



## **FR2.3: Women's Voices in Civil Society Organizations: Evidence from a Civil Society Mapping Project in Mali**

Katrina Kosec  
Senior Research Fellow  
International Food Policy Research Institute

Joint work with Jaimie Bleck (University of Notre Dame) and Jessica Gottlieb (University of Houston)

CGIAR GENDER Science Exchange, Nairobi, 12-14 October 2022



## Research Question

- How does women's engagement in civil society organizations (CSOs) differ from that of men?
- What factors predict women CSO leaders' willingness to hold the state accountable (i.e., sanction a mayor who she knows to be corrupt)?



## Background: CSOs in Mali

- CSOs comprise NGOs, voluntary associations, ethnic organizations, religious groups, traditional authorities and their constituents, savings and loans groups, informal social clubs, unions, and professional organizations
- Mali has maintained high levels of freedom of association and openness with respect to creation of CSOs since democratization in 1991
- In the last three decades, many national-level women's movements have substantively influenced policy and politics on issues such as land rights, opportunities for women's political engagement, gender-based violence, and family law (Tripp, 2000, 2004; Tripp and Kang, 2008; Medie, 2013)
- For women, the purpose of CSOs is often more focused on supporting their livelihoods, access to information, resource mobilization, emotional support and self-esteem, child health promotion, etc (Lasater et al., 2021; Meier zu Selhausen, 2016; Adams, Madhavan and Simon, 2002; Hägi et al., 2010)





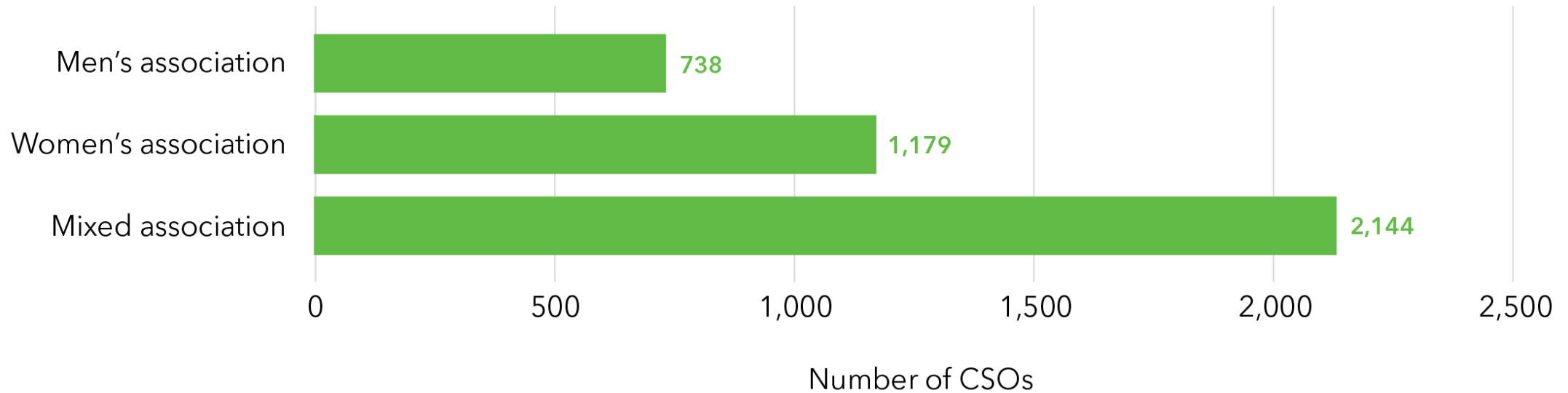
## Two Data Sources

- Civil society organization (CSO) mapping project (February – March 2020, and December 2020): interviews with 757 respondents (34% women and 66% men) from 58 communes asking them to name “*up to eight*” CSOs operating in their commune
- Survey conducted with leaders from 1,020 randomly-selected CSOs from amongst those mapped (January – March 2021)



Civil society actors in Mopti, Mali  
Photo credit: AKDN, Lucas Cuervo Moura

# Women in Mali have substantial coordinating capacity and social capital – revealed by substantial participation in CSOs



The 757 respondents collectively named 4,893 CSOs (after removing duplicates)

