

People left behind:  
Adolescent girls and young women

[Link with the pdf, Adolescent girls and young women](#)

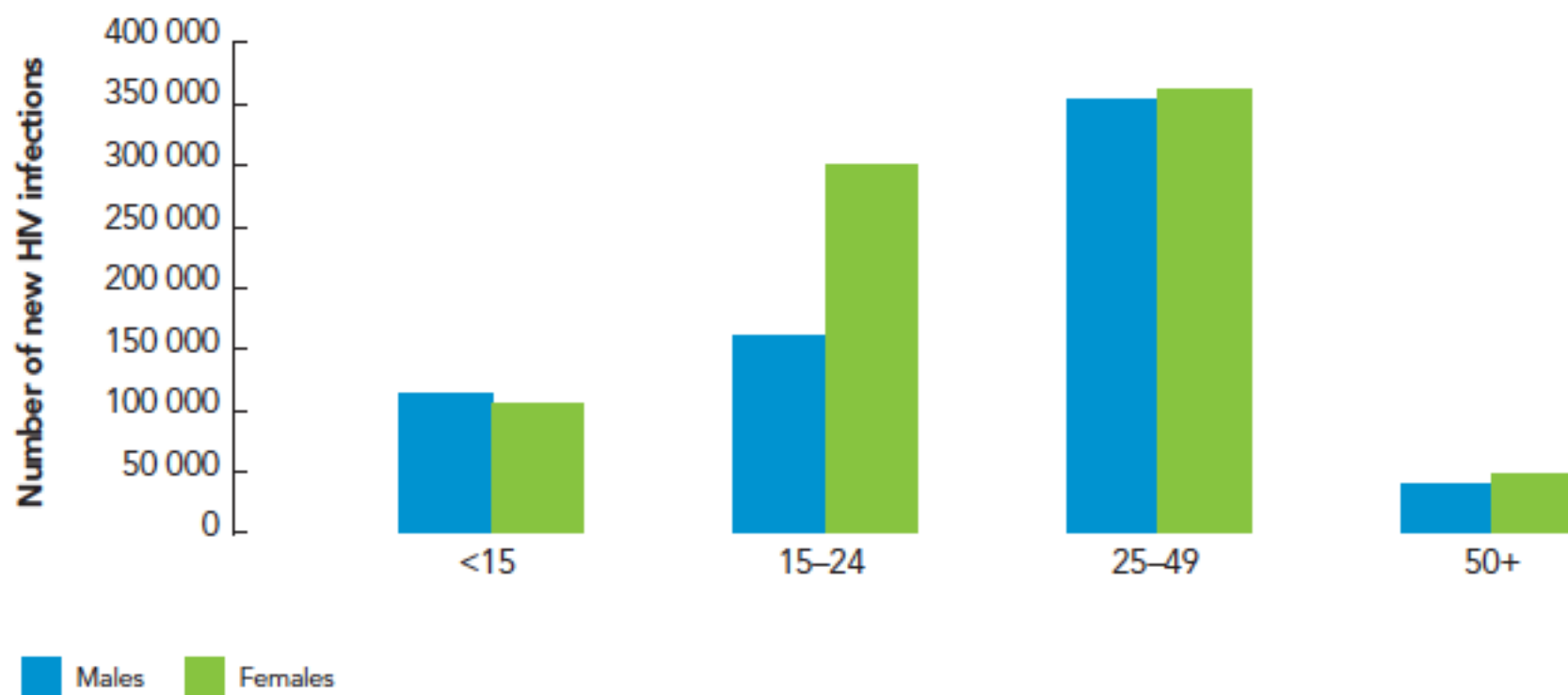


I am a young woman.  
I face these issues.

