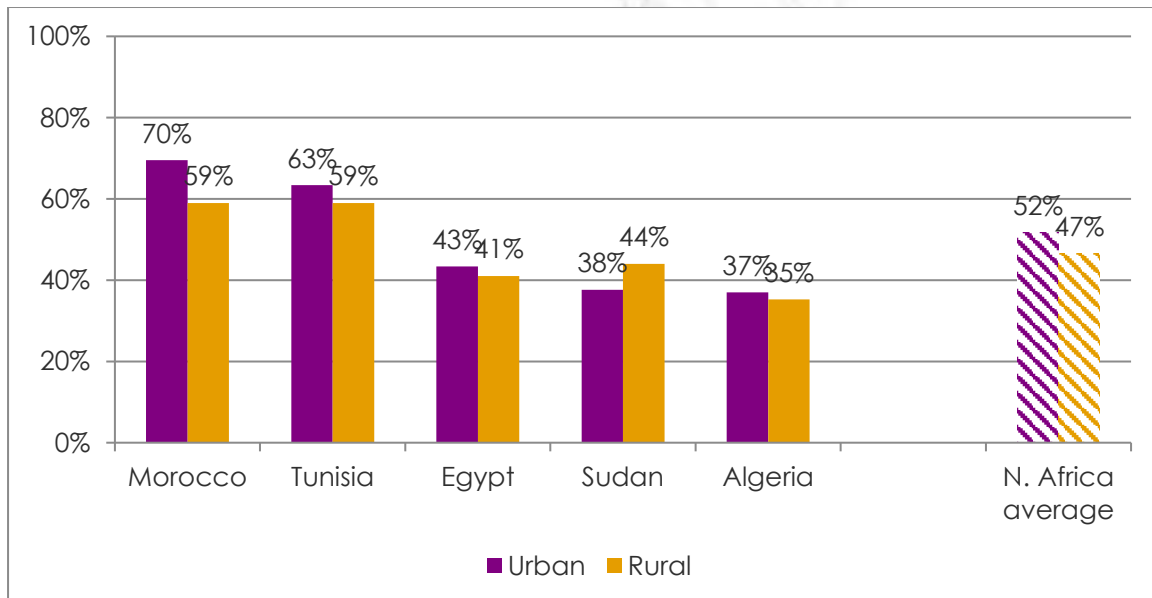
rural gap in Morocco (Figure 7). Urban-rural differences in other North African countries are modest, and in Sudan, the gap actually favours rural areas (44%) over cities (38%).

Figure 6: Support for equal opportunity for women’s leadership | by lived poverty level | 5 North African countries | 2015



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 "agree very strongly" that women should have the same chance as men)

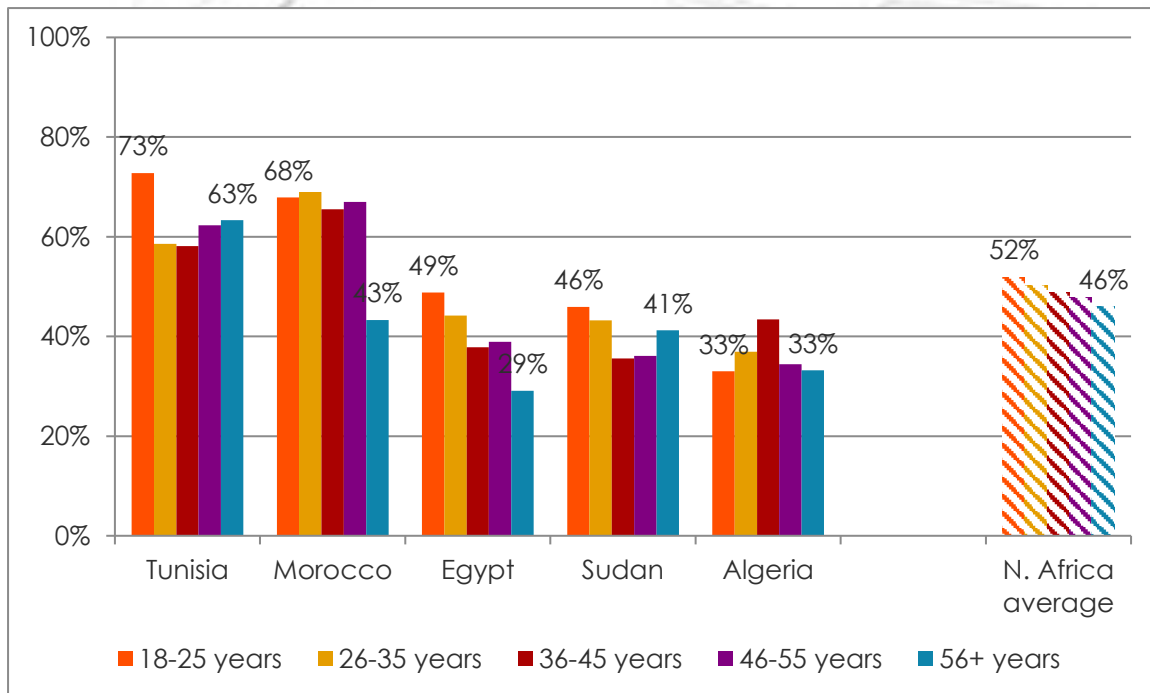
Figure 7: Support for equal opportunity for women’s leadership | by urban-rural location | 5 North African countries | 2015



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 "agree very strongly" that women should have the same chance as men)

Young North Africans are more likely to support equal opportunity for women's leadership than their elders, ranging from about half (52%) of 18- to 25-year-olds to 46% of those aged over 55 years. This pattern generally holds within the countries, too, except for Algeria, where 36- to 45-year-olds are most likely to support equal opportunity (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Support for equal opportunity for women's leadership | by age | 5 North African countries | 2015



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 "agree very strongly" that women should have the same chance as men)