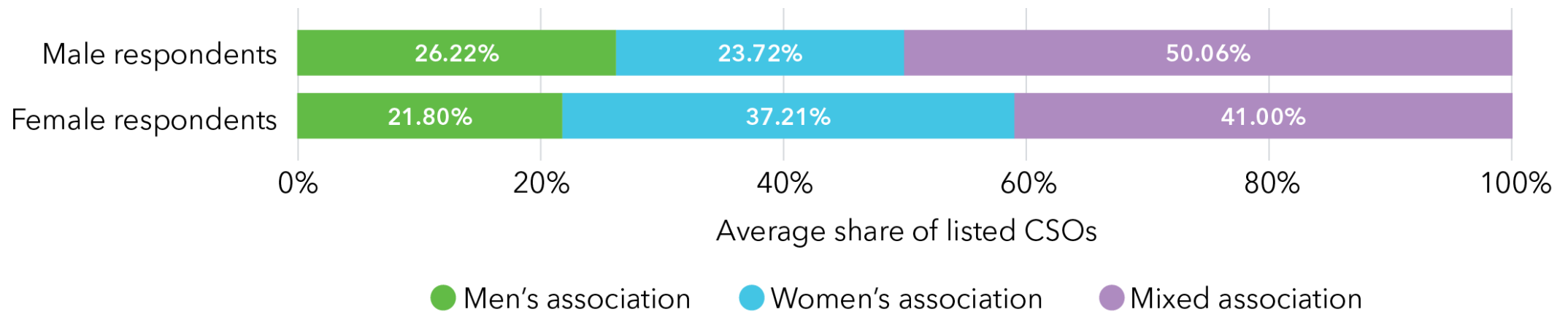


IFPRI

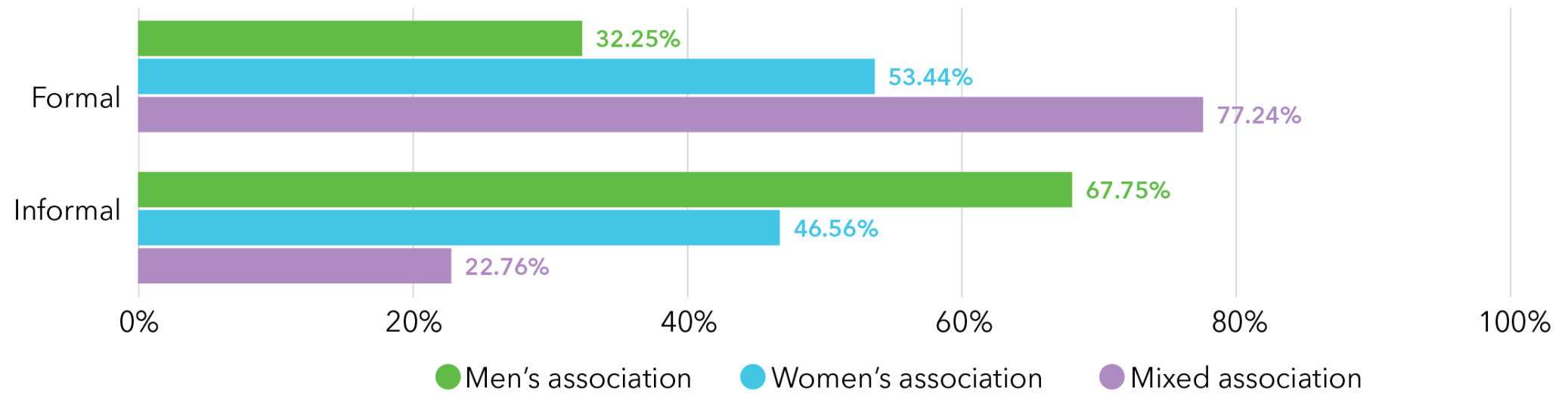


CGIAR

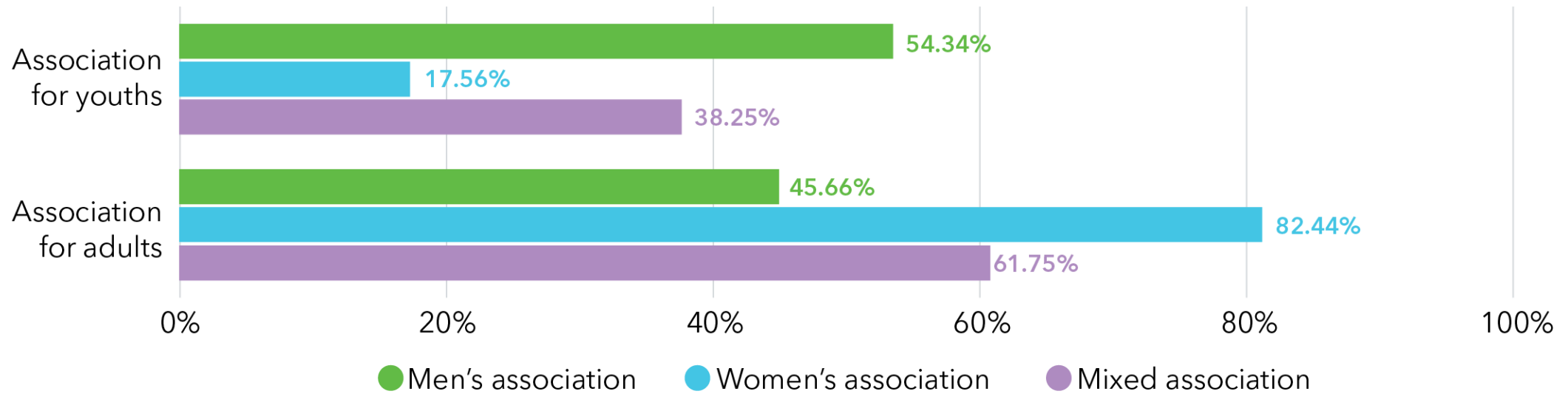
# Women respondents are relatively more likely to list women's CSOs, while men are more likely to list men's CSOs



# All-female CSOs are more likely