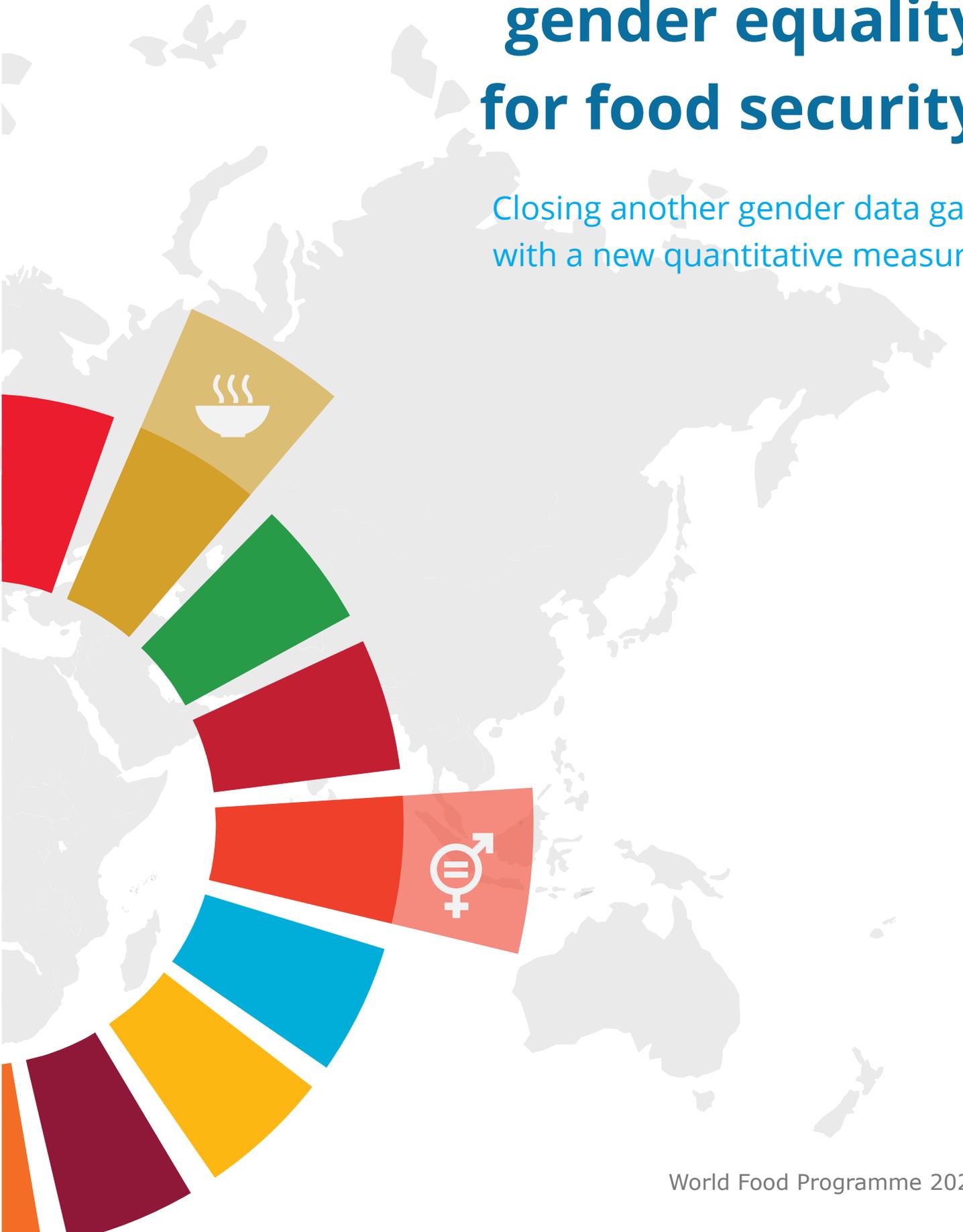




# The power of gender equality for food security

Closing another gender data gap with a new quantitative measure



The power of gender equality for food security:  
Closing another gender data gap with a new quantitative measure

Gender Office, World Food Programme  
Via Cesare Giulio Viola 68/70  
00148 Rome, Italy  
Tel: +39 06 65131 wfp.org  
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A brief video on the GE4FS measure can be viewed [here](#).

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# Acronyms

**CEDAW** Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women

**FAO** Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations

**FIES** Food Insecurity Experience Scale

**GE4FS** Gender Equality for Food Security (measure)

**GWP** Gallup World Poll

**MIRT** Multi-dimensional Item Response Theory

**SDG** Sustainable Development Goal

**WFP** World Food Programme

## Executive summary

The gender data gap persists. While studies and indices provide information on gender inequalities and on food insecurity, there is no quantitative measure that directly looks at hunger and disempowerment. In an effort to close this gender data gap, and support efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goals 2 (End hunger) and 5 (Achieve gender equality), the World Food Programme (WFP) and Gallup Inc, with statistical contributions from the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), have collaborated to develop the 'Gender Equality for Food Security' (GE4FS) measure.

With global applicability, the GE4FS measure combines the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) and a gender equality component. The gender equality component is made up of 18 mostly yes/no questions that cover five dimensions of empowerment: decision-making ability, financial self-sufficiency, freedom from violence, reproductive freedom and unpaid labour. The five empowerment dimensions were selected from a literature review and the expertise of a Technical Advisory Group. Administered through the Gallup World Poll, the GE4FS measure can be implemented in any country, across populations aged 15 years and older.

In 2018, the GE4FS measure was administered in seven countries (Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nigeria, Tajikistan, Thailand, United Kingdom, Zambia), and then in a further ten countries (Cambodia, Egypt, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Liberia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Sri Lanka, Venezuela) in 2019. Across the 17 countries, 17,107 individuals were surveyed, with approximately equal numbers of women and men.

The GE4FS data were analysed through the lens of Item Response Theory. A Cronbach's alpha analysis showed an acceptable degree of internal consistency; while application of the unidimensional Rasch model indicated good overall discrimination of the empowerment items. The assumptions of conditional independence, unidimensionality and equal discrimination of all items were examined, and the Rasch model was used to assess the 'severity' of each of the 18 empowerment items.

The data collected through administration of the GE4FS measure indicate a relationship between gender inequalities and food insecurity, to the detriment of women. According to the FIES data, in 10 of the 17 countries, women are more likely than men to experience food insecurity. The empowerment scores indicate that women are less likely to experience being empowered than are men. For three of the four countries where minimal differences in empowerment were reported between women and men, there were similarly non-significant differences in food insecurity prevalence.

In addition to the pooled data, the report presents the detailed analyses of the data for each of the 17 surveyed countries. The country-level data indicate that gender significantly influences a

person's experiences of empowerment. The data also indicate that experiences of impact are impacted by age, education and location.

What is evident from the pooled and country-level data is that hunger cannot be reduced or eliminated solely through the provision of adequate food. Rather, the multiple dimensions of empowerment – the factors experienced by individuals that establish equality – need to be understood and addressed.

# Chapter 1: Why a measure on gender equality and food security

In the fields of gender equality and food security, policy makers and practitioners can access quantitative and qualitative information for the design and implementation of evidence-based strategies, plans and programmes.

There are several composite gender indices. Examples include the Gender Equality Index, Gender Development Index, Gender Inequality Index, Social Institutions and Gender Index, World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap, Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index, and Women, Peace and Security Index.<sup>2</sup> Gender equality and women's empowerment measures and databases also exist; like Counting Women's Work, Emerge, SDG Gender Index, WomanStats, and Women Count.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, there are numerical measures of hunger and food insecurity, like the Food Consumption Score, Global Hunger Index, Adult and Household Food Security Survey Modules and Hunger and Nutrition Commitment Index,<sup>4</sup> as well as dietary intake assessment and anthropometry.

Alongside quantitative data and computations, qualitative research has repeatedly documented the diversity of gender-based discrimination, and the intersection with other forms of exclusion and domination, such as relating to age, ethnicity, sexuality, disability and socio-economic status.<sup>5</sup> There are, in turn, countless studies and reports on hunger and malnutrition, with the annual State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World publications being a prominent example.<sup>6</sup>

Yet there is no measure that directly links gender inequalities with food insecurity. In recognition of this (gender) data gap,<sup>7</sup> alongside the importance of value-for-money interventions that will lead to zero hunger which is predicated on equality of rights, a globally-applicable instrument is being developed to illuminate the interconnectedness of dis/empowerment and food in/security – the 'Gender Equality for Food Security' (GE4FS) measure.

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<sup>2</sup> See, respectively, <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2019>, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-development-index-gdi>, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>, <https://www.genderindex.org/>, <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-gender-gap-report-2018>, <http://www.ifpri.org/publication/womens-empowerment-agriculture-index>, <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/the-index/>

<sup>3</sup> See, respectively, <https://www.countingwomenswork.org/>, <http://emerge.ucsd.edu/>, <https://data.em2030.org/>, <http://www.womanstats.org/> and <https://data.unwomen.org/>

<sup>4</sup> See, respectively, <https://www.wfp.org/publications/meta-data-food-consumption-score-fcs-indicator>, <https://www.globalhungerindex.org/>, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/survey-tools/> and <http://www.hancindex.org/>

<sup>5</sup> There are libraries of resources on gender inequalities, across the spectrum of subjects and academic disciplines. Curated sources include that of UN Women (<https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications>) and such journals as Gender and Development (<https://www.genderanddevelopment.org/>) and Feminist Review (<https://journals.sagepub.com/home/fer>).

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.fao.org/publications/sofi/en/>

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, the United Nations Global SDG Database (<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/>) and the SDG Gender Index "Data Gaps" webpage (<https://data.em2030.org/em2030-sdg-gender-index/data-gaps/>).

As oppression, abuse and hunger are experienced by a person – with the converse of empowerment and food security being exercised and enjoyed by a person – the GE4FS measure was conceived as a means of gathering, and enabling comparison of, experiences of gender in/equality and of food in/security at the individual level. The focus on the person, or individual, was identified as important because gender and food – and the associated inequalities and insecurities – are two elements of the daily lives of all persons, and elements which are not captured by the prevailing household measures and population indices.<sup>8</sup>

In support of application of the global agenda,<sup>9</sup> and with a particular focus on the gender data gap for Sustainable Development Goals 2 and 5,<sup>10</sup> the World Food Programme (WFP) and Gallup Inc,<sup>11</sup> with statistical contributions from the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO),<sup>12</sup> have collaborated to construct a measure of women’s and men’s experiences of dis/empowerment which integrates FAO’s Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) and can be implemented in any country, across populations aged 15 years and older.

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<sup>8</sup> As elaborated, for example, in de Vreyer, P. and S. Lambert, 2018. *By ignoring intra-household inequality, do we underestimate the extent of poverty?* fhalshs-01724194f: <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-01724194/document> and Mazurana D., P. Benelli, H. Gupta and P Walker, 2011. *Sex and Age Matter: Improving Humanitarian Response in Emergencies*, Tufts University: Boston, <https://fic.tufts.edu/publication-item/sex-and-age-matter/>, as well as by the Individual Deprivation Measure at <https://www.individualdeprivationmeasure.org/>.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, the [United Nations Charter, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and the [Grand Bargain](#).

<sup>10</sup> SDG 2 – End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture; SDG 5 – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

<sup>11</sup> From the WFP, the GE4FS initiative was led by Jacqueline Paul (Senior Gender Adviser) and Zuzana Kazdova (Programme Policy Officer, Gender). Andrew Rzepa (Senior Managing Consultant) led Gallup Inc. collaboration, with significant statistical contributions from Pablo Diego-Rosell (Senior Researcher) and administrative support from Iman Berrached (Research Program Manager).

<sup>12</sup> From the FAO, the contributors were Carlo Cafiero (Senior Statistician) and Sara Viviani (Statistician).

# Chapter 2: Measure construction

In constructing the GE4FS measure, the primary considerations were (i) producing data that expands the evidence-base for informed decision-making – across policy, planning, programming, resource allocation – on achieving gender equality and food security; (ii) understanding the lived experiences of individuals, as opposed to focusing on opinions and households, population groups or institutions; (iii) ensuring ease of, and multi-country, administration; and (iv) permitting the disaggregation, and comparison, of data.

With these considerations in mind, and commencing in late 2017, the GE4FS measure for piloting was developed based on a literature review, statistical theorising, and the contributions of a Technical Advisory Group. For the measure, the “GE” – or empowerment – component needed to be created, while the Food Insecurity Experience Scale was chosen for the “FS” component.

## Food insecurity

The food insecurity component of the GE4FS measure is the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES).<sup>13</sup> In summary, the FIES is a survey-based tool to measure an individual’s access to food. The FIES explores constraints on the ability of an individual to obtain adequate food, by analysing information provided by individuals answering ‘yes’, ‘no’ or ‘don’t know’ to eight questions. More information about the FIES, its theoretical foundation and some practical considerations regarding its uses are provided in *The Food Insecurity Experience Scale: Development of a Global Standard for Monitoring Hunger Worldwide*<sup>14</sup> and the FIES “Frequently Asked Questions” document.<sup>15</sup>

### FIES Questions

During the last 12 months, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources:

- (i) you were worried you would not have enough food to eat?
- (ii) you were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food?
- (iii) you ate only a few kinds of foods?
- (iv) you had to skip a meal?
- (v) you ate less than you thought you should?
- (vi) your household ran out of food?
- (vii) you were hungry but did not eat?
- (viii) you went without eating for a whole day?

<sup>13</sup> For information about the FIES, see <http://www.fao.org/in-action/voices-of-the-hungry/fies/en/>

<sup>14</sup> Ballard, T.J., A.W. Kepple and C. Cafiero (2013). *The Food Insecurity Experience Scale: Development of a Global Standard for Monitoring Hunger Worldwide*, Food and Agriculture Organization: Rome.

<sup>15</sup> See <http://www.fao.org/3/a-bl354e.pdf>

# Empowerment

Being an individual-based measure, the “GE” component of the GE4FS measure was constructed from manifestations of empowerment. Empowerment is understood as a process through which a person acquires the capacities to make choices and take decisions about his or her own life and being able to act accordingly. Empowerment is thus related to agency. In relation to gender equality, empowerment is evident where women and men – in their diversity – have equal access to resources, roles, opportunities and power.

With this understanding, normative frameworks,<sup>16</sup> theoretical frameworks,<sup>17</sup> and global gender indices<sup>18</sup> were reviewed to identify potential dimensions of empowerment that could be included in the GE4FS measure. Five dimensions were selected: (i) decision-making ability; (ii) financial self-sufficiency; (iii) freedom from violence, (iv) reproductive freedom, and (v) unpaid labour. The chosen five dimensions of empowerment thus capture resources, agency and physical integrity.

## Dimension 1: Decision-making ability

**Mandate:** The ability of both women and men to be able to make decisions about their own lives and influence those of their communities is fundamental to gender equality and food security, as expressed in various international instruments. For example, Target 5.5 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is to “ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life”. The Beijing Platform for Action identifies “women in power and decision-making” as a critical area of concern, while the text of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) stresses equal participation and representation.

**Inequalities:** Inequalities in decision-making – from the household and community levels, to the world of work, the economy, justice systems and governance – persist, primarily to the detriment and discrimination of women. This is evident from household surveys to parliamentary representation data that indicate inequalities in two dimensions of decision-making ability, being personal autonomy and political power.<sup>19</sup> Inequalities in decision-making ability, in turn, impact

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<sup>16</sup> For example: CEDAW, Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UN Security Council Resolutions on women, peace and security, ICPD Programme of Action.

<sup>17</sup> Examples include (i) Dijkstra, G. (2002). “Revisiting UNDP’s GDI and GEM: Towards an Alternative,” *Social Indicators Research*, Vol. 57, pp. 301–338; Duflo, E. (2012). Women’s Empowerment and Economic Development. *Journal of Economic Literature*, Vol. 50 (4), pp. 1051-1079; Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, agency, achievements: Reflections on the measurement of women’s empowerment. *Development and Change*, 30(3), 435-464; Lombard, N. (2015). “Gendered violence: a cause and a consequence of inequality”. In Bettio, F., Sansonetti, S. (eds.), *Visions for Gender Equality*. Luxembourg: European Commission; Nussbaum, M. (2003). Capabilities as Fundamental Entitlements: Sen and Social Justice. *Feminist Economics*, Vol. 9 (2-3), pp. 33-59; Robeyns, I. (2003). “Sen’s Capability Approach and Gender Inequality: Selecting Relevant Capabilities,” *Feminist Economics*, Vol. 9 (2-3), pp. 61-92; and Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*. New York: Knopf.

<sup>18</sup> UNDP’s Gender Development Index (GDI), UNDP’s Gender Inequality Index (GII), Social Watch’s Gender Equity Index (GEI), OECD’s Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), WEF’s Global Gender Gap (GGG), IFPRI’s Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI), EIGE’s Gender Equality Index (GEI), Bericat’s European Gender Equality Index (EGEI), Holter’s Gender Equality and Quality of Life (GEQL)

<sup>19</sup> See, for example, UN Women (2013). *A Transformative Stand-Alone Goal on Achieving Gender Equality, Women’s Rights and Women’s Empowerment: Imperatives and Key Components*. New York: UN Women; Acharya, D.R., J.S. Bell, P. Simkhada, E.R. van Teijlingen and P.R. Regmi (2010). “Women’s autonomy in household decision-making: a demographic study in Nepal,” *Reproductive Health* 7:15; and <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>.

food security, as reflected in who produces, provides, procures, prepares and consumes food, and who profits from food systems.

**Empowerment:** Advances in gender equality in decision-making are linked with (a) improvements in the physical and mental health of individuals and families, along with self-realisation; (b) increased economic productivity; (c) innovation and creativity; and (d) sustained 'development'. Moreover, decision-making ability intersects with other dimensions of gender equality, such as pertaining to family planning and financial expenditures. As professed by UN Women, "having a voice and participating in the processes and decisions that determine their lives is an essential aspect of women's and girls' freedoms."<sup>20</sup>

## Dimension 2: Financial self-sufficiency

**Mandate:** Financial self-sufficiency – whereby an individual has a source of income that meets his/her basic needs (and those for which s/he cares) and over which s/he has control – is central to gender equality. Target 5.1 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires Member States to "undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws." The Beijing Platform for Action identifies "women and poverty" and "women and the economy" as critical areas of concern. "Women's ability to earn and control income and to own, use, and dispose of material assets" is understood as a key expression of personal agency.<sup>21</sup>

**Inequalities:** As reflected in the UN Secretary General's formation of the High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment,<sup>22</sup> gender inequalities persist in access to and control of financial resources from the household and community, to national and global levels. Financial-based inequalities derive, for example, from persistent horizontal and vertical sex segregation in employment, with women working in lower-paid and lower-prestige positions, feeding a cycle of lower bargaining power and lower remuneration. There are also the inequalities associated with access to financial institutions and services, having a bank account and receiving inheritance. Reflecting the interdependence of the dimensions of empowerment, financial self-sufficiency is connected to, for instance, decision-making ability, freedom from violence and labour.

**Empowerment:** Financial self-sufficiency is linked to poverty eradication, improved education and learning outcomes and decreased incidence of gender-based violence. When women have a say over the distribution of family resources, and when women have their own income and assets, they are better integrated into the formal economy and less reliant on men relatives, establishing a clear link between financial self-sufficiency and gender equality.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, financial self-

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<sup>20</sup> UN Women (2013). A Transformative Stand-Alone Goal on Achieving Gender Equality, Women's Rights and Women's Empowerment: Imperatives and Key Components. New York: UN Women.

<sup>21</sup> World Bank (2011). World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development. Washington DC: World Bank.

<sup>22</sup> <http://hlp-wee.unwomen.org/en>

<sup>23</sup> Duflo, E. (2012). Women's Empowerment and Economic Development. *Journal of Economic Literature*, Vol. 50 (4), pp. 1051-1079.

sufficiency facilitates greater decision-making power within households, communities and governments. As noted by Golla et al. (2011), “to benefit from economic activities, women need to have the ability to make and act on decisions and control resources and profits.”

### Dimension 3: Freedom from violence

**Mandate:** The eradication of gender-based violence is a long-standing global priority and one that was reiterated with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. SDG 5 Targets 5.2 and 5.3 respectively commit countries to “eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation” and “eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation”. Global commitments, including that to implement the related critical area of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action, have been variably translated to national contexts through domestic policies, legislation and action plans.<sup>24</sup>

**Inequalities:** Violence is antithetical to gender equality, given that infliction of violence violates bodily integrity, well-being, sense of safety and the ability to pursue and participate in the economic, social and political spheres.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, violence is sustained by, and sustains, other forms of gender inequalities, such as in economic power and decision-making authority, along with harmful norms of masculinity and femininity. The gendered nature of violence was highlighted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in its 2019 Global Study on Homicide, which claimed that “women continue to bear the heaviest burden of lethal victimization as a result of gender stereotypes and inequality”, noting that females are approximately 82 percent of the persons killed by intimate partners.<sup>26</sup>

**Empowerment:** The benefits of eliminating gender-based violence include lives saved; healthier individuals and families; greater economic prosperity of individuals, families and countries; and increased opportunities for women and girls to engage in education, employment, and public life. Eliminating violence may directly contribute to food security, given the associated eradication of practices that restrict women’s mobility, impede their access to food within the household, and cause physical and/or psychological damage that prevents full and free assumption of opportunities.

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<sup>24</sup> <http://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/in-focus/evaw>

<sup>25</sup> See, for example: Dijkstra, G. (2002). “Revisiting UNDP’s GDI and GEM: Towards an Alternative,” *Social Indicators Research*, Vol. 57, pp. 301–338; Klugman, J., L. Hanmer, S. Twigg, T. Hasan, J. McCleary-Sills and J. Santamaria. (2014). *Voice and Agency: Empowering Women and Girls for Shared Prosperity*. Washington, DC: World Bank; Lombard, N. (2015). “Gendered violence: a cause and a consequence of inequality”. In: Bettio, F., Sansonetti, S. (eds.), *Visions for Gender Equality*. Luxembourg: European Commission; Nussbaum, M. (2003). Capabilities as Fundamental Entitlements: Sen and Social Justice. *Feminist Economics*, Vol. 9 (2-3), pp. 33-59; Robeyns, I. (2003). “Sen’s Capability Approach and Gender Inequality: Selecting Relevant Capabilities,” *Feminist Economics*, Vol. 9 (2-3), pp. 61-92; UN Women (2013). *A Transformative Stand-Alone Goal on Achieving Gender Equality, Women’s Rights and Women’s Empowerment: Imperatives and Key Components*. New York: UN Women; and Webster, K. and M. Flood (2015). *Framework foundations 1: A review of the evidence on correlates of violence against women and what works to prevent it*. Melbourne: Our Watch.

<sup>26</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2019). *Global Study on Homicide 2019*, Vienna: UNODC (Booklet 5).

## Dimension 4: Reproductive freedom

**Mandate:** Reproductive freedom is an essential marker of empowerment and is included in global normative frameworks. CEDAW, for example, guarantees the “rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights.” The Beijing Platform for Action states that the “human rights of women include their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence.” In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Target 5.6 commits Member States to “ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.” The World Bank identifies decision-making over family formation, including “women’s and girls’ ability to decide when and how many children to have,” as one of the key expressions of agency.<sup>27</sup>

**Inequalities:** Limited or non-existent access to sexual and reproductive health services, including contraception, limits individuals’ control over, and the right to decide freely about, their bodies; it restricts personal autonomy. The loss of bodily and personal autonomy inherent in an inability to decide whether and when to bear children violates core principles of human capabilities. Discriminatory gender norms, harmful conceptualizations of masculinity, the gendered division of labour, financial dependency and inequalities in access to information, education, technologies and health services, are some of the factors impeding equal enjoyment of reproductive freedom.

**Empowerment:** As articulated by Women Deliver: “In order for girls and women to reach their greatest potential, they must have control over their sexual and reproductive lives. They have a right to determine whether and how many children to have, when and with whom to have them.”<sup>28</sup> Reproductive freedom affirms the values of personal autonomy and bodily integrity; improves the health of individuals and families; increases economic opportunities for individuals and communities; reduces poverty at a national level; and expands access to education, particularly for women and girls.<sup>29</sup> Contraception and maternal care are crucial for family planning and enabling women to engage in both the private and public spheres. Beyond the direct effect of reproductive freedom on food security, cultural and institutional contexts that guarantee reproductive freedom are also more likely to buffer individuals from the effects of poverty and food insecurity, through mechanisms such as adequate women’s health care.

## Dimension 5: Unpaid labour

**Mandate:** Normative frameworks on gender equality underscore that the differential status of paid and unpaid labour is a cause of gender inequality globally. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

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<sup>27</sup> World Bank (2011). World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development. Washington DC: World Bank.

<sup>28</sup> <http://womendeliver.org/investment/meet-demand-modern-contraception-reproductive-health/>

<sup>29</sup> See, for example, Duvvury, N. and P. Oxhorn (2012). *Understanding the Links between Sexual and Reproductive Health Status and Poverty Reduction*. UNFPA Policy Briefs. [https://www.mcgill.ca/isid/files/isid/pb\\_2012\\_18\\_oxhorn.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/isid/files/isid/pb_2012_18_oxhorn.pdf) and Asian Development Bank and FAO (2013). *Gender Equality and Food Security – Women’s Empowerment as a Tool Against Hunger*. Mandaluyong City, Philippines: Asian Development Bank.

Development requires Member States to “recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate” (SDG Target 5.4).

**Inequalities:** Globally, unpaid care and domestic work is primarily performed by women; which is, in turn, associated with greater economic, political and social power of men, than women.<sup>30</sup> As reported by the Overseas Development Institute, “in 2014, on average across 66 countries representing two-thirds of the world’s population, women spent 3.3 times as much time as men on unpaid care.”<sup>31</sup> More recently, Oxfam highlighted the inequalities and negative impacts of the invisibility and unequal distribution of unpaid care work, including exclusion from decision-making and both financial and time poverty.<sup>32</sup> The UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food identified a cycle of discrimination in which the burden of women’s unpaid labour limits their time to live freely and gain access to capabilities and resources, such as knowledge and health.<sup>33</sup> In turn, many women who perform unpaid work remain outside the formal economy, which hinders their ability to gain financial self-sufficiency and impedes access to education, paid employment and food security.<sup>34</sup> Such inequalities violate Nussbaum’s (2003) central human capability of “having the right to seek employment on an equal basis with others,” and Robeyns’ (2003) capabilities for gender equality pertaining to both (a) domestic work and non-market care, and (b) paid work and other projects.

**Empowerment:** Equalizing the status of unpaid labour will result in gains in innovation and creativity; the well-being of individuals and households; individual and institutional acquisition of new knowledge and skills; and sustainable economic ‘productivity’.<sup>35</sup>

## 18 empowerment items

Twenty-five survey items (i.e. questions) were initially formulated to measure the five selected dimensions of empowerment. Following the 2018 administration of the GE4FS measure in seven countries, the 25 initial items were reduced to 18.<sup>36</sup> Statistical analysis of the data collected from the 2018 implementation of the GE4FS, which revealed limited predictive value and overlap with some of the items, accounted for the reduction. Also, with an underlying imperative in the administration of the GE4FS measure being to do-no-harm, the items examining violence were revised and reduced. The retained items related to restrictions on mobility and coercion.

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<sup>30</sup> Sepúlveda Carmona, M. (2013). Report of the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights: Unpaid Care Work, Poverty and Women’s Human Rights. 68th Session UN General Assembly, UN A/68/293, New York: United Nations.

<sup>31</sup> Samman, E., E. Presler-Marshall and N. Jones (2016). *Women’s Work: Mothers, Children and the Global Childcare Crisis*, London: Overseas Development Institute.

<sup>32</sup> Coffey, C., P. Espinoza Revollo, R. Harvey, M. Lawson, A. Parvez Butt, K. Piaget, D. Sarosi and J. Thekkudan (2020). *Time to Care: unpaid and underpaid care work and the global inequality crisis*, Oxford: Oxfam International.

<sup>33</sup> De Schutter, O. (2012). *Report submitted by the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier De Schutter: Women’s rights and the right to food*, Human Rights Council, A/HRC/22/50.

<sup>34</sup> Asian Development Bank and Food and Agriculture Organization (2013). *Gender Equality and Food Security—Women’s Empowerment as a Tool Against Hunger*. Mandaluyong City, Philippines: Asian Development Bank.

<sup>35</sup> See, for example: ActionAid (2015). *Close the Gap: the Cost of Inequality in Women’s Work*, ActionAid UK.

<sup>36</sup> The empowerment items are listed in Annex A.

For the empowerment items, dichotomous response options (yes/no) were used. Dichotomous response options were chosen because they (i) are relatively easy to understand across populations with different cultural contexts and levels of literacy and educational attainment, (ii) quick to answer, (iii) support accurate translation, and, as a consequence, (iv) support cross-country comparisons. The exception to the dichotomous response option was for the following item.

*Question:* In your household, who decides whether you can work for pay outside of the home, if you wanted to?

*Response options:* Only you (*indicating empowerment*)  
You together with someone else  
Only someone else (*indicating disempowerment*)

Positive responses (“yes”) to the following items signal empowerment.

- In the past 12 months, did you have income that you could use without asking for permission from anyone?
- If you wanted to, can you make your own decisions about what to do with money you receive from any source?
- If you wanted to, can you make your own decisions about seeking medical or healthcare services?
- If you wanted to, can you make your own decisions about spending time with relatives who do not live with you?
- If you wanted to, can you make your own decisions about spending time with friends who do not live with you?
- Do you have your own account with a bank or other financial institution, such as a savings, current/transaction, or checking account? Please do not think about accounts that you share with others.
- Do you, personally, have any money saved that you could use if you needed it?
- Do you, by yourself or with someone else, own property, such as land, a home or other dwelling?
- Do you, by yourself, own a mobile phone?

Positive responses (“yes”) to the following items signal disempowerment.

- In the past 12 months, did anyone in your household take money you earned, received, or had saved, without your permission?
- Would you have to get permission from anyone in your household before you could go to a local event by yourself, such as a community or neighbourhood celebration or meeting?
- Would you have to get permission from anyone in your household before you could go to the market or shops by yourself?
- In your household, are you the person who spends the most time doing housework, such as cleaning, cooking, and/or caring for children or other household members?

- In the past 12 months, has housework, such as cleaning, cooking, and/or caring for children or other household members prevented you from doing paid work, if you wanted to?
- In the past 12 months, has housework, such as cleaning, cooking, and/or caring for children or other household members prevented you from participating in education or training, if you wanted to?
- Are you able to decide on your own whether to use any methods to prevent pregnancy or sexually-transmitted illnesses, such as birth control or condoms?
- In the past 12 months, has anyone in your household threatened to harm you or someone you care about?

## Coverage

The five selected dimensions of empowerment do not constitute a definitive nor exhaustive explanation of empowerment. For example, the five dimensions do not include direct measures of education,<sup>37</sup> skills, training or time use.<sup>38,39</sup> Accordingly, the data gathered through application of the GE4FS measure should be considered in conjunction with other sources of information to create a comprehensive understanding of gender inequalities and food insecurity, from the individual to the institutional levels.

One of the unique features of the GE4FS measure is that it measures experiences of food in/security and dis/empowerment at the level of the individual, rather than compiling, for example, national level rates of education, employment and political representation. Also differentiating the GE4FS measure from other indices is its global applicability, rather than being limited to particular populations, such as rural and agricultural areas.

## Technical Advisory Group

Informing the construction of the “GE” component of the GE4FS measure was the technical expertise of the eight members of the Technical Advisory Group. The expertise of the members of the Technical Advisory Group encompassed gender equality, food security and research. The members were part of the Technical Advisory Group as individual experts and not as representatives of the organizations for which they worked, being ActionAid Australia, Care Canada, data2x of the UN Foundation, the Food Security Program at the American University of Beirut, the Global Women’s Institute at the George Washington University, the International Food

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<sup>37</sup> Education is a common dimension in global gender indices, as well as gender equality being an element of global educational goals, such as those of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and its predecessor, the Millennium Development Goals. Measures of gender equality in education relate to, for example, educational attainment, participation in formal and non-formal education, exposure to education for gender equality and human rights and use of communication technologies.

<sup>38</sup> Allocation of time and time use can serve as measures of gender equality, given implications in relation to, for example, (i) paid work, (ii) unpaid domestic and care work; (iii) education and learning opportunities; (iv) engagement in culture, leisure, mass-media and sports practices; and (v) socializing and community participation.

<sup>39</sup> Education and employment are common dimensions in other gender-related indices, such as the GII. In this way, the GE4FS complements, rather than duplicates, existing measures.

Policy Research Institute, the International Women’s Development Agency and the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development<sup>40</sup>

The initial contributions of the Technical Advisory Group to the construction of the GE4FS measure included review of a background paper which outlined the GE4FS measure proposition and participation in a two-day meeting convened at the WFP Headquarters (Rome) in October 2017. Following the two-day workshop, the Technical Advisory Group reviewed and proposed revisions to the empowerment items. The Technical Advisory Group members were able to provide further inputs as updates on the GE4FS pilot were provided.

## Administration – piloting the GE4FS measure

The GE4FS measure was administered through the Gallup World Poll,<sup>41</sup> in seven countries in 2018 and ten countries in 2019.<sup>42</sup>

### Gallup World Poll

In 2005, Gallup launched the World Poll to collect high-quality data worldwide with a consistent methodology. Annually, Gallup administers the World Poll – face-to-face or by telephone – in more than 160 countries. Face-to-face interviews are approximately one hour, while telephone interviews are about 30 minutes.

Gallup uses telephone surveys in countries where telephone coverage represents at least 80 percent of the population or is the customary survey methodology. In countries where telephone interviewing is employed, Gallup uses a random-digit-dial method or a nationally representative list of phone numbers. Telephone methodology is typical in the Australia, Canada, Japan, the U.S.A. and western Europe. In other countries, including much of Latin America and Eastern Europe, as well as nearly all of Asia, the Middle East and Africa, Gallup uses an area frame design for face-to-face interviewing in randomly selected households.

At the country level, the typical World Poll survey includes at least 1,000 individuals. One thousand was the sample size for the administration of the GE4FS measure. With some exceptions, all samples are probability based and nationally representative of the resident population aged 15 years and older.<sup>43</sup> The coverage area is the entire country, including urban and rural areas. The sampling frame represents the entire civilian, non-institutionalized adult population of the

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<sup>40</sup> For the organizations represented in the Technical Advisory Group see, respectively, <https://actionaid.org.au/>, <https://care.ca/>, <https://data2x.org/>, <https://www.aub.edu.lb/fafs/foodsecurity/Pages/default.aspx>, <https://globalwomensinstitute.gwu.edu/>, <http://www.ifpri.org/>, <https://iwda.org.au/> and <http://www.unrisd.org/>

<sup>41</sup> Information on the Gallup World Poll is provided on the Gallup website, at [www.gallup.com/178667/gallup-world-poll-work.aspx](http://www.gallup.com/178667/gallup-world-poll-work.aspx)

<sup>42</sup> 2018 countries: Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nigeria, Tajikistan, Thailand, United Kingdom, Zambia

2019 countries: Cambodia, Egypt, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Liberia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Sri Lanka, Venezuela

<sup>43</sup> In this report, “women” and “men” are used, rather than “female” and “male”, because the items that comprise the GE4FS measure assess the experiences of persons, as are shaped by their gender rather than biological sex. For the purpose of ease of reading, respondents aged 15 and 17 years – so children – are grouped into the “women” and “men” categories. The gender of the respondents was recorded by the interviewers administering the World Poll survey.

country. Exceptions include areas where the safety of interviewing personnel is threatened and scarcely populated islands in some countries.

There are three stages in the sampling procedure. In countries where Gallup conducts face-to-face surveys, the first stage of sampling is the identification of the Primary Sampling Units, consisting of clusters of households. Primary Sampling Units are stratified by population size and/or geography. Clustering is achieved through one or more stages of sampling. Where population information is available, sample selection is based on probabilities proportional to population size; otherwise, Gallup uses simple random sampling. In countries where telephone interviewing is employed, Gallup uses a random-digit dialling method or a nationally representative list of phone numbers. In select countries where cell phone penetration is high, Gallup uses a dual sampling frame.

The second stage is the selection of households. Gallup uses random-route procedures to select sampled households. Unless there is a direct refusal, interviewers make up to three attempts to survey an individual in the sampled household. To increase the probability of contact and completion, interviewers make attempts at different times of the day, and when possible, on different days. If the interviewer cannot obtain an interview at the initial sampled household, s/he uses a simple substitution method.

The third sampling stage involves selecting respondents. In face-to-face and telephone methodologies, random respondent selection is achieved by using either the latest birthday or Kish grid method. In a few countries in the Middle East and Asia, gender-matched interviewing is required. Gender matching of interviewers and interviewees was applied for the administration of the GE4FS measure in 2019. Probability sampling with quotas is implemented during the final stage of selection. Gallup implements quality control procedures to validate the selection of correct samples and that the interviewer selects the correct person in each household.

Gallup weights World Poll samples to correct for unequal selection probability, nonresponse and double coverage of landline and cell-phone users when using both cell-phone and landline frames. Gallup also weights its final samples to match the national demographics of each selected country. The margin of error for each sample reflects the influence of data weighting. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.

### **The GE4FS items in the Gallup World Poll**

In 2018, the eight FIES items were in the middle, while the empowerment items were asked towards the end, of the World Poll Survey. On average, administration of the World Poll survey with one respondent took approximately 35 minutes.

In 2019, the FIES items were located approximately half-way through the survey, following questions related to life satisfaction, employment and civic participation. The empowerment items came at the end of the survey, following questions on education, household, religion, income and residence. The approximate duration of the interview was 15 minutes. The difference in administration duration between 2018 and 2019 was due to the GE4FS module being part of the World Poll in 2018, while in 2019 it was administered as a stand-alone survey.

For both years, survey preparation was completed in the first quarter. Survey preparation included translating the FIES and empowerment items into the languages of the countries in which the GE4FS would be administered, pre-testing and interviewer training. Pre-testing was done to eliminate problems with any items, identify potential risks, and reduce the likelihood of unforeseen circumstances and challenges with actual data collection. The pre-testing involved administering the survey with persons who were reflective of the sample. The interviewers were trained on methodology and administration of the World Poll generally and the GE4FS items specifically. The training content thus included programme description, questionnaire briefing, interviewing skills, methodology and mock interviews. The months of May to November were dedicated to data collection. Across the 17 countries surveyed in 2018 and 2019, there was a total of 17,107 survey respondents, of which 8,667 were women and 8,440 were men (Table 1). Quality assurance was supported by supervisors accompanying interviewers, respondent re-contact, random quality checks of interviewer work and review of the gathered data.