## HIV burden

- Globally there are about 380 000 new HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women(10–24) every year.
- Globally, 15% of women living with HIV are aged 15–24, of whom 80% live in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Women represent 50% of all adults living with HIV globally. However in the most affected region, sub-Saharan Africa, 59% of adults living with HIV are women.
- In sub-Saharan Africa, women acquire HIV five to seven years earlier than men.
- Young women (15-24 years old) in sub-Saharan Africa are twice as likely as young men to be living with HIV.

## New HIV infections in sub-Saharan Africa, by age and sex, 2013



Source: UNAIDS 2013 estimates.

# Why adolescent girls and young women are being left behind

- Worldwide, there are approximately 880 million adolescent girls and young women aged 15–24 years.
- Despite making up 12% of the world's population, this population is often left without a voice or control of their own bodies.
- Gender-based violence and limited access to health care and education, coupled with systems and policies that do not address the needs of young people, are obstacles that block adolescent girls and young women from being able to protect themselves against HIV, particularly as they transition into adulthood.

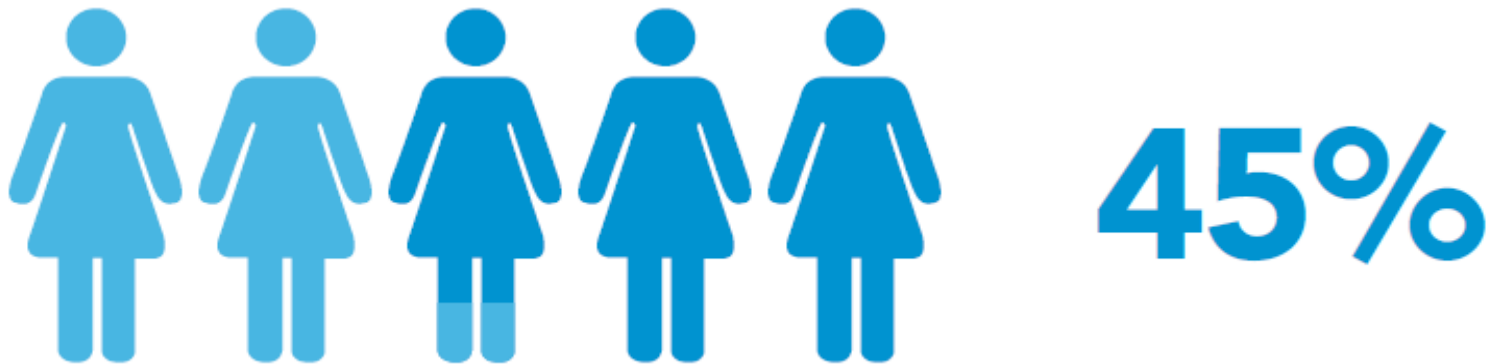
# WHY ADOLESCENT GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN ARE BEING LEFT BEHIND

## THE TOP 4 REASONS

- 01 Gender-based violence
- 02 Lack of access to health services
- 03 Lack of access to education
- 04 Policies that do not translate into action