Political engagement

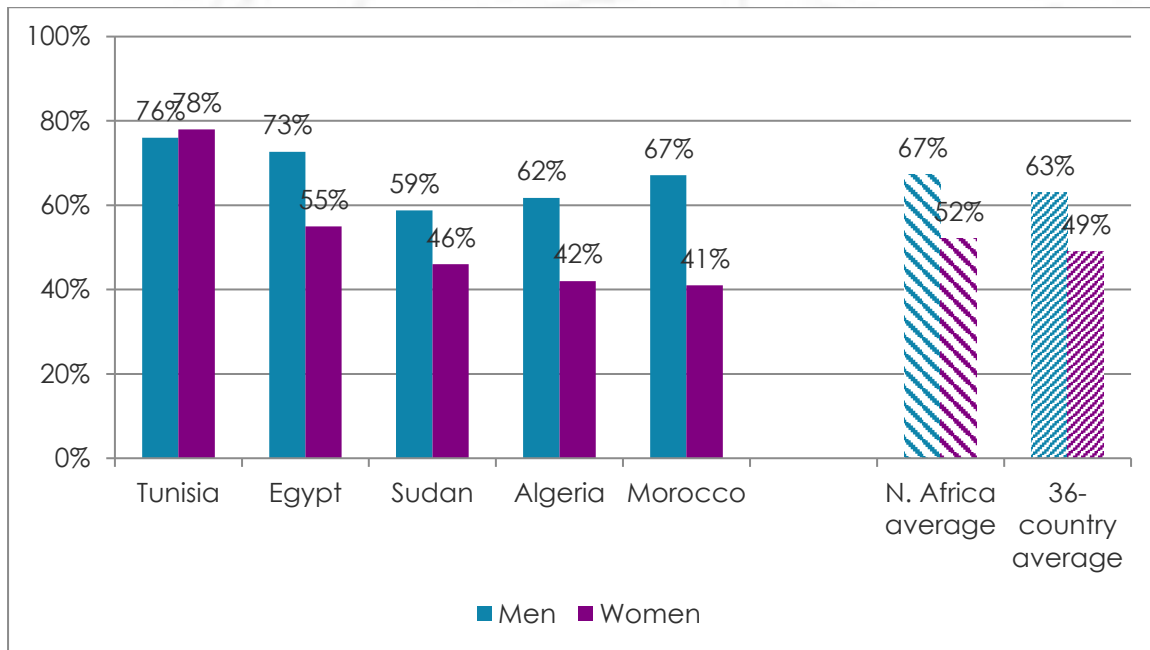
In addition to public opinion on women's equal opportunity to hold office, women's interest in public affairs and engagement in political processes may be factors that contribute to – and are influenced by – women's actual representation in political decision-making.

Interest in public affairs

Across Africa as well as the North Africa region, women express less interest than men in public affairs. On average across 36 surveyed countries, half (49%) of women say they are "somewhat" or "very" interested in public affairs, compared to 63% of men. Similarly, across North Africa, 52% of women vs. 67% of men say they are somewhat/very interested in public affairs. The same pattern obtains in four of the five North African countries, with gender gaps ranging from 13 percentage points in Sudan to 26 points in Morocco. The exception is Tunisia, where about equal proportions of women (78%) and men (76%) say they are interested in public affairs (Figure 9). Interest levels among women vary widely between North African countries, ranging from 41% in Morocco and 42% in Algeria to 78% in Tunisia.

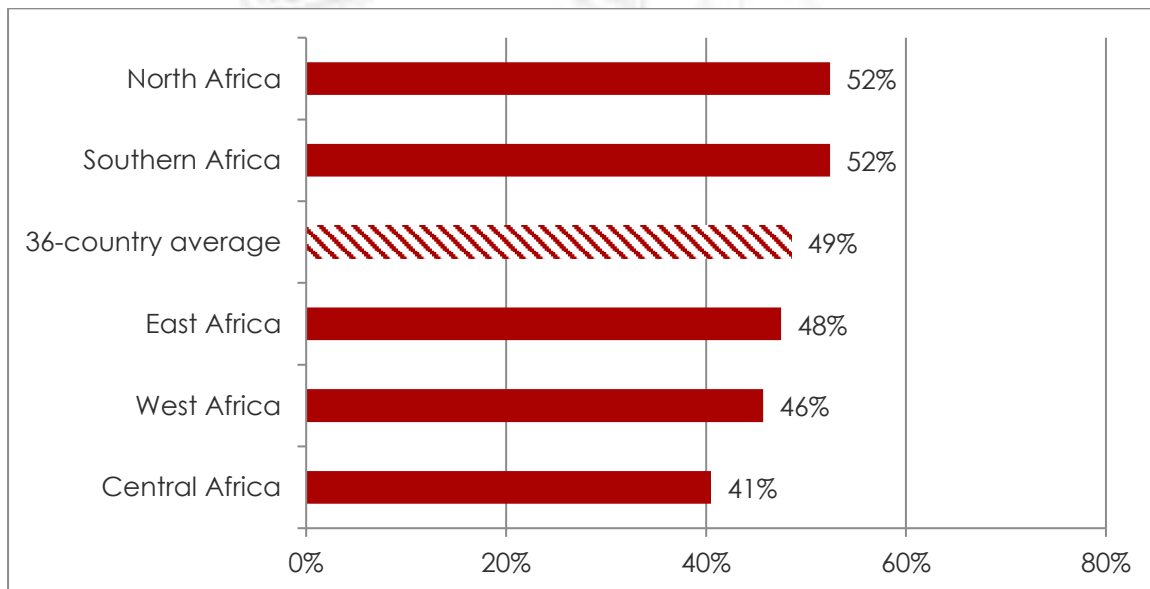
By region, women's interest in public affairs is actually slightly higher in North Africa (52%) than in other regions (49% across all five regions) (Figure 10).