Country	Respondents		
	Women	Men	Total
Bangladesh	499	501	1,000
Cambodia	500	500	1,000
Egypt	504	496	1,000
Kenya	504	496	1,000
Kyrgyzstan	504	496	1,000
Lesotho	502	498	1,000
Liberia	499	501	1,000
Mozambique	500	500	1,000
Myanmar	500	500	1,000
Nicaragua	508	492	1,000
Nigeria	387	613	1,000
Sri Lanka	553	554	1,107
Tajikistan	615	385	1,000
Thailand	588	412	1,000

United Kingdom	512	488	1,000
Venezuela	500	500	1,000
Zambia	492	508	1,000
Total	8,667	8,440	17,107

**Table 1:** Number of survey respondents, by gender and country.

The collected data were cleaned, weighted and vetted for accuracy and consistency. Univariate frequency distributions were then calculated for each empowerment item disaggregated by gender. All frequency distributions were weighted to ensure a nationally representative sample. Population statistics were used to weight the data by gender, age, and, where reliable data were available, education or socioeconomic status. Sampling error calculations considered the weights and the “clustering” effect in countries where interviewing was done face to face.<sup>44</sup> All tabulations included a point estimate for each response category, a 95 percent confidence interval for each point estimate, and the unweighted sample size (denominator) for each response category. Cells with a denominator of less than 100 unweighted cases were omitted from the results because they have a large margin of error.

## The empowerment element of the GE4FS measure

The GE4FS data were analyzed through the lens of Item Response Theory (IRT),<sup>45</sup> a statistical modelling framework commonly used for scale validation in psychology and education, as well as in other fields that rely on self-reporting (like the FIES).<sup>46</sup>

Within the Item Response Theory model,<sup>47</sup> the Rasch model is applied to the empowerment element of the GE4FS data. The Rasch model provides a set of tools to assess the suitability of the empowerment items for constructing a measurement scale. The Rasch model also supports comparison of a scale’s performance across different populations. Measure validity, reliability and cross-country comparability of the empowerment element of the GE4FS was thus explored with the use of Item Response Theory tools.

Investigation as to whether the empowerment items combine to form a scale involved (i) subjecting the data to a Cronbach’s alpha analysis, (ii) applying the unidimensional Rasch model, and (iii) conducting a Multi-dimensional Item Response Theory (MIRT) analysis.

<sup>44</sup> Clustering occurs in face-to-face countries as a result of the sampling approach, which selects populated areas in multiple stages. Since persons living within the same area are more likely to be similar to each other, than to persons living in other areas, the resulting sample is less accurate than a simple random sample as a representation of an entire country.

<sup>45</sup> Hambleton, R. K., Swaminathan, H., & Rogers, H. J., 1991. *Fundamentals of item response theory*. Newbury Park, Calif: Sage Publications.

<sup>46</sup> Cafiero, C., S. Viviani and M. Nord, 2018. “Food security measurement in a global context: The Food Insecurity Experience Scale”. *Measurement Journal*, 116 (146-152).

<sup>47</sup> Bond, T. G., and C.M. Fox, 2001. *Applying the Rasch model: Fundamental measurement in the human sciences*. Mahwah, NJ: L. Erlbaum.

## Pooled data

Data from the 17 countries surveyed in 2018 and 2019 were pooled to explore the global quality of the empowerment element of the GE4FS measure.

The first explorative analysis involved the computation of Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha indicates the average correlation between all the items in a set, adjusted for the number of items. Cronbach's alpha is used to examine the internal consistency of the items, with values of  $\alpha = 0.7$  or higher considered acceptable. The computed Cronbach's alpha for the surveyed population (i.e. pooled sample of 17,107 individuals) was  $\alpha = 0.72$  (standard error = 0.72), indicating an acceptable degree of internal consistency of the empowerment items.

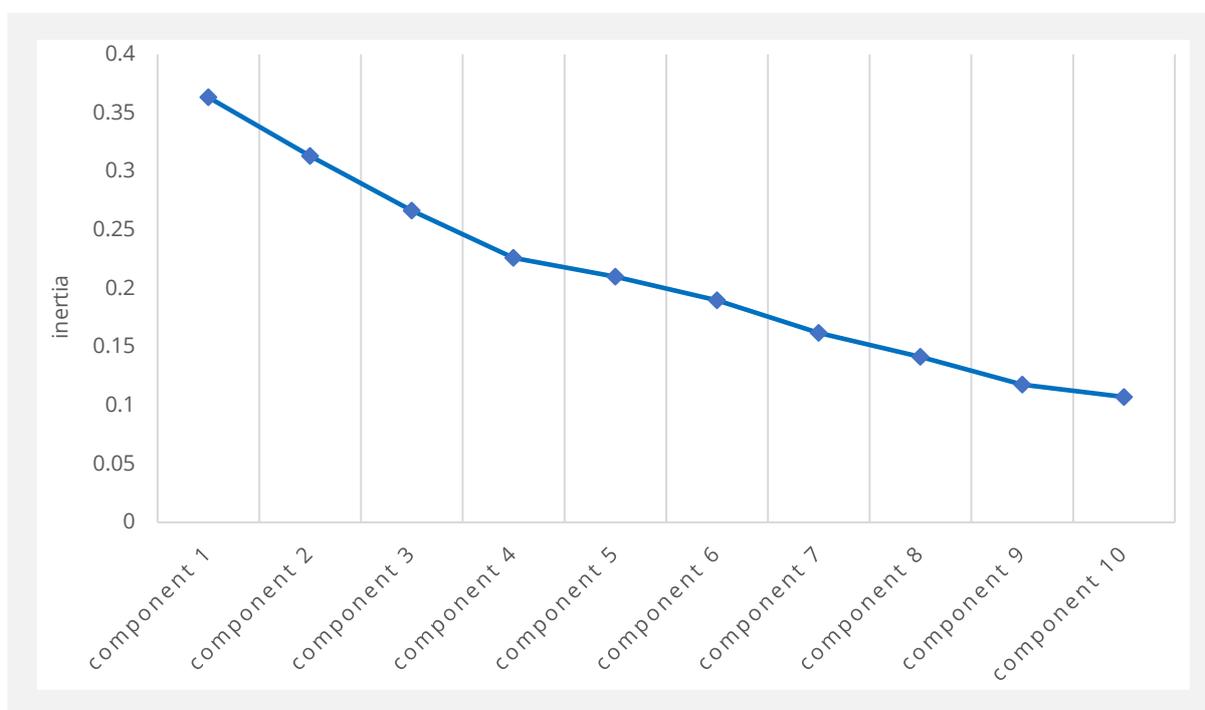
The next statistical step was the application of the unidimensional Rasch model. A Rasch reliability score of 0.87 was computed, indicating good overall discrimination of the empowerment items. The assumptions of conditional independence, unidimensionality and equal discrimination of all items were examined.

Conditional independence refers to the probability that, conditionally on the latent trait, reporting one experience does not depend on whether (i) the respondent has reported other experiences, or (ii) other respondents have reported the same experience. Conditional independence holds when the only source of dependency among items is the latent trait; being a symptom of unidimensionality. Conditional independence is determined by examining the residual correlation matrix. For the pooled sample, eight items showed conditional dependence, indicative of conceptual overlap. More specifically, the four item pairings below showed absolute residual correlation values of 0.35 or higher indicating the presence of conditional dependence.

Do you, personally, have any money saved that you could use if you needed it?	In the past 12 months, did you have income that you could use without asking for permission from anyone?	$r = -0.58$
If you wanted to, can you make your own decisions about spending time with relatives who do not live with you?	If you wanted to, can you make your own decisions about spending time with friends who do not live with you?	$r = 0.57$
Would you have to get permission from anyone in your household before you could go to a local event by yourself?	Would you have to get permission from anyone in your household before you could go to the market or shops by yourself?	$r = 0.50$
In the past 12 months, has housework, such as cleaning, cooking, and/or caring for children or other household members prevented you from doing paid work?	In the past 12 months, has housework, such as cleaning, cooking, and/or caring for children or other household members prevented you from participating in education or training?	$r = 0.49$

Dimensionality refers to whether items capture clearly identified dimensions. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) on the residuals' matrix was conducted to assess dimensionality of the empowerment component of the GE4FS module.<sup>48</sup> Principal Component Analysis is a procedure for reducing a set of variables into a smaller set of uncorrelated variables (principal components) that capture most of the variability in the original set. Principal Component Analysis residuals show the amount of unexplained variance left after extracting each principal component. The screeplot of PCA on the residuals shows a smoothly decreasing curve (Figure 1), which indicates unidimensionality. The decreasing curve thus suggests that the 18 items comprise a single scale, measuring a single concept – empowerment. It can thus be concluded that the conditional correlation is a symptom of redundancy of some items, not compromising the unidimensionality of the scale and the quality of the measure.

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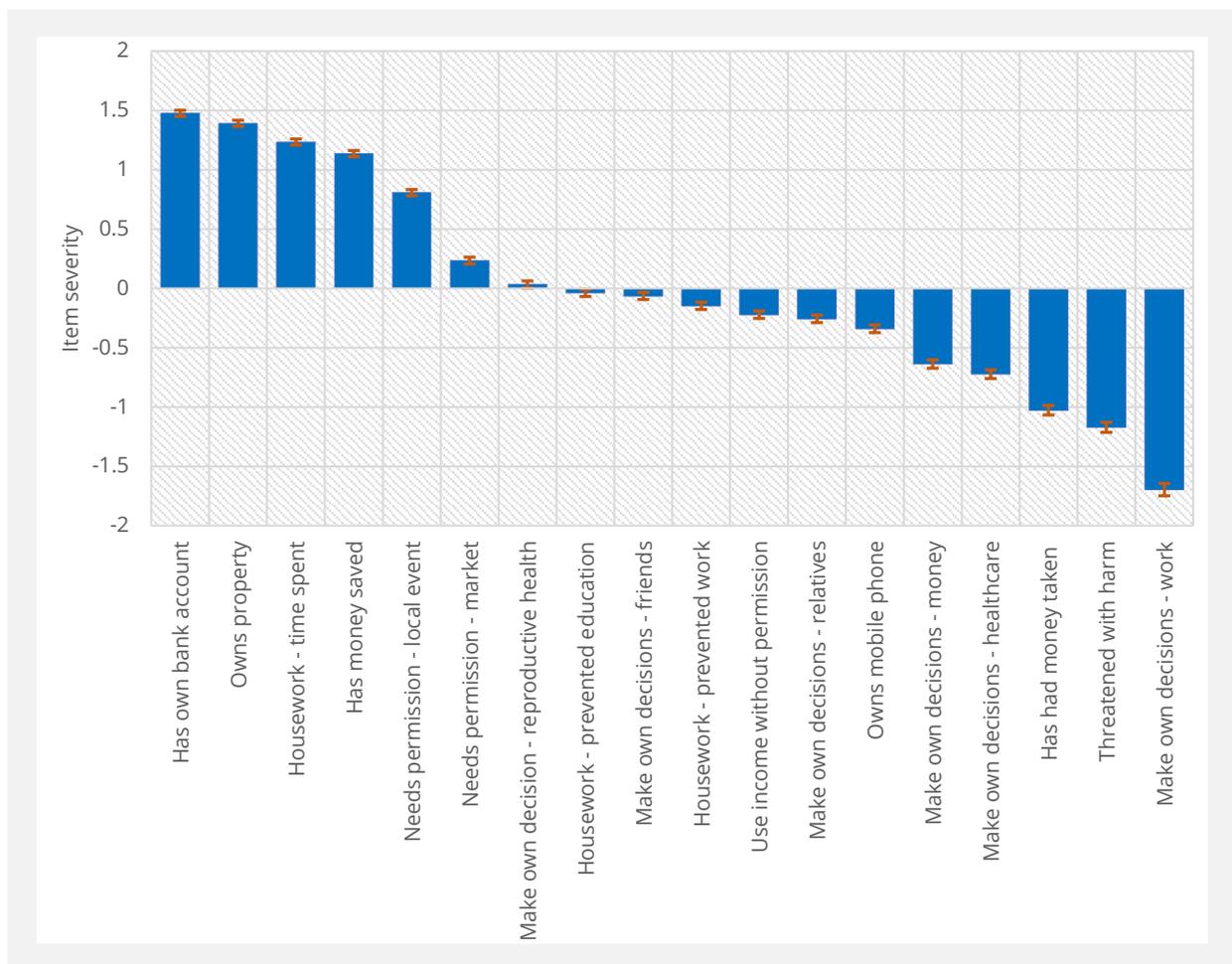


**Figure 1:** Screeplot of Principal Component Analysis residuals

Equal discrimination of items is where the items in the measure have similar power in differentiating – discriminating among – respondents. Infit (information-weighted) statistics were all within the acceptable range of 0.7 to 1.3 for all items, suggesting that the 18 items contribute equally to a measure of empowerment.

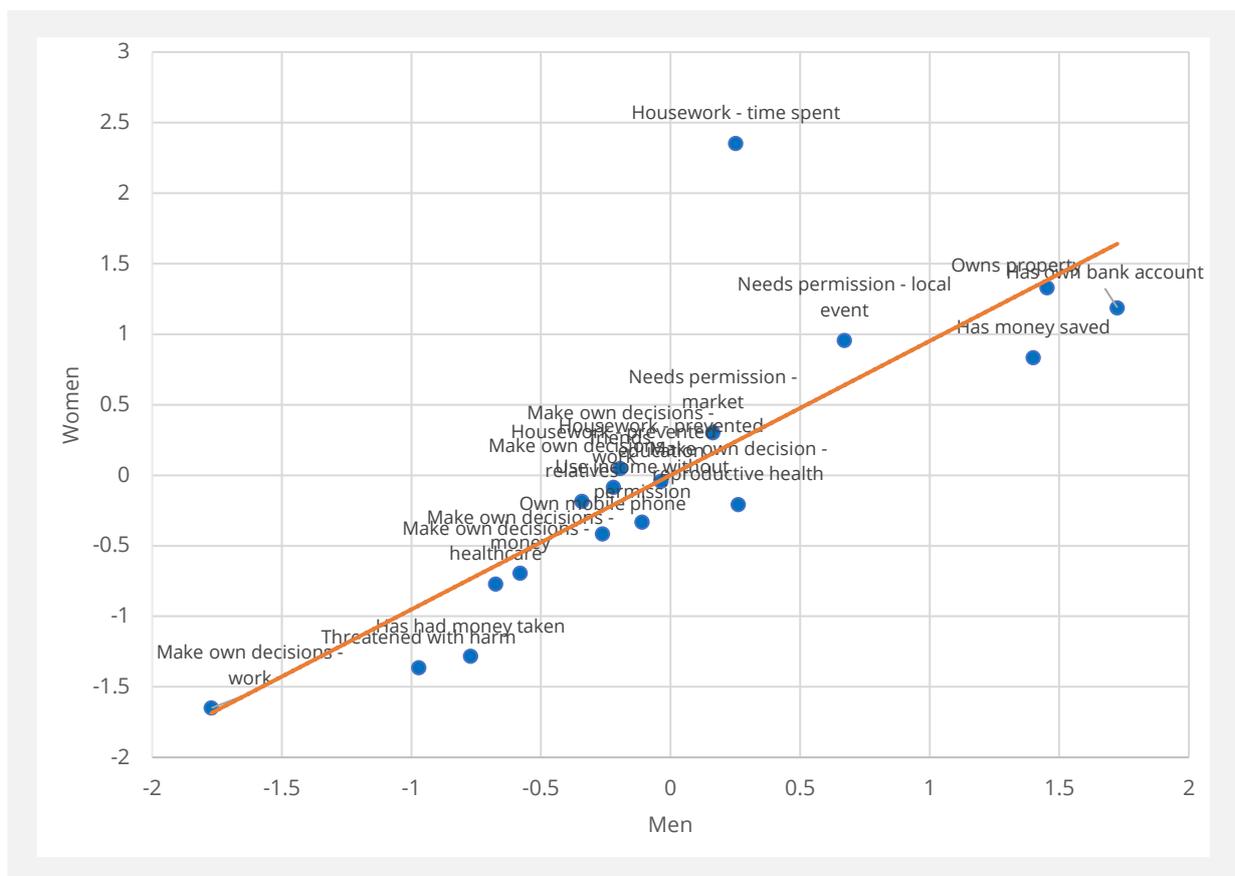
<sup>48</sup> Principal component analysis (PCA) is a statistical procedure that uses an orthogonal transformation to convert a set of observations of possibly correlated variables (entities each of which takes on various numerical values) into a set of values of linearly uncorrelated variables called principal components.

The Rasch model was used to assess the 'severity' of each of the 18 empowerment items. Severity refers to the level of empowerment suggested by each item. In the pooled sample (Figure 2), items associated with ownership of a bank account and property showed the highest severities, followed by "In your household, are you the person who spends the most time doing housework?" (reverse coded), "Do you, personally, have any money saved that you could use if you needed it?" and "Would you have to get permission from anyone in your household before you could go to a local event by yourself?" (reverse coded). Conversely, the item "you decide whether you can work for pay outside of the home" shows the lowest severity, followed by the items "In the past 12 months, has anyone in your household threatened to harm you or someone you care about?" (reverse coded), "In the past 12 months, did anyone in your household take money you earned, received, or had saved, without your permission?" (reverse coded), "If you wanted to, can you make your own decisions about seeking medical or healthcare services?" and "If you wanted to, can you make your own decisions about what to do with money you receive from any source?". Negative responses to the foregoing items are associated with lack of empowerment.



**Figure 2:** 'Severity' of the 18 empowerment items  
(Pooled sample results, n = 17,107)

Differential Item Functioning analysis was studied to understand whether item severities varied significantly across demographic groups (Figure 3). The distribution of severities by gender indicates differential item functioning for one item: "In your household, are you the person who spends the most time doing housework, such as cleaning, cooking, and/or caring for children or other household members?" (reverse coded). This item shows greater severity for women (Severity = 2.35, Standard Error = 0.04), than for men (Severity = 0.25, Standard Error = 0.04), suggesting that not being the person in the household who spends most time doing housework is more empowering for women than men.



**Figure 3:** Differential item functioning of the 18 empowerment items by gender

In addition to gender, differential item functioning was examined for age, education and location (urban, rural), across the pooled sample. Differential item functioning was found for education and location. Age did not show differential item functioning for any of the 18 empowerment items.

## Country-level data

Most of the results for the pooled sample were reproduced at the country level.

### *Reliability*

The Cronbach alpha was lower than 0.7 in 11 of the 17 countries, ranging from a minimum of 0.45 (United Kingdom) to a maximum of 0.88 (Egypt). The Rasch Reliability was high in all 17 countries – 0.86 to 0.88.

### *Item Response Theory assumptions*

In terms of equal discrimination of the 18 empowerment items, there are acceptable infit statistics (0.7 to 1.3) for most countries. There were, however, relatively weaker infit statistics for Egypt, Sri Lanka and Tajikistan.

Most countries (11 of 17) showed evidence of unidimensionality. Six countries evidenced moderate multidimensionality: Bangladesh (2 dimensions), Egypt (3 dimensions), Kenya (2 dimensions, particularly for men), Mozambique (4 dimensions, particularly for men), Sri Lanka (2 dimensions, particularly for women), Tajikistan (3 dimensions, particularly for women) and the United Kingdom (2 dimensions, particularly for women).

All countries showed local dependencies, with residual correlations greater than 0.35. Some countries evidenced a higher number of dependencies than others, particularly Egypt (26 dependencies) and Tajikistan (16 dependencies). The dependencies common to the other countries are the same as those for the pooled sample. Differential item functioning was evident in most countries by gender, but not age, location or education.

For gender, differential item functioning was found for 9 of the 17 countries, and particularly for the item “In your household, are you the person who spends the most time doing housework, such as cleaning, cooking, and/or caring for children or other household members?”. Egypt was the only country that showed differential item functioning for other items: “Do you have your own account with a bank or other financial institution?” ( $z = 10.0, p < .01$ ); “Do you, personally, have any money saved that you could use if you needed it?” ( $z = 13.8, p < .01$ ); and “Are you able to decide on your own whether to use any methods to prevent pregnancy or sexually-transmitted illnesses, such as birth control or condoms?” ( $z = 11.6, p < .01$ ).

For age, most countries (16 of 17) did not show differential item functioning. The exception was the United Kingdom, for which there was differential item functioning by age (30-44 years age group compared with the other age groups of 15-29 years and 45 years and older)<sup>49</sup> for the item “In your household, are you the person who spends the most time doing housework, such as cleaning, cooking, and/or caring for children or other household members?” ( $z=10.0, p<.01$ ).

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<sup>49</sup> The listed age groupings were used for the differential item functioning analysis, so as to balance the sample size across categories and be able to draw statistically robust conclusions.

Similarly, most countries (16 of 17) did not show differential item functioning by location (urban/rural). The exception was Egypt, for which differential item functioning was indicated for the items "Do you have your own account with a bank or other financial institution?" ( $z = -9.4, p < .01$ ); "Do you, personally, have any money saved that you could use if you needed it?" ( $z = 12.4, p < .01$ ); "Do you, by yourself or with someone else, own property, such as land, a home or other dwelling?" ( $z = -10.9, p < .01$ ); and "Are you able to decide on your own whether to use any methods to prevent pregnancy or sexually-transmitted illnesses" ( $z = -10.6, p < .01$ ).

No country showed differential item functioning by level of educational attainment, with the comparison being primary or less versus secondary or higher.

# Chapter 3: Country Data

## Overview

The data collected through administration of the GE4FS measure indicate a relationship between gender inequalities and food insecurity, to the detriment of women.

According to the FIES data, in 10 of the 17 countries, women are more likely than men to experience food insecurity. In seven countries – Bangladesh, Lesotho, Liberia, Myanmar, Nigeria, the United Kingdom and Venezuela – there are marginal (i.e. not statistically significant) differences between the proportions of women and men who experience moderate or severe food insecurity.

The empowerment scores in turn indicate that men are more likely to experience being empowered than are women (Table 2 & Figure 4). Of the 17 countries surveyed, in only four were little or no differences in experienced empowerment evident between women and men: Cambodia, Lesotho, the United Kingdom and Venezuela. The ‘gap’ in empowerment between women and men, by country, is visualised in Figure 5. There is, however, an exception to this exception. In all 17 countries, it is women, and not men, who spend the most time doing housework – the unpaid care and domestic work of cleaning, cooking and/or caring for household members.

Country	% of population experiencing moderate/severe food insecurity		Empowerment Score		
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women-Men Gap
Bangladesh	33.8	33.7	0.689	2.103	1.414
Cambodia	49.1	41.2	0.868	1.027	0.158
Egypt	34.3	26.6	0.424	2.084	1.659
Kenya	<sup>50</sup>	-	1.151	1.858	0.707
Kyrgyzstan	23.1	21.3	0.780	1.537	0.757
Lesotho	76.4	75.5	1.028	1.141	0.114
Liberia	84.3	84.5	0.778	1.196	0.417
Mozambique	69.2	67.0	0.540	1.004	0.464
Myanmar	-	-	0.913	1.552	0.639
Nicaragua	-	-	0.867	1.432	0.565

<sup>50</sup> While the prevalence of moderate-severe food insecurity was computed for women and men in each of the 17 countries surveyed, the proportions are not listed for the countries from which permission to make the figures publicly available has not been received.

Nigeria	-	-	1.027	1.785	0.758
Sri Lanka	-	-	0.576	1.421	0.845
Tajikistan	26.3	22.9	0.446	1.562	1.117
Thailand	-	-	1.703	2.066	0.364
United Kingdom	-	-	2.666	2.893	0.227
Venezuela	-	-	1.499	1.696	0.197
Zambia	-	-	1.176	1.584	0.408

**Table 2:** Percentage of population (aged 15+ years) experiencing moderate to severe food insecurity and their empowerment score, by gender and country (for 2018 and 2019).

Three of the four countries for which small differences in the empowerment of women and men were computed – Lesotho, the United Kingdom and Venezuela – were also among the countries where differences in food insecurity between women and men are marginal.



**Figure 4:** Empowerment scores of women and men, in the 17 surveyed country



**Figure 5:** Women-men gap in the empowerment score

## Individual Country Data

In the following sections, data for each country are presented. In the figures for the empowerment items, data are grouped by the five dimensions: decision-making ability, financial self-sufficiency, freedom from violence, reproductive freedom and unpaid labour.

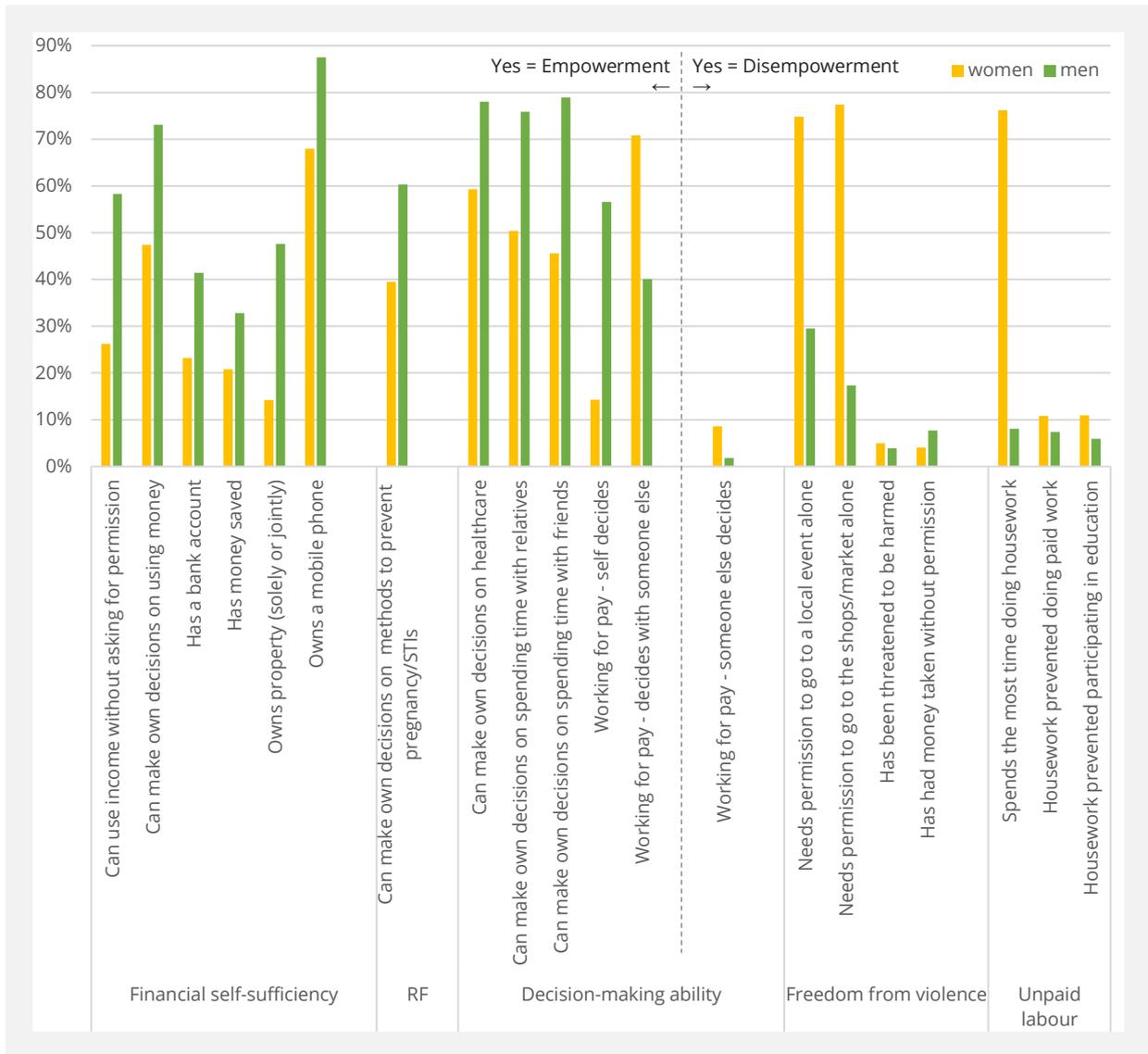
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# Bangladesh

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### Gender

In Bangladesh, the data indicate marked differences between women and men across all empowerment items, with women experiencing lower levels of empowerment as compared to men. The gap between women and men is greatest for the unpaid labour dimension, with women distinctly more likely than men to be the person in their households who spend the most time doing housework; and for freedom from violence, relating to mobility, with women being significantly more likely than men to need permission to go to the shops/market, or to a local event, alone. Marked differences between women and men are also evident in relation to (i) decision-making, where men are more likely than women to make their own decisions on whether to work for pay outside of home and on spending their time with friends; and (ii) financial self-sufficiency, with men being more likely to own property or have income that they can use without permission than women (Figure 6).



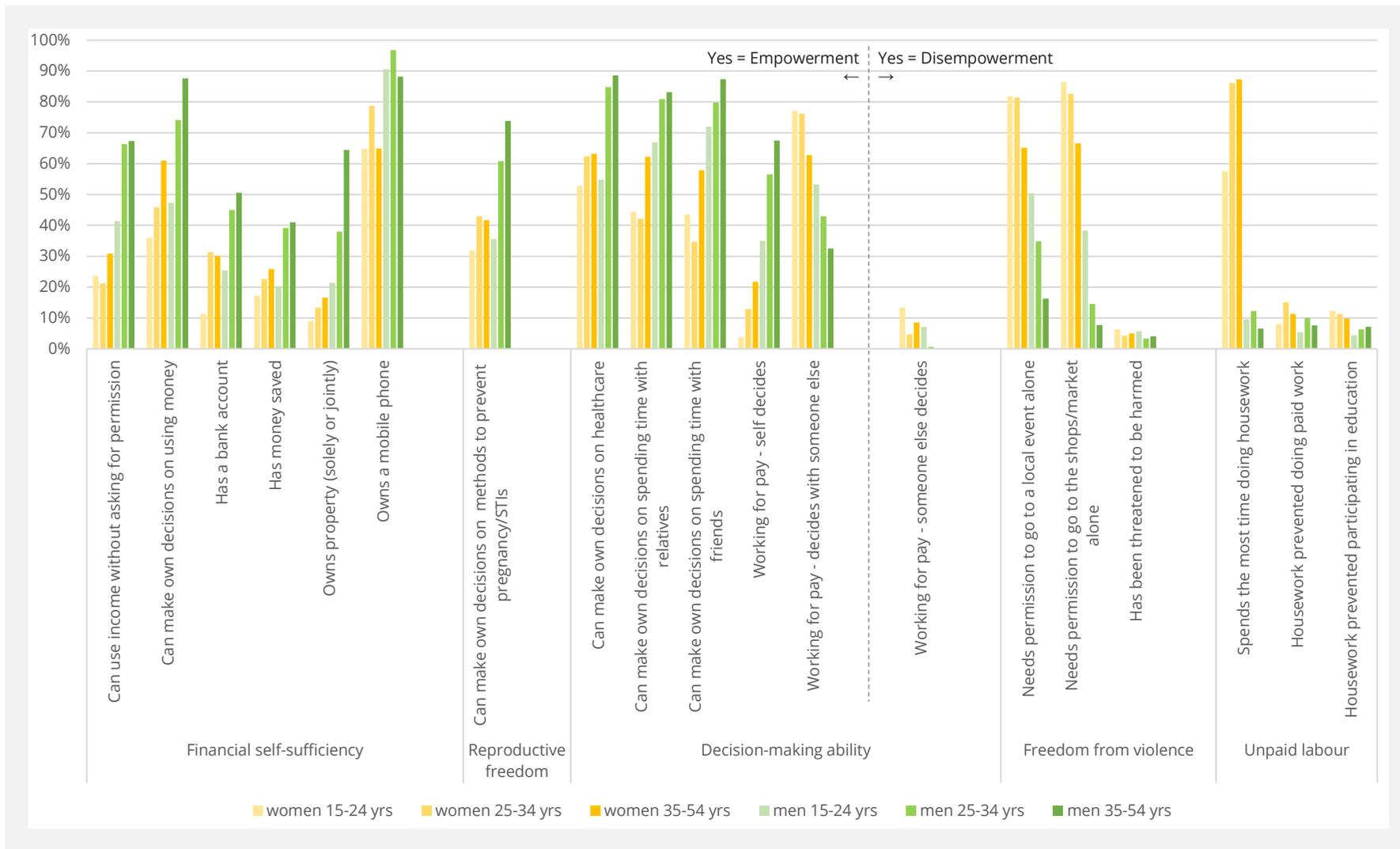
**Figure 6:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men in Bangladesh<sup>51</sup>

## Gender and age

Disaggregation of the Bangladesh data by age show that while experiences of empowerment differ by age group, the gap in experienced empowerment between women and men is larger than the gap based on age. In terms of gender and age, men aged 35-54 years are the group reporting the highest level of empowerment for almost all items, closely followed by men aged 25-34 years (Figure 7). For almost all empowerment items, women aged 15 to 24 years are the least empowered group, closely followed by women between 25 and 34 years. Women in the 35-54 years age group are more likely to make their own decisions regarding spending time with relatives and friends, as well as spending money, and are less likely to need permission to go to a local

<sup>51</sup> RF = Reproductive freedom

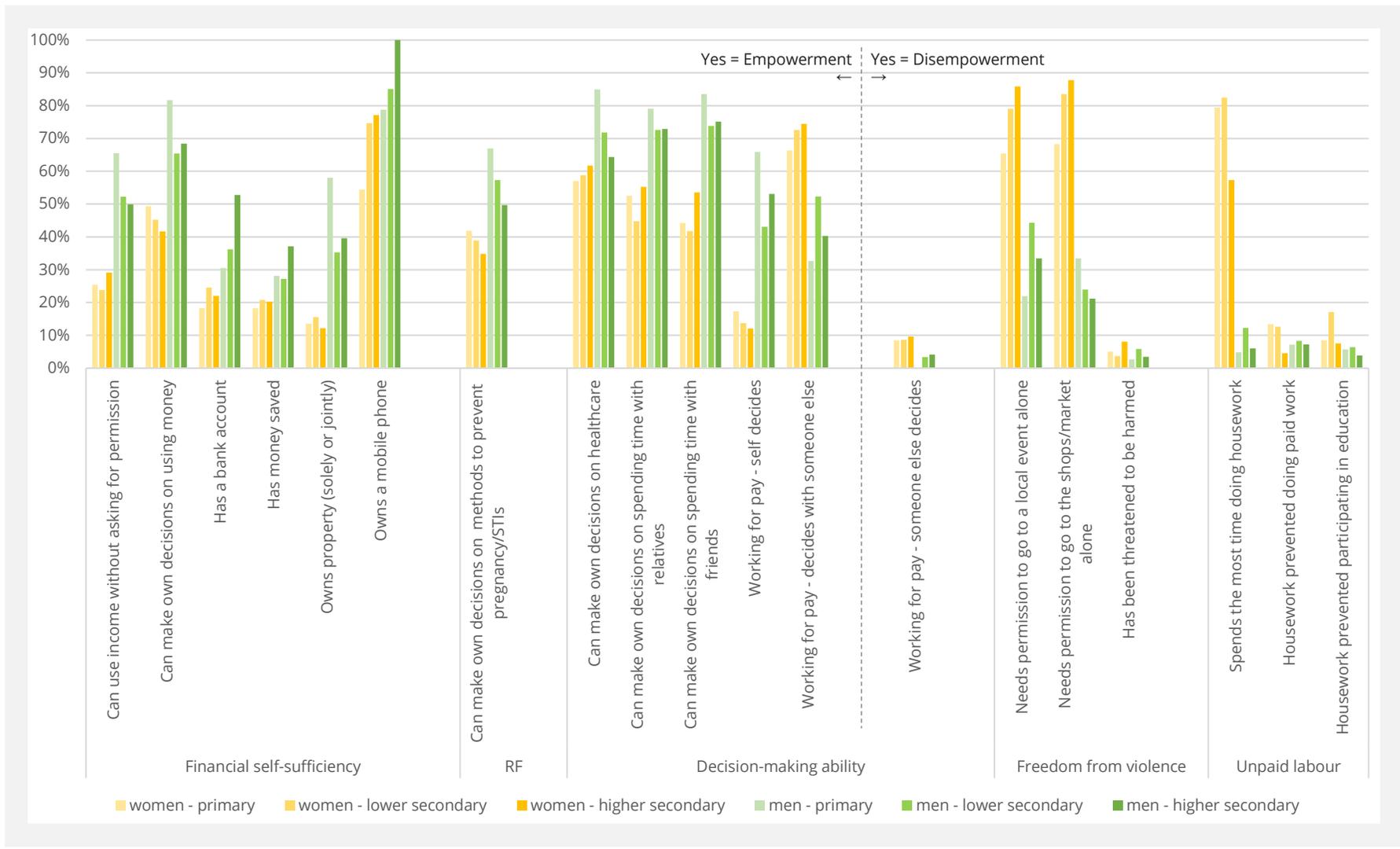
event or market/shops alone, as compared to younger women. Yet even across these items their level of empowerment is lower, as compared to men in the youngest age group. Cross-cutting gender and age, the gap between men aged 15-24 years and men in the other two age groups is significant, particularly in relation to financial self-sufficiency.



**Figure 7:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by age group, in Bangladesh

## **Gender and education**

While differences in empowerment vary with levels of formal education, across all the items gender is a more significant factor in experiencing empowerment than is education (Figure 8). In general, empowerment levels differ based on education levels for men, but less so for women. Across most of the empowerment items, men with primary education report being more empowered as compared to all other groups; with the exception of ownership of a mobile phone, having a bank account, and having money saved, where men with higher secondary education report the highest empowerment levels. Women's empowerment, on the other hand, varies little across education groups; with the exception of (i) mobile phone ownership, where women with primary education are significantly less likely to own a mobile phone than women with secondary education; (ii) mobility, with women with primary education being less likely to need permission to go alone to local event or market/shops; and (iii) unpaid labour, where women with higher secondary education are less likely than other women to be the person in the household spending the most time doing housework.



**Figure 8:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Bangladesh

Differences in empowerment by education level is more marked among men, than for women. For women, the differences based on level of education are significant in regard to mobile phone ownership and mobility (Figure 9).



**Figure 9:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Bangladesh

When comparing experiences of empowerment of women and men with the same education levels across the 18 items, the empowerment gap between women and men with primary education is larger than the empowerment gap between women and men with lower secondary or higher secondary education in regard to financial self-sufficiency, decision-making, and

reproductive freedom. In relation to freedom from violence, the empowerment gap is largest between women and men with higher secondary education (Figure 10).



**Figure 10:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men,<sup>52</sup> in the same education groups, in Bangladesh

## Gender and location

As with education levels, gender is a more significant factor in levels of experienced empowerment than is location (rural or urban); with location impacting more men's than women's empowerment levels (Figure 11).

<sup>52</sup> % difference = men - women

Rural men are the most empowered group in regard to decision-making (on healthcare, spending time with friends and relatives, and using money) and property ownership. Urban men are the most empowered group in bank account ownership and having money saved. In the remaining items there are small differences in empowerment levels between urban and rural men. Women report only small variations in empowerment levels based on location; except for mobile phone ownership where urban women report being more empowered than rural women.

