



UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA

**University of Botswana**  
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**Gaborone, Botswana**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Batswana Increasingly Demand Gender Equality**

The Afrobarometer is a comparative series of public attitude surveys, covering up to 35 African countries in Round 5 (2011-2013). It measures public attitudes on democracy and its alternatives, evaluations of the quality of governance and economic performance. In addition, the survey assesses the views of the electorate on critical political issues in the surveyed countries. The Afrobarometer also provides comparisons over time, as four rounds of surveys have been held from 1999 to 2008 and Round 5 is currently underway.

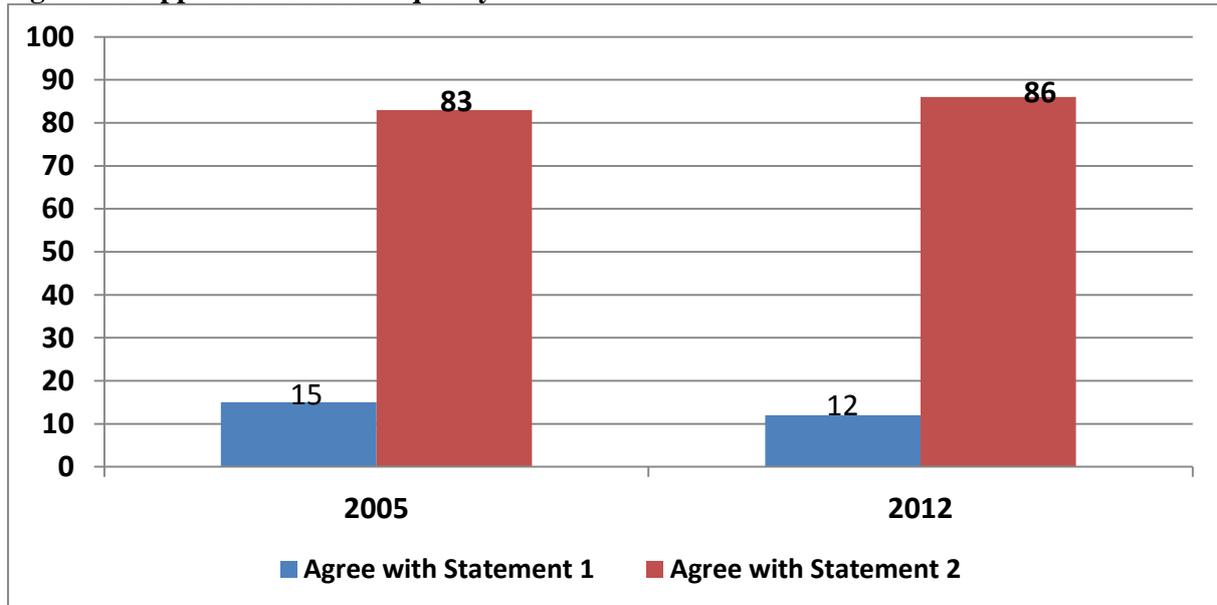
Afrobarometer's work in Botswana is coordinated by the Southern African Barometer research team at the University of Botswana. Fieldwork for Round 5 was conducted in Botswana from 30 June to 11 July 2012. The survey interviewed 1200 adult Batswana, and a sample of this size yields results with a margin of error of +/-2.8% at a 95% confidence level.

### **FINDINGS**

The recent Afrobarometer survey in Botswana revealed high and possibly increasing support for gender equality as compared to a previous survey conducted in 2005 (Round 3). Batswana believe that women must have the same chance of being elected into political office as men, and hence believe women can play a critical role in the development of their country. Majorities also believe that women must not be restricted to the traditional laws and customs of the country. There is indeed high support for women's involvement in the political processes of the country. Such support for women's empowerment has increased slightly since the Afrobarometer Round 3 survey conducted in 2005.

Asked to choose between the two statements, "Men make better political leaders than women, and should be elected rather than women" and "Women should have the same chance of being elected to political office as men", a strong majority (86%) supported the involvement of women in the political field, whilst just 12% opposed this. This reflects a relatively constant view in comparison to the 2005 findings where 83% supported women's participation into the political arena (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Support for Gender Equality**