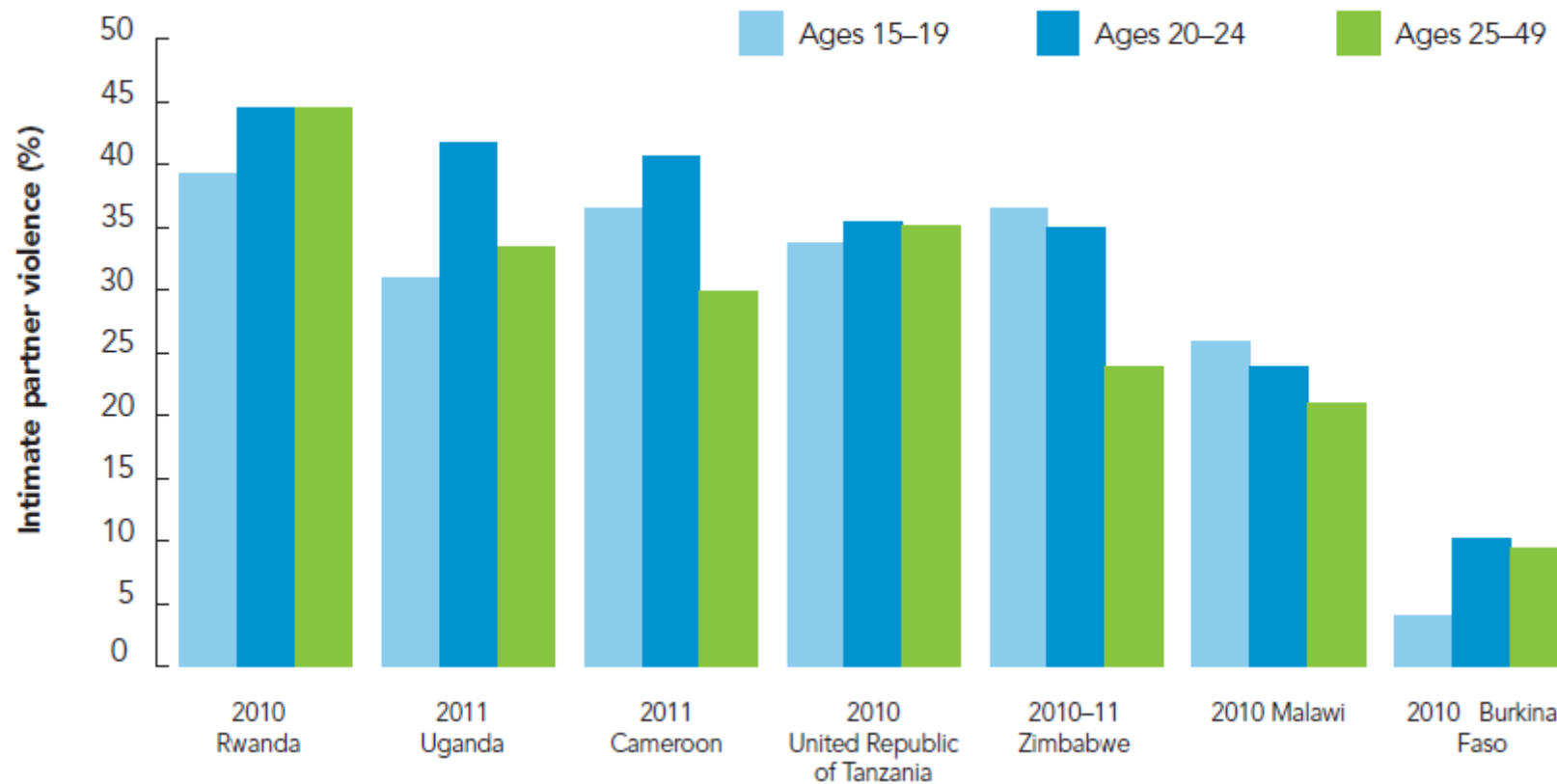
# Violence, abuse and exploitation: increasing risk and vulnerability

In some settings, up to 45% of adolescent girls report that their first sexual experience was forced.



Young women who experience intimate partner violence are 50% more likely to acquire HIV than women who have not.