Figure 9: Interest in public affairs | by gender | 5 North African countries | 2015



Respondents were asked: How interested would you say you are in public affairs? (% who say "somewhat interested" or "very interested")

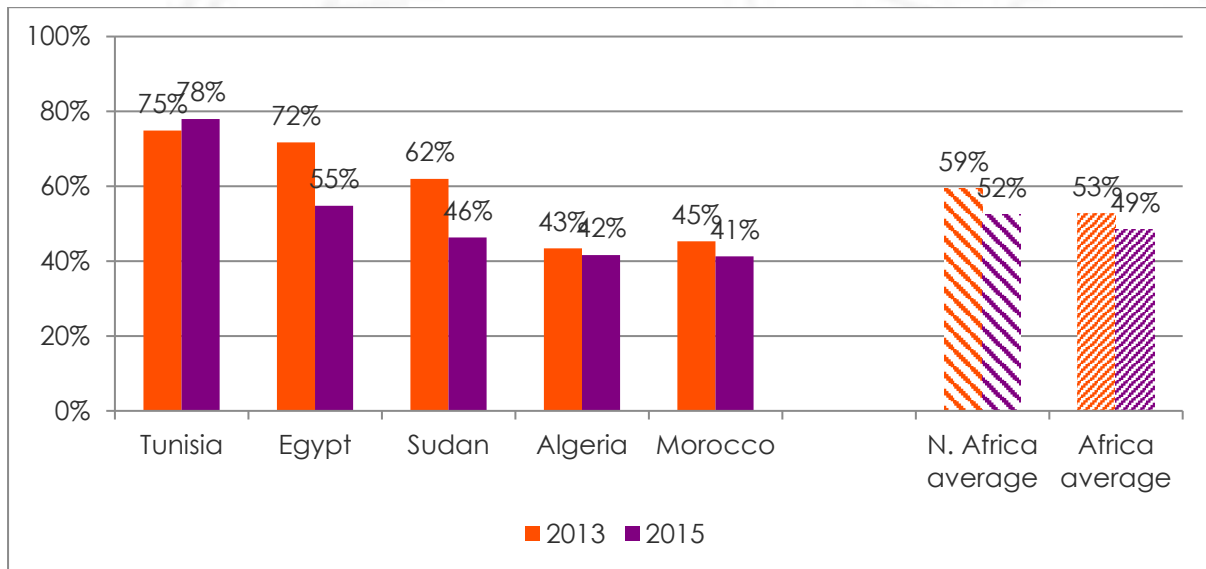
Figure 10: Women's interest in public affairs | by region | 36 countries | 2014/2015



Respondents were asked: How interested would you say you are in public affairs? (% who say "somewhat interested" or "very interested")

Over time, African women's interest in politics has declined by 4 percentage points since 2013, from 53% to 49%, while that of North African women has declined by 7 percentage points, from 59% to 52% within the same period. The most dramatic drops in North Africa were registered in Egypt (by 17 percentage points) and Sudan (by 16 points). Only Tunisia saw a slight increase (3 points) (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Change in women's interest in public affairs | 5 North African countries | 2013-2015

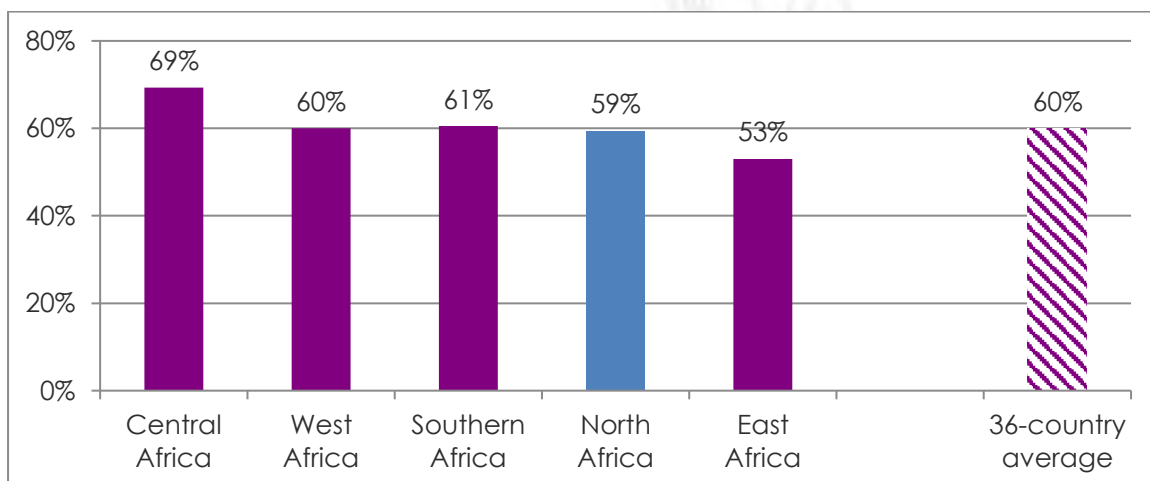


Respondents were asked: How interested would you say you are in public affairs? (% who say "somewhat interested" or "very interested")

Discussion of politics

As another indicator of political engagement, respondents were asked how often they discuss political matters with family or friends. On average across the five North African countries, six in 10 women (59%) say they "occasionally" or "frequently" discuss politics – about the same proportion as the continental average (60%). East African women are least likely to discuss politics (53%), while Central African women are most likely to do so (69%) (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Discussion of politics by women | by region | 36 countries | 2014/2015