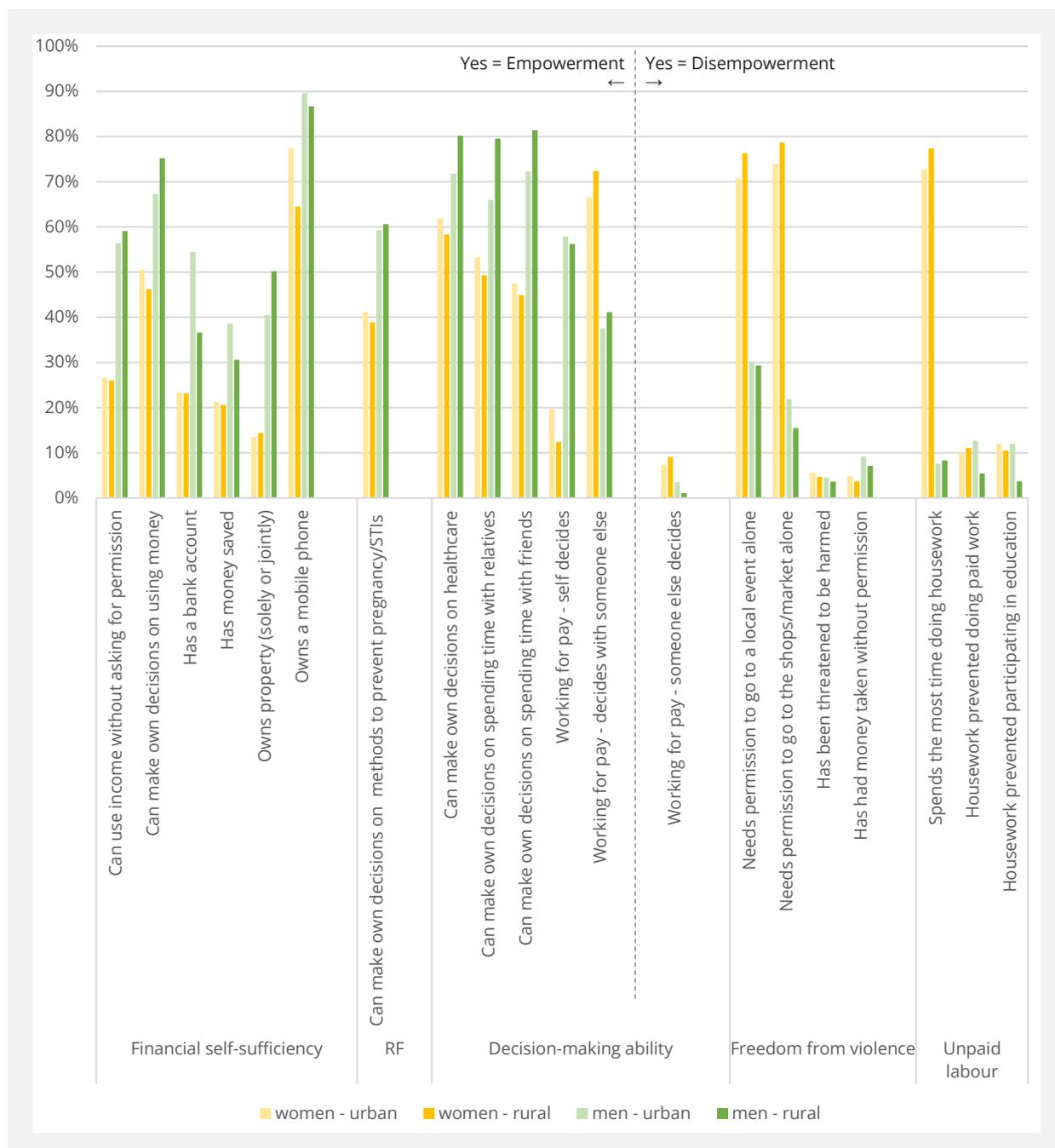
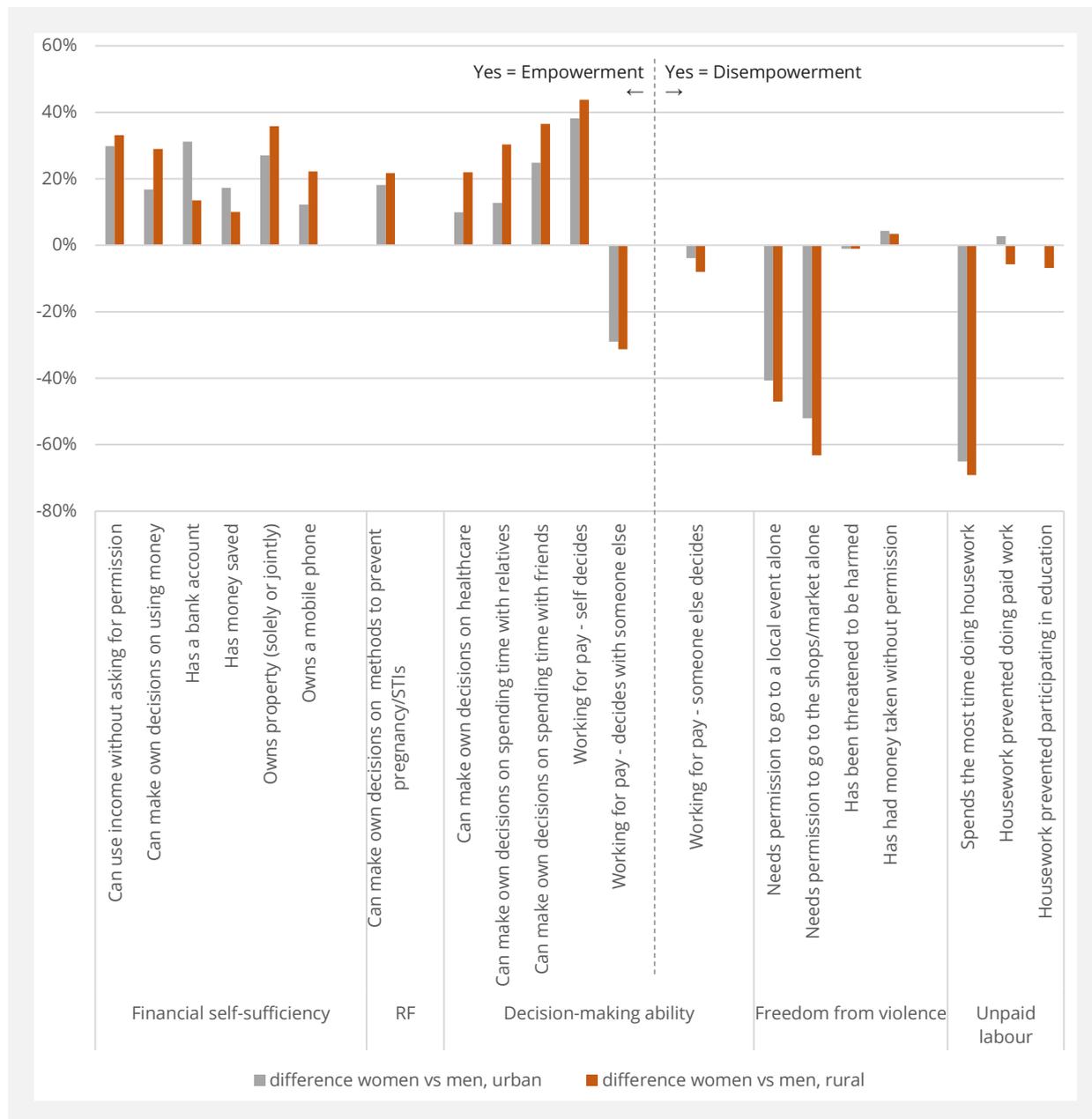


Figure 11: Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in Bangladesh

For most of the empowerment items, the gap between women and men is more marked in rural, than urban, areas (Figure 12).



**Figure 12:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men, in rural and urban locations, in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, gender is a significant factor in determining whether a person feels and is empowered. Experiences of empowerment are, however, moderated by age, education level and location, and significantly more so for men than for women.

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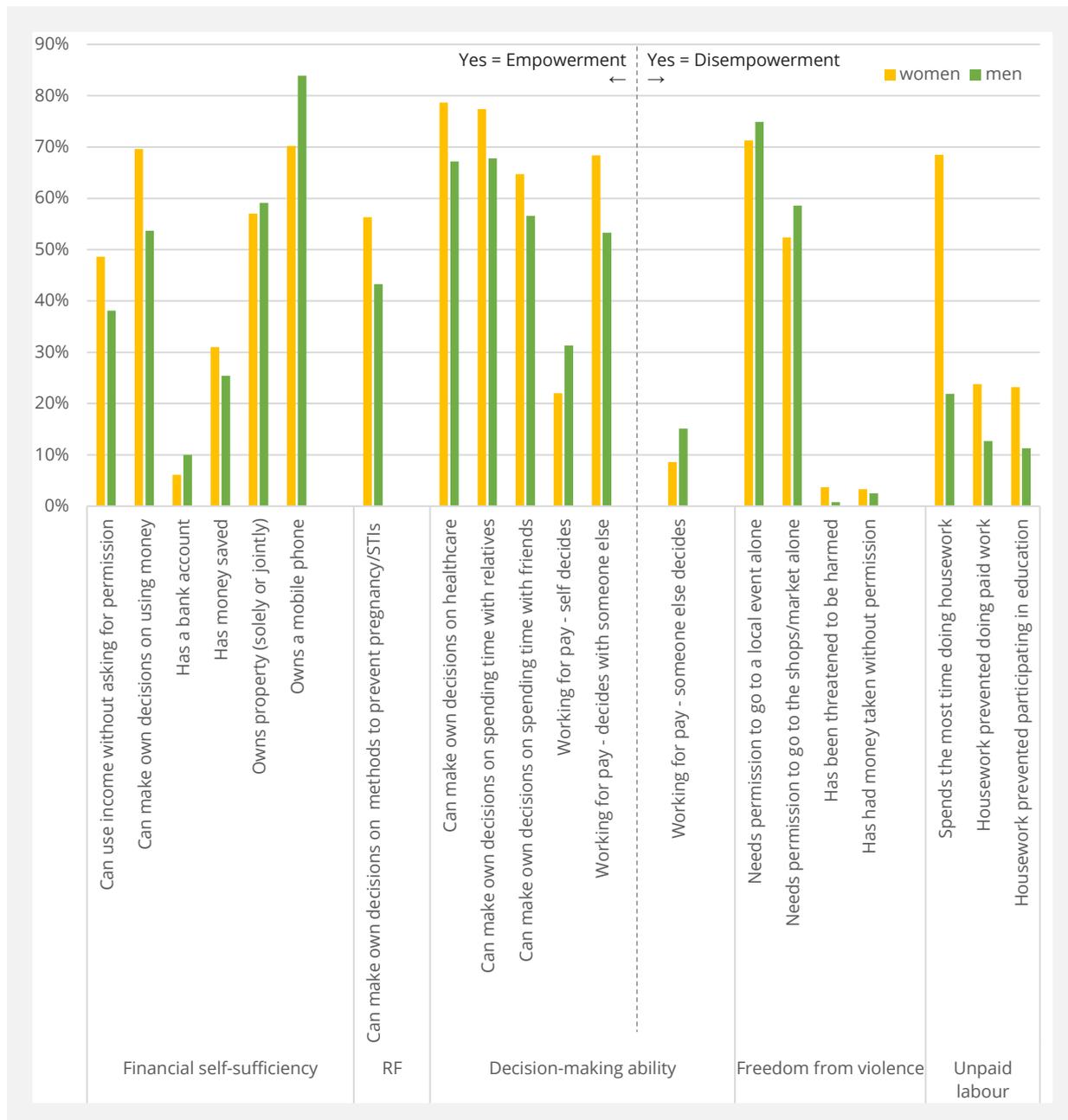
# Cambodia

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## Gender

In Cambodia, the data indicate differences in experienced empowerment between women and men across most of empowerment items; however, with a gap less marked as compared to other countries surveyed, and with women reporting higher levels of empowerment in some items as compared to men.

The gap between women and men is greatest for the unpaid labour dimension, with women distinctly more likely than men to be the person in their households who spend the most time doing housework. Women reported higher level of experienced empowerment in the reproductive freedom dimension, as well as in relation to decision-making, where they are more likely to make their own decisions about healthcare and visiting friends or relatives. Men, on the other hand, are more likely to decide on their own on whether to work for pay outside of home. Under financial self-sufficiency, women are more likely than men to have income they can use without asking permission and can make their own decisions about what to do with money received. More men, than women, report owning a mobile phone (Figure 13).



**Figure 13:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men in Cambodia<sup>53</sup>

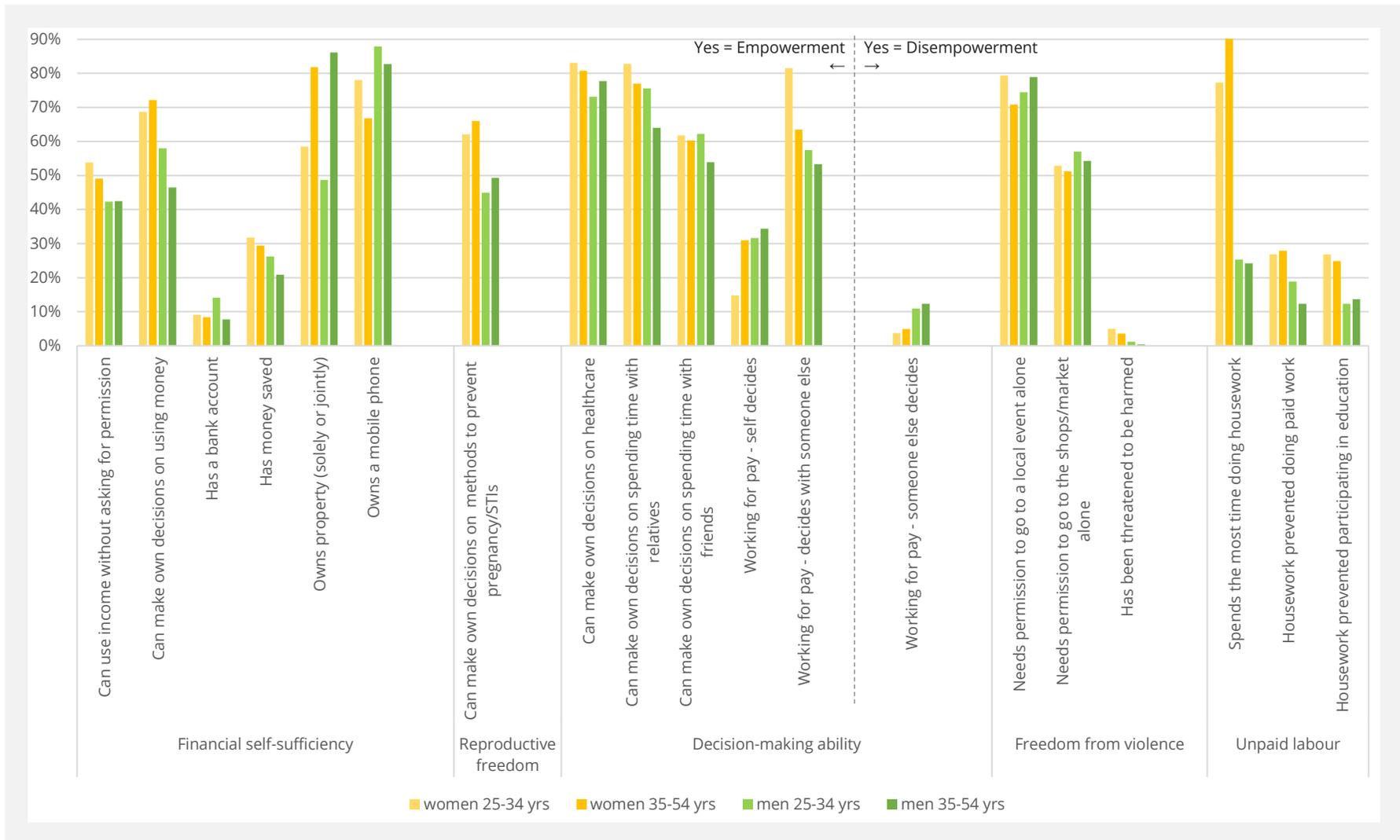
## Gender and age

Disaggregation of the Cambodia data by age<sup>54</sup> showed that while experiences of empowerment differ by age group, the gap in experienced empowerment between women and men is larger than the gap based on age (Figure 14).

<sup>53</sup> RF = Reproductive freedom

<sup>54</sup> The age group 15-24 years was not considered in the analysis due to insufficient data available.

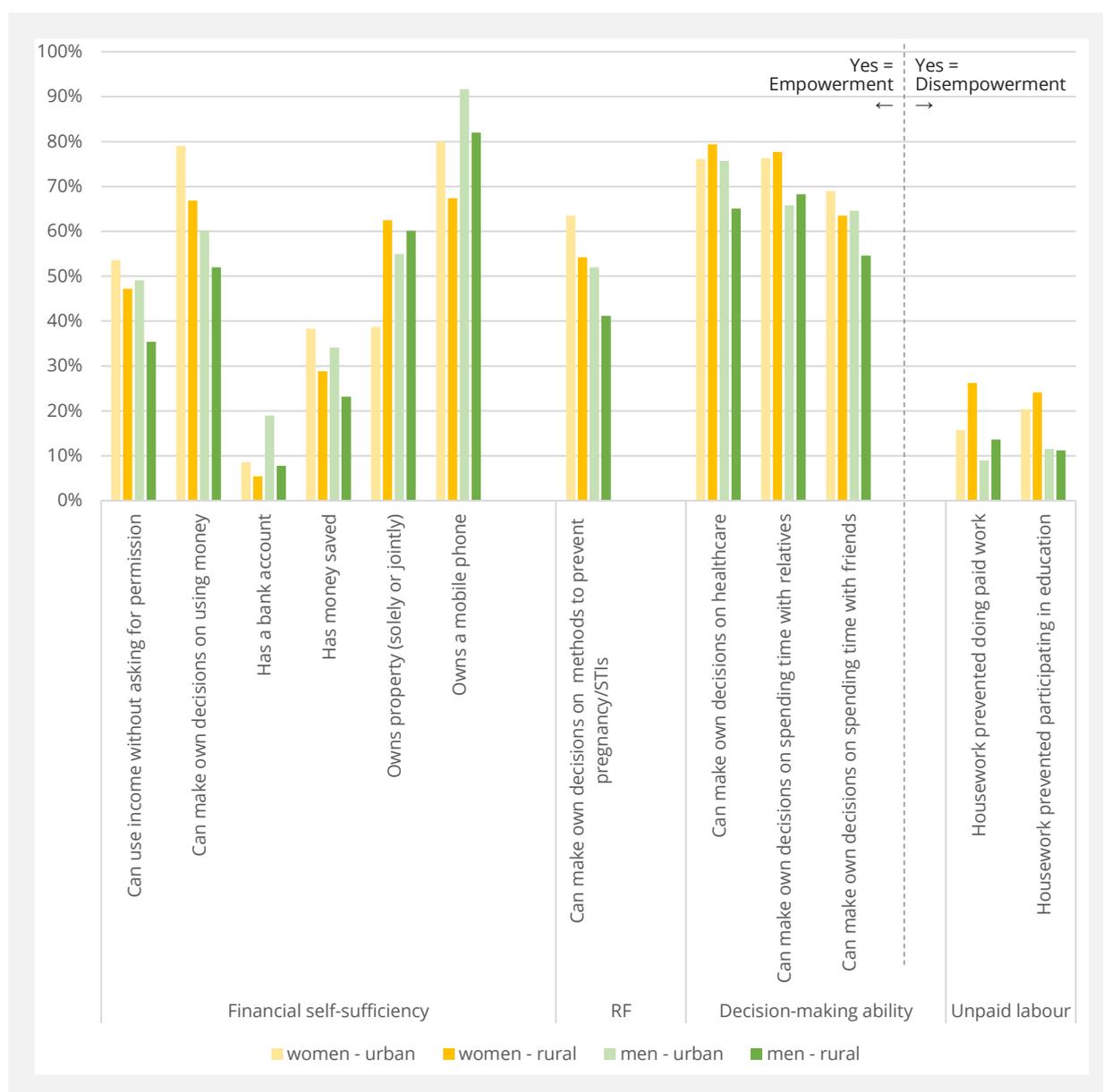
Age-related differences are evident in regard to property ownership, where women and men in the 35-54 years age group are most likely to own property (solely or jointly). Cross-cutting gender and age, women aged 25-34 years are the least likely group to decide alone whether to work for pay outside of home. Women aged 35-54 years are the least likely group to own a mobile phone, while being the group that spends overwhelmingly the most time doing housework. Men in the 35-54 years age group, on the contrary, are the group least likely to make their own decisions about using saved money and about spending time with relatives.



**Figure 14:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by age group, in Cambodia

## Gender and location

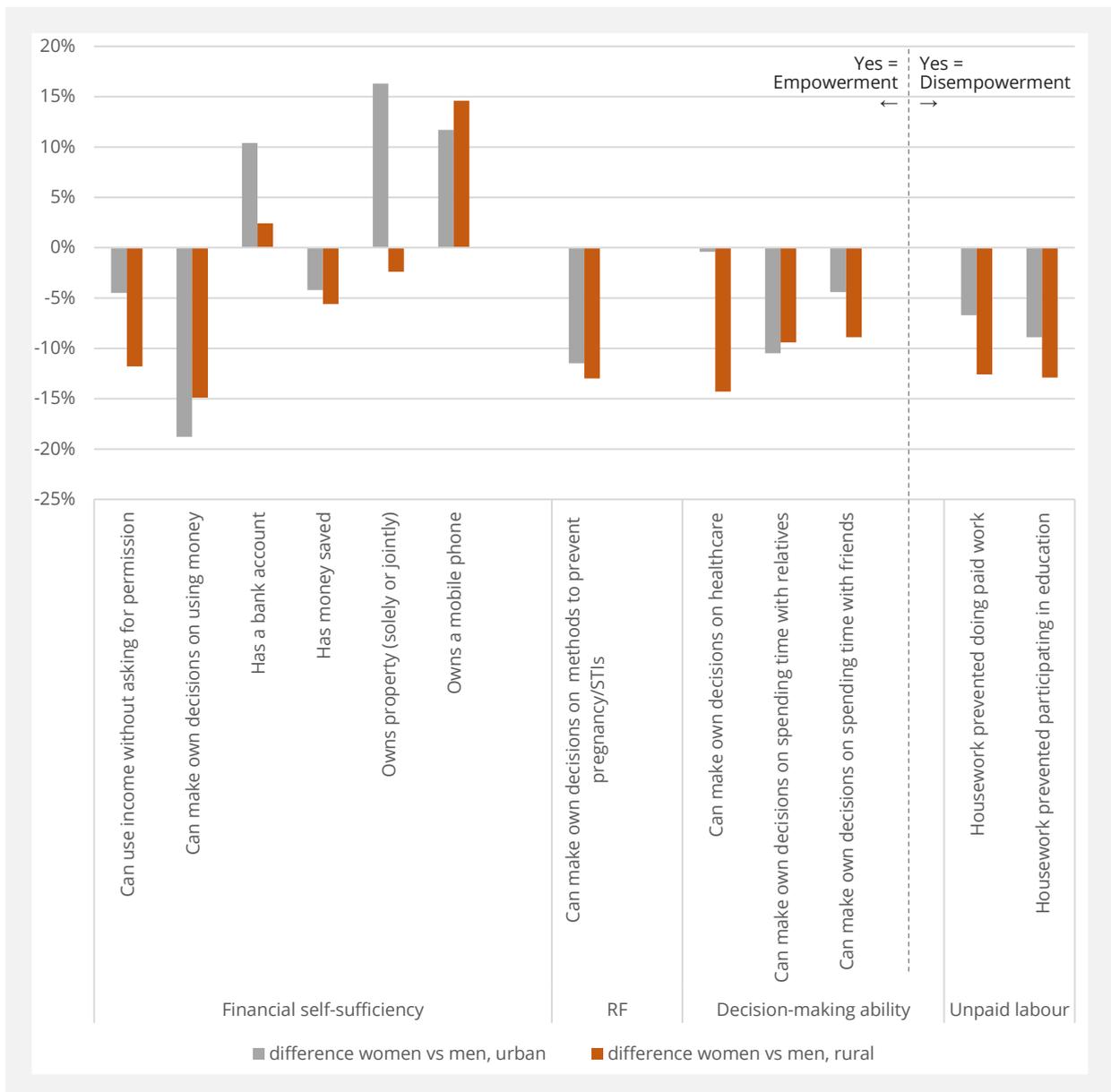
While location – rural or urban – has an impact on levels of experienced empowerment, gender is slightly more significant (Figure 15).<sup>55</sup> Across most of the items, rural men reported the lowest levels of empowerment, in particular in relation to decision-making, reproductive freedom and some areas of financial self-sufficiency. Urban women, on the other hand, are the group who reported the lowest level of empowerment in property ownership. Rural women reported the lowest level of empowerment in mobile phone ownership.



**Figure 15:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in Cambodia

<sup>55</sup> Only items with sufficient number of responses as disaggregated by location were analysed.

The gap between women and men is more marked in urban areas for financial self-sufficiency, while the unpaid labour the gap is more marked in rural areas (Figure 16).



**Figure 16:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men, in rural and urban locations, in Cambodia

In Cambodia, gender is a significant factor in determining whether a person feels and is empowered. Experiences of empowerment are, however, moderated by age, education level and location.

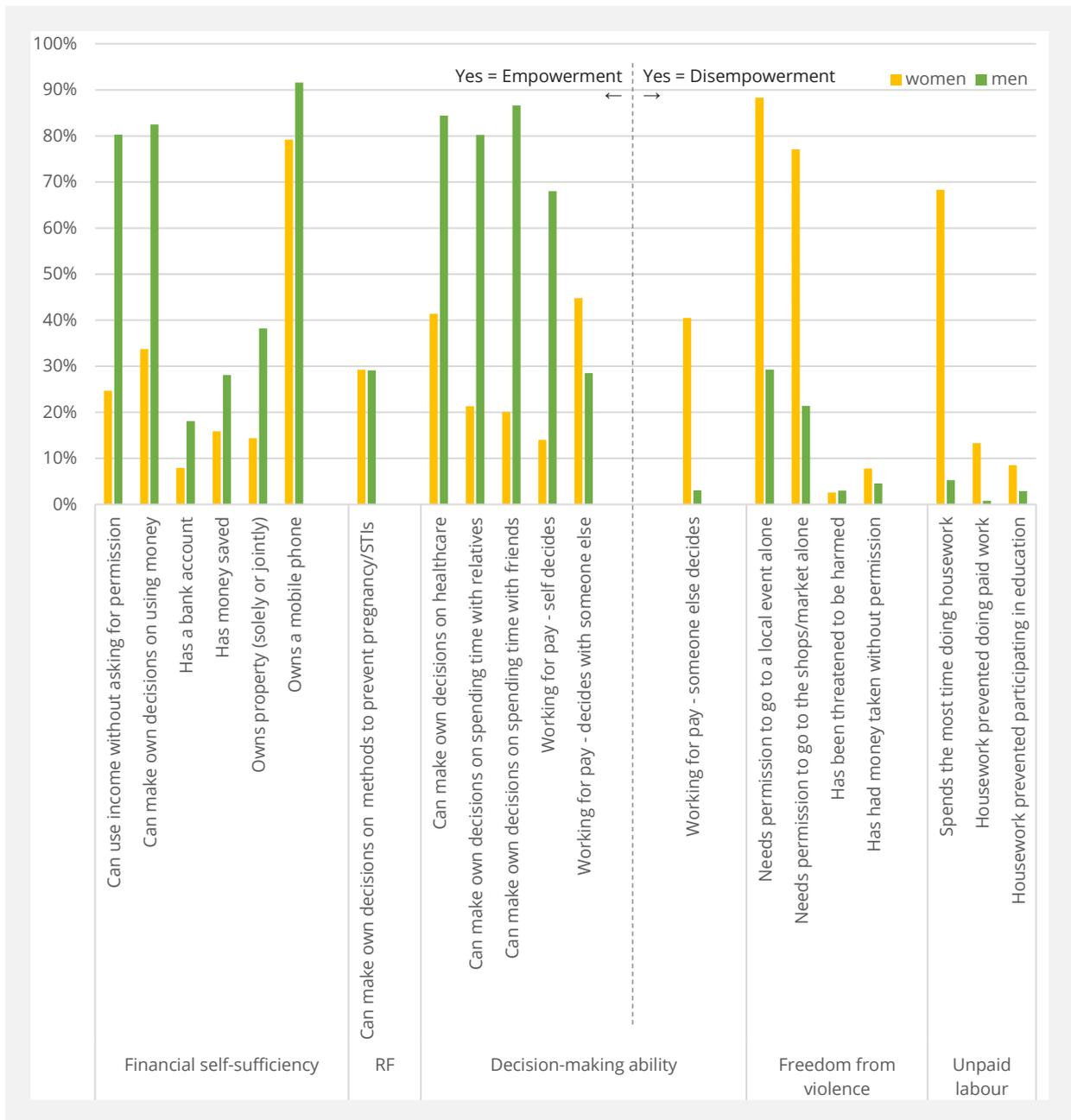
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# Egypt

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## Gender

In Egypt, the data indicate very marked differences between women and men across all empowerment items. Women reported experiencing significantly lower levels of empowerment on the reproductive freedom dimension, as compared to men. Marked differences between women and men (over 50% gap) are evident in relation to (i) decision-making, where men are significantly more likely than women to make their own decisions about spending time with friends and relatives and on whether to work for pay outside of home; (ii) unpaid work, where women are significantly more likely to be the person in the household who spends the most time doing housework; (iii) freedom from violence, in particular with regards to mobility, with a large majority of women – unlike men – needing permission to go to a local event or a market alone; and (iv) financial self-sufficiency, with men being more likely than women to have income that they can use without permission and be able to make their own decisions about what to do with money received (Figure 17).



**Figure 17:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men in Egypt<sup>56</sup>

## Gender and age

Disaggregation of the Egypt data by age showed that while experiences of empowerment differ by age group, the gap in experienced empowerment between women and men is significantly larger than the gap based on age. As shown in Figure 18, across most items, age is a factor that

<sup>56</sup> RF = Reproductive freedom

compounds empowerment gaps for women, but not for men. Men report significantly higher levels of empowerment than do women with little variation based on age, with the exception of property ownership, decision-making on working outside of the home for pay, and reproductive freedom, where men in the 35-54 years group are more empowered than men in the 25-34 years age group. Across all but one item, men in the least empowered age group reported higher rates of empowerment than did women in the most empowered age group. For almost all empowerment items, women aged 15 to 24 years are the least empowered group. The only item where women reported a higher level of empowerment than some men is reproductive freedom, with women of both age groups being more likely to make their own decisions to prevent pregnancy or sexually-transmitted illnesses than men in the 25-34 years age group (but slightly less likely than men in the 35-54 age group).

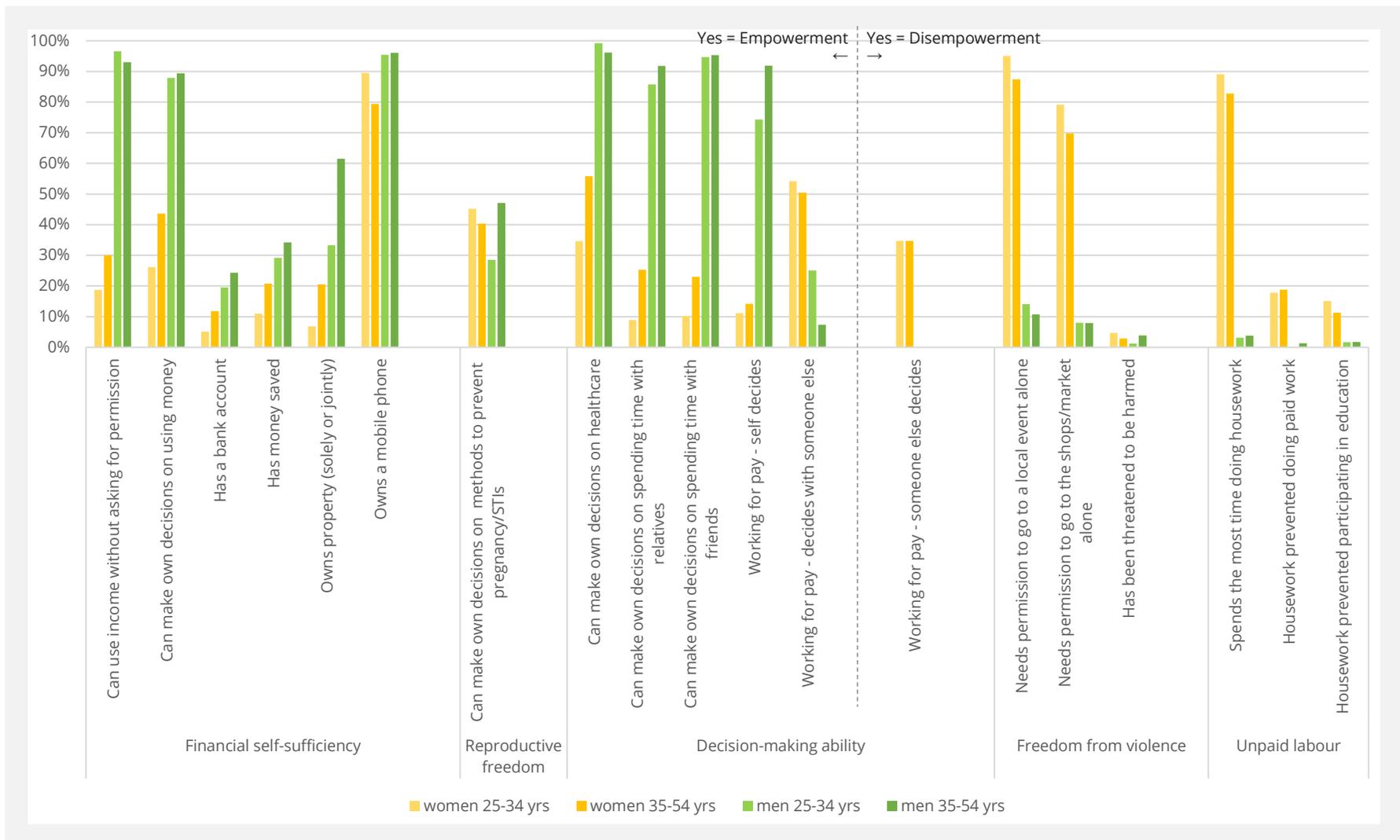


Figure 18: Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by age group, in Egypt

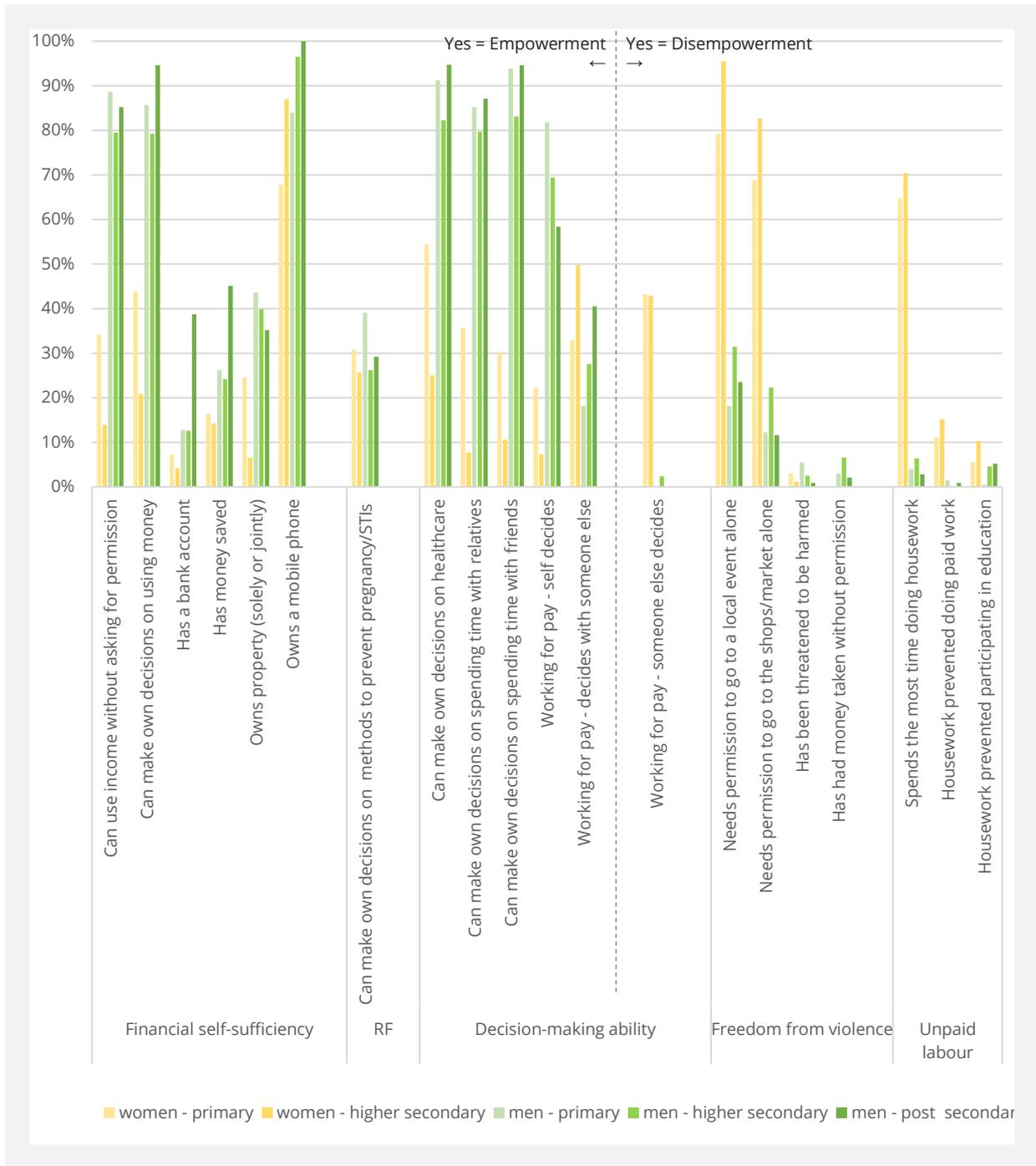
## Gender and education

While differences in empowerment vary with levels of formal education, across most of the empowerment items, gender is a more significant factor in experiencing empowerment than is education (Figure 19).<sup>57</sup> Across most items, men with post-secondary education reported the highest level of empowerment, while women with secondary education reported the lowest level of empowerment. Comparing the primary and secondary education groups, education is a more significant factor in the empowerment levels of women than that of men.

Education level appears a significant factor when intersecting with gender in financial self-sufficiency dimension, specifically for bank account ownership and money saved, with men with post-secondary education being more likely than the other groups to report empowerment in these items.