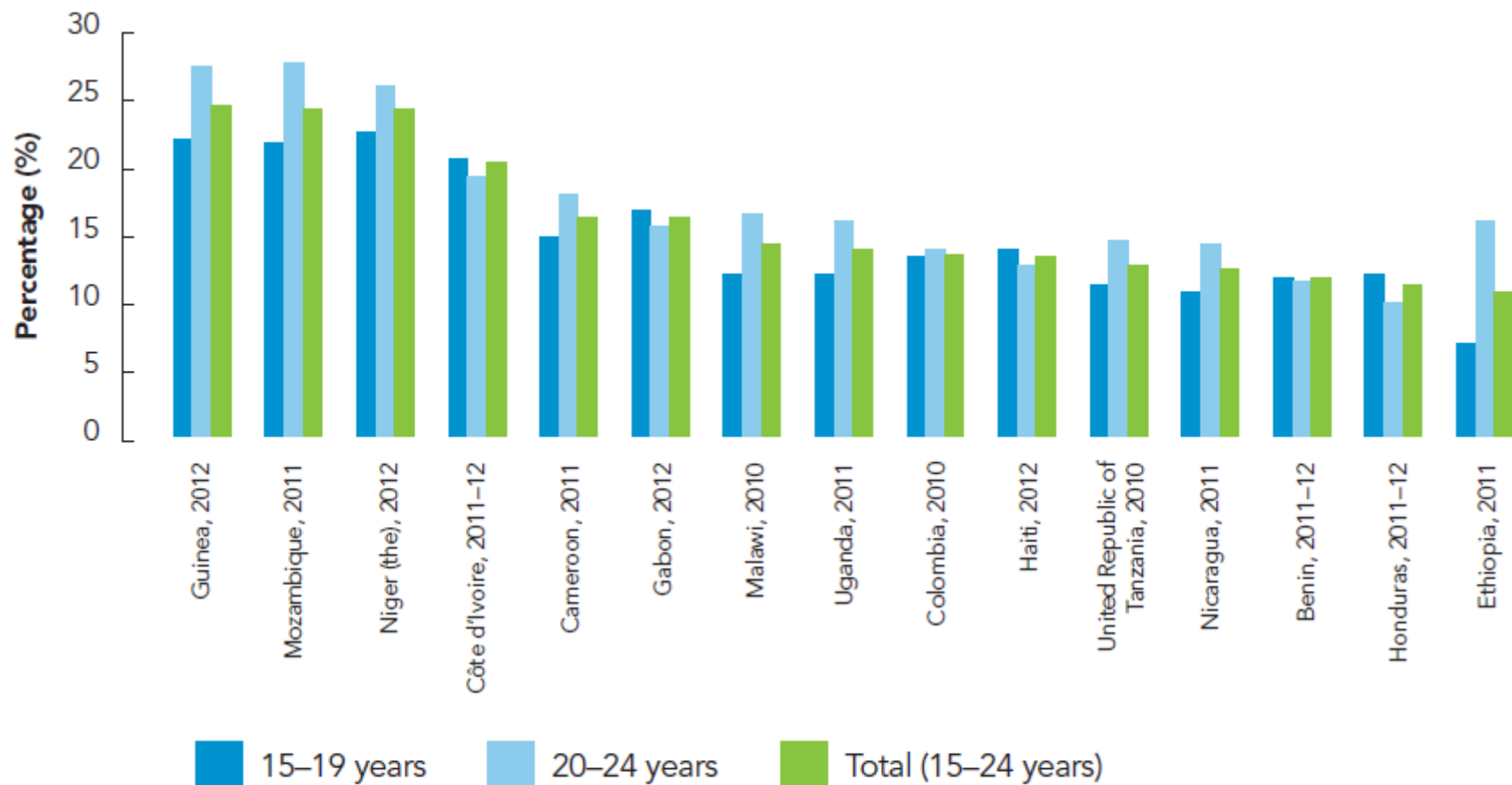
# Percentage of ever-married women who have experienced spousal physical or sexual violence by their current or most recent husband or partner in the past 12 months, by age



Source: Demographic and Health Survey data, countries with available data in sub-Saharan Africa.