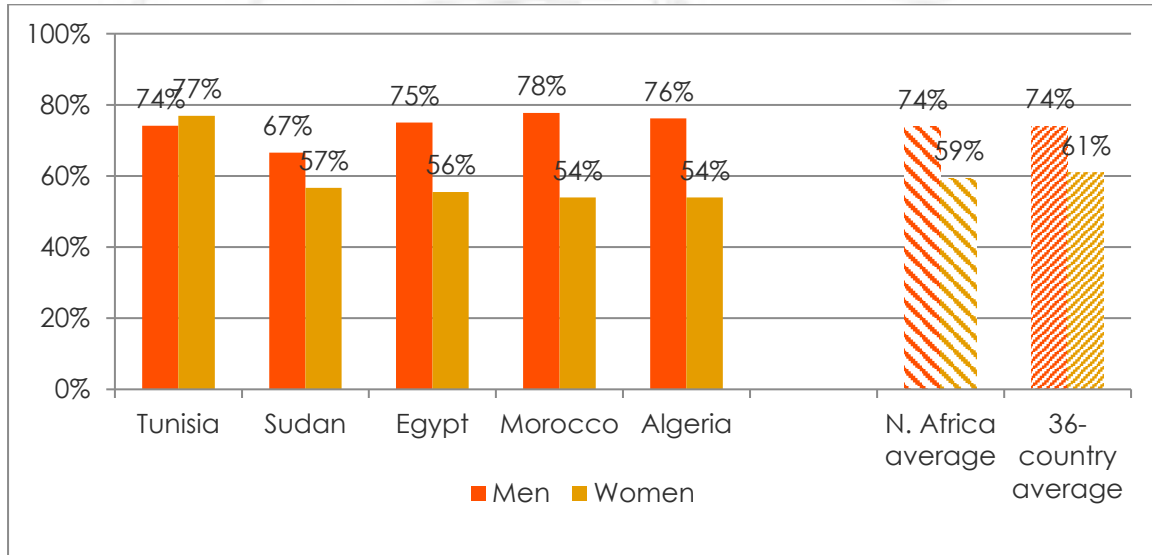


Respondents were asked: When you get together with your friends or family, would you say you discuss political matters frequently, occasionally, or never? (% who say "occasionally" or "frequently")

Again, both across Africa and across North Africa, women are less likely than men to say they discuss politics, showing a 15-percentage-point gap (74% for men, 59% for women) for the

North Africa region. By country, the gap is largest in Morocco (24 percentage points) and Algeria (22 points). The exception, again, is Tunisia, where women are slightly more likely than men to discuss politics (77% vs. 74%) (Figure 13).

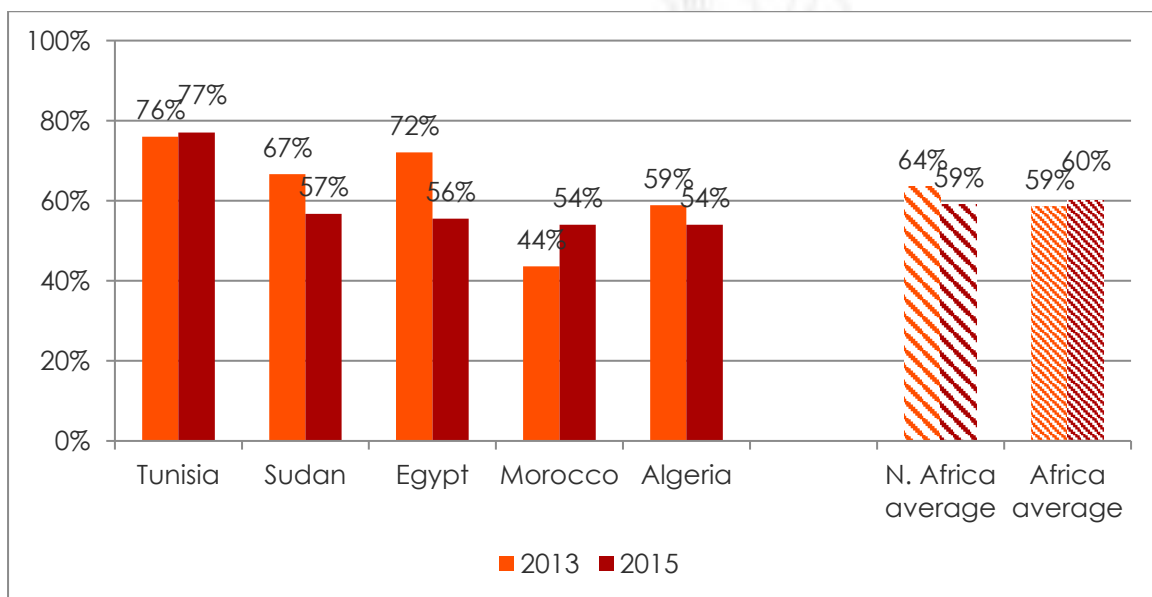
Figure 13: Discussion of politics | by gender | 5 North African countries | 2015



Respondents were asked: When you get together with your friends or family, would you say you discuss political matters frequently, occasionally, or never? (% who say “occasionally” or “frequently”)

As in the case of interest in politics, discussion of politics by North African women has declined, from 64% in 2013 to 59% in 2015. Similar trends are seen in all five countries except Tunisia (Figure 14). At the continental level, the level of discussion of politics by women has remained steady.

Figure 14: Discussion of politics among women | 5 North African countries | 2013-2015



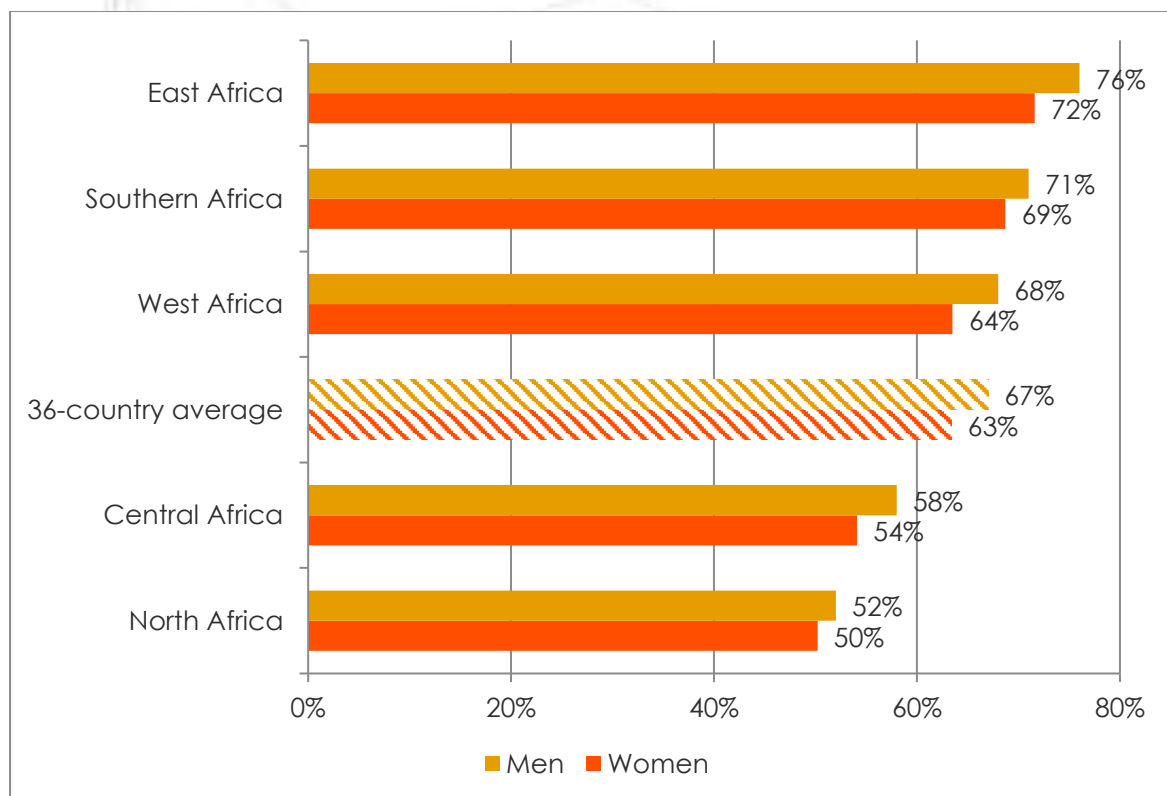
Respondents were asked: When you get together with your friends or family, would you say you discuss political matters frequently, occasionally, or never? (% who say “occasionally” or “frequently”)