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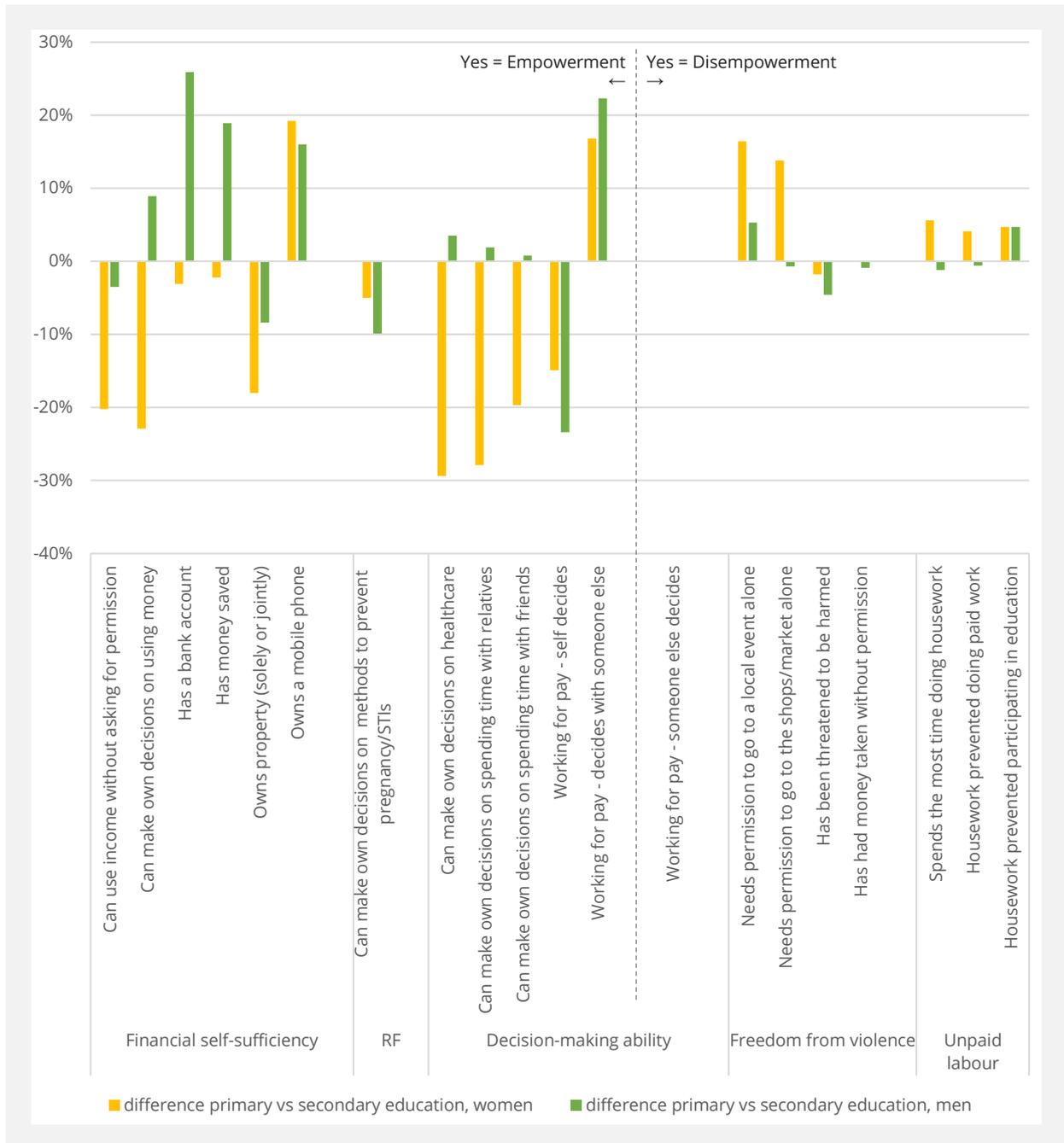
<sup>57</sup> 'Women with post-secondary education' group was omitted from the results due to an insufficient number of responses.



**Figure 19:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Egypt

Differences in empowerment by education level are more marked for women than for men across most items, with the exception of bank account ownership, availability of money saved, and individual or joint decision-making on working for pay outside of home. For most items, women with secondary education reported being less empowered than women with primary education, with the exception of mobile phone ownership. This difference is particularly significant in relation

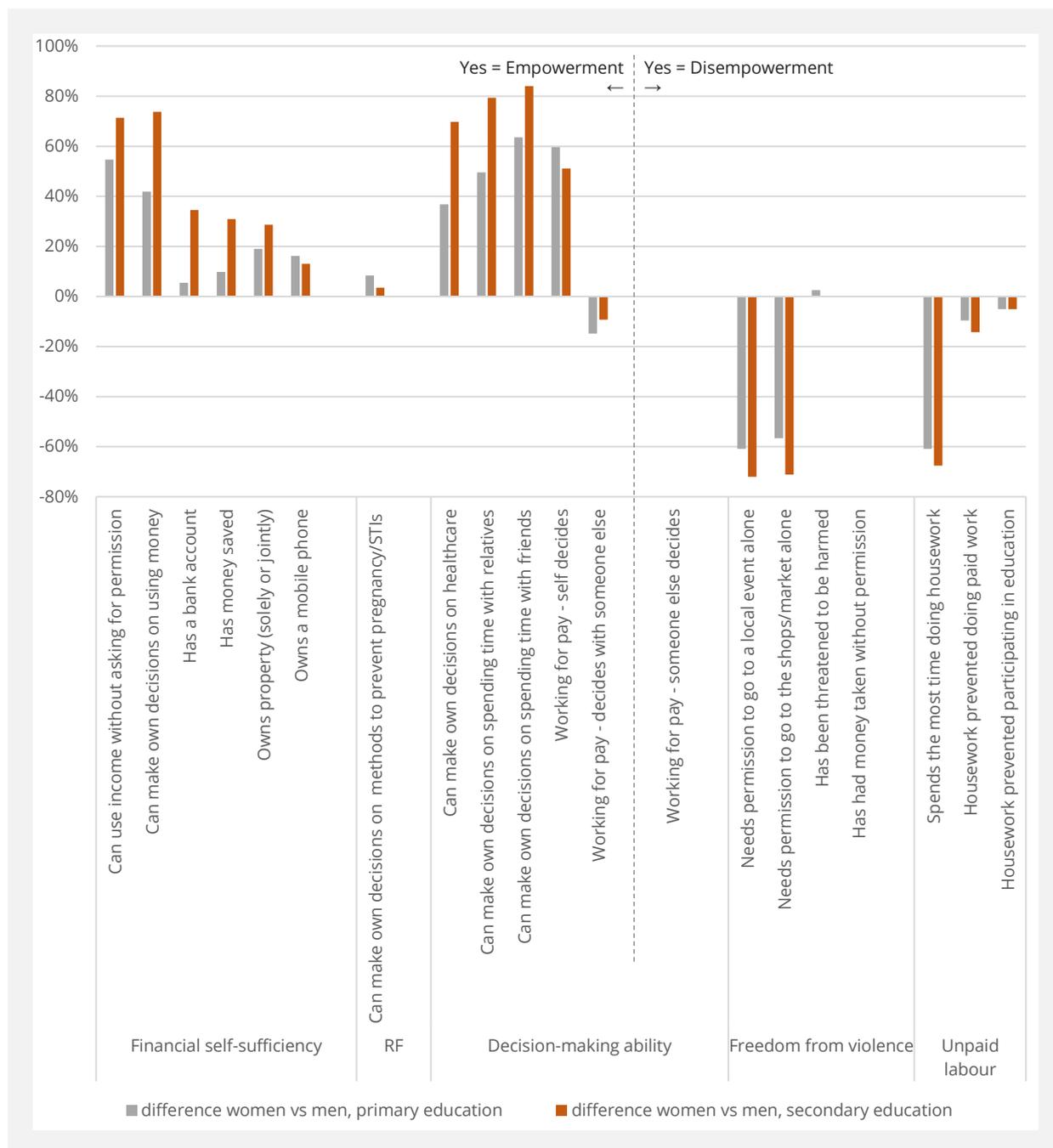
to decision-making ability (on healthcare, spending time with friends and relatives), financial self-sufficiency (decisions on using money, using income without asking for permission and property ownership), and, to a lesser degree, mobility (needing permission to go to a local event or market alone) (Figure 20).



**Figure 20:** Differences in experiences of (dis)empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Egypt<sup>58</sup>

<sup>58</sup> % difference = % of responses by respondents with secondary education - % of responses by respondents with primary education

When comparing experiences of empowerment of women and men with the same education levels across the 18 items, the empowerment gap between women and men with secondary education is larger than the empowerment gap between women and men with primary education (Figure 21).

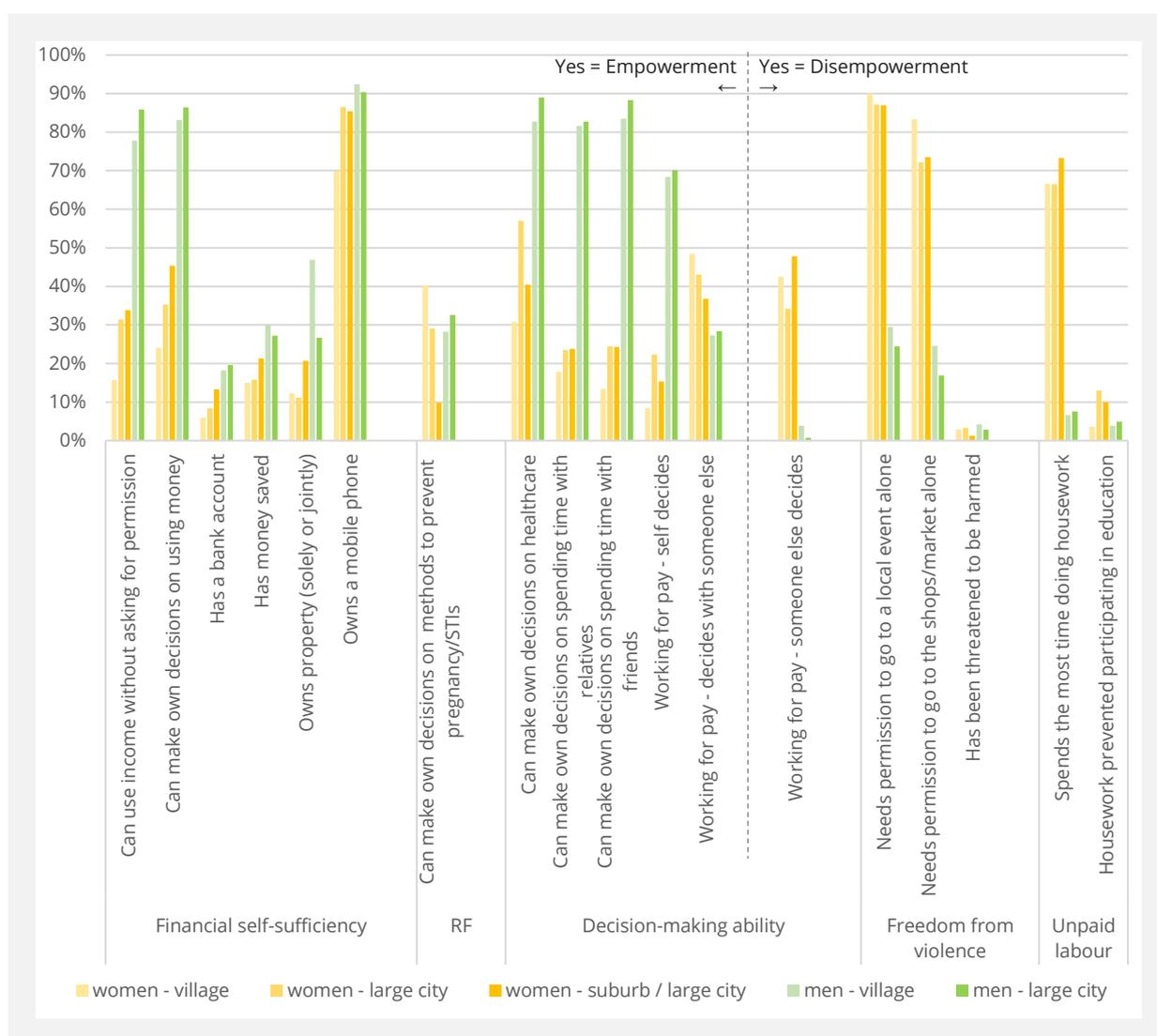


**Figure 21:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men,<sup>59</sup> in the same education groups, in Egypt

<sup>59</sup> % difference = men - women

## Gender and location

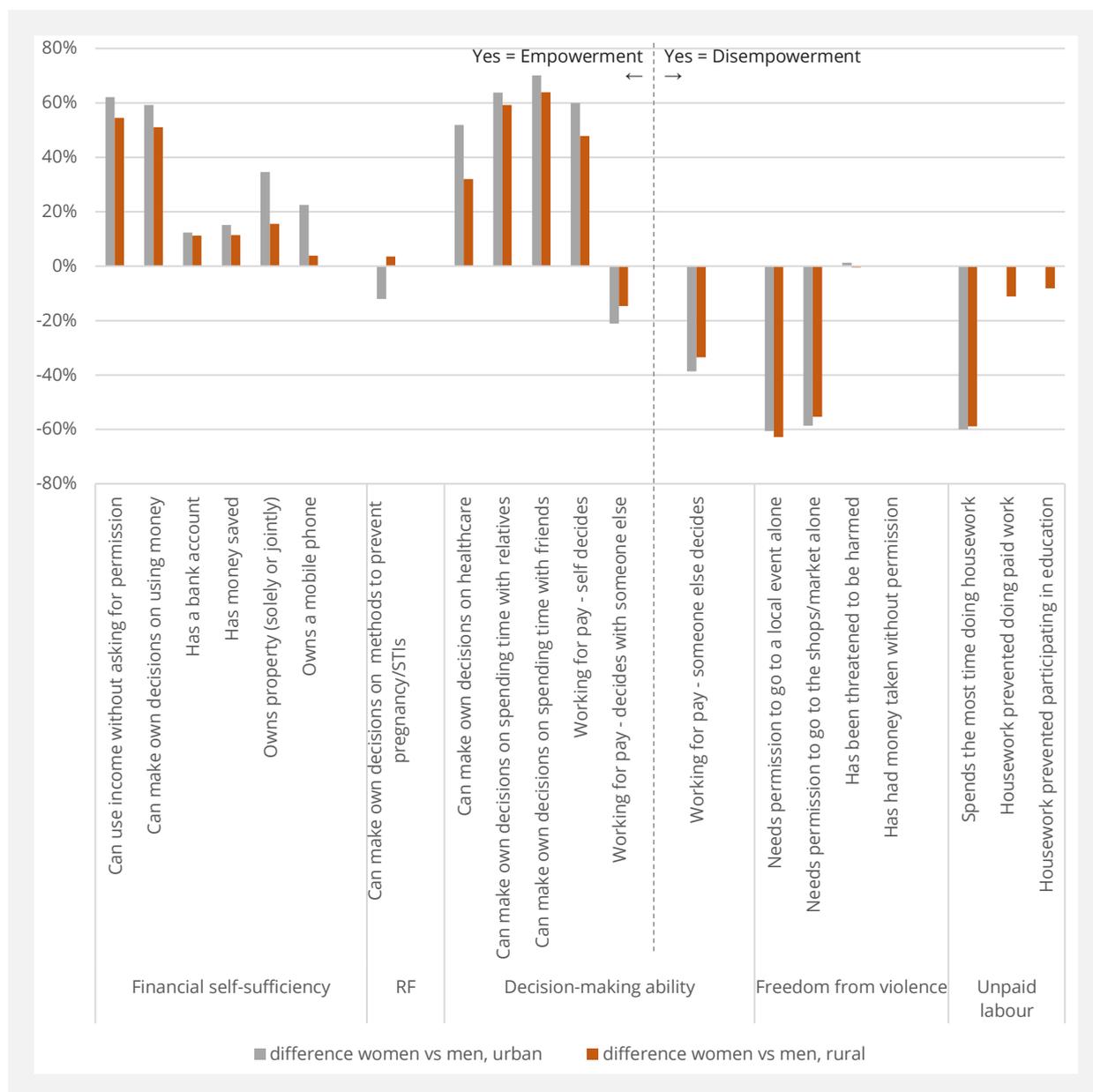
As with education levels, while location – rural or urban – has an impact on levels of experienced empowerment, gender is a substantially more significant factor. For men, there are few differences in reported empowerment between rural and urban locations. The exception is property ownership, where rural men reported being more empowered than any other group. For women, the differences in empowerment levels are more marked across locations, in particular in the financial self-sufficiency and decision-making ability dimensions, with rural women being the least empowered group across most items, except for reproductive freedom. Women from suburbs of a large city are the least empowered group with regard to reproductive freedom (Figure 22).<sup>60</sup>



**Figure 22:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in Egypt

<sup>60</sup> 'Men from suburb of a large city' group was omitted from the results due to an insufficient number of responses.

For most of the empowerment items, the gap between women and men is more marked in urban, than rural, areas; particularly for mobile phone and property ownership, and decision-making on healthcare. There are marginal differences between women and men in urban and rural areas in relation to freedom of violence and unpaid labour (Figure 23).



**Figure 23:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men, in rural and urban locations, in Egypt

In Egypt, gender is a significant factor in determining whether a person feels and is empowered. Experiences of empowerment are, however, to a degree moderated by age, education level and location, and more so for women than for men.

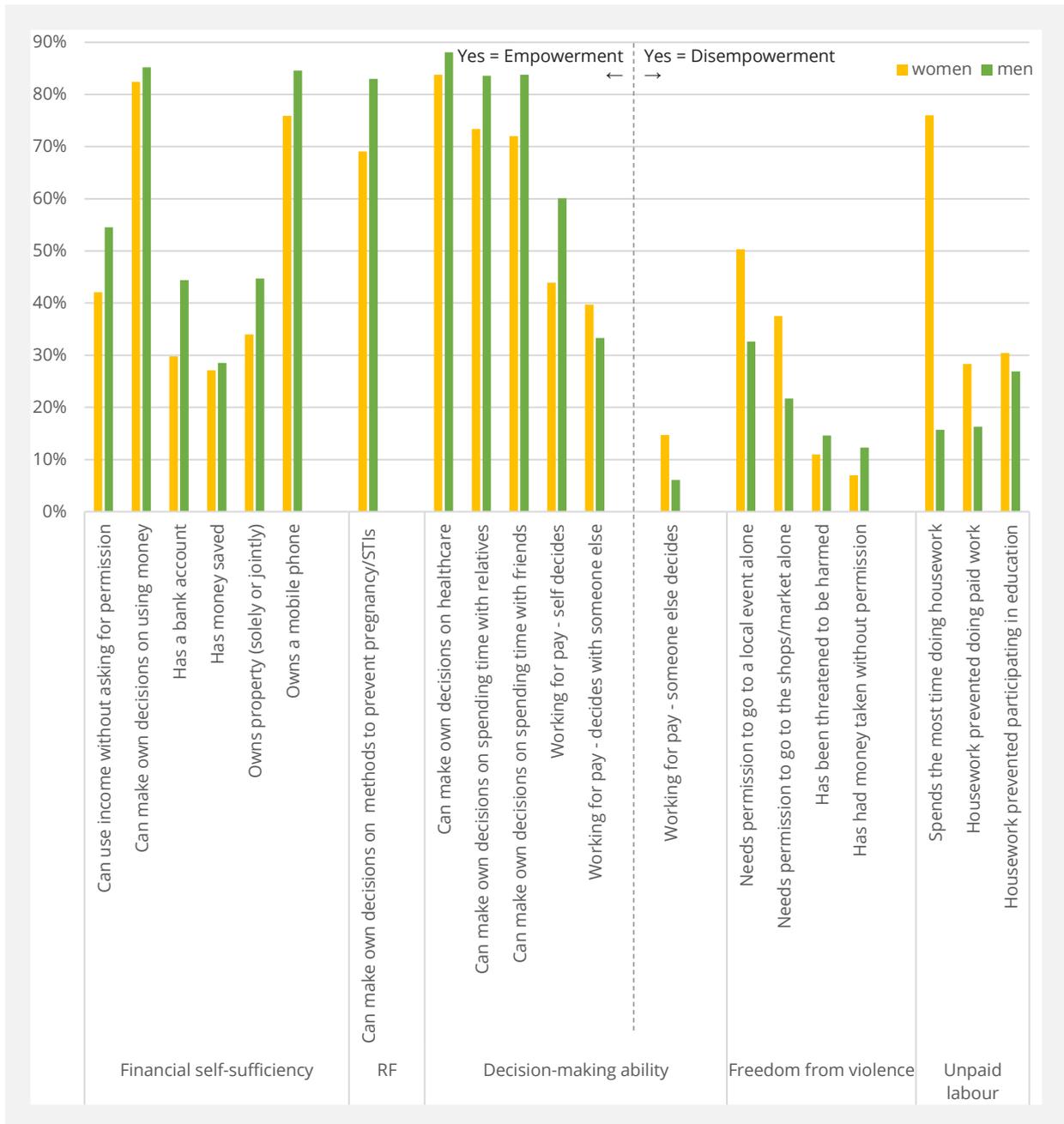
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# Kenya

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## Gender

In Kenya, the data indicate differences between women and men across all empowerment items, with women experiencing lower levels of empowerment as compared to men. The gap between women and men is greatest for the unpaid labour dimension, with women distinctly more likely than men to be the person in their households who spend the most time doing housework. Differences between women and men are also evident in relation to (i) freedom from violence, where women are more likely than men to need permission to go to local event or market alone; (ii) decision-making, where men are more likely than women to make their own decisions on whether to work for pay outside of home and on spending their time with friends; and (iii) financial self-sufficiency, with men being more likely than women to have a bank account or have income that they can use without permission (Figure 24).



**Figure 24:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men in Kenya<sup>61</sup>

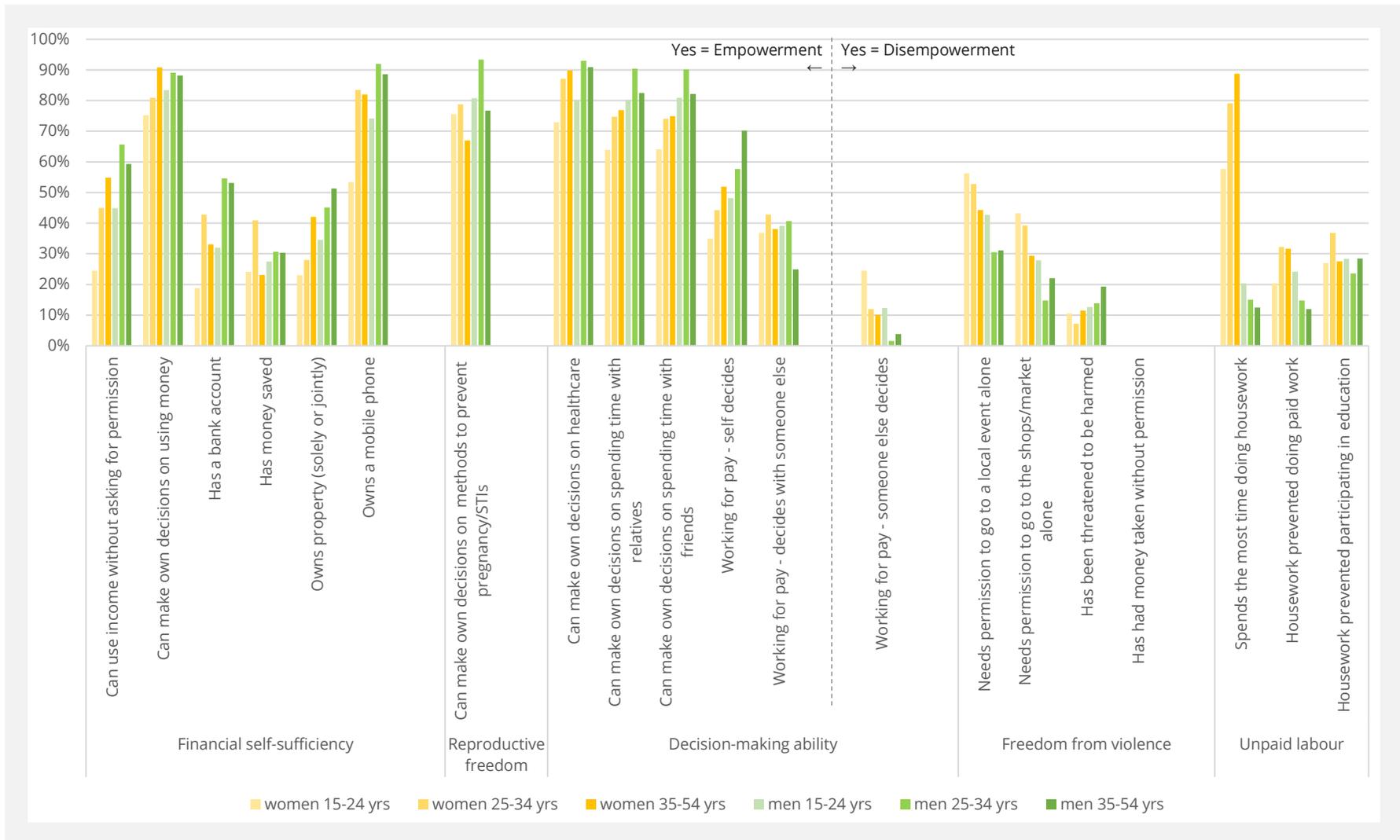
## Gender and age

Disaggregation of the Kenya data by age show that while experiences of empowerment differ by age group, the gap in experienced empowerment between women and men remains more significant than the gap based on age. As shown in (Figure 25), in terms of gender and age, men over 25 years of age, and in particular in the 25-34 years age group, report the highest rates of

<sup>61</sup> RF = Reproductive freedom

empowerment across most items. Age-related differences are evident in a number of items. In the financial self-sufficiency dimension, women and men in the 15 to 24 years group are less empowered, as compared to the other age groups within their gender. The men in the 15 to 24 years age group reported significantly higher rates of empowerment than did women in the same age group. For almost all empowerment items, women between 15 and 24 years of age are the least empowered group.

Across most items – unpaid labour, freedom from violence, reproductive freedom and decision-making – men in the least empowered age group reported similar or higher levels of empowerment than women in the most empowered age group. Within the financial self-sufficiency dimension and regarding decision-making on healthcare, women in the 25-34 years and/or 35-54 years age groups reported similar or only slightly lower empowerment levels, as compared to men. Women between 25 and 34 years of age reported having money saved, more than did the other age groups of women and men.



**Figure 25:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by age group, in Kenya

## Gender and education

Disaggregation of the Kenya data by gender and education showed that for some items, gender remains a more significant factor in experiencing empowerment than is education.<sup>62</sup> For some items, the level of empowerment between women and men with secondary education level is similar (Figure 26).

Gender remains the most significant factor with regards to (i) freedom from violence, in particular mobility; (ii) ability to decide alone whether or not to work for pay outside of home; and (iii) some financial self-sufficiency items, including the ability to use income without asking for permission and property ownership, with women reporting lower levels of empowerment than men across all these items.

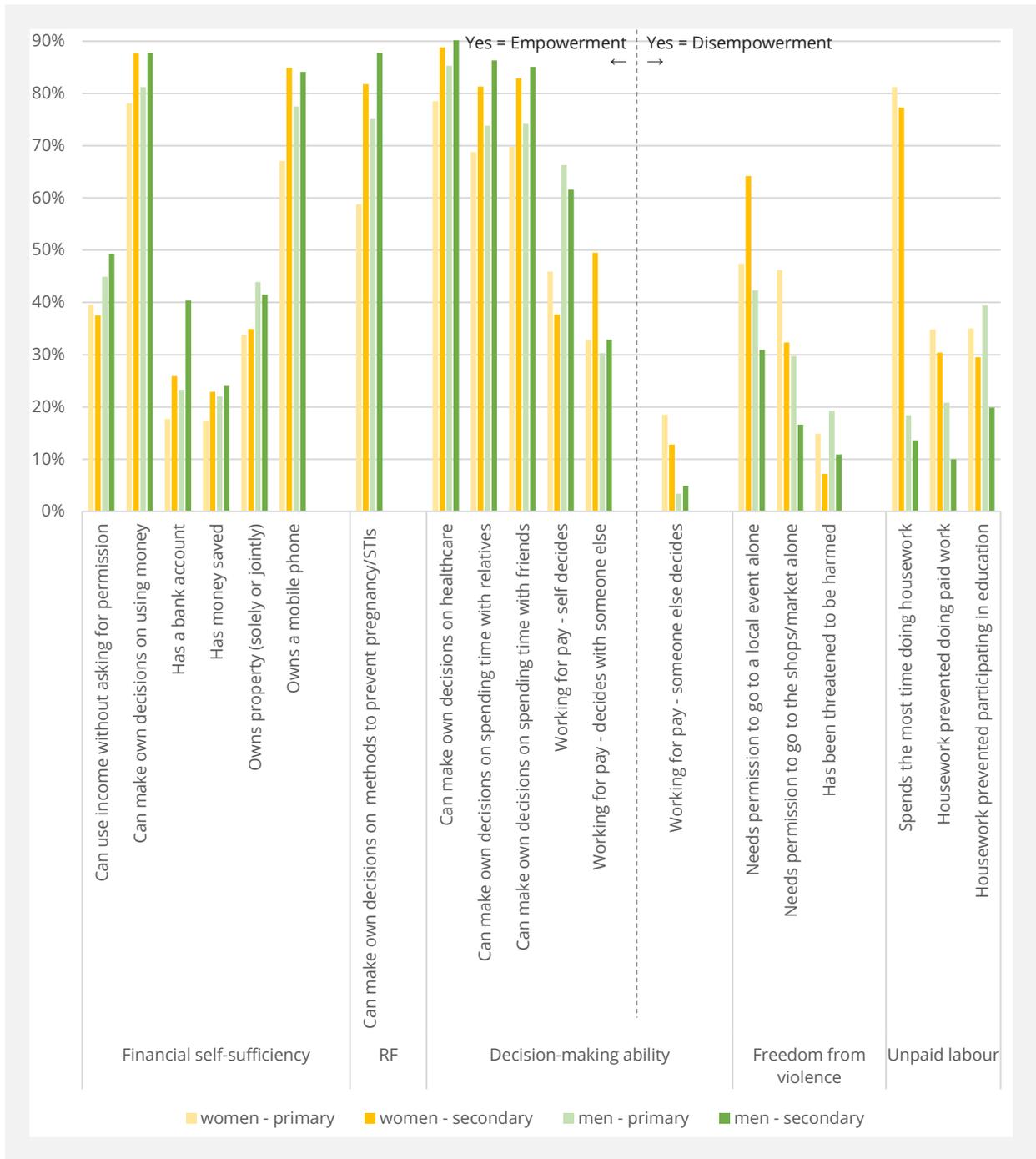
Education, on the other hand, is a significant factor in relation to (i) the decision-making dimension, with men, and to a slightly lesser degree women, with secondary education being more likely to make their own decisions regarding healthcare, spending time with friends or relatives, as compared to women and men with primary education; and (ii) financial self-sufficiency, with women and men with secondary education being more likely to own a mobile phone or make their own decisions on using money saved. As regards reproductive freedom, while men, and to a lesser extent women, with secondary education are more likely to be able to make decisions on methods to prevent pregnancy or sexually-transmitted illnesses, as compared to men and women with primary education, the gender gap remains significant, in particular at the primary education level.

Cross-cutting gender and age, men with secondary or higher education are more likely to have a bank account than the other gender and age groups.

In general, even where education is a significant factor in empowerment levels, women with primary education report the lowest levels of experienced empowerment across most items. As shown in Figure 27, men with post-secondary education are consistently the most empowered group across all items.

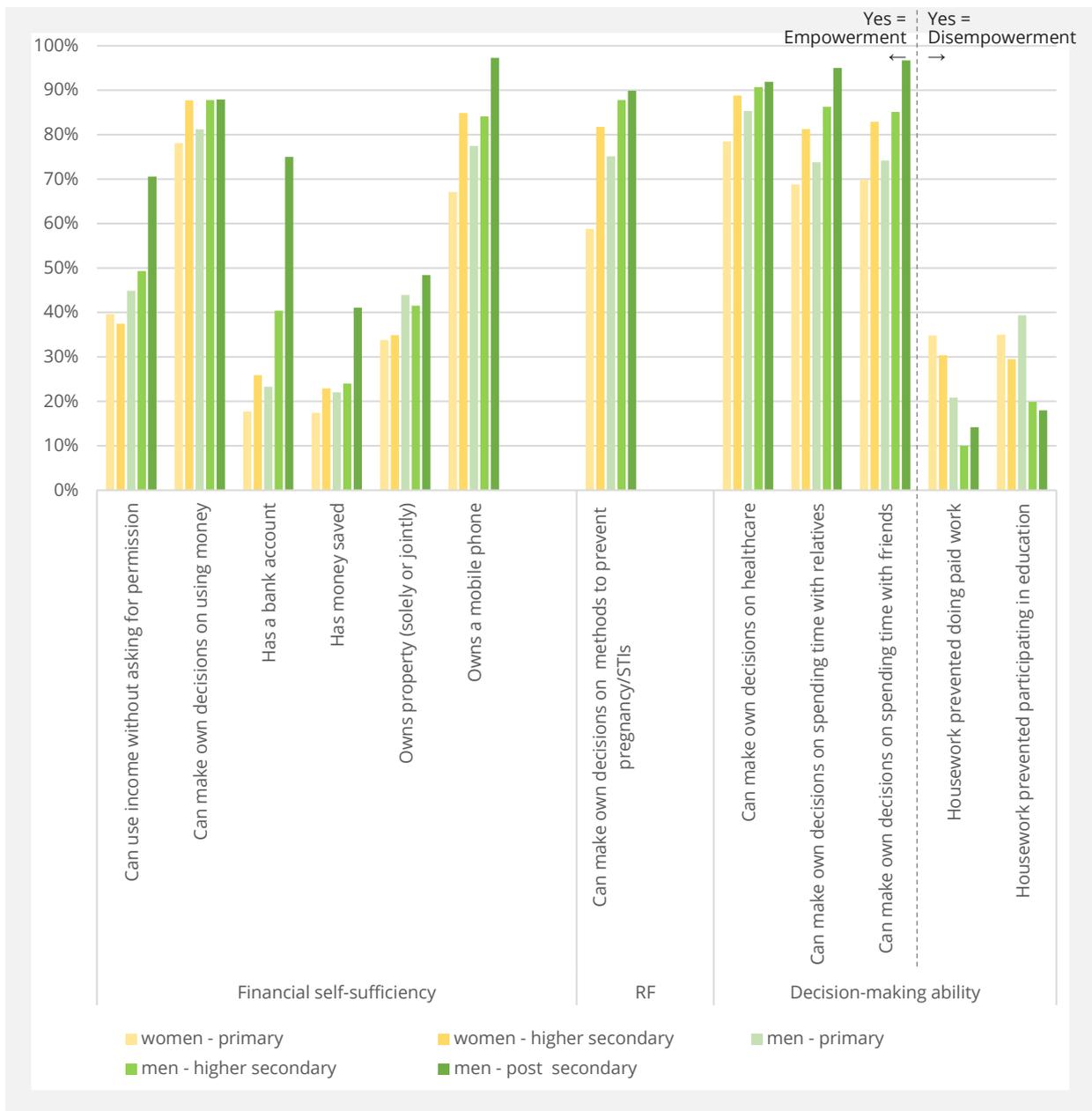
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<sup>62</sup> Due to small number of responses in the post-secondary education group, only primary and secondary education groups were considered for most of the analysis.



**Figure 26:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Kenya<sup>63</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Due to limited availability of data in the 'post-secondary education' group, only primary and secondary education groups are shown.



**Figure 27:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Kenya (including post-secondary education group)<sup>64</sup>

Across most items, the differences in empowerment by education level are more marked among women, than men. For most of the empowerment items, women with lower secondary education report being more empowered, as compared to women with primary education. This difference is most significant in relation to the ability to make own decisions on methods to prevent pregnancy and sexually-transmitted illnesses, as well as mobile phone ownership. More women with

<sup>64</sup> Table including men with post-secondary education group, for items where sufficient data was available. Sufficient data wasn't available for women with post-secondary education

secondary education, on the contrary, report needing permission to go to a local event alone, as compared to women with primary education.

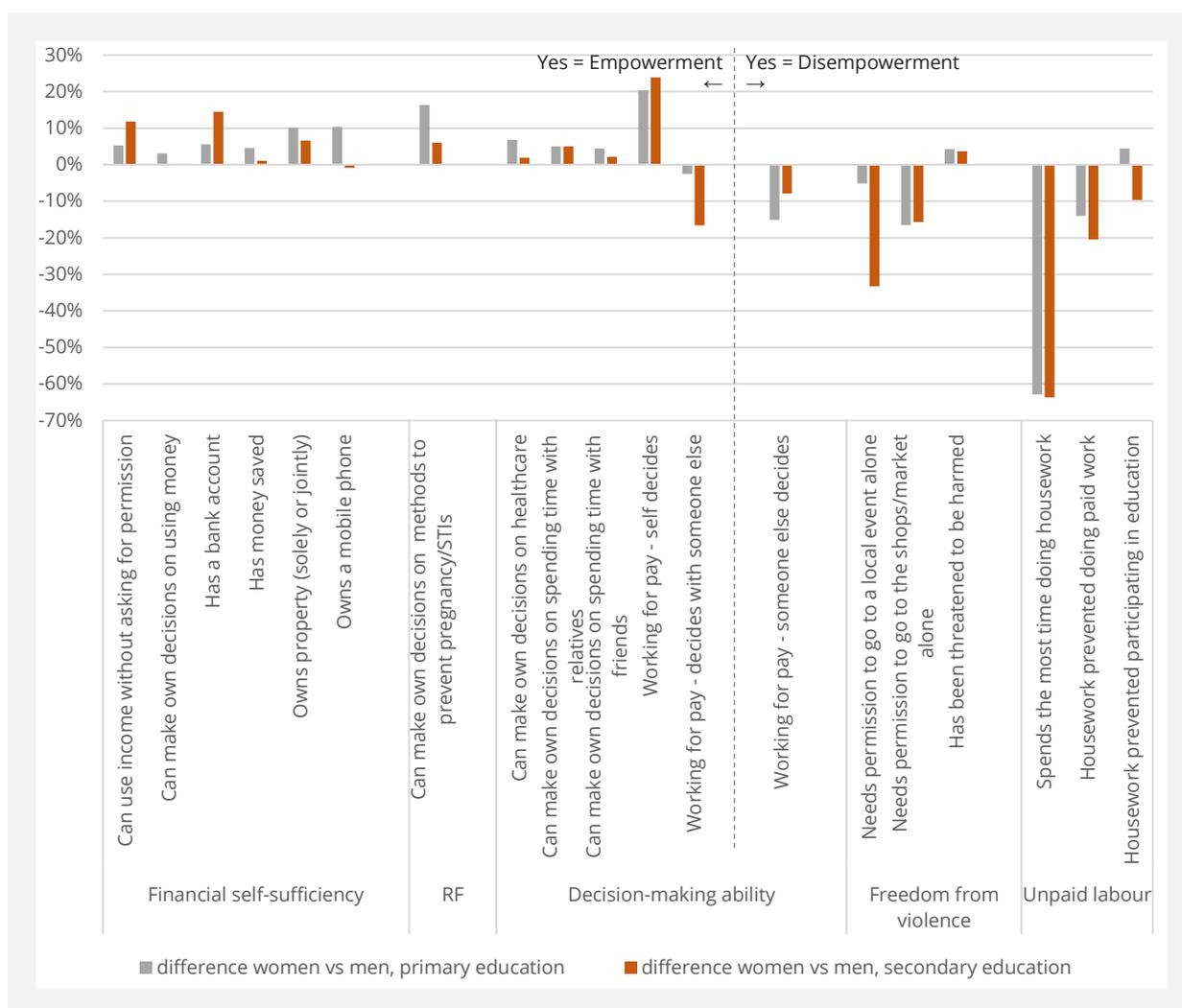
Differences in empowerment among men with primary education and those with lower secondary education are less marked as compared to women. The exception is in relation to bank account ownership and unpaid labour preventing taking up education or paid work, where men with secondary education are significantly more empowered as compared to men with primary education (Figure 28).