to be formal (i.e., registered with the state) than are all-male CSOs

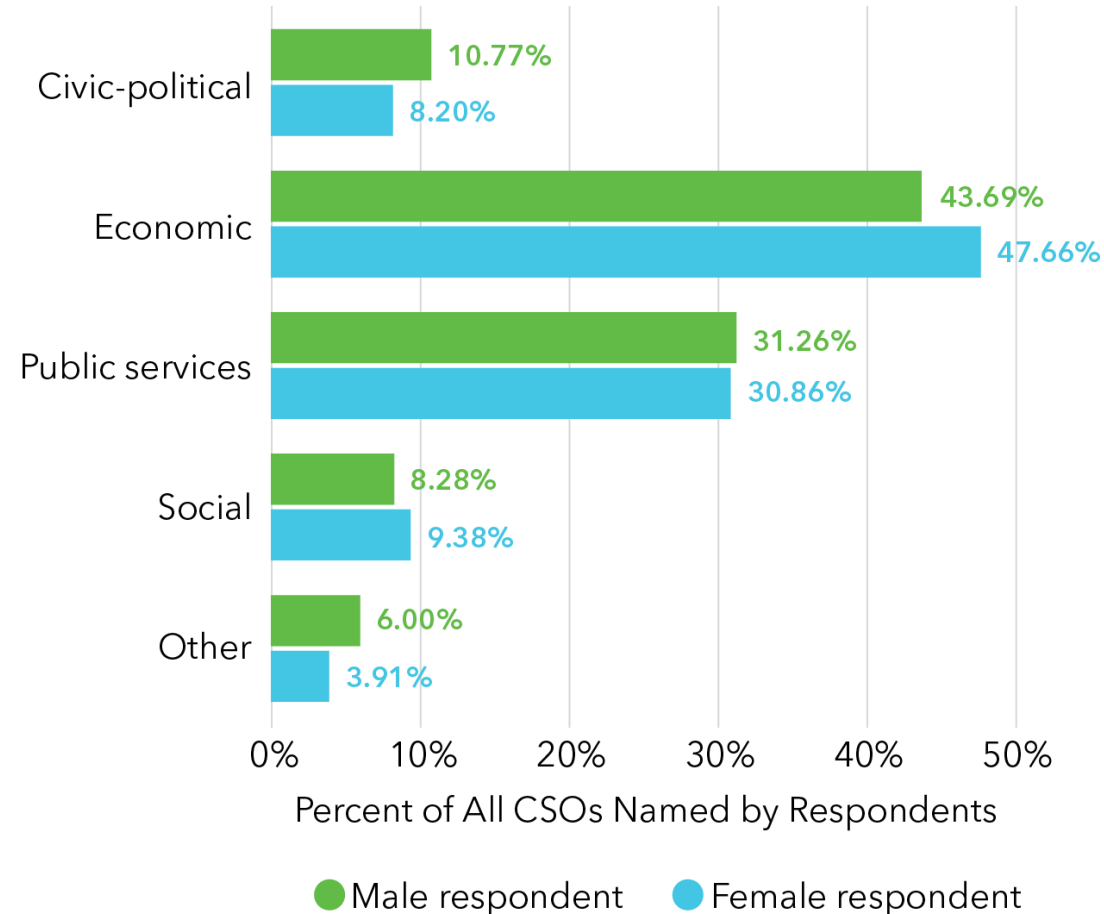


# All-male CSOs are the most likely to be youth organizations (54%), followed by mixed-gender CSOs (38%); all-female CSOs are much less commonly youth-focused (only 8%)