Tunisian women's exceptionally high levels of interest in and discussion of public affairs – matching or surpassing those of both men and other women in the region – may reflect the country's considerable civil-society advocacy and progress on women's rights in recent years. In addition to a new constitution in 2014 that UN Women called “a breakthrough for women's rights” (2014), which made Tunisia the first Arab country to give women the right to run for president, the country has enacted laws to ensure gender parity at national and local levels (UN Women, 2016b).

Voting in elections

Across 36 African countries, women are slightly less likely than men to say they voted in their country's most recent national election, 63% vs. 67%. Half (50%) of North African women say they voted – a rate only marginally lower than for North African men (52%), but lower than any other region (Figure 15).

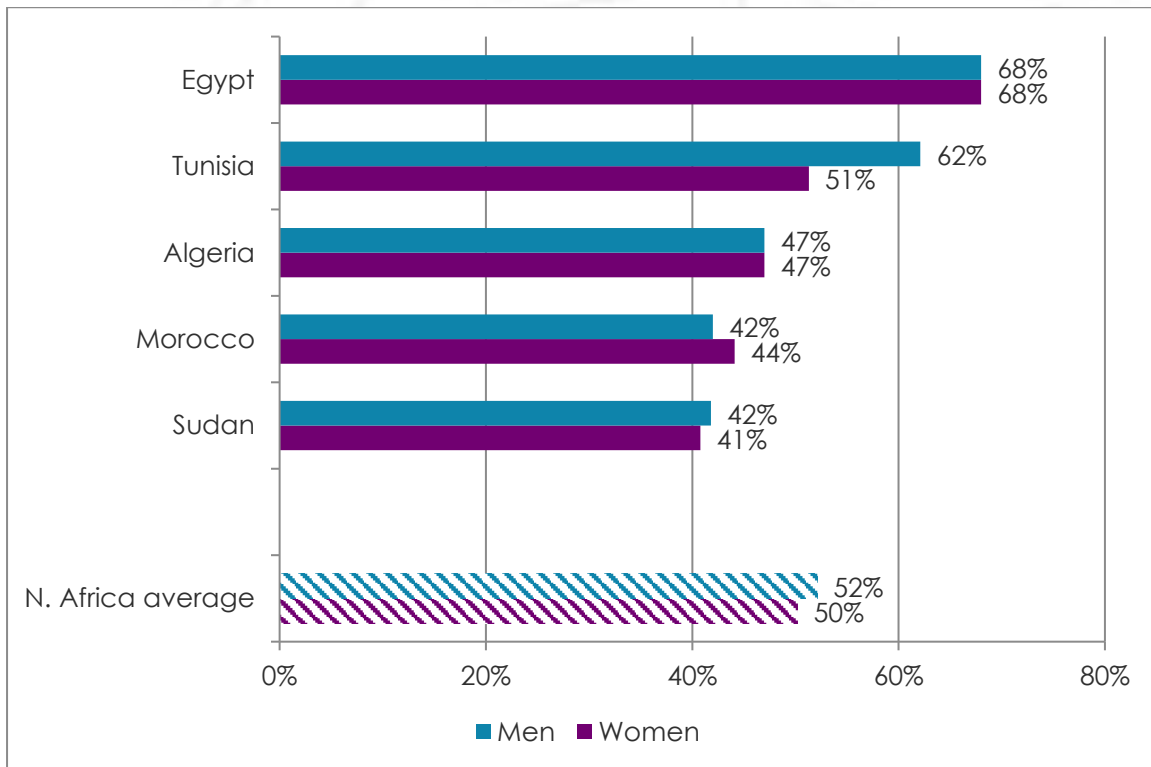
Figure 15: Voting in elections | by gender and region | 36 countries | 2014/2015



Respondents were asked: *Understanding that some people were unable to vote in the most recent national election in [20XX], which of the following statements is true for you? (% who say they voted)*

Within North African countries, gender differences in self-reported voting are non-existent except in Tunisia, where women – though at least as interested as men in politics – are significantly less likely to have voted in December 2014 (62% for men vs. 51% for women) (Figure 16). Women's voting rates range from a low of 41% in Sudan to a high of 68% in Egypt.

Figure 16: Voting in elections | by gender | 5 North African countries | 2015



Respondents were asked: *Understanding that some people were unable to vote in the most recent national election in [20XX], which of the following statements is true for you? (% who say they voted)*

Pre-election engagement

Afrobarometer measured pre-election engagement by whether respondents attended a campaign rally, attended a campaign meeting, worked for a candidate or party, and/or tried to persuade someone else to vote for a certain candidate or party during the last national election.