**Figure 28:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Kenya<sup>65</sup>

<sup>65</sup> % difference = % of responses by respondents with lower secondary education - % of responses by respondents with primary education

When comparing experiences of empowerment of women and men with the same education levels across the 18 items, the empowerment gap between women and men with secondary education is larger with regard to mobility, in particular needing permission to go to a local event alone; and to a lesser degree in bank account ownership, the ability to use income without asking for permission, and housework preventing the ability to do paid work. The empowerment gap between women and men with primary education is larger with regard to the ability to decide on methods to prevent pregnancy/sexually-transmitted illnesses and mobile phone ownership. Education levels have little influence on the empowerment gap with regards to unpaid labour, with women with both primary and secondary education alike being overwhelmingly the person spending the most time doing housework (Figure 29).



**Figure 29:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men,<sup>66</sup> in the same education groups, in Kenya

<sup>66</sup> % difference = men - women

## Gender and location

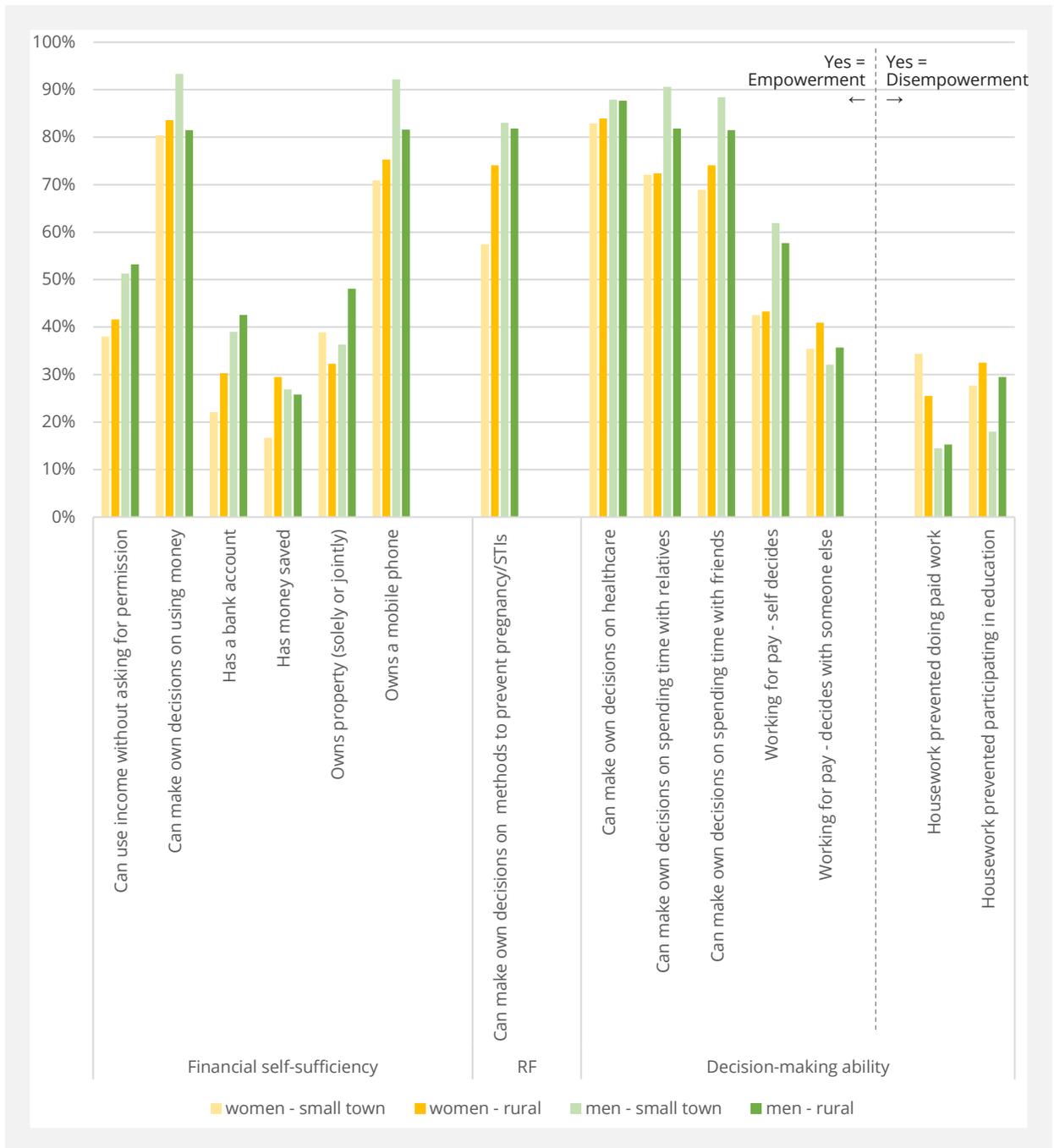
While location – rural area or small town – has an impact on levels of experienced empowerment, across most items gender is a more significant factor. In general, men living in a small town are the most empowered group, while women living in a small town are the least empowered group (Figure 30).<sup>67</sup>

Men from small towns reported higher levels of experienced empowerment as compared to rural men, especially in the dimension of decision-making ability (except for decision-making on healthcare, where differences are not marked). Under the financial self-sufficiency dimension, men from small towns reported higher levels of empowerment for mobile phone ownership and ability to make own decisions on using money, while rural men are more likely to own property. Under reproductive freedom, there are small differences between rural men and men from small towns.

In contrast, women from small towns reported being less empowered than rural women across all dimensions, with most marked differences in the areas of freedom from violence, reproductive freedom, and financial self-sufficiency (in particular regarding availability of money saved and ownership of bank account). In relation to decision-making, differences between women in small towns and rural areas are less significant (Figure 31).

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<sup>67</sup> Only items with sufficient number of responses in all categories were considered.



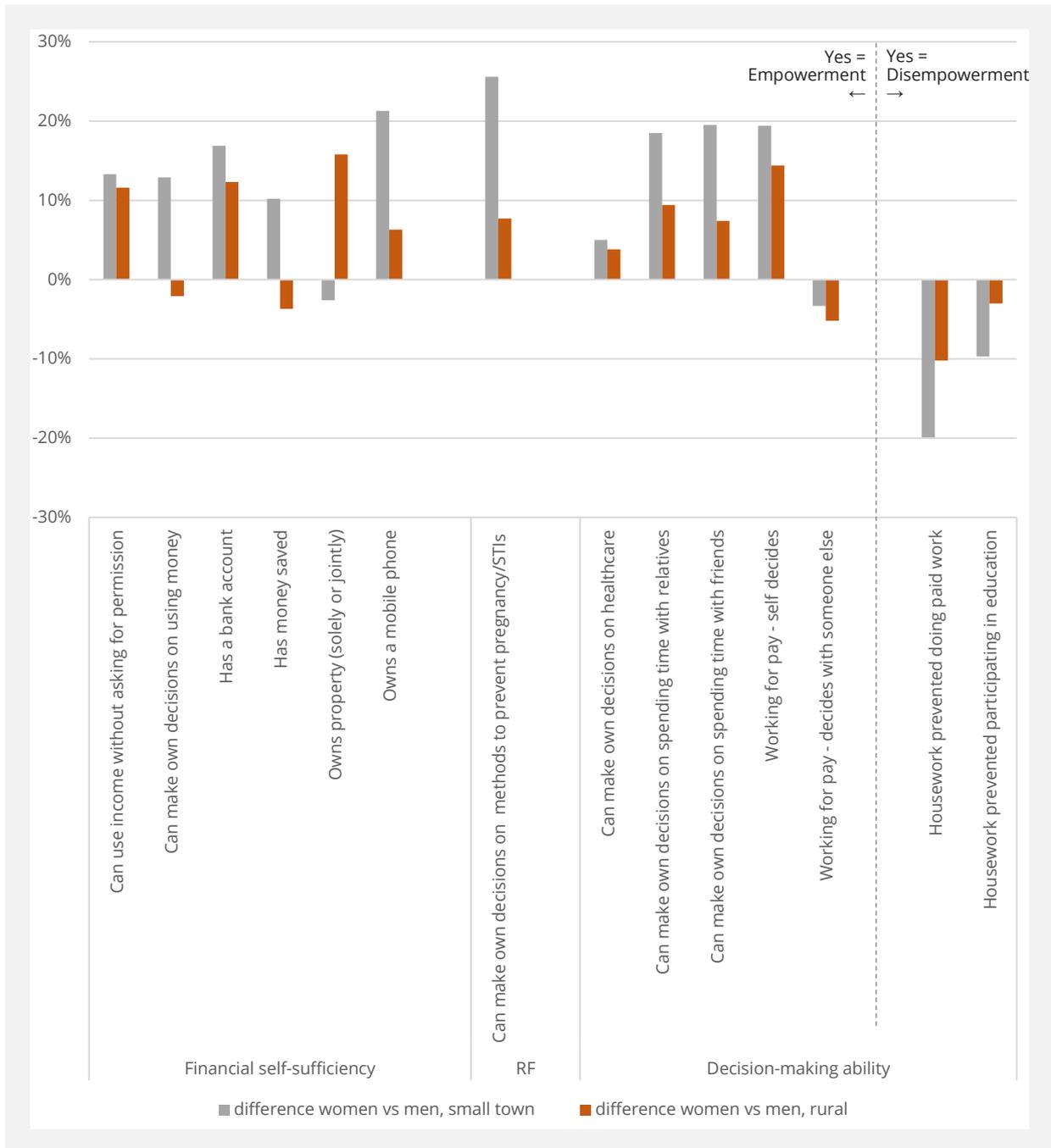
**Figure 30:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in Kenya



**Figure 31:** Differences in experiences of (dis)empowerment of women and men, by location, in Kenya<sup>68</sup>

For all of the empowerment items where data in all categories are available, with the exception of property ownership, the gap between women and men is more marked in small towns than rural areas, particularly for reproductive freedom (Figure 32).

<sup>68</sup> % difference = % of responses by respondents from small town - % of responses by respondents from rural areas



**Figure 32:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men, in small town and rural areas, in Kenya

In Kenya, gender is a significant factor in determining whether a person feels and is empowered. Experiences of empowerment are, however, moderated by age, education level and location, and more so for women than for men.

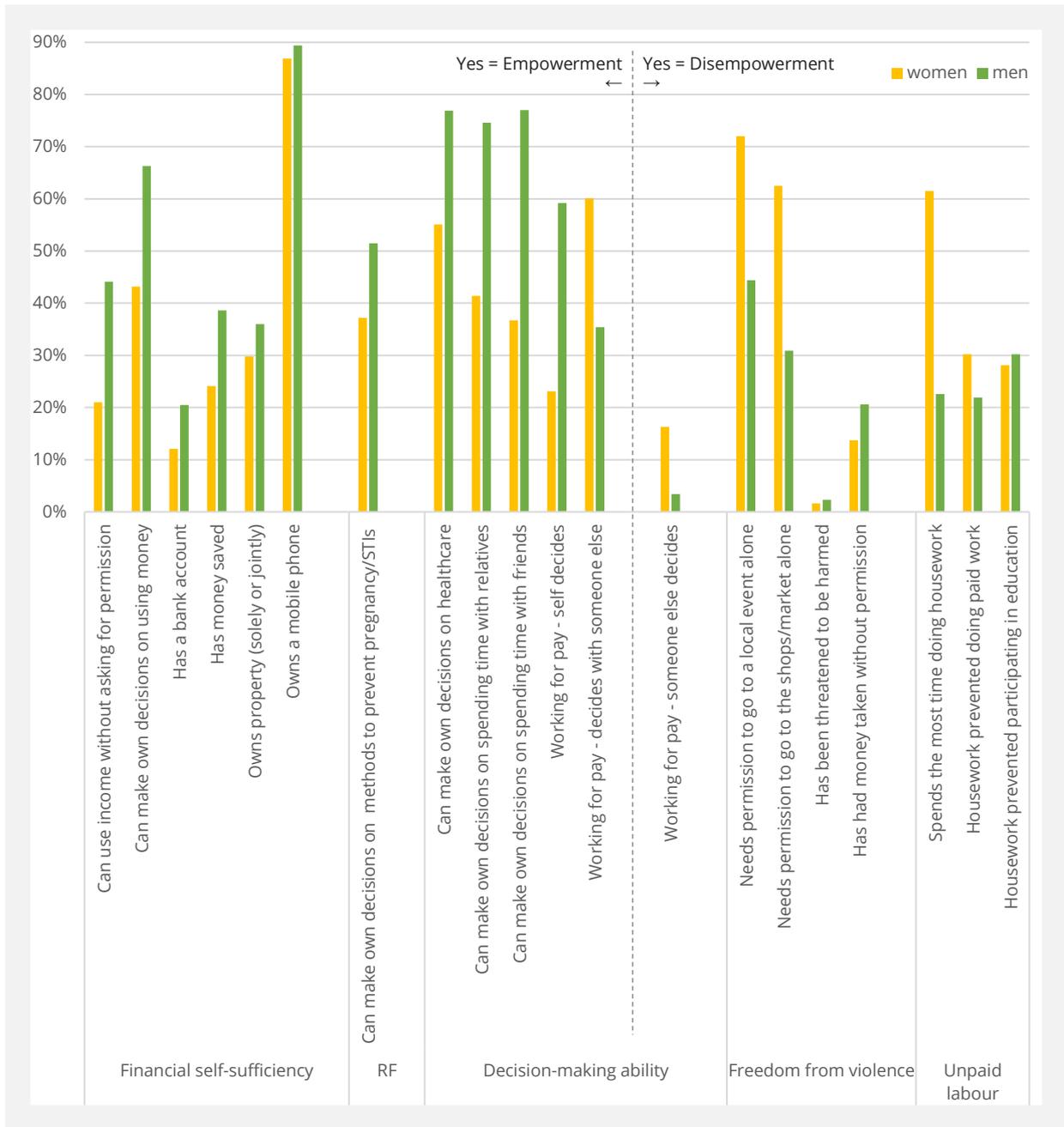
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# Kyrgyzstan

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## Gender

In Kyrgyzstan, the data indicate marked differences between women and men across all empowerment items, with women experiencing significantly lower levels of empowerment than men. The gap between women and men is greatest for the (i) decision making dimension, where men are markedly more likely than women to make their own decisions on spending time with friends, whether to work for pay outside of home and on spending their time with relatives; (ii) unpaid labour dimension, with women distinctly more likely than men to be the person in their households who spend the most time doing housework; and (iii) freedom from violence, with women significantly more likely to need permission to go the shops and local events alone. Stark differences between women and men are also evident in relation to financial self-sufficiency, with men being more likely to have income that they can use without permission, able to make decisions on using money and on healthcare, than women (Figure 33).



**Figure 33:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men in Kyrgyzstan<sup>69</sup>

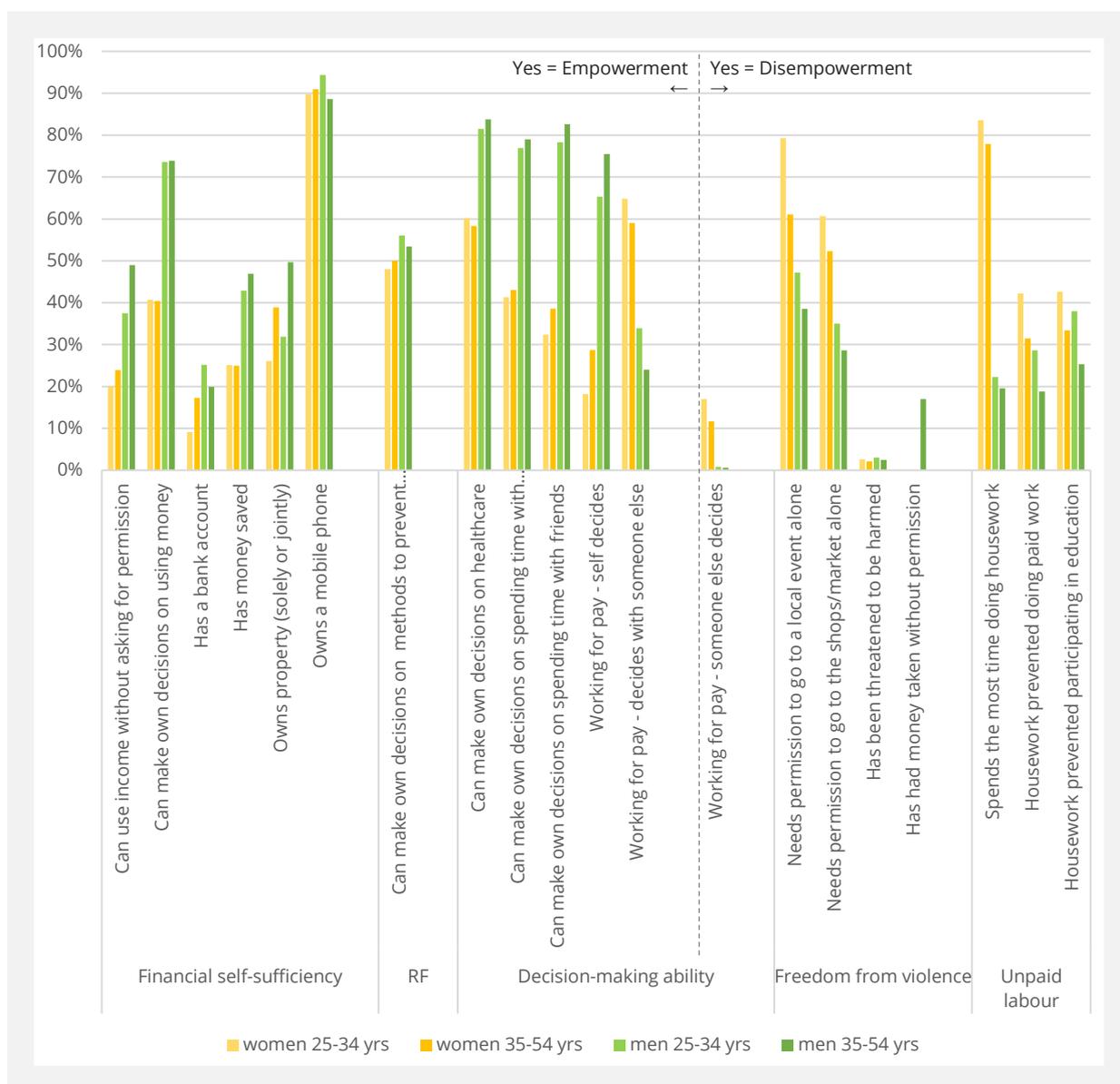
## Gender and age

Disaggregation of the Kyrgyzstan data by age show that while experiences of empowerment differ by age group, the gap in experienced empowerment between women and men is significantly larger than the gap based on age. As shown in (Figure 34), in terms of gender and age, men of

<sup>69</sup> RF = Reproductive freedom

both age groups,<sup>70</sup> and particularly in the 35-54 years group, report higher levels of empowerment than do women across most items. For almost all empowerment items, women aged 25 to 34 years are the least empowered group.

Age-related differences are evident only in regard to property ownership, where women and men aged 35-54 years are more likely to own (solely or jointly) a property, than are women and men in the 25-34 years age group. Cross-cutting gender and age, women aged 25 to 34 years are significantly more likely to need permission to go to a local event alone as compared to the other groups.



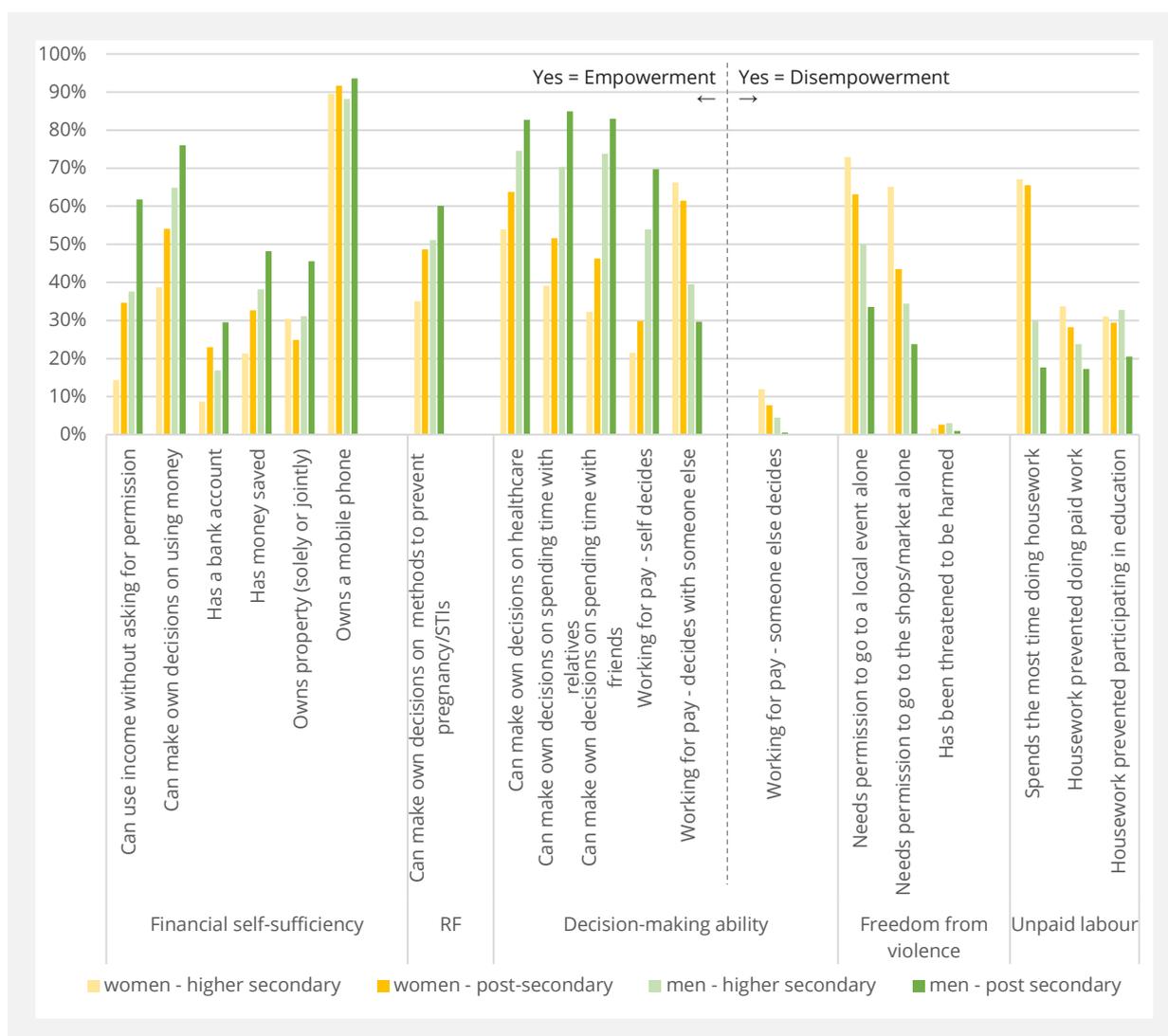
**Figure 34:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by age group, in Kyrgyzstan

<sup>70</sup> The data for the 15-24 years age group, for both women and men, were insufficient to include in the analysis.

## Gender and education

While differences in empowerment vary with levels of formal education, across most of the empowerment items gender remains a more significant factor in experiencing empowerment, with levels of formal education compounding the gender differences (Figure 35). Men with post-secondary education reported the highest level of experienced empowerment across all items, while women with higher secondary education reported the lowest levels of empowerment across all items, with the exception of property ownership. In almost all items, men with higher secondary education are more empowered than women with post-secondary education.

Education levels compound gender differences, particularly in the decision-making dimension and with regard to mobility. Education level appears more significant than gender only in relation to account ownership, with both women and men with post-secondary education being more likely to have their own account, as compared to women and men with higher secondary education.



**Figure 35:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Kyrgyzstan

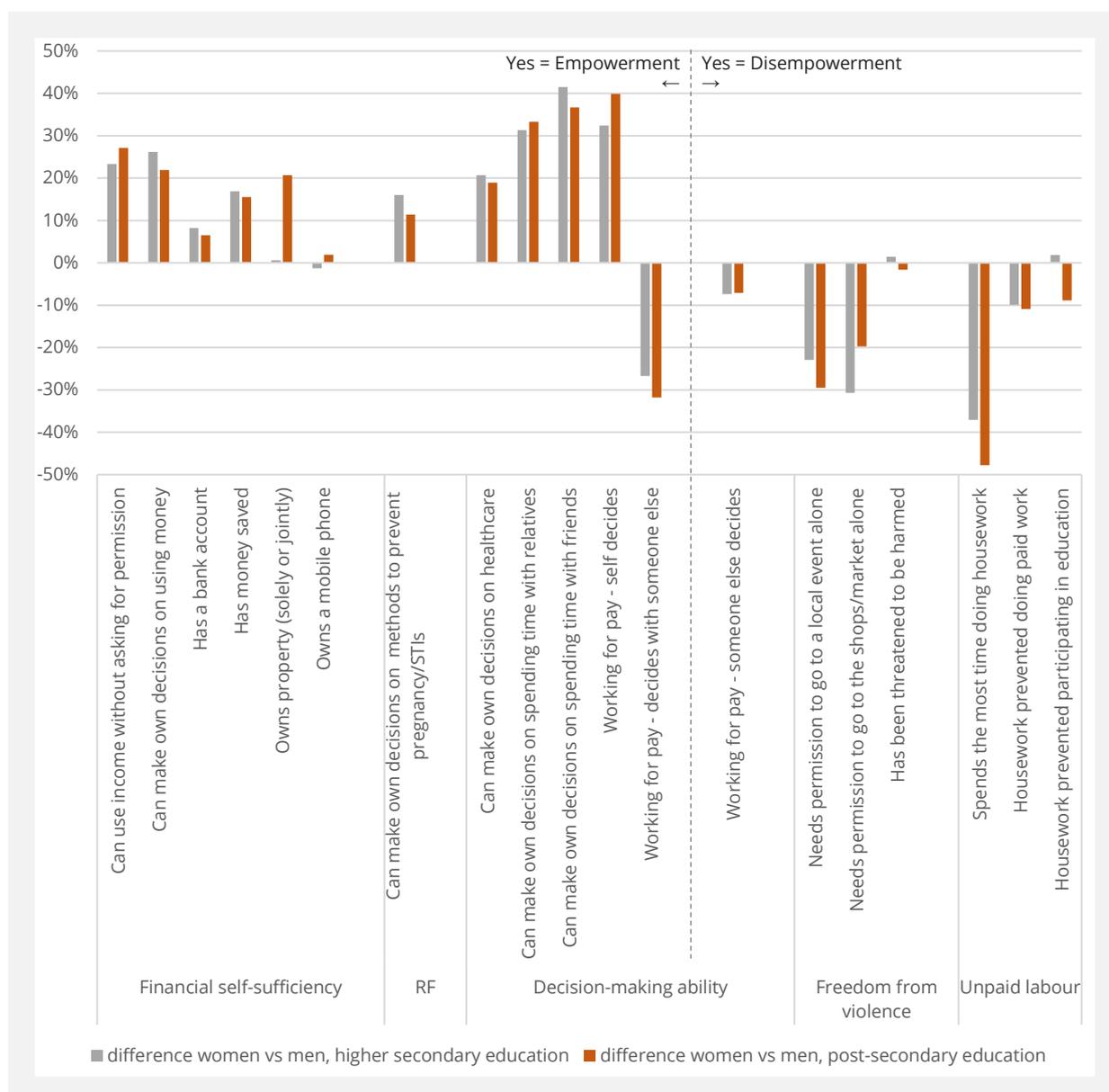
The gap in empowerment by education level is similar for women and for men across most items, with the exception of property ownership and unpaid labour, where differences in empowerment among men with higher secondary education and those with post-secondary education are significantly more marked, as compared to women (Figure 36).



**Figure 36:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Kyrgyzstan<sup>71</sup>

<sup>71</sup> % difference = % of responses by respondents with post-secondary education - % of responses by respondents with higher secondary education

When comparing experiences of empowerment of women and men with the same education levels across the 18 items, the empowerment gap between women and men with post-secondary education is larger, as compared to the empowerment gap between women and men with higher secondary education, with regards to property ownership and, to a lesser extent, unpaid labour, the ability to decide for oneself whether to work for pay and the ability to go to a local event without needing a permission. In contrast, the empowerment gap between women and men with higher secondary education is larger in relation to the ability to go to shops/markets without needing permission (Figure 37).

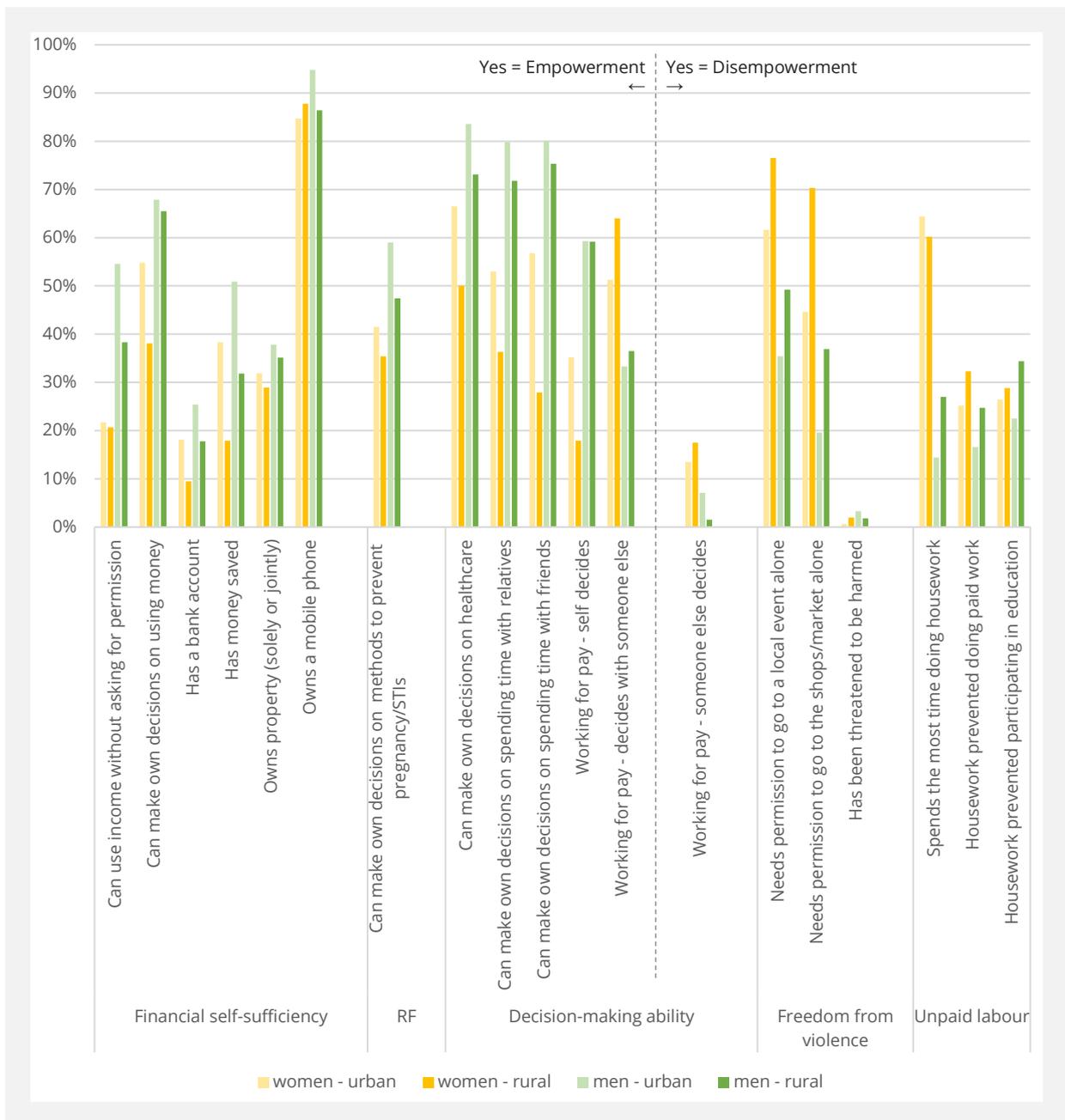


**Figure 37:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men,<sup>72</sup> in the same education groups, in Kyrgyzstan

<sup>72</sup> % difference = men - women

## Gender and location

As with education levels, while gender remains a significant factor in determining experienced empowerment, the differences between women and men are strongly compounded by location – rural or urban. Across most items, urban men are the most empowered group, while rural women are the least empowered group (Figure 38). This gap is particularly evident in the decision-making dimension; and is notably wider for women than for men across most items (Figure 39). Rural men reported being more empowered than urban women for most of the empowerment items.

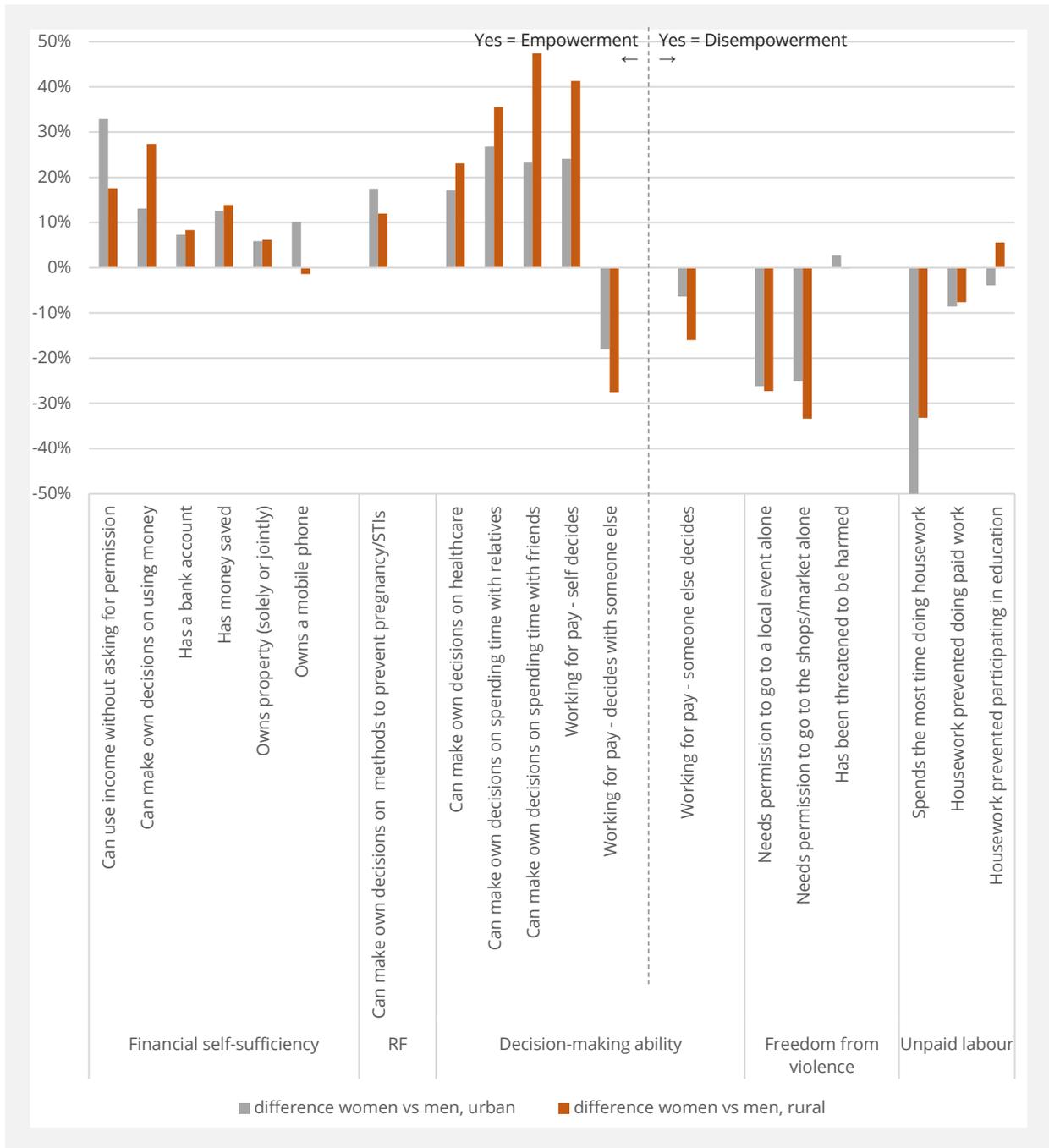


**Figure 38:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in Kyrgyzstan



**Figure 39:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in Kyrgyzstan

The gap between women and men is more marked in rural, than urban, areas; particularly in decision-making and, to a lesser extent, freedom from violence. The gap between women and men is greater in urban, than rural, areas in relation to unpaid labour, having income to use without permission, and, to a lesser extent, reproductive freedom (Figure 40).



**Figure 40:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men, in rural and urban locations, in Kyrgyzstan

In Kyrgyzstan, gender is a significant factor in determining whether a person feels and is empowered. Gaps in empowerment levels between women and men are compounded by education level and location, and more so for women than for men.