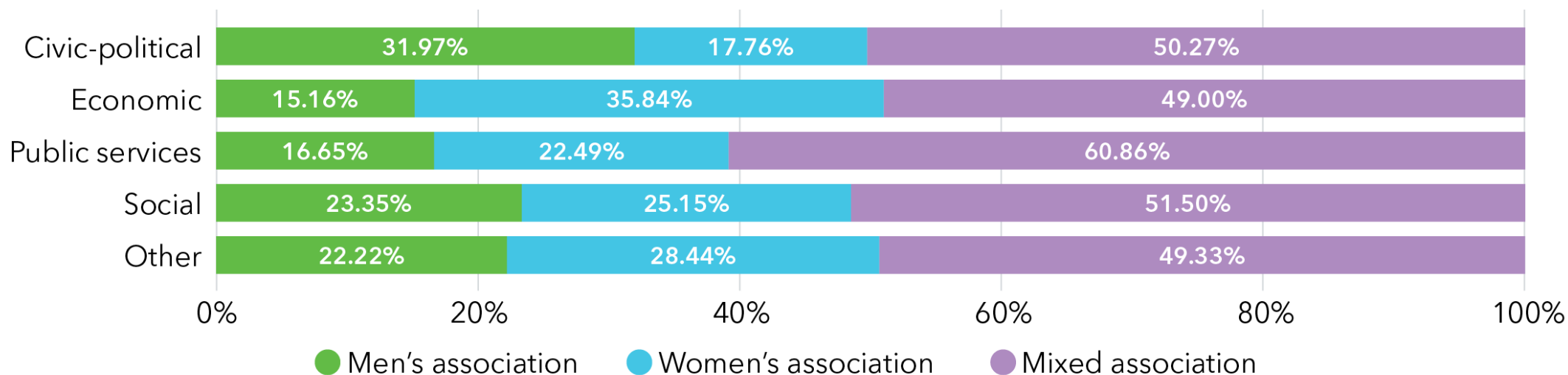


# Male and female respondents are similarly aware of the array of different intended functions, or purposes, of CSOs



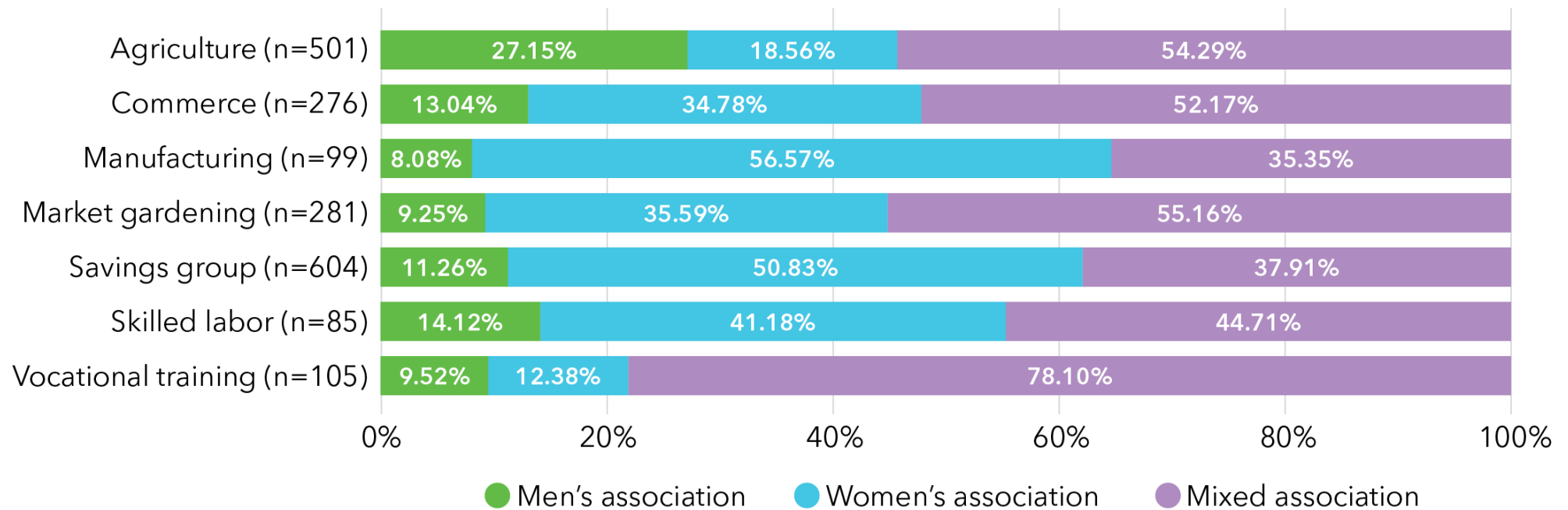
## Women have substantial social capital across a variety of CSO types