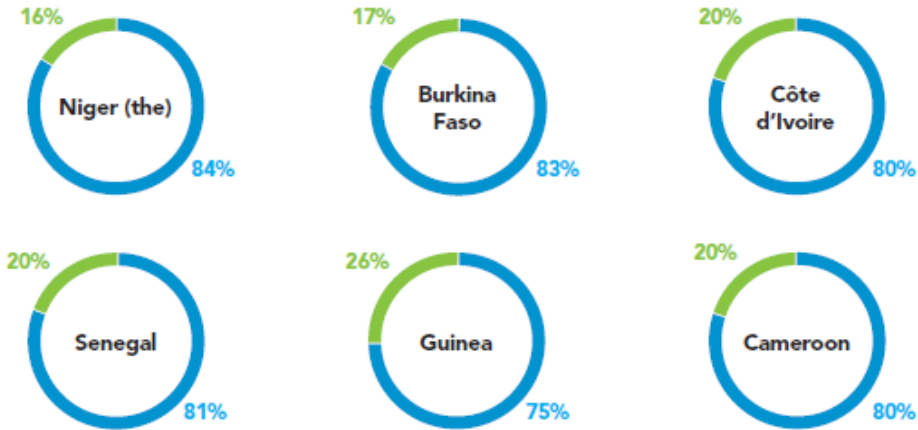
# Sex before the age of 15 among young women by age groups in selected countries, 2010–2012



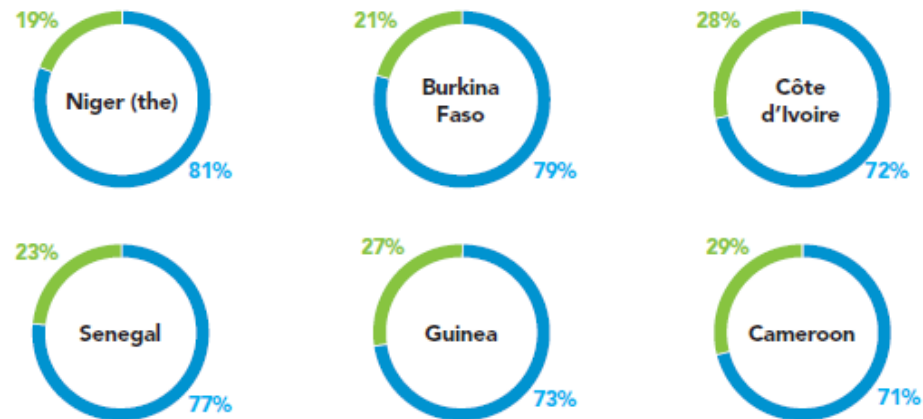
Source: Demographic and Health Surveys, 2010–2012.



# Currently married women who do not have the final say on their own health care by age groups in selected countries, 2010–2012\*