As shown in Table 1, across all North African countries as well as all regions of the continent, women are consistently less active than men in pre-election activities, revealing gender gaps of up to 17 percentage points. Comparing regions, North African women are least likely to be involved in pre-election activities, while Central African women are most likely to be involved. Only 14% of North African women attended a campaign rally, 10% attended a campaign meeting, 7% worked for a party, and 15% persuaded others to vote a certain way, compared to 40%, 38%, 17%, and 29%, respectively, of Central African women.

Women's pre-election engagement also varies across the five North African countries. For example, Sudanese women are most likely to have attended a campaign rally (21%), attended a campaign meeting (18%), and worked for a candidate or party (12%), compared to 8%, 4%, and 1%, respectively, of Tunisian women. However, Tunisian women are most likely to have tried to persuade others to vote for a certain candidate or party (23%), compared to only 10% of Moroccan women.

Table 1: Gender gap in pre-election engagement | 36 countries | 2015

	Attended campaign rally			Attended campaign meeting			Worked for a candidate or party			Tried to persuade others to vote for a candidate or party		
	M*	W*	Gap*	M	W	Gap	M	W	Gap	M	W	Gap
Algeria	25%	13%	12	16%	10%	6	13%	8%	5	20%	15%	5
Egypt	23%	15%	8	15%	8%	7	9%	4%	5	22%	14%	8
Morocco	28%	14%	14	27%	13%	14	17%	11%	6	18%	10%	8
Sudan	27%	21%	6	26%	18%	8	14%	12%	1	14%	11%	3
Tunisia	25%	8%	17	20%	4%	16	6%	1%	5	27%	23%	4
North Africa	26%	14%	11	21%	10%	10	12%	7%	5	20%	15%	5
Southern Africa	37%	28%	9	24%	16%	8	12%	8%	4	20%	15%	5
East Africa	57%	41%	16	40%	26%	14	20%	11%	9	32%	20%	12
West Africa	42%	30%	12	40%	26%	14	27%	14%	13	35%	21%	14
Central Africa	49%	40%	9	45%	38%	8	25%	17%	8	37%	29%	8
36-country average	41%	30%	11	33%	22%	11	19%	11%	8	28%	19%	9

Respondents were asked: Thinking about the last national election, did you: Attend a campaign rally? Attend a meeting with a candidate or campaign staff? Try to persuade others to vote for a certain presidential or legislative candidate or political party? Work for a candidate or party? (% who say "yes")

* M=Men; W=Women; Gap: Men minus Women (in percentage points)

Note: Due to rounding, percentage-point gap may appear to vary from the difference between the percentages for men and women.

Civic engagement

Civic engagement or activism was measured by how often respondents attended a community meeting, joined with others to raise an issue or request government action, and/or attended a demonstration or protest match during the previous year. Again, as shown in Table 2, women are consistently less involved in civic activities than men, a difference reflected in all five North African countries, across all regions, and across the continent.

And once again, North African women are least likely to engage in civic activism: Only 23% attended a community meeting, 23% joined others to raise an issue, and 11% joined others to request government action at least once. In contrast, these activities drew 58%, 40%, and 24%, respectively, of East African women at least once during the previous year.

As we saw with pre-election activities, Sudanese women stand out in attending community meetings (41%) and joining others to raise an issue (32%) and to request government action (18%), while Moroccan women are most likely to attend a demonstration or protest march (14%).

Table 2: Gender gap in civic engagement | 36 countries | 2014/2015

	Attended community meeting			Joined others to raise an issue			Joined others to request gov't action			Attended a demonstration or protest march		
	M*	W*	Gap*	M	W	Gap	M	W	Gap	M	W	Gap
Algeria	32%	18%	14	32%	17%	16	16%	9%	7	14%	5%	9
Egypt	29%	17%	12	29%	16%	12	24%	14%	10	19%	12%	7
Morocco	42%	27%	15	43%	26%	17	21%	13%	9	14%	14%	1
Sudan	54%	41%	13	45%	32%	13	33%	18%	15	12%	10%	2
Tunisia	24%	10%	14	38%	23%	15	12%	4%	8	18%	6%	12
North Africa	36%	23%	14	37%	23%	15	21%	11%	10	15%	9%	6
Southern Africa	58%	53%	6	43%	37%	6	25%	20%	5	8%	6%	2
East Africa	69%	58%	11	56%	40%	16	36%	24%	12	7%	5%	2
West Africa	62%	48%	14	58%	40%	18	29%	18%	12	13%	9%	4
Central Africa	47%	41%	6	52%	45%	7	27%	20%	6	16%	12%	4
36-country average	57%	47%	10	50%	37%	13	27%	19%	9	11%	8%	3

Respondents were asked:

1. Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year: Attended a community meeting? Got together with others to raise an issue? (% who say "once or twice," "several times," or "often")
2. Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens when they are dissatisfied with government performance. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year: Joined others in your community to request action from government? Participated in a demonstration or protest march? (% who say "once or twice," "several times," or "often")

* M=Men; W=Women; Gap: Men minus Women (in percentage points)

Contacting leaders

As with other forms of civic engagement, women in North Africa are less likely than men (by 8 to 11 percentage points) to have contacted a local government councillor, a government agency official, or a traditional or religious leader at least once during the previous year about some important problem or to share their views (Table 3). Their most frequent contact was with a religious leader (19%).

However, compared to women across the continent, North African women are about average when it comes to contacting local government councillors (15% vs. 17% across the continent) and above average in contacting government officials (17% vs. 11%). They trail the continental averages in contacting traditional and religious leaders.

Contact of leaders varies significantly among North African countries. Overall, about one in four Moroccan women contacted these leaders, compared to less than one in 10 Tunisian women.