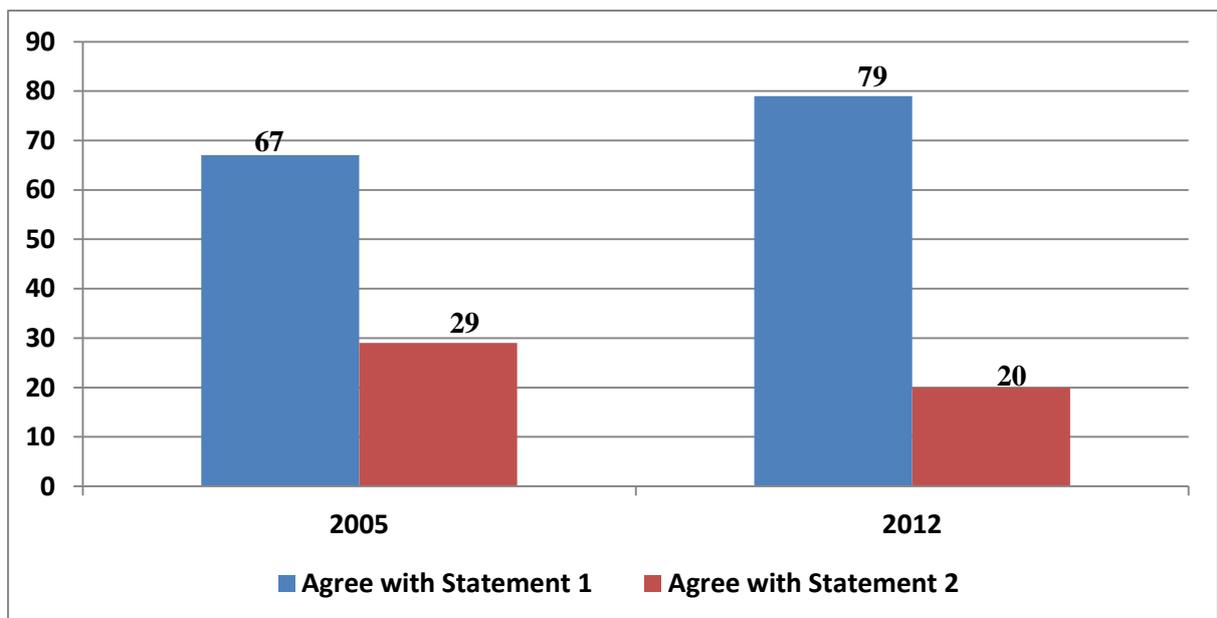


*Statement 1: Men make better political leaders than women*

*Statement 2: Women should have the same chance of being elected to political office as men*

Further, Batswana support the need for women to receive the same treatment as men. The survey reveals close to eight in ten (79%) Batswana approving this, against two in ten (20%) who believe that women have always been subject to traditional laws and customs, and should remain so. The findings reveal an increase in support for women’s empowerment by 12% since 2005, when 67% held the same view. Conversely, there is decline in support for men’s dominance over women, from 29% registered for 2005 to 20% in 2012 (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Equality in Treatment**



*Statement 1: In our country, women should have equal rights and receive the same treatment as men do.*

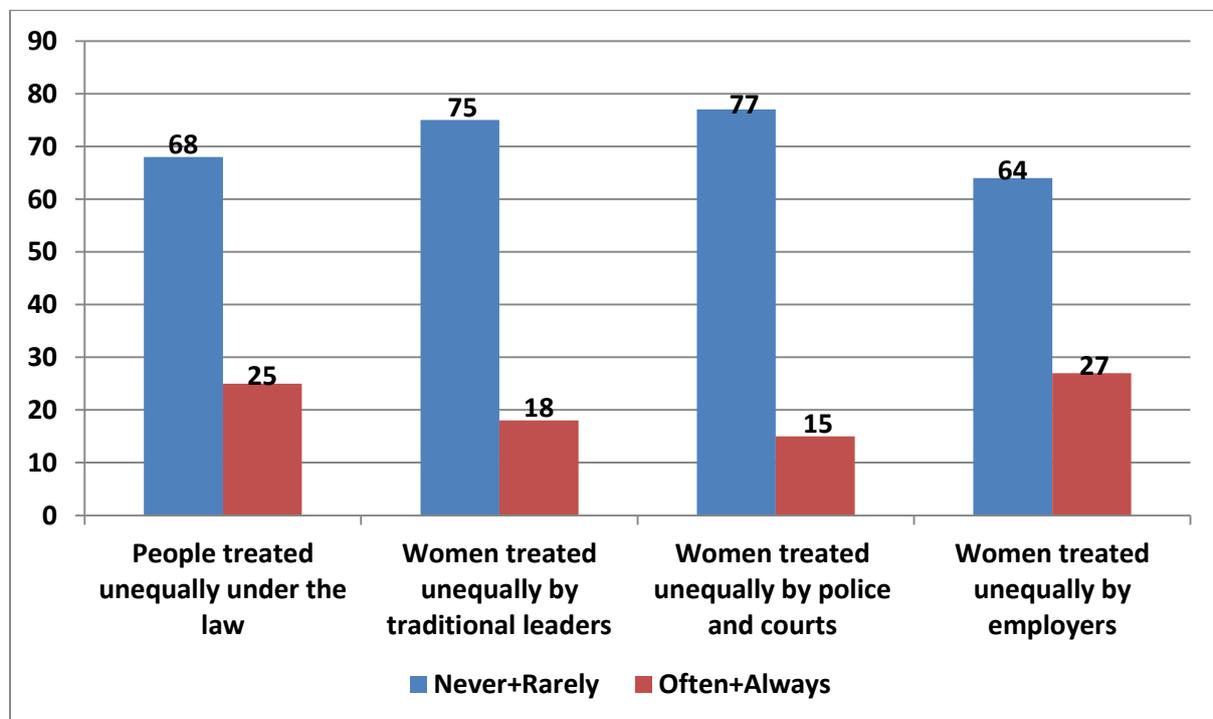
*Statement 2: Women have always been subject to traditional laws and customs, and should remain so.*

In the same manner, Batswana disapprove of the segregation of women with regard to access to education, but support the notion that opportunities in education must be on merit terms rather than on gender segregation. An overwhelming majority (80%) support this notion against only a minute 4% who believe that if funds are limited funds, a boy should be awarded the first chance to receive education before a girl.

**Batswana Report Low Levels of Women’s Segregation by Police, Courts and Traditional Leaders but a Higher Segregation from Employers.**

Asked to respond to a general question on whether Batswana were treated unequally under the law, a quarter are affirmative, as opposed to 68% who disagree. When asked to respond to whether women are treated unequally by specific authorities, fewer Batswana report unfair treatment of women by traditional leaders (18%) and by the police and courts (15%). However, this increases to more than a quarter (27%) who say that women are treated unequally by employers. The findings reveal that more segregation of women happens at work places than in other places. However, majorities report low levels of unfair treatment of women across all of the different settings.

**Figure 3: Equality under the law**



*In your opinion, how often, in this country:*

- Are people treated unequally under the law?
- Are women treated unequally by traditional leaders?
- Are women treated unequally by the police and courts?
- Are women treated unequally by employers?

The above findings reveal that most Batswana perceive gender equality in terms of women being accorded the same opportunities, rights and treatment as men.

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