Young women  
15–19 years



Young women  
20–24 years



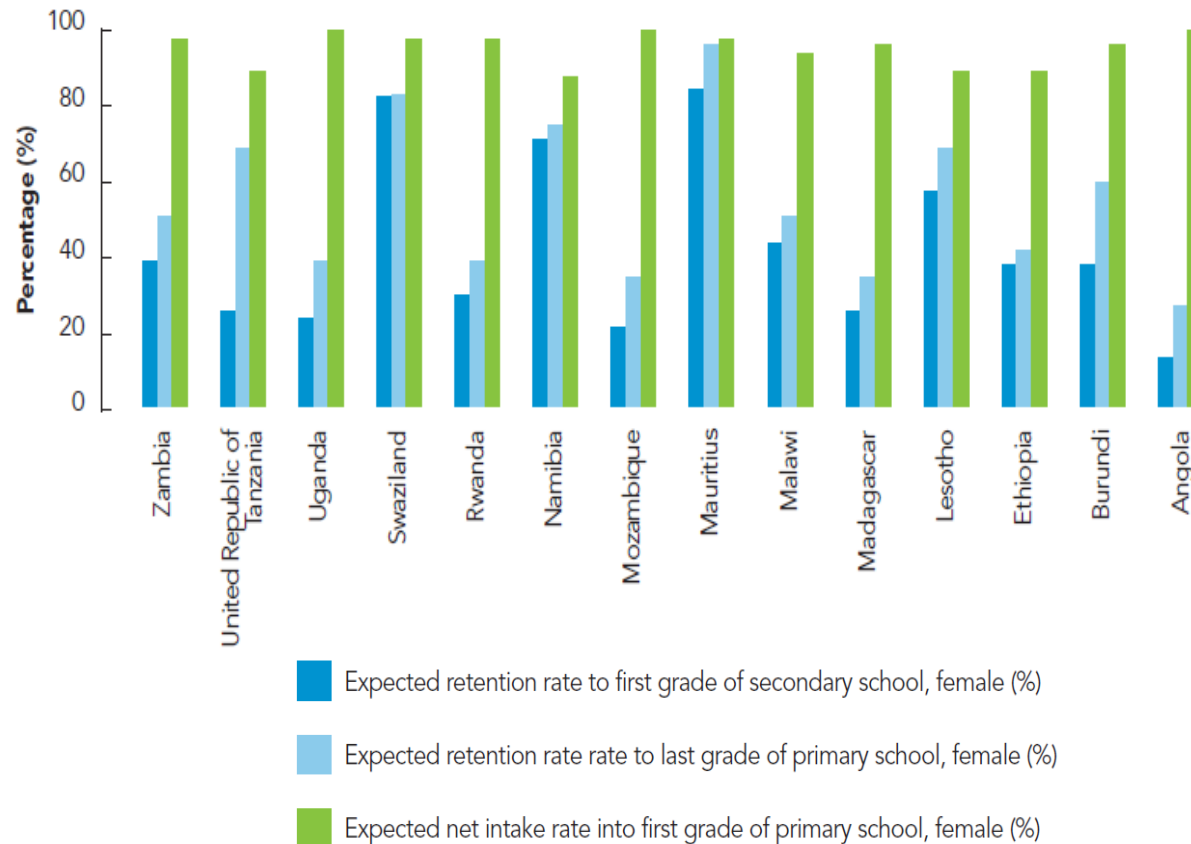
 Have a final say (%)  
 Do not have a final say (%)

\* Reciprocal of currently married women who report having a final say in their own health.

## Lack of access to health services

- In sub-Saharan Africa, only 15% of young women aged 15–24 are aware of their HIV status.
- More than half of the 21 Global Plan priority countries are failing to meet the needs of family planning among at least 25% of all married women (DHS).
- In sub-Saharan Africa, only 26% of adolescent girls possess comprehensive and correct knowledge about HIV, compared with 36% of adolescent boys. In this context, according to UNICEF, among girls aged 15–19 who reported having multiple sexual partners in the past 12 months, only 36% reported that they used a condom the last time they had sex.

# Expected cohort retention rate to last grade of primary school and first grade of secondary school among girls in selected eastern and southern African countries, 2010



In sub-Saharan Africa, approximately 80% of young women have not completed their secondary education, and one in three young women cannot read.

Source: Young people today. Time to act now. Why adolescents and young people need comprehensive sexuality education and sexual and reproductive health services in eastern and southern Africa. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; 2013.