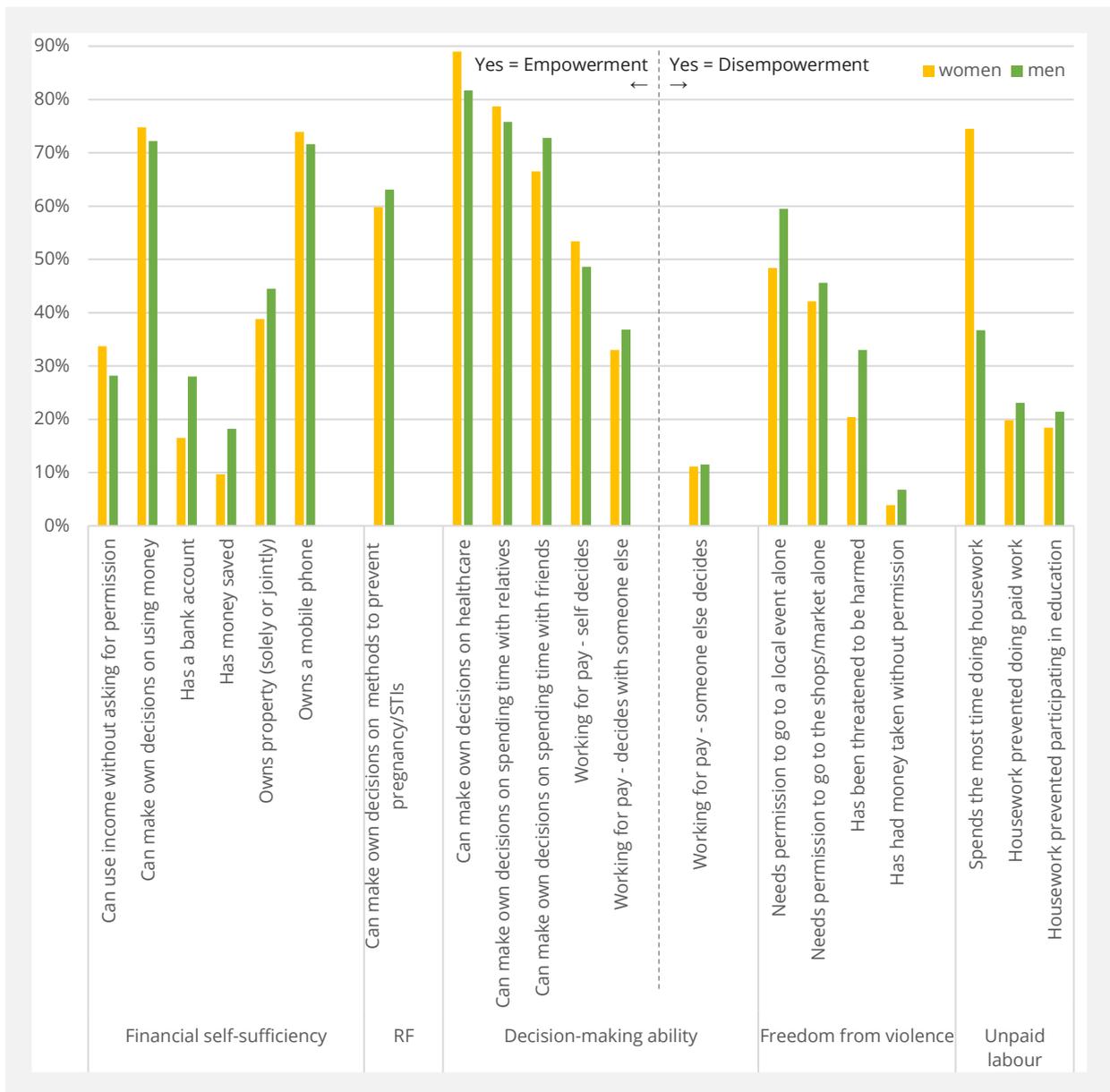
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# Lesotho

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## Gender

In Lesotho, the data indicate relatively small differences between women and men across most of the empowerment items. The gap between women and men is greatest for the unpaid labour dimension, with women distinctly more likely than men to be the person in their households who spend the most time doing housework. Men reported lower levels of empowerment as compared to women in the freedom from violence dimension, where they are more likely than women to have been threatened to be harmed, and more likely to need permission to go to a local event or shops alone. Women reported lower levels of empowerment in the financial self-sufficiency dimension, being less likely than men to have a bank account, money saved or to own a property (Figure 41).



**Figure 41:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men in Lesotho<sup>73</sup>

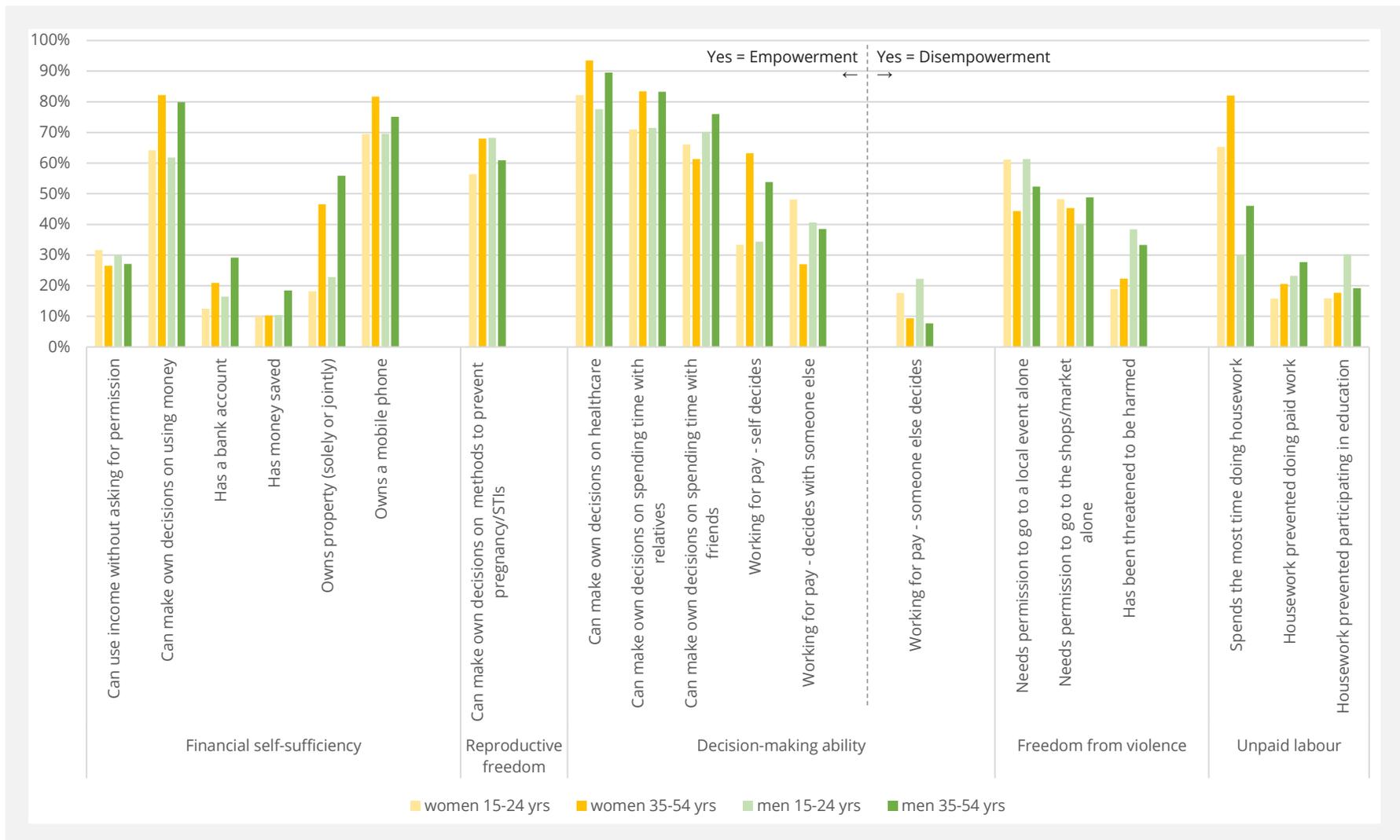
## Gender and age

Disaggregation of the Lesotho data by age showed marked gaps in experienced empowerment based on age in several areas.<sup>74</sup> As shown in (Figure 42), age-related differences are evident in regard to (i) decision making, especially the ability to make decisions on healthcare, on spending time with relatives, and on working for pay outside of home; and (ii) financial self-sufficiency, in

<sup>73</sup> RF = Reproductive freedom

<sup>74</sup> Due to limited availability of data for women and men in the 25-34 years age group, only the 15-24 years and 35-54 years age groups were included in the analysis.

particular property ownership, ability to make decisions about income, and bank account ownership; with women and men in the 35-54 years age group reporting higher levels of empowerment than women and men in the 15-24 years age group. Gender is a more significant factor with regard to freedom from violence, with men of both age groups more likely to have been threatened to be harmed, as compared to women. Cross-cutting gender and age, women – and especially women in the 35-54 years age group – are significantly more likely to be the person in the household spending the most time doing housework.



**Figure 42:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by age group, in Lesotho

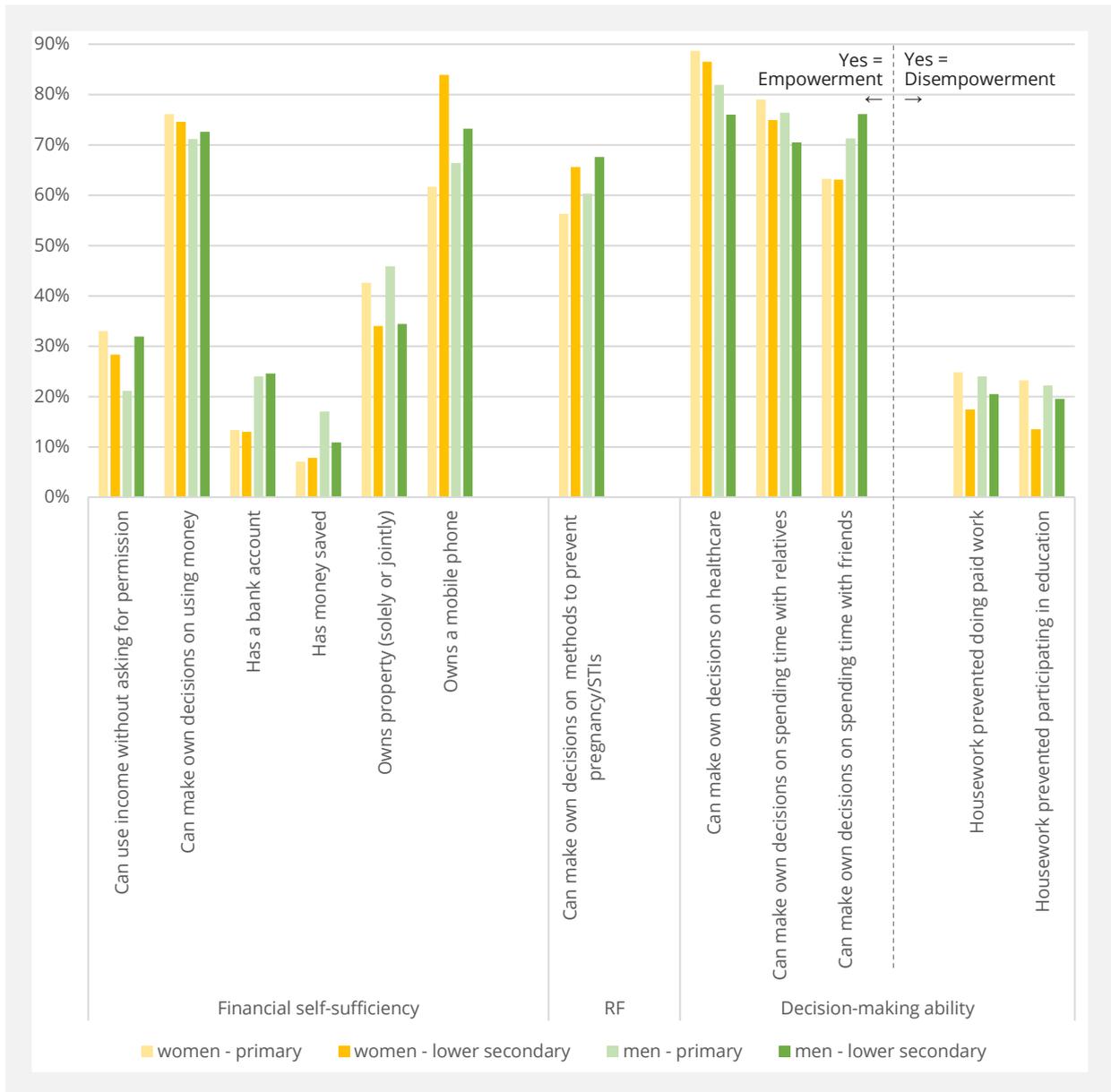
## Gender and education

In the 12 items analysed for gender and education,<sup>75</sup> while differences in empowerment vary with levels of formal education for some items, gender remains a more significant factor in experiencing empowerment (Figure 43). Women and men with lower secondary education are more likely to make their own decisions regarding their reproductive health, as compared to women and men with primary education. Men, and more so women, with lower secondary education, reported higher rates of mobile phone ownership. By comparison, women and men with primary education are more likely to own property, as compared to women and men with lower secondary education.

Gender remains a more significant factor in regard to bank account ownership and decision-making, in particular the ability to make decisions on spending time with friends, with men reporting higher levels of empowerment for both items. Women, in contrast, are more likely to make their own decisions on healthcare.

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<sup>75</sup> The remaining items were omitted due to limited disaggregated data.



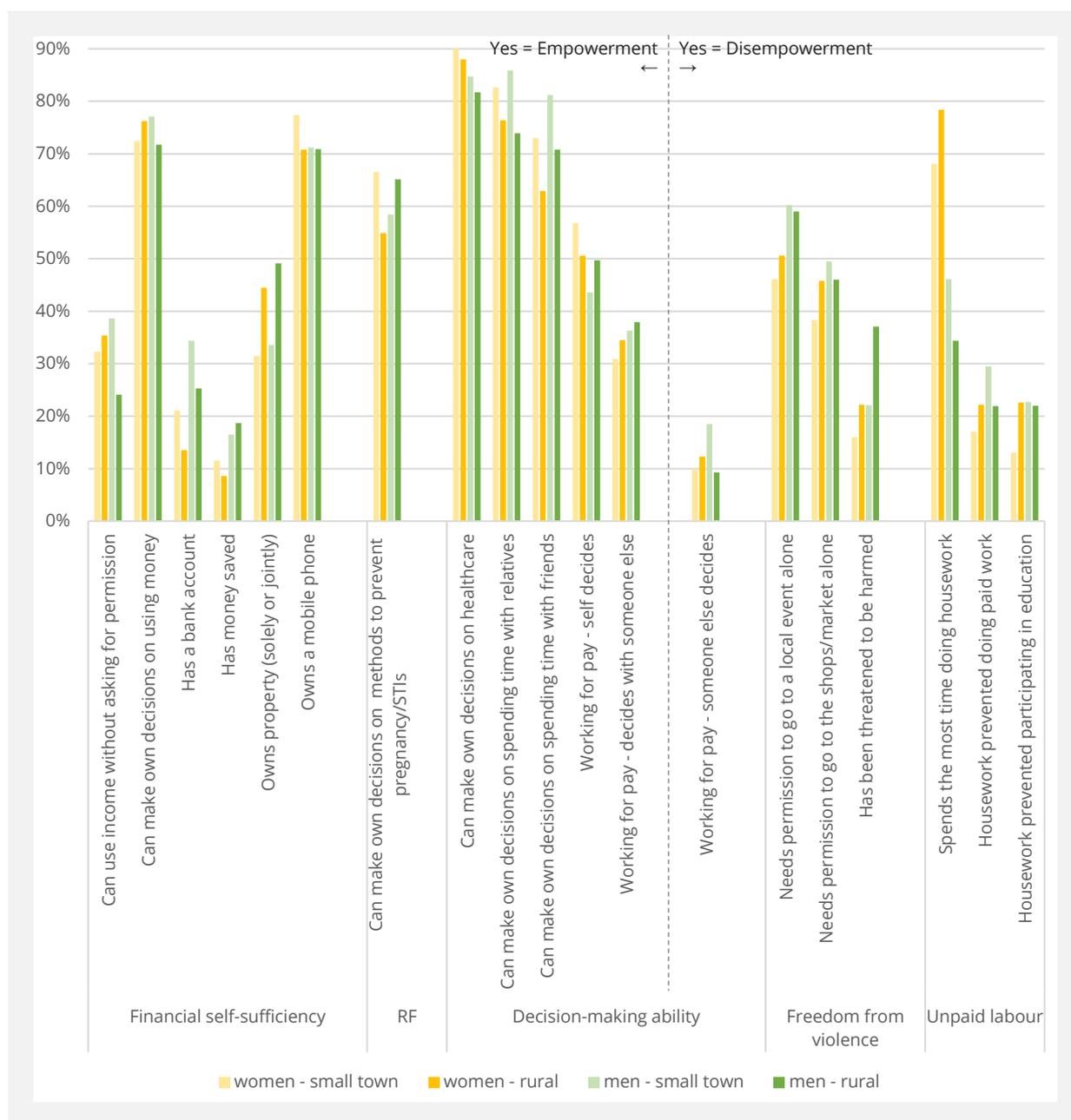
**Figure 43:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Lesotho

## Gender and location

As with education levels, while location – rural or small town – has an impact on levels of experienced empowerment, gender is a more significant factor. Location is significant mostly in regard to property ownership, women and men from small town being more likely to own property, as compared to rural women and men.

Cross-cutting of gender and location is evident especially in regard to (i) unpaid labour, with women – especially rural women – being the person in the household who spends the most time doing housework; (ii) freedom from violence, with men reporting more restrictions to mobility,

and rural men in particular reporting having been threatened to be harmed; (iii) financial self-sufficiency, with men – particularly from a small town – being more likely to own a bank account; and (iv) decision-making, with men – and to a lesser degree women – from small town more likely to make their own decisions on spending time with friends or relatives (Figure 44).



**Figure 44:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in Lesotho

In Lesotho, gender is a significant factor in determining whether a person feels and is empowered. Experiences of empowerment are, however, moderated by age, education level and location.

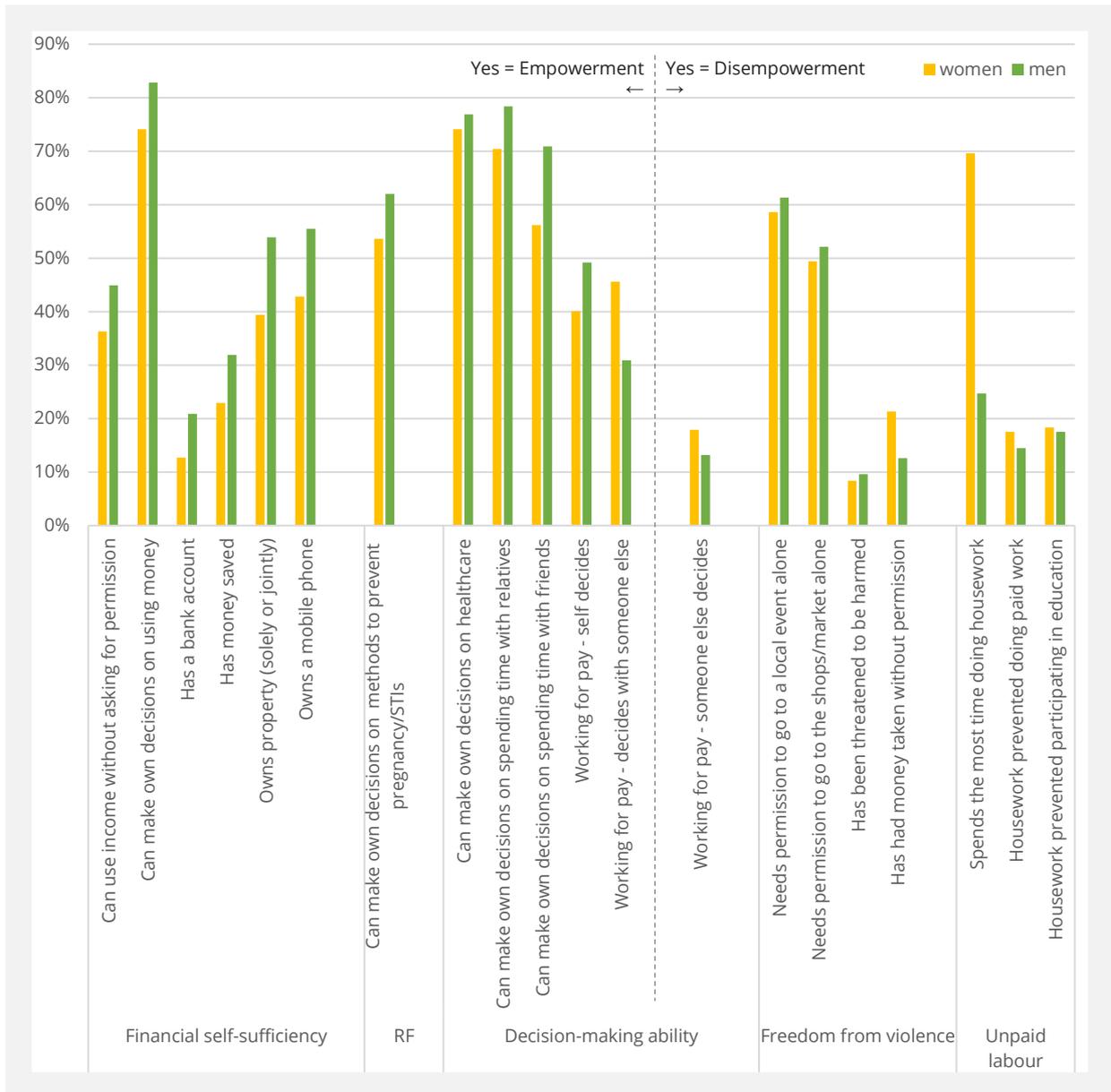
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# Liberia

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## Gender

In Liberia, the data indicate differences between women and men across all empowerment items, with women experiencing lower levels of empowerment as compared to men. The gap between women and men is greatest for unpaid labour, with women distinctly more likely than men to be the person in their households who spend the most time doing housework. Differences between women and men are also evident in relation to (i) financial self-sufficiency, with men being more likely to own property, own a mobile phone, have money saved, make their own decisions on using income, and use income without asking for permission, as compared to women; (ii) decision-making, where men are more likely than women to make their own decisions on spending time with friends and on whether to work for pay outside of home (Figure 45).



**Figure 45:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men in Liberia<sup>76</sup>

## Gender and age

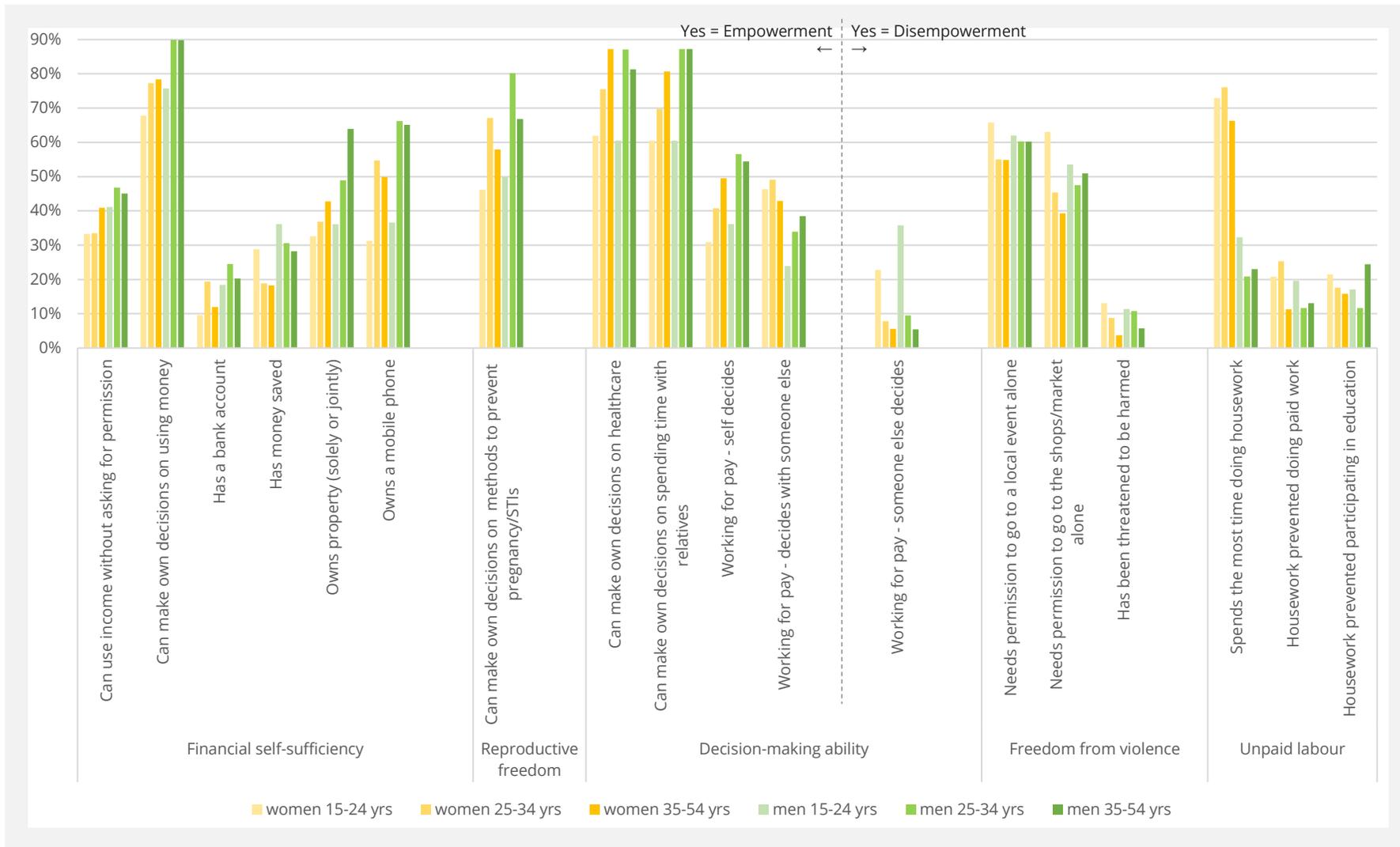
Disaggregation of the Liberia data by age show that, for several empowerment items, experiences of empowerment differ significantly by age group. The gap in experienced empowerment between women and men remains evident across most items. As shown in (Figure 46), age-related differences are particularly visible in relation to decision-making, with both women and men in the 15-24 years age group being less able to make their own decisions on healthcare, spending time with relatives, and whether to work for pay outside of home. Women and men in the 15-24 years

<sup>76</sup> RF = Reproductive freedom

age group are also less likely to own a mobile phone or make their own decisions on methods to prevent pregnancy and sexually-transmitted illnesses, than women and men in the other age groups.

Cross-cutting gender and age, men of the 25-34 years and 35-54 years age groups are the most empowered groups across most items. This is not the case for women. In the decision-making dimension, women aged 25-34 years reported lower levels of empowerment as compared to men in the same age group and to women and men in the 35-54 years age group.

Gender-related differences are clearly visible in relation to (i) financial self-sufficiency, with men – in particular in the 25-34 and 35-54 years age groups – reporting higher levels of empowerment across most items, as compared to men in the 15-24 years age group and women of all age groups; and (ii) unpaid labour, with women of all age groups being significantly more likely to be the person in the household spending the most time doing housework.



**Figure 46:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by age group, in Liberia

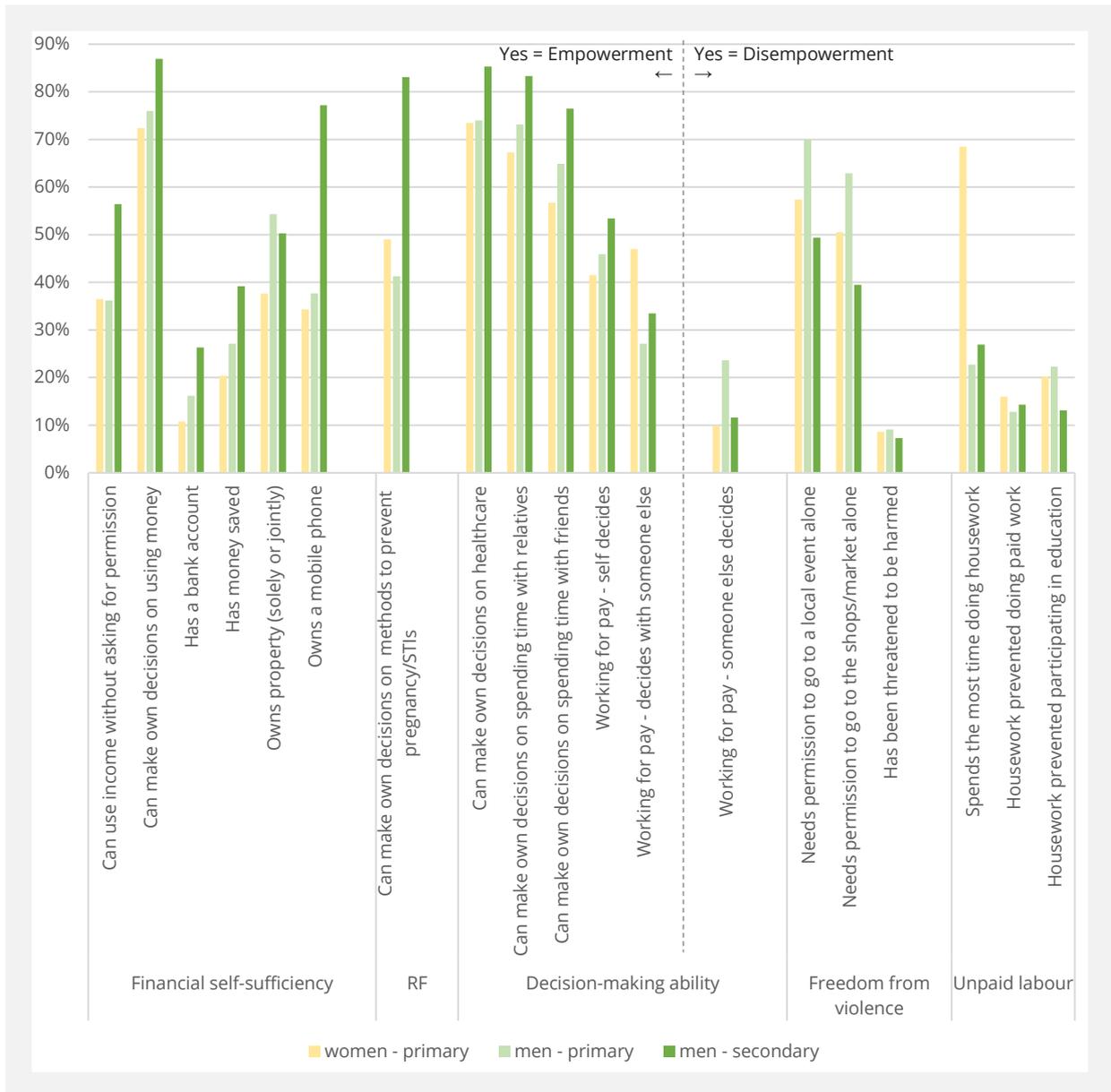
## **Gender and education**

While differences in empowerment vary with levels of formal education, across most of the empowerment items, gender is a more significant factor in experiencing empowerment than is education (Figure 47).<sup>77</sup>

Men with secondary education reported significantly greater empowerment across almost all items, as compared to women and men with primary education. Men with primary education reported being more empowered than women with primary education in relation to decision-making, financial self-sufficiency and unpaid labour, but less empowered than women with primary education with respect to reproductive freedom and freedom from violence.

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<sup>77</sup> The gender and education analysis does not include women with secondary education, due to the lack of data for this group.



**Figure 47:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Liberia<sup>78</sup>

## Gender and location

Across most items, while location – village or city<sup>79</sup> – has an impact on levels of experienced empowerment, gender is a more significant factor (Figure 48).

For decision-making, rural men reported the highest level of experienced empowerment, being more likely to make their own decisions on spending time with friends and relatives as compared

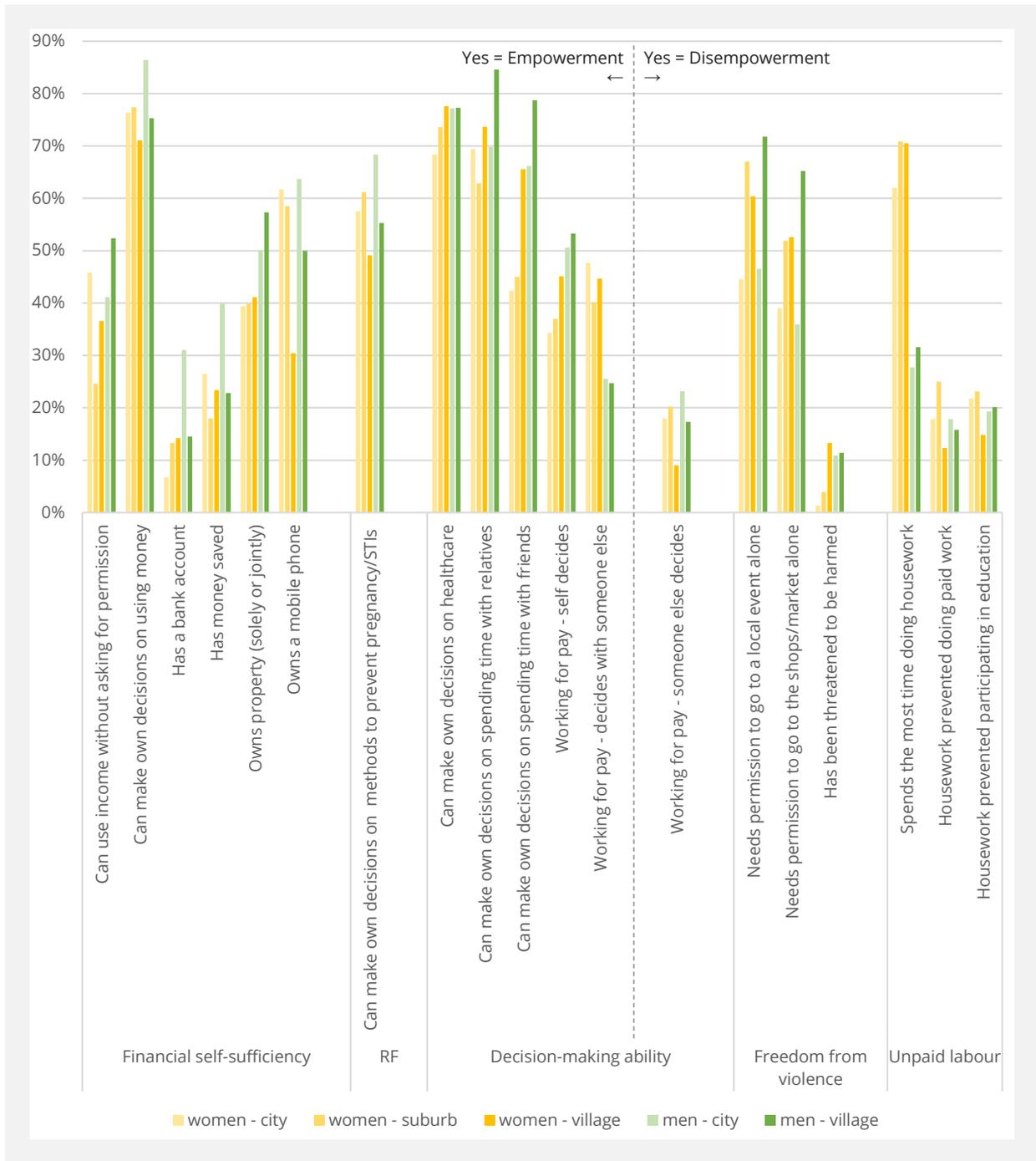
<sup>78</sup> Data for women with secondary education not available.

<sup>79</sup> Data for men from suburbs not available.

to the other groups. By contrast, urban women reported the lowest level of empowerment in relation to decision-making, being significantly less likely to make their own decisions on spending time with friends and on whether to work for pay outside of home.

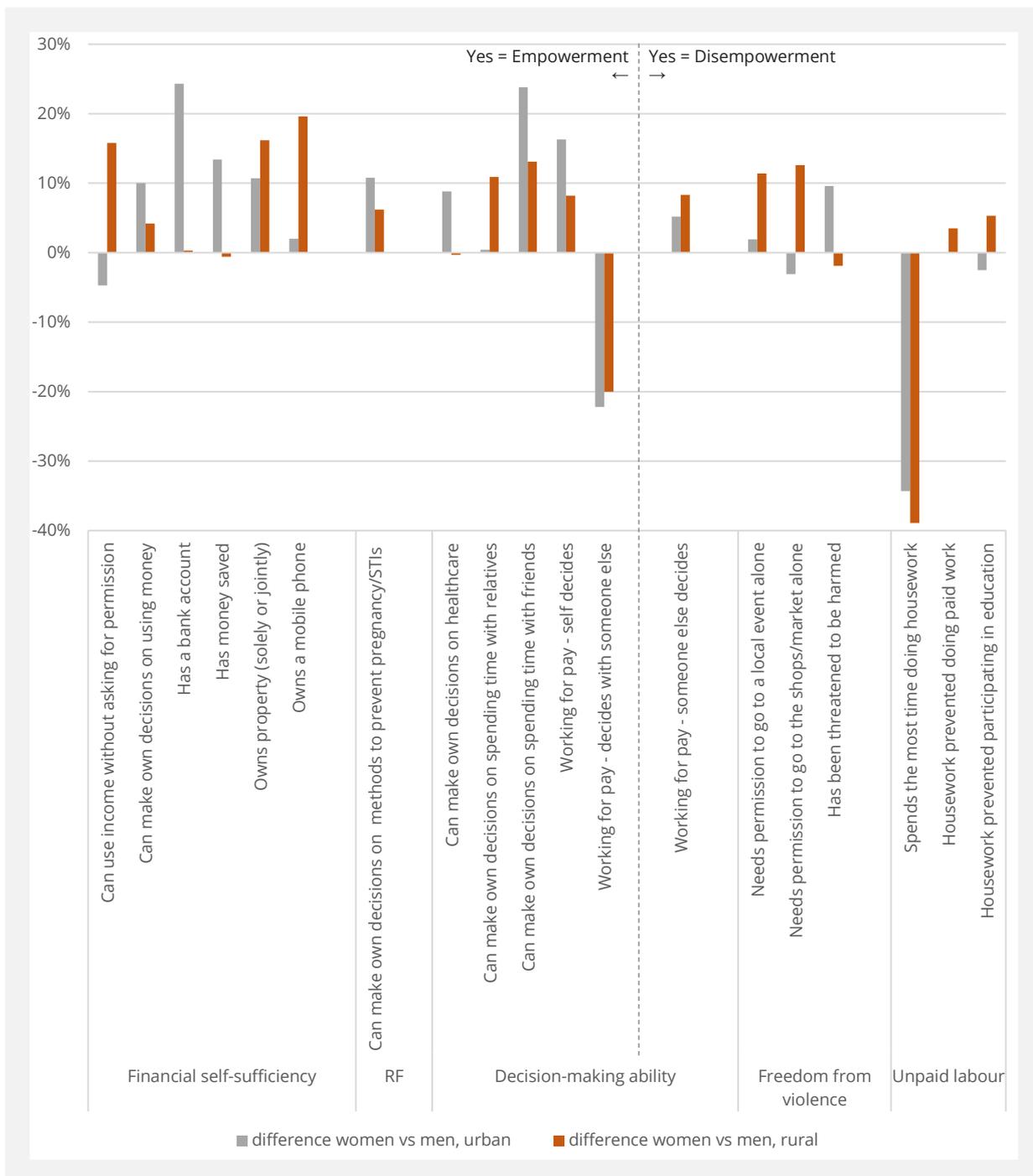
Urban men reported the highest level of experienced empowerment, especially in relation to financial self-sufficiency; being more likely to have money saved, have a bank account or make their own decisions on using money, as compared to the other groups. Men – both rural and urban – are more likely to own property than women. Urban men also reported higher level of empowerment in regard to reproductive freedom, as compared to the other groups.