But women's groups are less likely to engage in politics—consistent with findings pointing to a pervasive gender gap in nearly all forms of political participation and political knowledge (Logan and Bratton 2006; Bleck and Michelitch 2018)



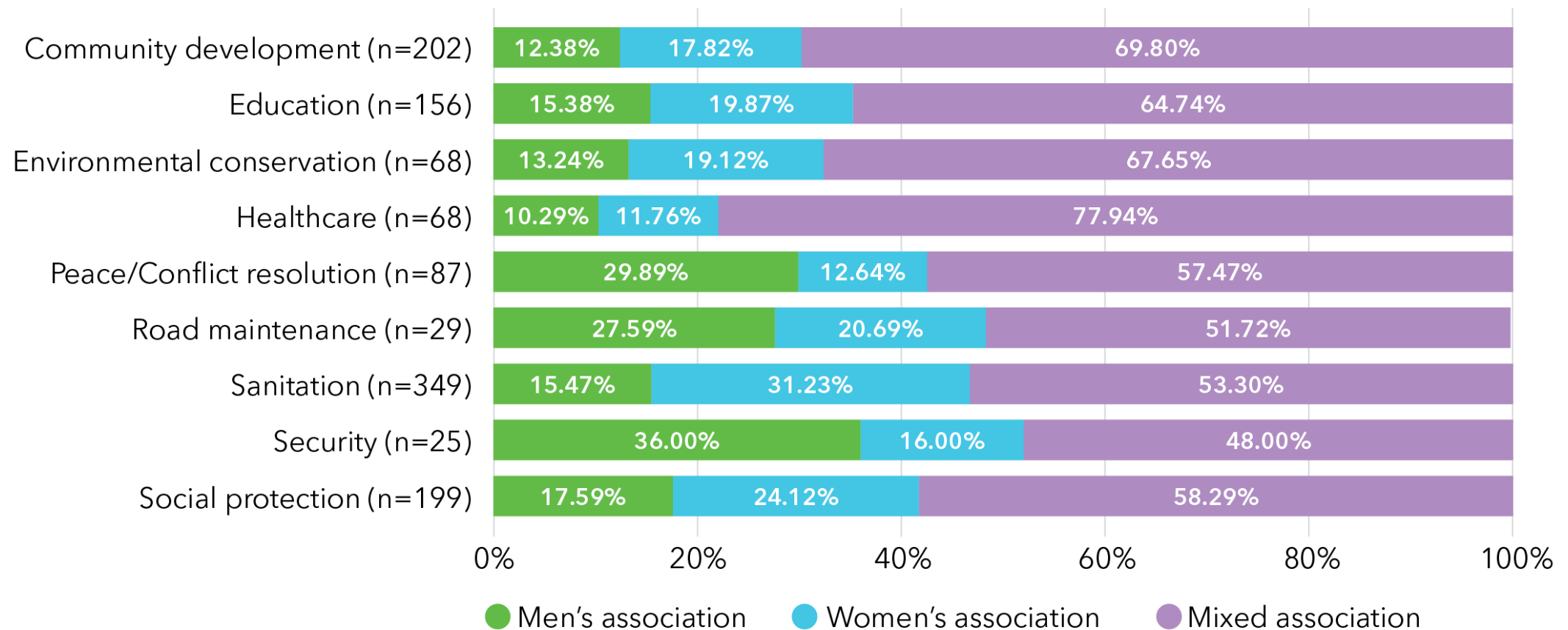
## Gender composition of economic-related CSOs by activity