## Policies that do not translate into action

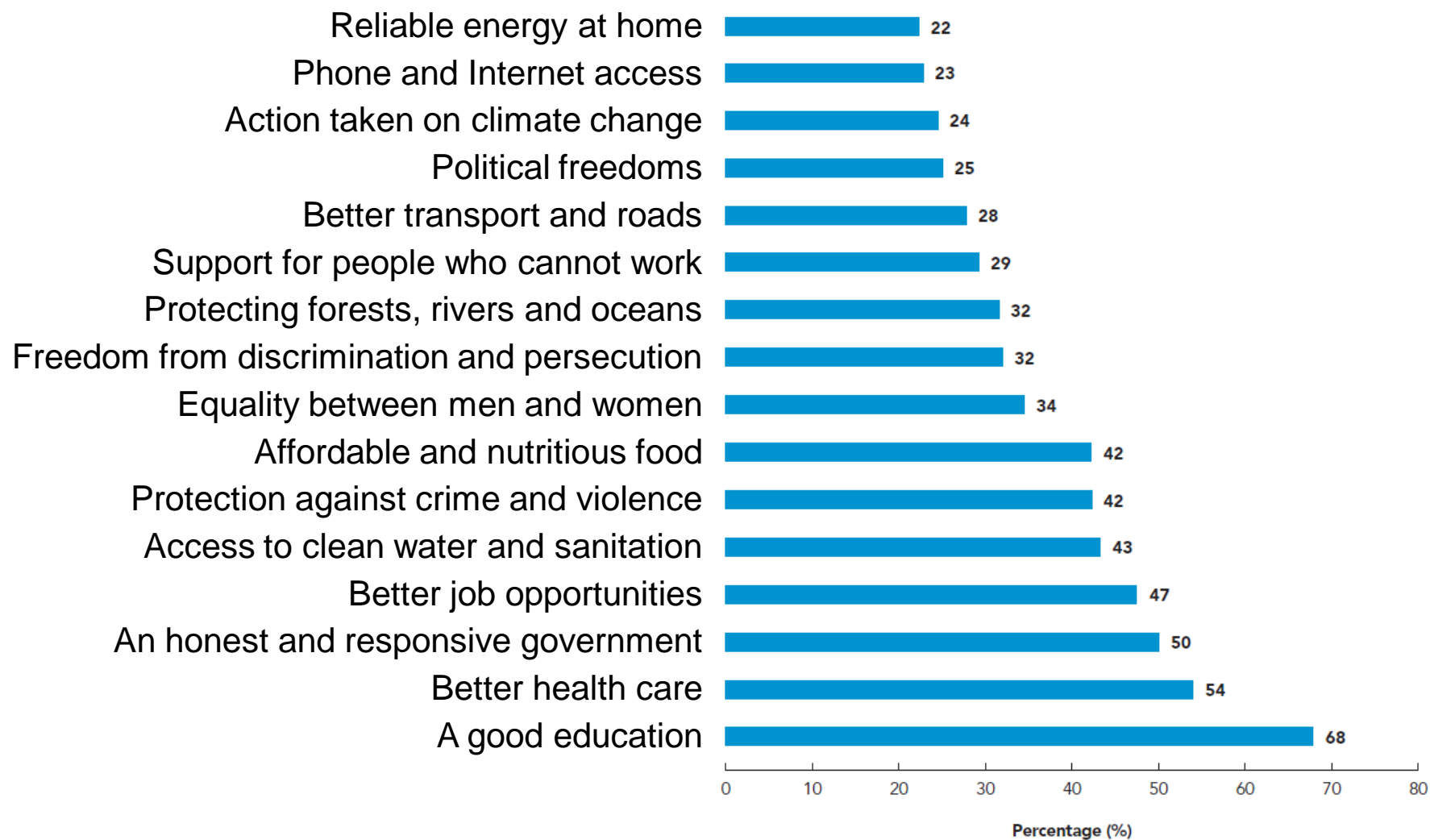
- In 2014, 9% of all reporting countries had laws that created obstacles for women and girls accessing HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services.
- The proportion of women survivors of physical and/or sexual violence who do seek help ranges from 18% in Azerbaijan and the Philippines to 52% in Colombia.
- Often, legal frameworks bar adolescent girls and young women from exercising their basic human rights.
- Approximately 40% of women of reproductive age live in countries with restrictive abortion legislation.
- Every year, there are approximately 16 million births among adolescent girls aged 15–19, accounting for 11% of all births worldwide. Adolescent girls experience a disproportionate 23% of the global burden of disease associated with pregnancy.

# CLOSING THE GAP

## HOW TO CLOSE THE GAP

- 01 End all forms of gender-based violence
- 02 Ensure access to quality health services
- 03 Keep girls in school
- 04 Empower young women and girls and challenge and change social norms

# Percentage of votes by topic among women 16–30 years old at all education levels from all countries on their priorities for the post-2015 development framework



Source: MYWorld Analytics. New York: United Nations; 2014.