Table 3: Gender gap in contacting leaders | 36 countries | 2014/2015

	Contacted local government councillor			Contacted official of a government agency			Contacted traditional leader			Contacted religious leader		
	M*	W*	Gap*	M	W	Gap	M	W	Gap	M	W	Gap
Algeria	33%	15%	18	24%	13%	12	17%	8%	10	29%	14%	15
Egypt	27%	18%	9	30%	21%	9	24%	15%	9	34%	25%	9
Morocco	39%	25%	14	34%	26%	8	35%	25%	10	37%	28%	10
Sudan	17%	10%	7	29%	19%	10	34%	26%	9	34%	24%	10
Tunisia	17%	9%	8	15%	8%	7	11%	8%	4	7%	3%	4
N. Africa average	27%	15%	11	26%	17%	9	24%	16%	8	28%	19%	10
Southern Africa	26%	19%	7	14%	10%	4	35%	28%	7	37%	38%	-1
East Africa	28%	17%	11	23%	14%	9	37%	26%	11	48%	44%	4
West Africa	30%	16%	13	14%	8%	6	36%	22%	14	45%	33%	12
Central Africa	23%	17%	6	13%	9%	4	22%	14%	8	38%	36%	2
36-country average	27%	17%	10	17%	11%	6	33%	23%	10	40%	34%	6

Respondents were asked: During the past year, how often have you contacted any of the following persons about some important problem or to give them your views: A local member of County Assembly? An official of a government agency? Traditional leader? Religious Leader? (% who say they contacted these leaders "only once," "a few times," or "often")

* M=Men; W=Women; Gap: Men minus Women (in percentage points)

Equality and empowerment of women

If indicators of political engagement show certain deficits for North African women, do these findings reflect broader social inequalities? In its Round 5 (2011/2013) surveys, Afrobarometer surveys asked respondents whether women should have the same rights as men, whether they are in fact treated the same as men, and how respondents assess their government's performance in empowering women.

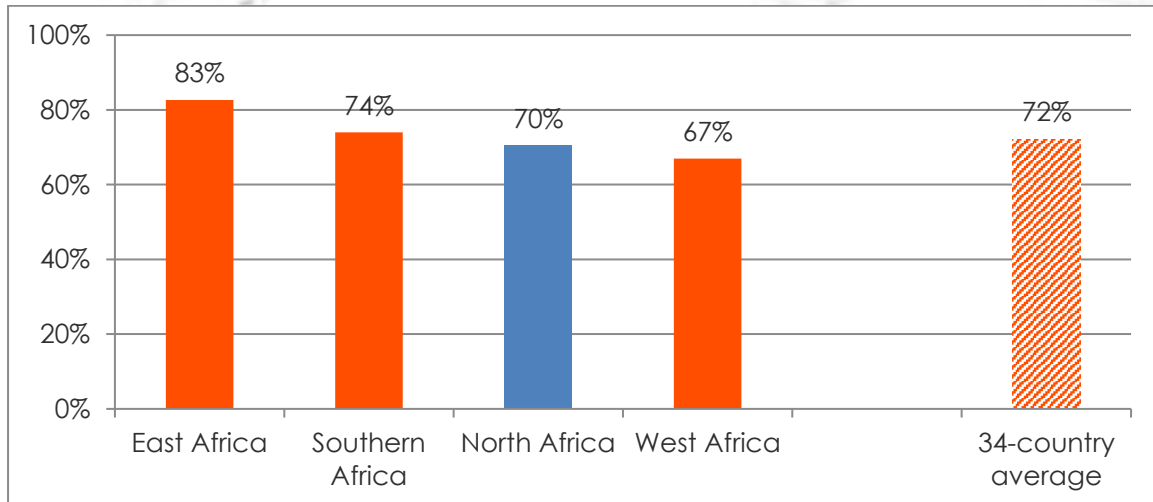
Seven in 10 North Africans of both genders (70%) "agree" or "agree very strongly" that women should have equal rights and receive the same treatment as men – close to the average across 34 surveyed countries (72%), though well below the East African average of 83% (Figure 17).

Despite this support for gender equality in principle, North Africans are more likely than other Africans to say that women suffer discrimination. About half of North Africans say women are "often" or "always" treated unequally by employers (52%) and traditional leaders (51%), and four in 10 (42%) say women are treated unequally by police and the courts – each finding

about 10 percentage points higher than the average across 34 surveyed countries (Figure 18).

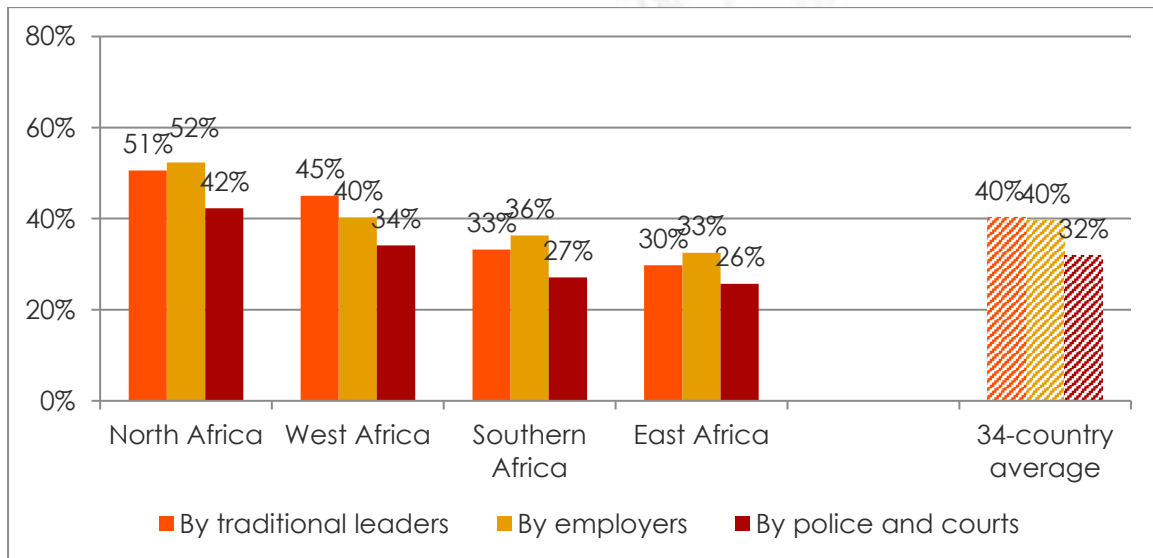
And North Africans are least likely to see their government as effective advocates for women's rights. Only 45% say their government is performing "fairly well" or "very well" in empowering women, well below the 60% average across 34 countries (Figure 19).