Location is a significant factor with regard to freedom from violence, in particular mobility, with rural men – and to a lesser extent rural women – being significantly more likely to need permission to go to a local event or shops alone, as compared to urban men and women.



**Figure 48:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in Liberia

The gap between women and men is more marked in urban, than rural, areas for decision-making, reproductive freedom, bank account ownership and availability of money saved. In mobility, unpaid labour and property or mobile phone ownership, the gap is more marked in rural, as compared to urban, areas (Figure 49).



**Figure 49:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men, in rural and urban locations, in Liberia

In Liberia, gender is a significant factor in determining whether a person feels and is empowered. Experiences of empowerment are, however, moderated by age, education level and location.

# Mozambique

## Gender

In Mozambique, the data indicate marked differences between women and men across all empowerment items, with women experiencing lower levels of empowerment as compared to men. The gap between women and men is greatest for the unpaid labour dimension, with women distinctly more likely than men to be the person in their households who spend the most time doing housework. Marked differences between women and men are also evident in relation to (i) decision-making, where men are more likely than women to make their own decisions on whether to work for pay outside of home and on spending their time with friends; and (ii) financial self-sufficiency, with men being more likely to own property or have income that they can use without permission than women (Figure 50).



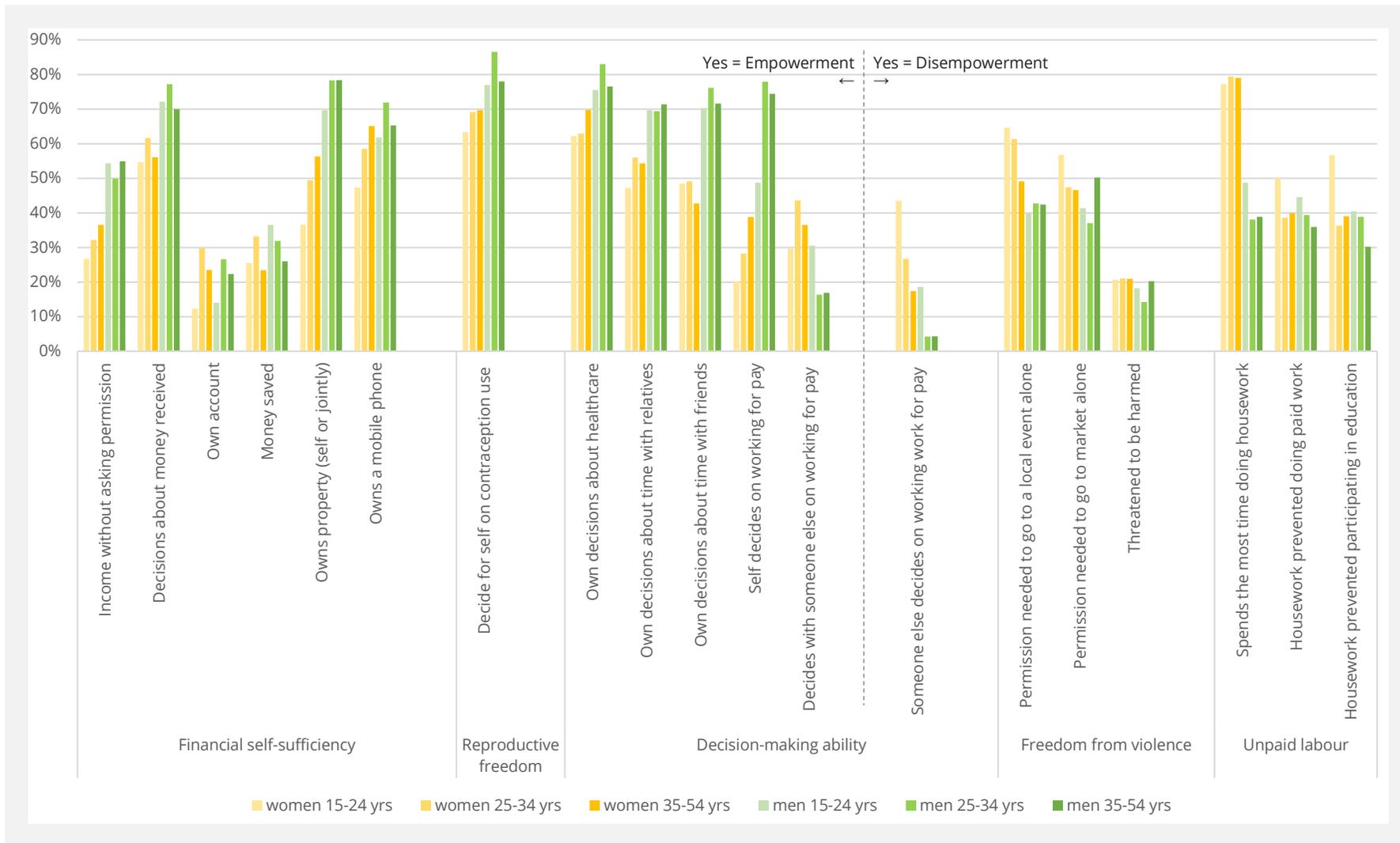
Figure 50: Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men in Mozambique<sup>80</sup>

<sup>80</sup> RF = Reproductive freedom

## **Gender and age**

Disaggregation of the Mozambique data by age showed that while experiences of empowerment differ by age group, the gap in experienced empowerment between women and men is larger than the gap based on age. As shown in (Figure 51), in terms of gender and age, men of all age groups, and particularly for the 25-34 years group, report higher levels of empowerment than do women. Across most items, men in the least empowered age group still report higher rates of empowerment than do women in the most empowered age group. For almost all empowerment items, women aged 15 and 24 years are the least empowered group.

Age-related differences are evident in regard to account ownership, where women and men in the 25-34 years age group are most likely, and women and men between 15 and 24 years are least likely, to have an account with a bank or financial institution. Cross-cutting gender and age, the gap between women aged 15-24 years and women in the other two age groups is particularly significant in relation to the ability to decide whether they work for pay outside the home and unpaid care and domestic work being a barrier to participating in education.



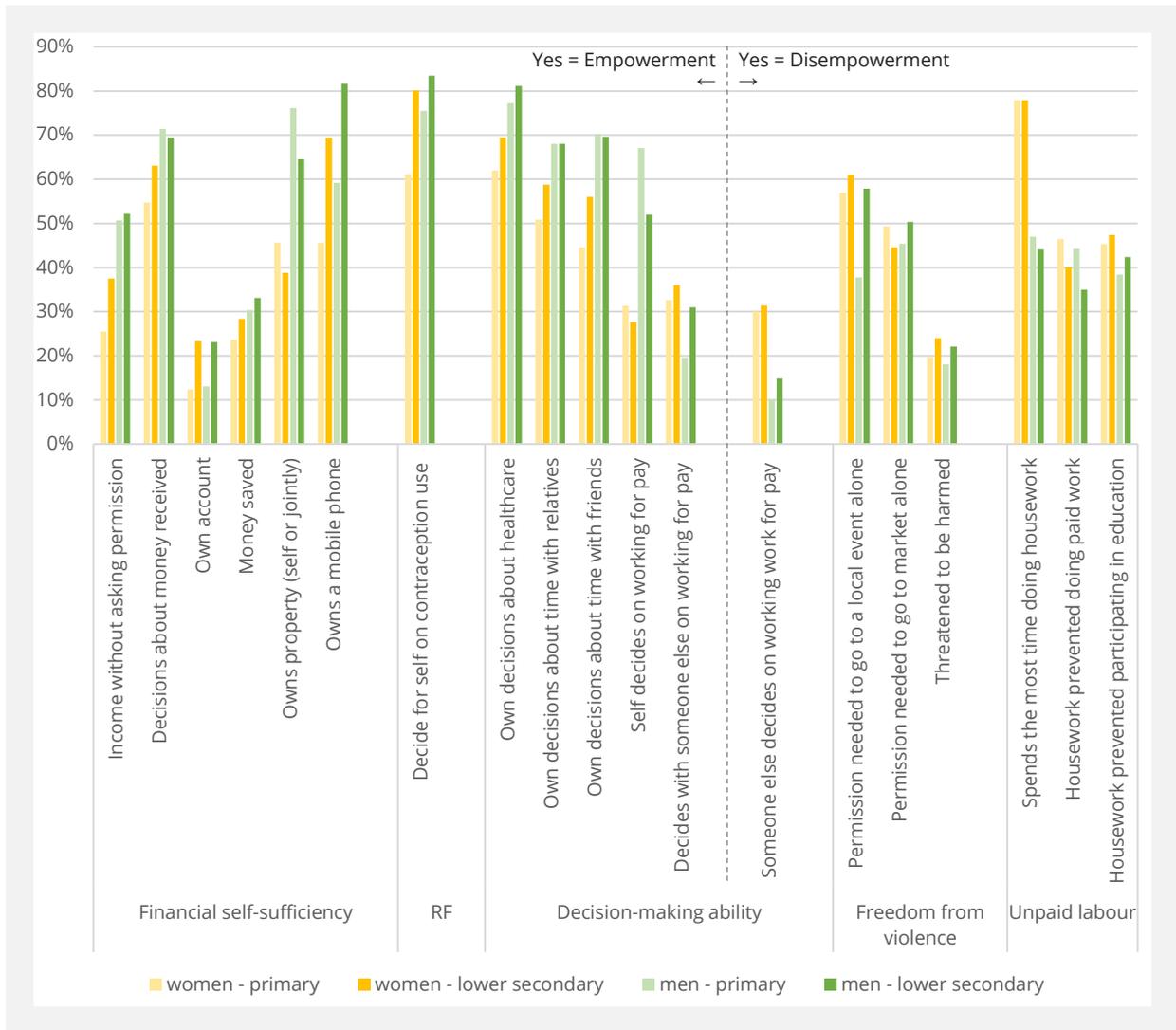
**Figure 51:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by age group, in Mozambique

## **Gender and education**

While differences in empowerment vary with levels of formal education, across most of the empowerment items, gender is a more significant factor in experiencing empowerment than is education (Figure 52).

In general, lower levels of education correlate with lower levels of empowerment of women, but not for men. Women with primary education report the lowest levels of experienced empowerment across most items. In contrast, men with primary education report the highest levels of empowerment for several items, including owning property, deciding for themselves if they work for pay outside of the home and not needing permission to go to a local event alone.

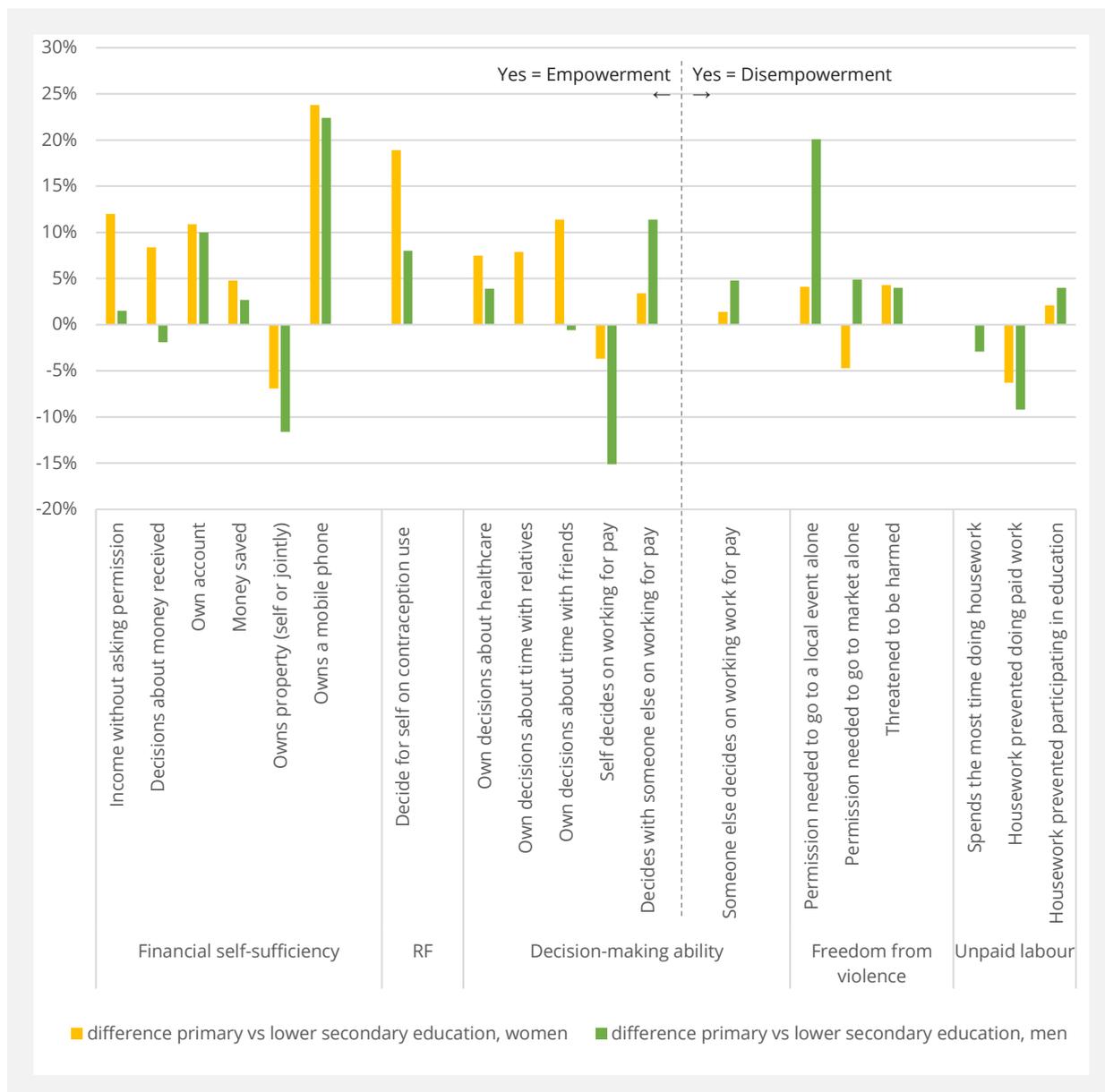
Education level appears significant with regards to account ownership, with both women and men with lower secondary education being more likely to have their own account, as compared to women and men with primary education. Education level is also linked to mobile phone ownership, with women and men with lower secondary education being more likely to own a mobile phone and more so for men than for women.



**Figure 52:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Mozambique

Differences in empowerment by education level is more marked among women, than for men. For most of the empowerment items, women with lower secondary education report being more empowered, as compared to women with primary education. This difference is most significant in relation to mobile phone ownership and making decisions on the use of contraception (Figure 53).

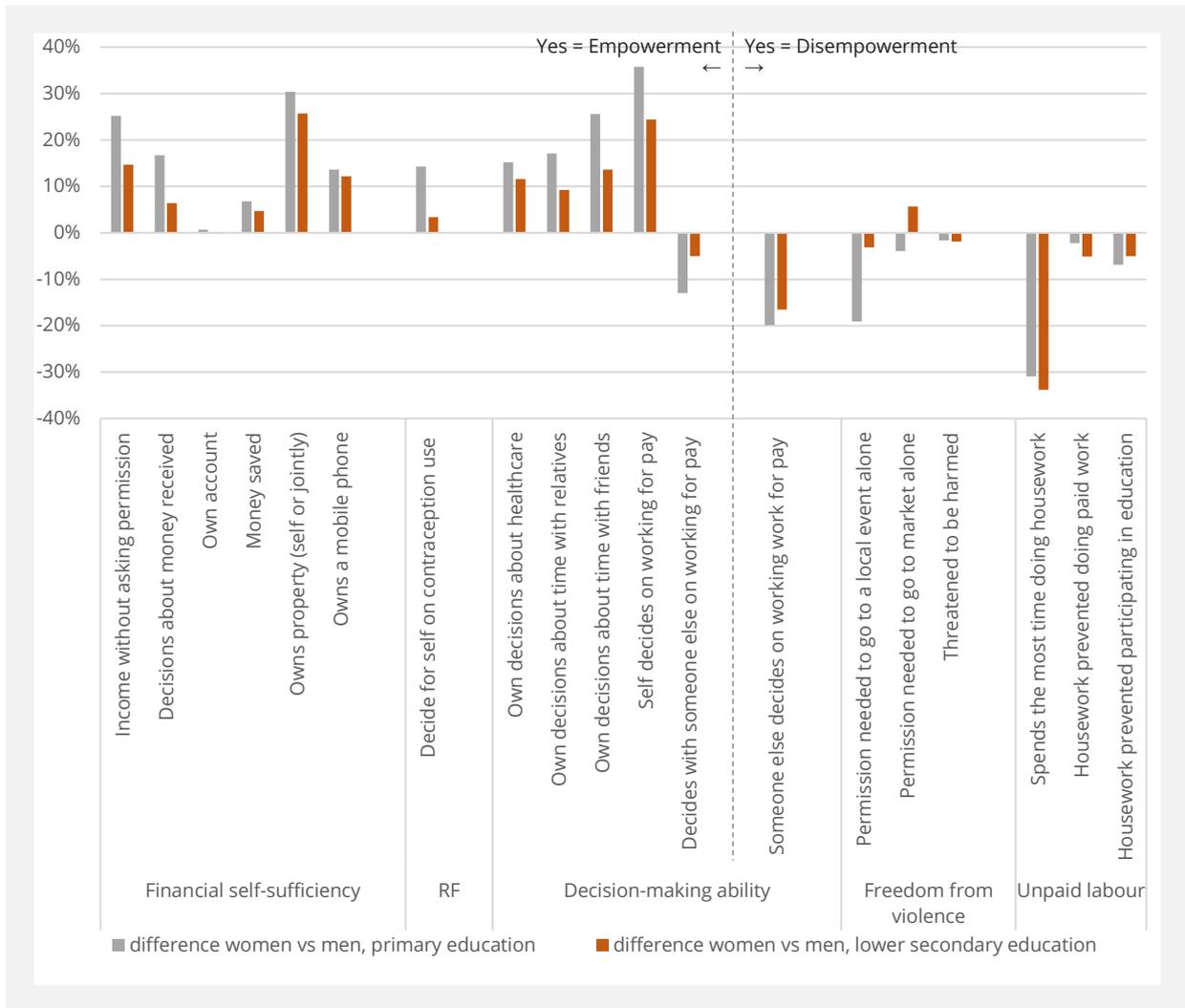
Differences in empowerment among men primary education and those with lower secondary education are significantly less marked, as compared to women. Among men, the more significant differences by education level are for the empowerment items on needing permission to go to a local event alone; deciding by themselves to work for pay outside of the house and owning property ownership. With the exception of phone ownership, men with lower secondary education report being more empowered than men with primary education (Figure 53).



**Figure 53:** Differences in experiences of (dis)empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Mozambique<sup>81</sup>

When comparing experiences of empowerment of women and men with the same education levels across the 18 items, the empowerment gap between women and men with primary education is larger than the empowerment gap between women and men with lower secondary education (Figure 54).

<sup>81</sup> % difference = % of responses by respondents with lower secondary education - % of responses by respondents with primary education



**Figure 54:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men,<sup>82</sup> in the same education groups, in Mozambique

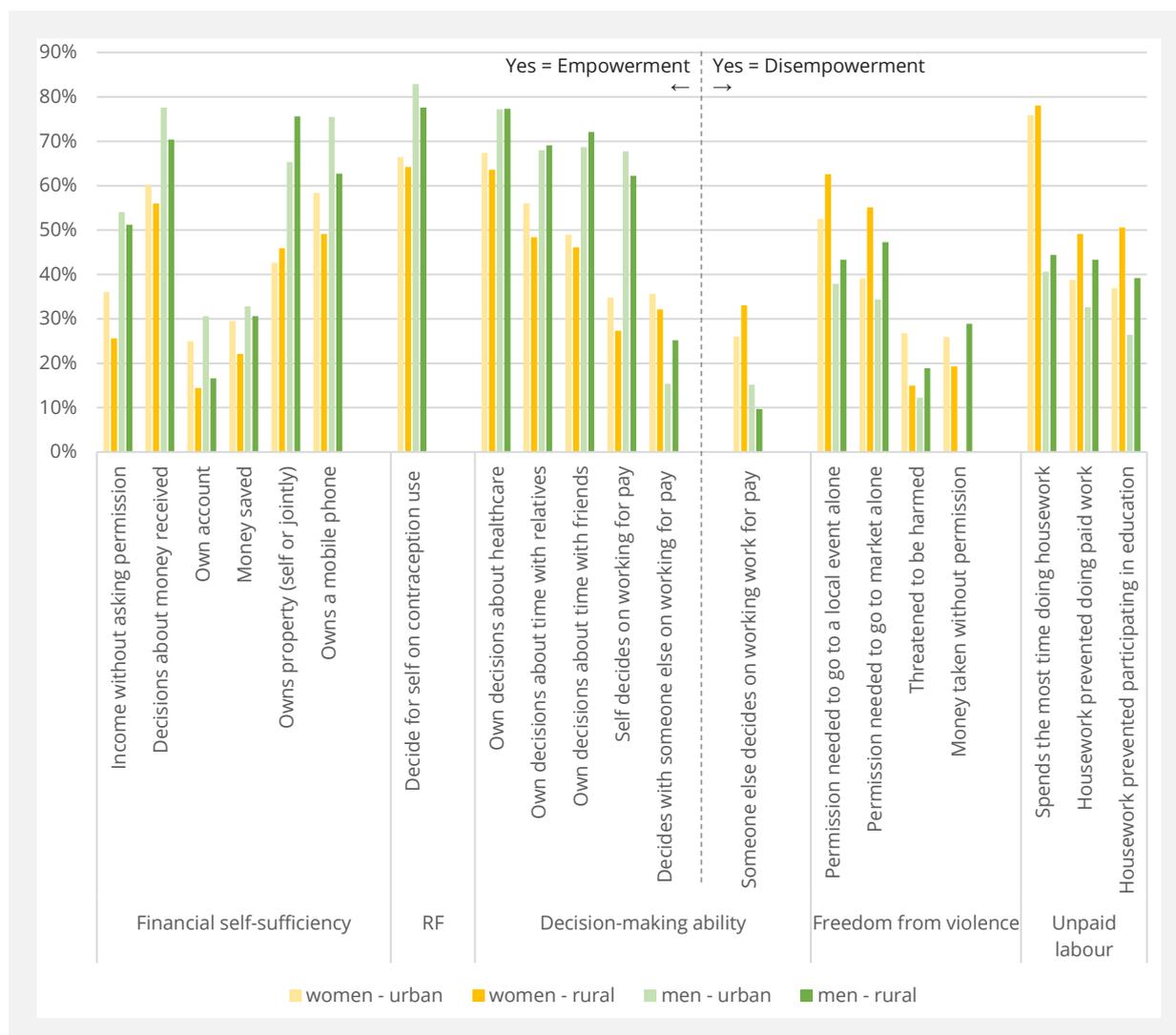
## Gender and location

As with education levels, while location – rural or urban – has an impact on levels of experienced empowerment, gender is a more significant. In general, urban men are the most empowered group, while rural women are the least empowered group (Figure 55).

Urban men report higher levels of experienced empowerment as compared to rural men in the dimensions of financial self-sufficiency (except for the property ownership item), freedom from violence and unpaid labour. In relation to decision-making, differences between rural and urban men are less marked, than for the other empowerment dimensions. Urban women report being more empowered than rural women in financial self-sufficiency (except for the property

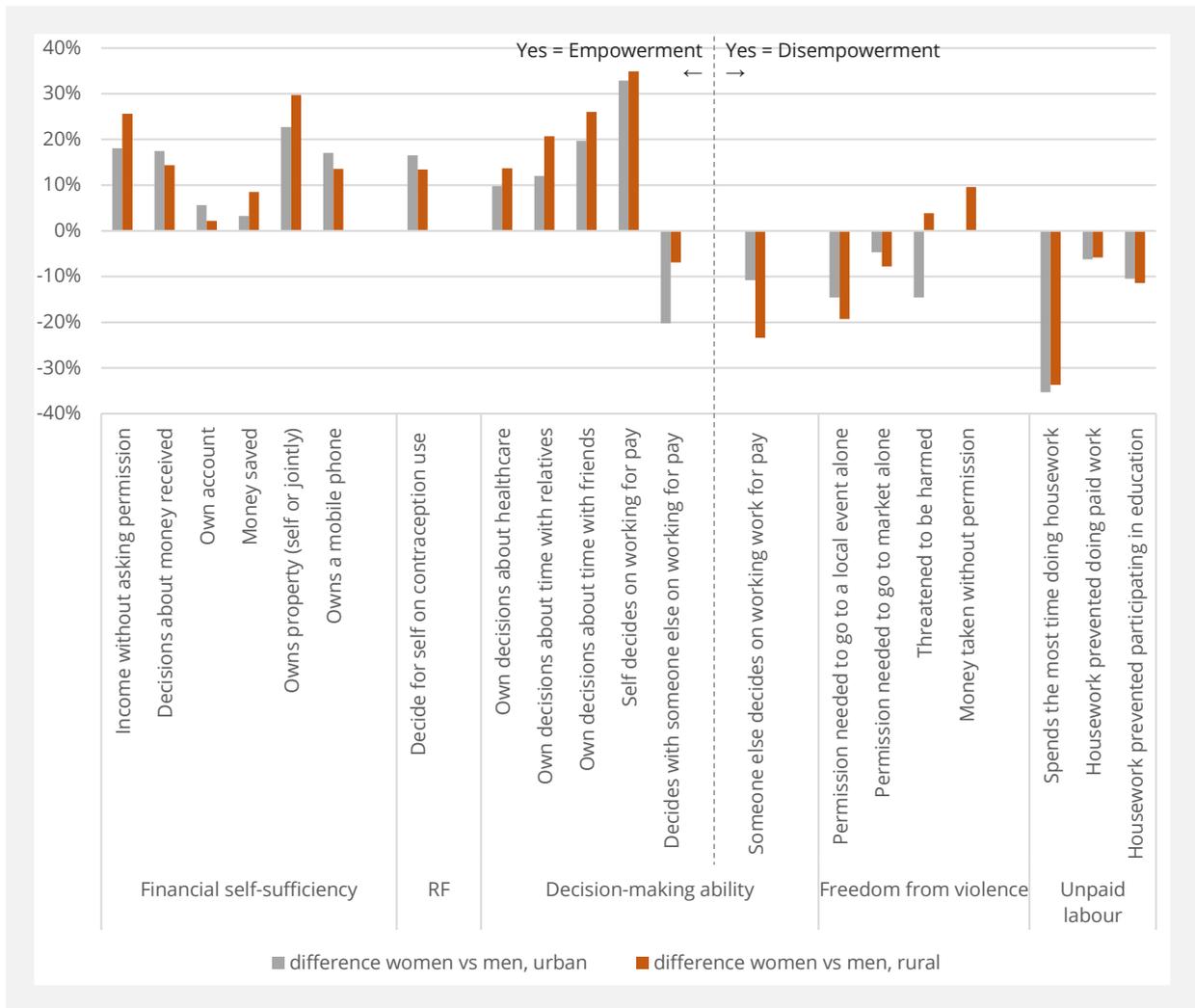
<sup>82</sup> % difference = men - women

ownership item), unpaid labour and, to a lesser degree, in decision-making, but report higher levels of violence as compared to rural women.



**Figure 55:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in Mozambique

For most of the empowerment items, the gap between women and men is more marked in rural, than urban, areas; particularly for decision-making and to a lesser extent in financial self-sufficiency. There are marginal differences between women and men in urban and rural areas in relation to unpaid labour (Figure 56).



**Figure 56:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men, in rural and urban locations, in Mozambique.

In Mozambique, gender is a significant factor in determining whether a person feels and is empowered. Experiences of empowerment are, however, moderated by age, education level and location, and more so for women than for men.

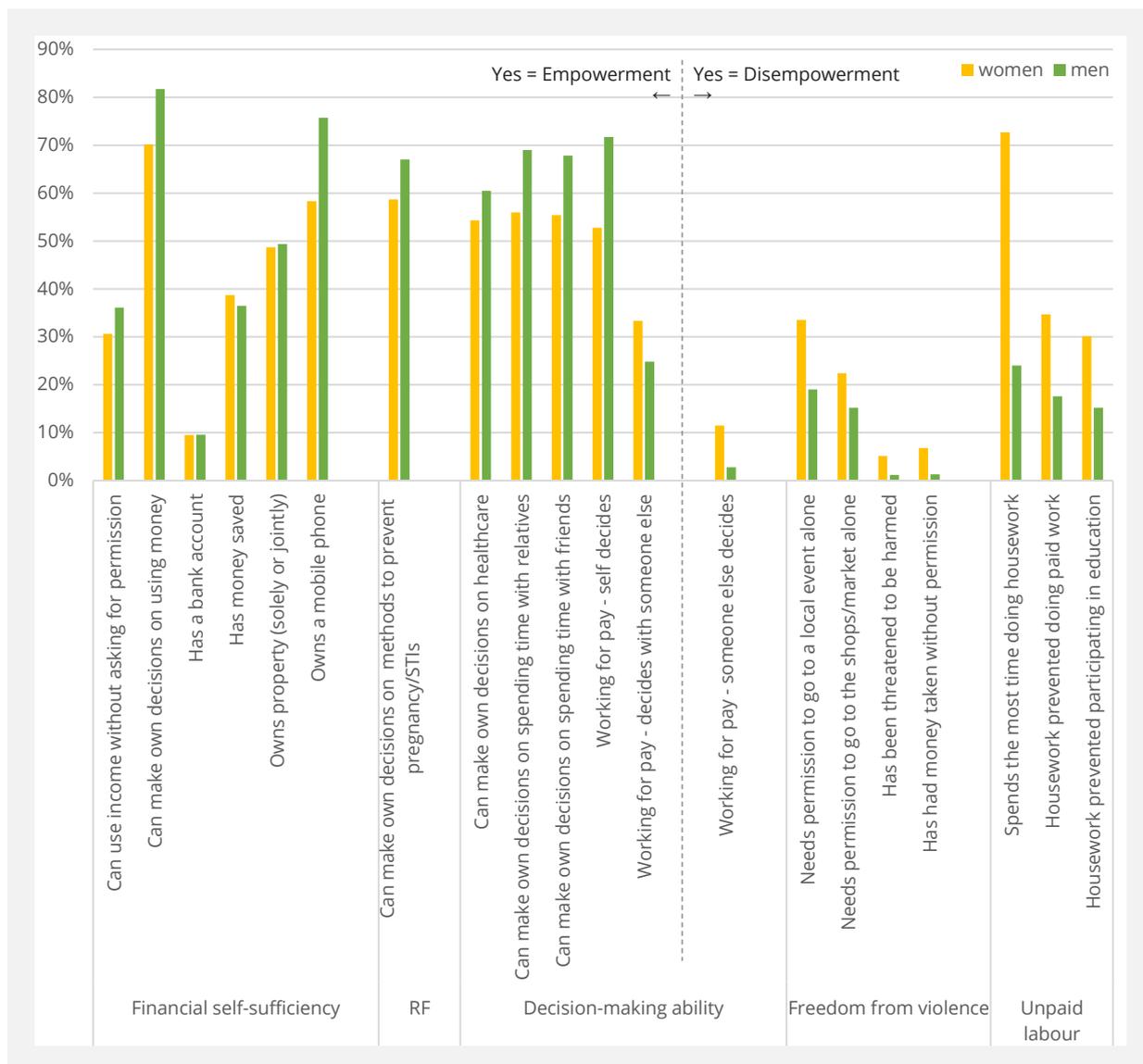
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# Myanmar

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## Gender

In Myanmar, the data indicate marked differences between women and men across almost all empowerment items, with women experiencing lower levels of empowerment as compared to men (Figure 57). The gap between women and men is greatest for the unpaid labour dimension, with women distinctly more likely than men to be the person in their households who spend the most time doing housework. Housework is also more likely to prevent women, rather than men, from doing paid work or participating in education. Marked differences between women and men are also evident in relation to (i) decision-making, where men are more likely than women to make their own decisions on whether to work for pay outside of home and on spending their time with relatives and friends; and (ii) financial self-sufficiency, with men being more likely than women to own a mobile phone and to make their own decisions on using money; and (iii) freedom from violence, where women are more likely than men to need a permission to go to a local event alone.



**Figure 57:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men in Myanmar<sup>83</sup>

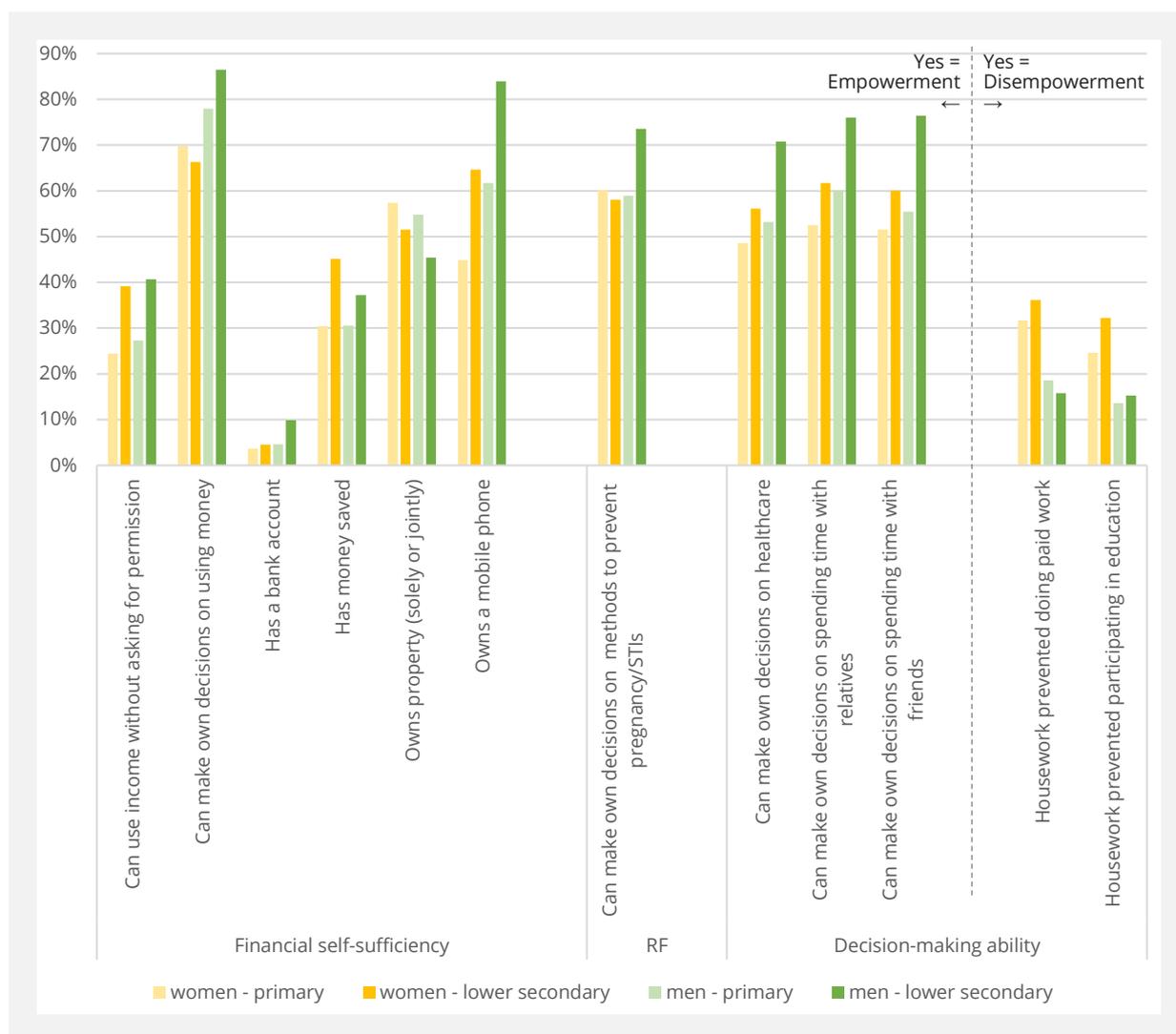
## Gender and education

Data available disaggregated by education levels show that education is a significant factor in experiencing empowerment for men, but less so for women than for men (Figure 58).<sup>84</sup> Men with lower secondary education reported the highest levels of experienced empowerment across most items, with the exception of property ownership and having money saved. Women with primary education reported the lowest level of empowerment across a number of items, particularly with regard to decision-making. Education level, rather than gender, is a significant factor with respect to the ability to use income without asking for permission, with women and men with lower

<sup>83</sup> RF = Reproductive freedom

<sup>84</sup> Only items with data available in all four categories – for women and men with primary and lower secondary education – were included in the analysis.

secondary education being more empowered on this item, as compared to women and men with primary education. On the other hand, gender – rather than education – is the significant factor in regard to unpaid work, with women of any education level being less empowered across this dimension as compared to men.