All-female CSOs are more common than all-male CSOs in certain key areas like manufacturing, savings groups, skilled labor, and market gardening; **agriculture is the only area where men's groups are more common than women's groups**



# Gender composition of public service-related CSOs by activity

All-women's groups are more plentiful than are all-men's groups in most of these areas, with the exception of **peace and conflict resolution, road maintenance, and security**



**Women CSO leaders have greater mobilization capacity than do male CSO leaders – but they have lower informational capacity, lower technical capacity, and have a greater fear of facing social sanctions if they point out mayoral corruption**



Outcome: Having 75% or more women in the CSO

Hierarchy Index	0.034 (0.029)	0.050 <sup>+</sup> (0.029)
Embeddedness Index	-0.002 (0.026)	-0.002 (0.027)
Informational Capacity Index	-0.140 <sup>***</sup> (0.034)	-0.123 <sup>***</sup> (0.034)
Technical Capacity Index	-0.071 <sup>+</sup> (0.037)	
Social Cost of Sanctioning Index	0.056 <sup>+</sup> (0.030)	
Political Knowledge Sub-Index		-0.160 <sup>***</sup> (0.025)
Community Influence Sub-Index		0.033 (0.024)
Mobilization Capacity Sub-index		0.080 <sup>**</sup> (0.027)
Financial Vulnerability Sub-index		0.034 (0.021)
Mayor Dependence Sub-index		0.024 (0.016)
Community Dependence Sub-index		-0.036 <sup>+</sup> (0.021)
Constant	0.358 <sup>***</sup> (0.015)	0.358 <sup>***</sup> (0.014)
Observations	1014	1014

# Will women CSO leaders point out a known mayoral corruption to a group tasked with monitoring mayoral corruption and punishing mayors that steal?

- Women are read a vignette about a known incidence of mayoral corruption
- They are given the chance to report on it or not
- If they report on this, the mayor will be punished with a lower inter-governmental transfer – but then might be less likely to steal in the future

When will women CSO leaders punish the mayor?





## Outcome: Willingness to Point out Mayoral Corruption to a Watchdog

**Gender of the CSO leader does not predict willingness to punish known mayoral corruption**

---

Male	0.16 (0.17)
Hierarchy Index	-1.44*** (0.26)
Embeddedness Index	-0.06 (0.26)
Informational Capacity Index	0.34 (0.26)
Technical Capacity Index	1.49*** (0.32)
Social Cost of Sanctioning Index	-0.35 (0.22)
Male × Hierarchy Index	0.94** (0.33)
Male × Embeddedness Index	-0.12 (0.32)
Male × Informational Capacity Index	0.41 (0.35)
Male × Technical Capacity Index	0.09 (0.44)
Male × Social Cost of Sanctioning Index	0.41 (0.31)

Our experimental treatment — priming the CSO leader to feel their CSO is important by telling them they were identified by well-connected citizens as being influential — results in a significantly lower likelihood of punishing the mayor for women respondents, but a higher likelihood of sanctioning for men respondents



## Outcome: Willingness to Point out Mayoral Corruption to a Watchdog

	Importance treatment	
	Respondent	CSO
Male	0.19 (0.25)	
CSO 25% or more male		-0.10 (0.24)
Importance Treatment	-0.45 <sup>+</sup> (0.27)	-0.87 <sup>**</sup> (0.28)
Male × Importance Treatment	0.65 <sup>+</sup> (0.35)	
CSO 25% or more male × Importance		1.20 <sup>***</sup> (0.35)
Constant	6.88 <sup>***</sup> (0.19)	7.08 <sup>***</sup> (0.18)
Observations	991	1014

# Summary of Results

- Women have substantial social capital across a variety of CSO types, but women's groups are less likely to engage in politics
- All-female CSOs are more common than all-male CSOs in key areas including manufacturing, savings groups, skilled labor, market gardening, and a variety of public service-related activities
- All-male CSOs dominate in agriculture, peace and conflict resolution, road maintenance, and security
- CSOs comprised of women have lower informational and technical capacity, especially due to lower levels of political knowledge, and have a greater fear of facing social sanctions if they point out mayoral corruption
- Gender of the CSO leader does not predict willingness to punish mayoral corruption
- When CSO leaders are primed to feel important, women become significantly less likely to punish the mayor, while men become significantly more likely