Figure 17: Support for equal rights and treatment of women | by region⁴
 | 34 countries | 2011/2013



Respondents were asked: Let's talk for a moment about the kind of society you would like to have in this country. Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 Statement 1: In our country, women should have equal rights and receive the same treatment as men do.
 Statement 2: Women have always been subject to traditional laws and customs, and should remain so.
 (% who "agree" or "agree very strongly" that women and men should have equal rights)

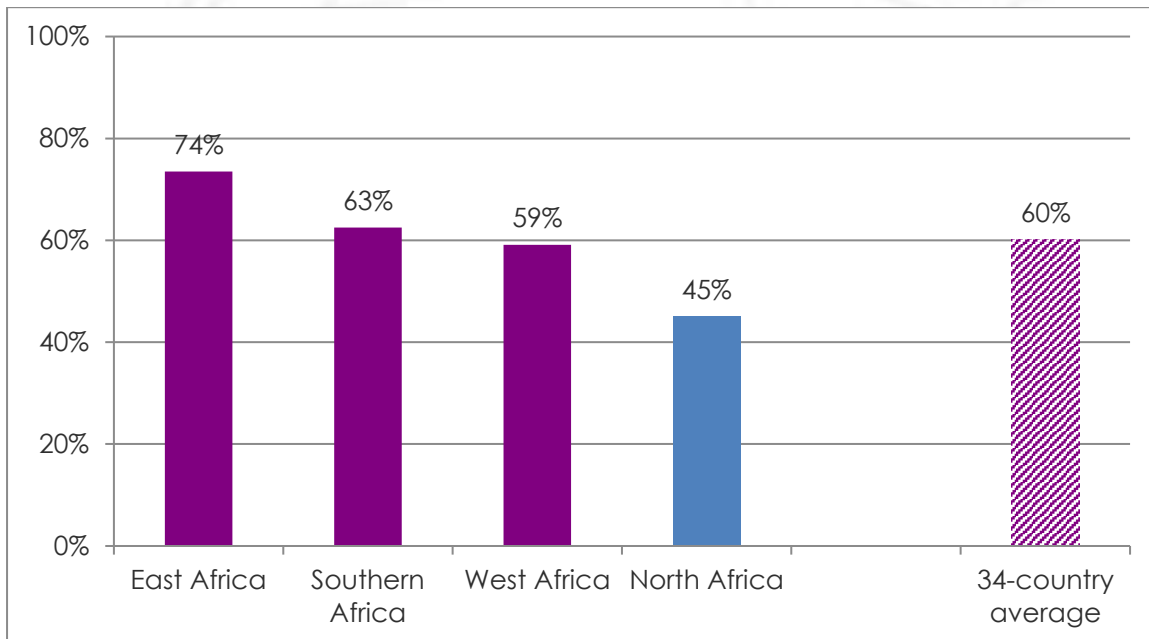
Figure 18: Unequal treatment of women | by region | 34 countries | 2011/2013



Respondents were asked: In your opinion, how often, in this country are women treated unequally by: Traditional leaders? Police and courts? Employers? (% who say "often" or "always")

⁴ Central Africa is not shown because Round 5 surveys included only one country in the region (Cameroon).

Figure 19: Government handling of empowerment of women | by region
 | 34 countries | 2011/2013



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: Empowering women? (% who say "fairly well" or "very well")

Conclusion

In Africa as throughout the world, equal representation of women at all levels of political decision-making remains an ambitious goal. In North Africa, relatively weak popular support, especially among men, of equal opportunity for women to be elected to public office is mirrored in high perceptions of discrimination and negative ratings of government efforts to empower women.

North African countries vary significantly in terms of policies (such as the level of electoral quotas) as well as popular attitudes (e.g. Tunisian women's high level of interest in public affairs). But on average, like women in other regions, North African women clearly trail men in terms of interest in public affairs, discussion of politics, and engagement in political and civic activities – all areas where government policy, civil society advocacy, and individual effort can work together for change.

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Appendix

Table A.1: Afrobarometer Round 6 fieldwork dates and previous survey rounds

Country	Months when Round 6 fieldwork was conducted	Previous survey rounds
Algeria	May-June 2015	2013
Benin	May-June 2014	2005, 2008, 2011
Botswana	June-July 2014	1999, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012
Burkina Faso	April-May 2015	2008, 2012
Burundi	September-October 2014	2012
Cameroon	January-February 2015	2013
Cape Verde	November-December 2014	2002, 2005, 2008, 2011
Côte d'Ivoire	August-September 2014	2013
Egypt	June-July 2015	2013
Gabon	September 2015	N/A
Ghana	May-June 2014	1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2012
Guinea	March-April 2015	2013
Kenya	November-December 2014	2003, 2005, 2008, 2011
Lesotho	May 2014	2000, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012
Liberia	May 2015	2008, 2012
Madagascar	December 2014-January 2015	2005, 2008, 2013
Malawi	March-April 2014	1999, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012
Mali	December 2014	2001, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2013
Mauritius	June-July 2014	2012
Morocco	November 2015	2013
Mozambique	June-August 2015	2002, 2005, 2008, 2012
Namibia	August-September 2014	1999, 2003, 2006, 2008, 2012
Niger	April 2015	2013
Nigeria	December 2014-January 2015	2000, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2013
São Tomé and Príncipe	July-August 2015	N/A
Senegal	November-December 2014	2002, 2005, 2008, 2013
Sierra Leone	May-June 2015	2012
South Africa	August-September 2015	2000, 2002, 2006, 2008, 2011
Sudan	June 2015	2013

Country	Months when Round 6 fieldwork was conducted	Previous survey rounds
Swaziland	April 2015	2013
Tanzania	August-November 2014	2001, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012
Togo	October 2014	2012
Tunisia	April-May 2015	2013
Uganda	May 2015	2000, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2012
Zambia	October 2014	1999, 2003, 2005, 2009, 2013
Zimbabwe	November 2014	1999, 2004, 2005, 2009, 2012

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