**Figure 58:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Myanmar

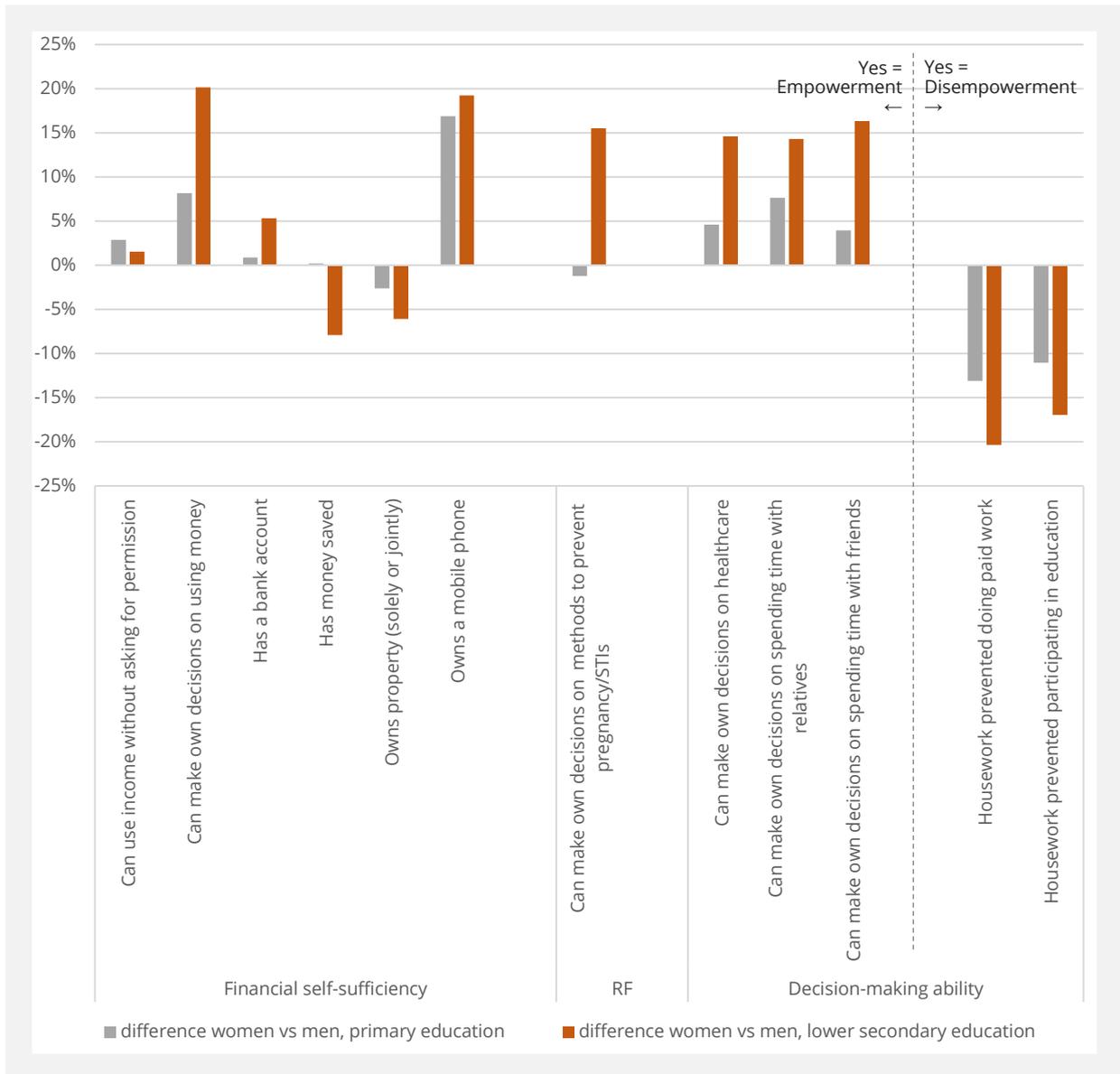
Differences in empowerment by education level – primary or lower secondary – is more marked among men than women (Figure 59). For women, gaps by education levels are evident in regard to mobile phone ownership, having money saved and the ability to use income without asking for permission, with women with lower secondary education reporting higher empowerment levels than women with primary education. Among men, the more significant differences by education level are in relation to phone ownership and decision-making.



**Figure 59:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Myanmar<sup>85</sup>

When comparing experiences of empowerment of women and men with the same education levels, the empowerment gap between women and men with lower secondary education is larger than the empowerment gap between women and men with primary education (Figure 60).

<sup>85</sup> % difference = % of responses by respondents with lower secondary education - % of responses by respondents with primary education



**Figure 60:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men,<sup>86</sup> in the same education groups, in Myanmar

### Gender and location

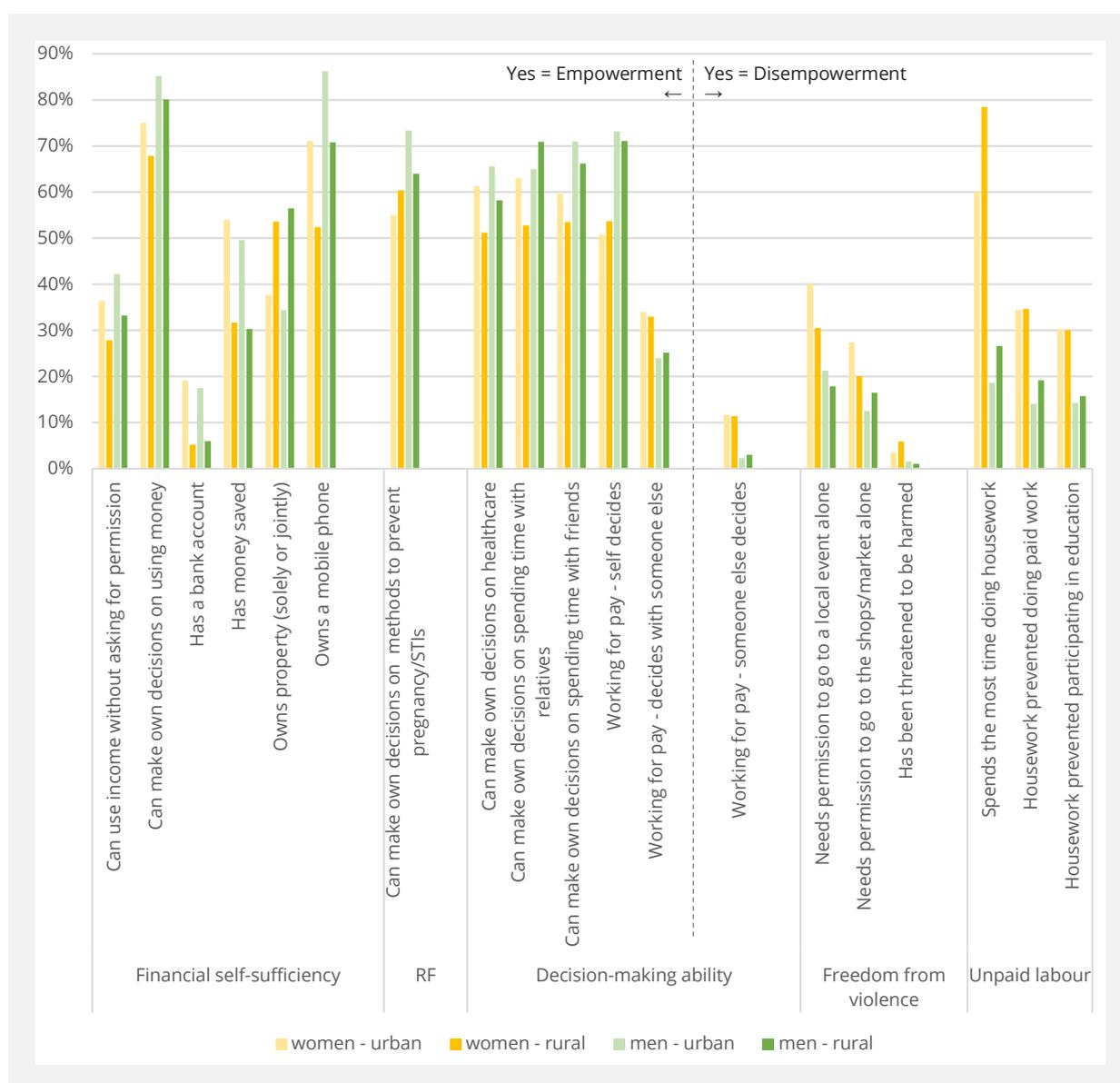
While location – rural or urban – has an impact on levels of experienced empowerment, gender is a more significant factor. In general, urban men are the most empowered group, while rural women are the least empowered group (Figure 61).

Location is a significant factor in terms of financial self-sufficiency. Gaps based on location, rather than gender, are evident in regard to having money saved, bank account ownership and the ability

<sup>86</sup> % difference = men - women

to use income without asking for permission, with urban women and men reporting higher levels of empowerment than rural urban and men. In contrast, rural women and men are markedly more likely to own property than urban women and men.

While urban women and men are more likely to own a mobile phone and make their own decisions on using money than rural women and men, the gender gap remains evident for these items. Gender, rather than location, is a significant factor for decision-making, freedom from violence and unpaid labour. In respect to unpaid labour, women – and in particular rural women – are significantly more likely to be the person in the household who spends the most time doing housework.



**Figure 61:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in Myanmar

For most of the empowerment items, the gap between women and men is more marked in rural, than urban, areas. In relation to reproductive freedom and freedom from violence, differences between women and men are more marked in urban, than rural, areas (Figure 62) .



**Figure 62:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men, in rural and urban locations, in Myanmar

In Myanmar, gender is a significant factor in determining whether a person feels and is empowered. Experiences of empowerment are, however, moderated by age, education level and location, and more so for women than for men.

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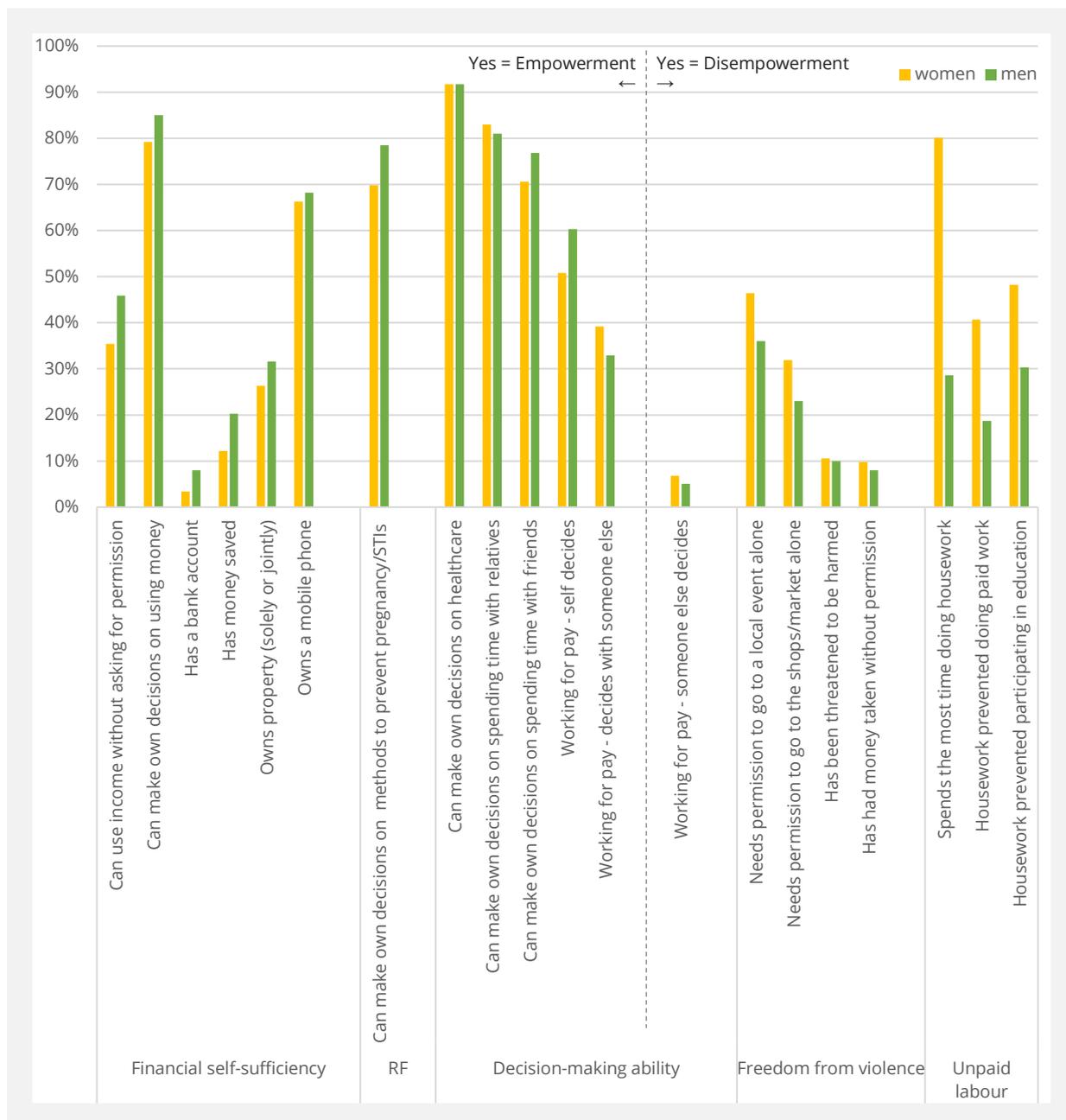
# Nicaragua

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## Gender

In Nicaragua, the data indicate differences between women and men across almost all empowerment items, with women experiencing lower levels of empowerment as compared to men (Figure 63). The gap between women and men is greatest for the unpaid labour dimension, with women distinctly more likely than men to be the person in their households who spend the most time doing housework, as well as being housework more frequently preventing women, than men, from participating in education or doing paid work.

Differences between women and men are also evident in relation to (i) financial self-sufficiency, with men being more likely than women to have income that they can use without permission or have money saved; (ii) freedom from violence, with women being more likely than men to need permission to go to a local event or market/shops alone; (iii) decision-making, where men are more likely than women to make their own decisions on whether to work for pay outside of home; and (iv) reproductive freedom, with women being less likely than men to make their own decisions on methods to prevent pregnancy or sexually-transmitted illnesses.



**Figure 63:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men in Nicaragua<sup>87</sup>

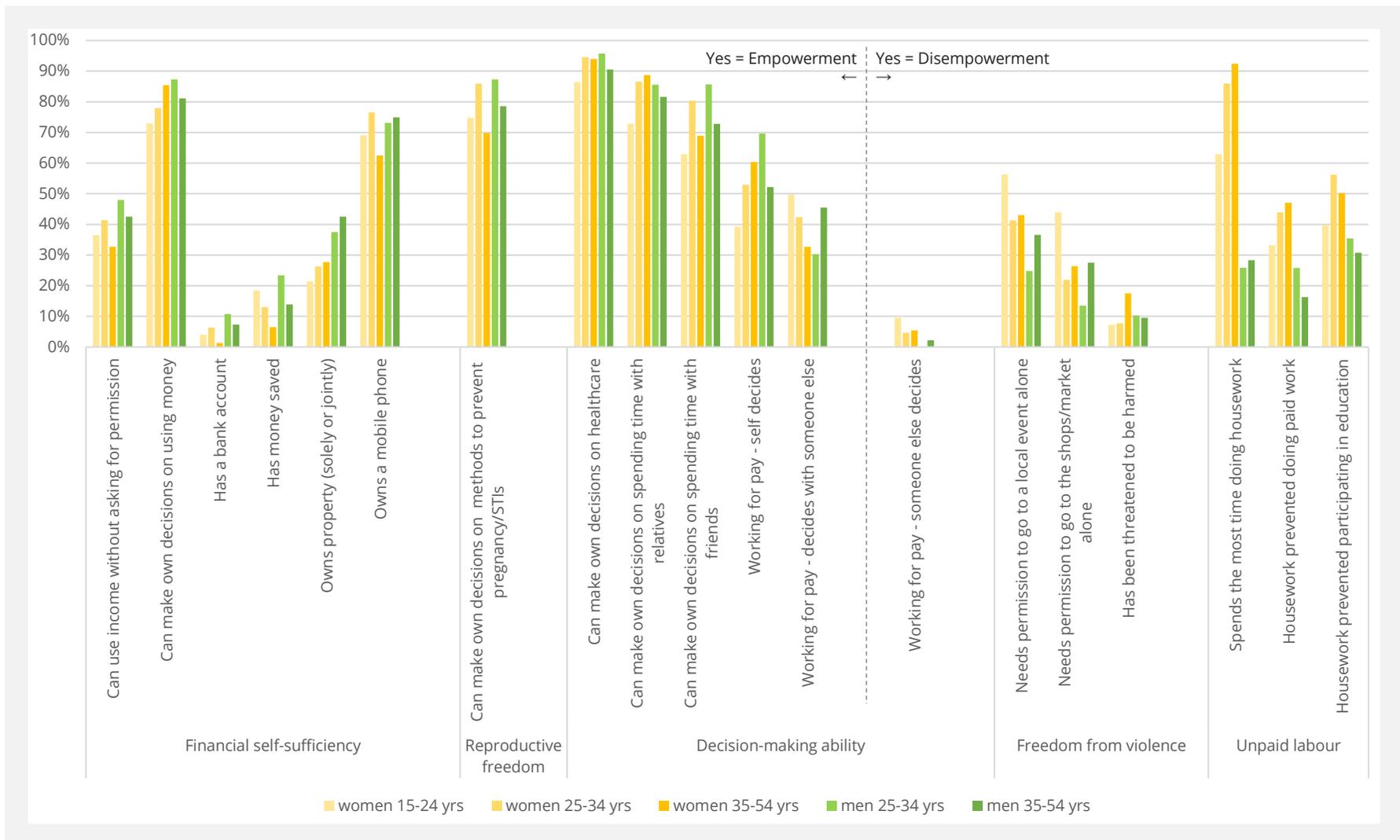
## Gender and age

Disaggregation of the Nicaragua data by age show that gender inequalities are compounded by age across several empowerment items, and more so for women than for men.<sup>88</sup> As shown in (Figure 64), men between 25 and 34 years are the gender and age group reporting the highest level of empowerment. Contrastingly, women in the 15-24 years and 35-54 years age groups

<sup>87</sup> RF = Reproductive freedom

<sup>88</sup> Data for men in the 15-24 years age group not available.

reported lower levels of empowerment across most items, as compared to all men and to women in the 25-34 years age group. Women aged 15-24 years are the group reporting the lowest level of empowerment in relation to decision-making and freedom from violence, while women aged 35-54 years reported the lowest level of empowerment across most financial self-sufficiency, unpaid labour and reproductive freedom items.



**Figure 64:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by age group, in Nicaragua

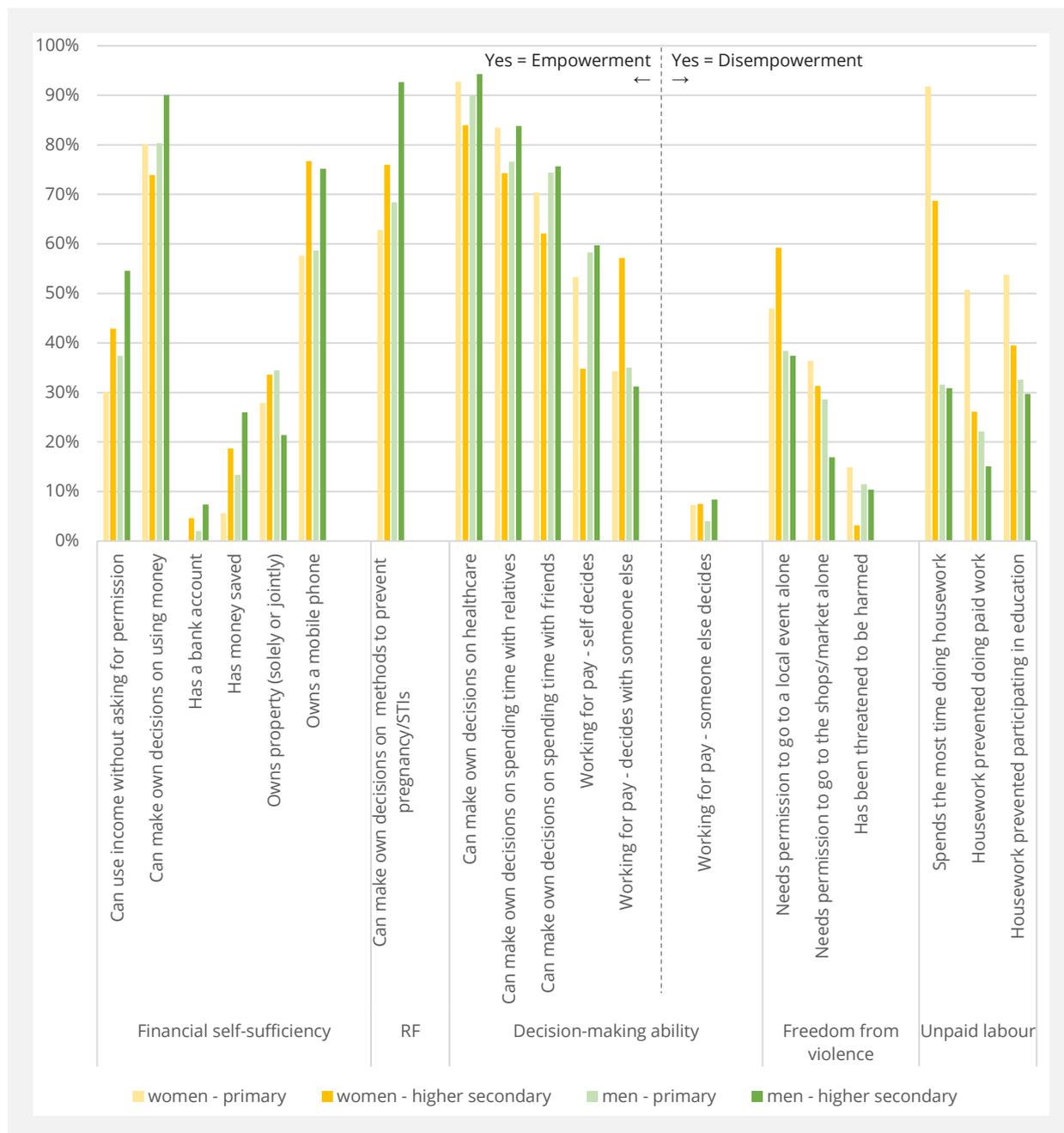
## Gender and education

Disaggregation of the Nicaragua data by gender and education show that gender inequalities vary by education level, and more so for women than for men (Figure 65).<sup>89</sup> In general, men with higher secondary education reported higher levels of experienced empowerment across all items, with the exception of property ownership, as compared to all the other groups. For women, however, higher levels of education do not necessarily correlate with higher levels of empowerment. Women with higher secondary education reported being less empowered, as compared to all men and women with primary education, in regard to (i) decision-making, being less likely to make their own decisions on whether to work for pay outside of home, on healthcare and on spending time with friends or relatives; (ii) mobility, being more likely to need permission to go to a local event alone; and (iii) ability to make own decisions on using money saved. Women with primary education, on the other hand, reported the lowest levels of empowerment in relation to unpaid labour, being significantly more likely than women with higher secondary education and all men to be the person in the household spending the most time doing housework, and to be prevented from participating in education or doing paid work by housework.

Education level, rather than gender, is the most significant factor in regard to mobile phone ownership, with both women and men with higher secondary education being more likely to own a mobile phone than women and men with primary education.

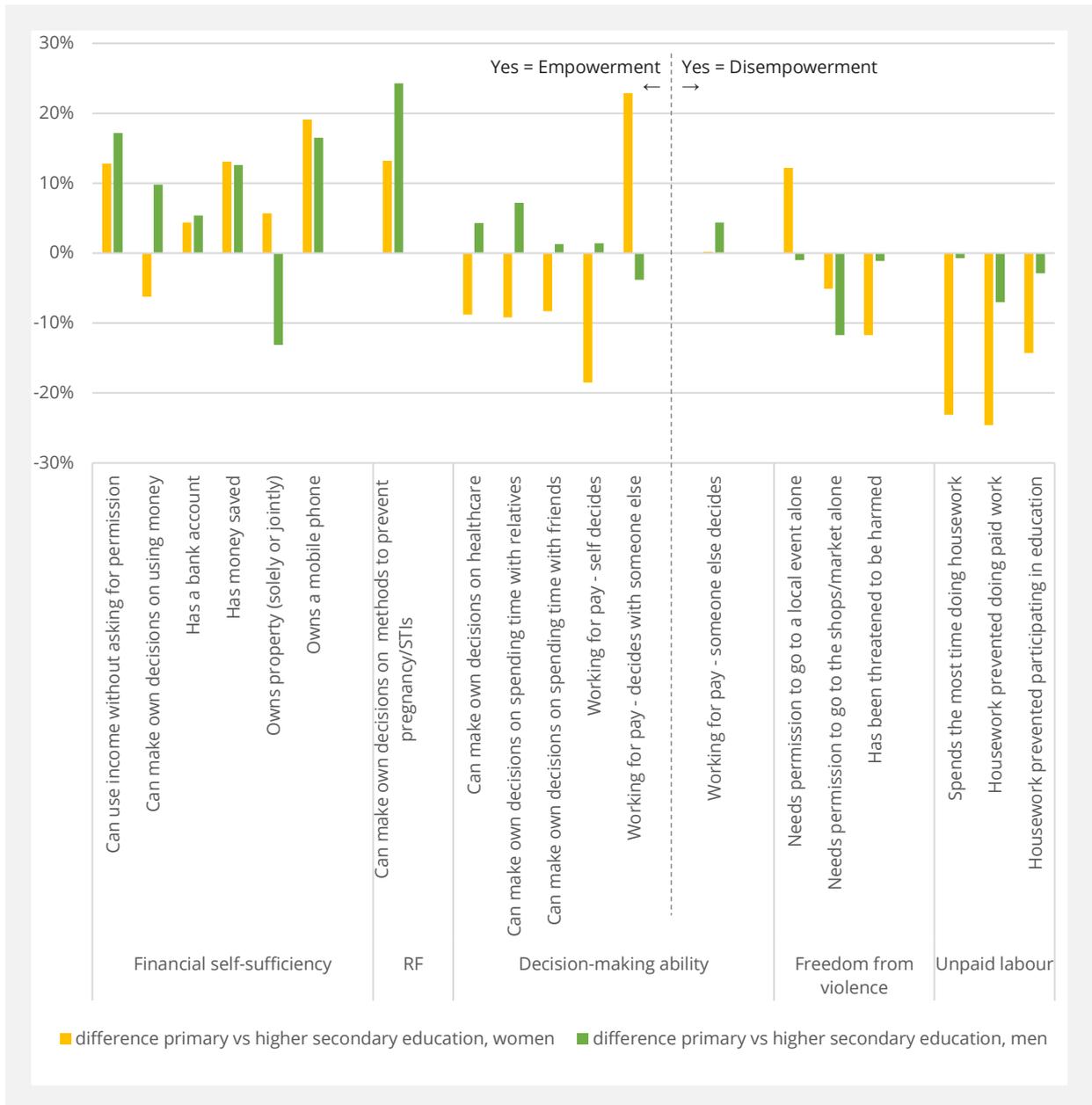
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<sup>89</sup> Due to limited availability of data for the lower secondary education groups, only primary and higher secondary groups were included in the analysis.



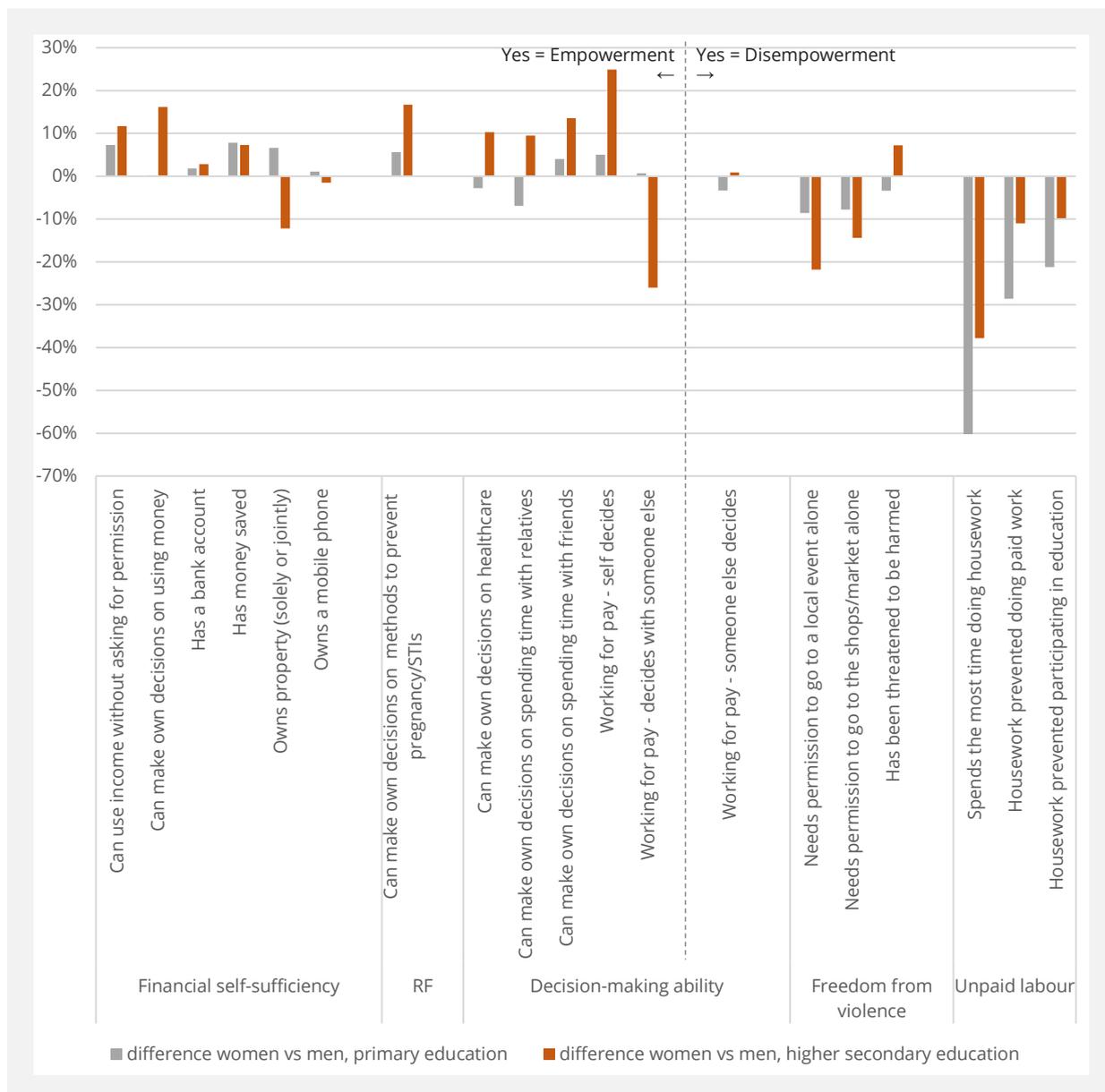
**Figure 65:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Nicaragua

Differences in empowerment by education level are more marked among women, than men. For men, empowerment levels differ with education levels in relation to financial self-sufficiency and reproductive freedom, but less so for the other items. For women, there are differences in empowerment among those with primary and with lower secondary education. Women with secondary education reported lower levels of empowerment in decision-making, as compared to women with primary education (Figure 66).



**Figure 66:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Nicaragua

When comparing experiences of empowerment of women and men with the same education levels across the 18 items, the empowerment gap between women and men with higher secondary education is larger than the empowerment gap between women and men with primary education (Figure 67).



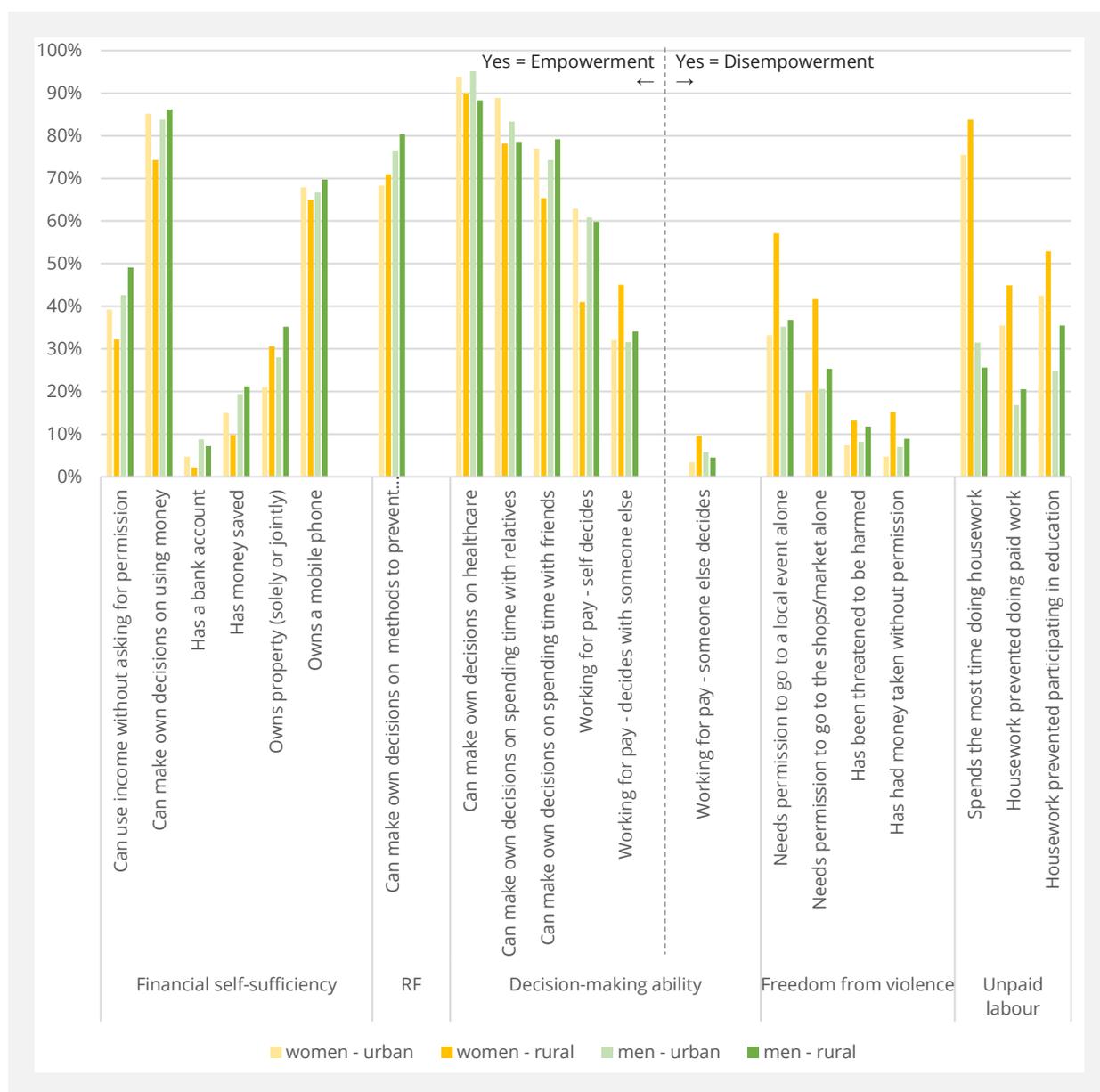
**Figure 67:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men, 90 in the same education groups, in Nicaragua

### Gender and location

Gender inequalities in Nicaragua vary by location – urban or rural – and more so for women than for men. While location has little impact on empowerment of men, it has a significant impact on the levels of empowerment experienced by women, with rural women being the least empowered group across most items (Figure 68). The gap is particularly marked in regard to (i) freedom from violence, with rural women being more likely, as compared to the other groups, to need

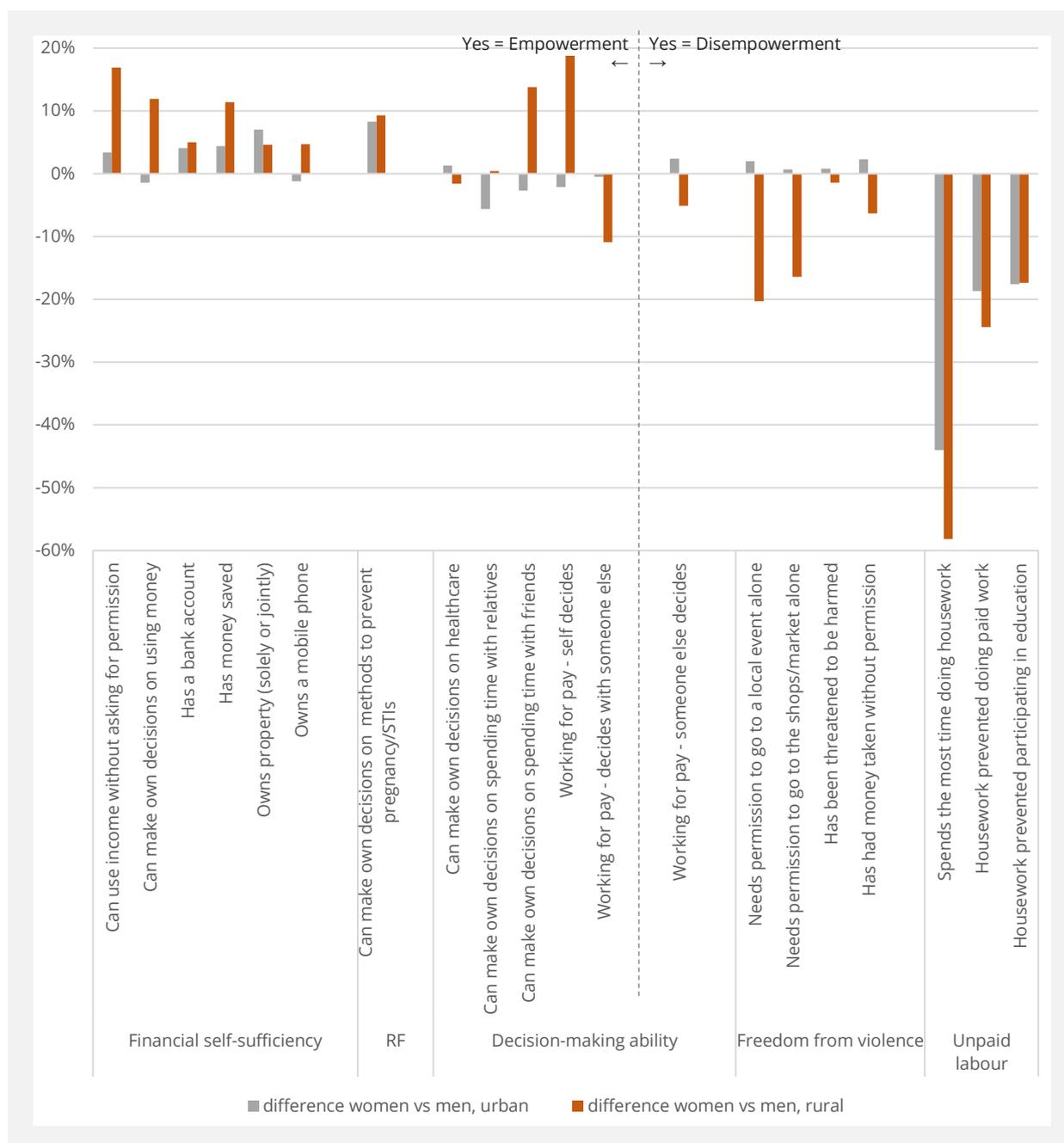
<sup>90</sup> % difference = men - women

permission to go to a local event or to shops/market; (ii) decision-making, with rural women being less likely to decide alone whether to work for pay outside of home and make decisions on spending time with friends; and (iii) unpaid labour, where rural women are most likely to be the person in the household spending the most time doing housework and being prevented from participating in education or taking up paid work by housework; and (iv) financial self-sufficiency, where rural women are the least likely to have income they can use without asking for permission or make their own decisions on using money. Differences between the other groups are less marked, with the exception of unpaid labour, where both rural and urban women report lower empowerment as compared to men.



**Figure 68:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in Nicaragua

For most of the empowerment items, the gap between women and men is more marked in rural, than urban, areas (Figure 69).



**Figure 69:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men, in rural and urban locations, in Nicaragua

In Nicaragua, gender is a significant factor in determining whether a person feels and is empowered. Experiences of empowerment are, however, moderated by age, education level and location, and more so for women than for men.

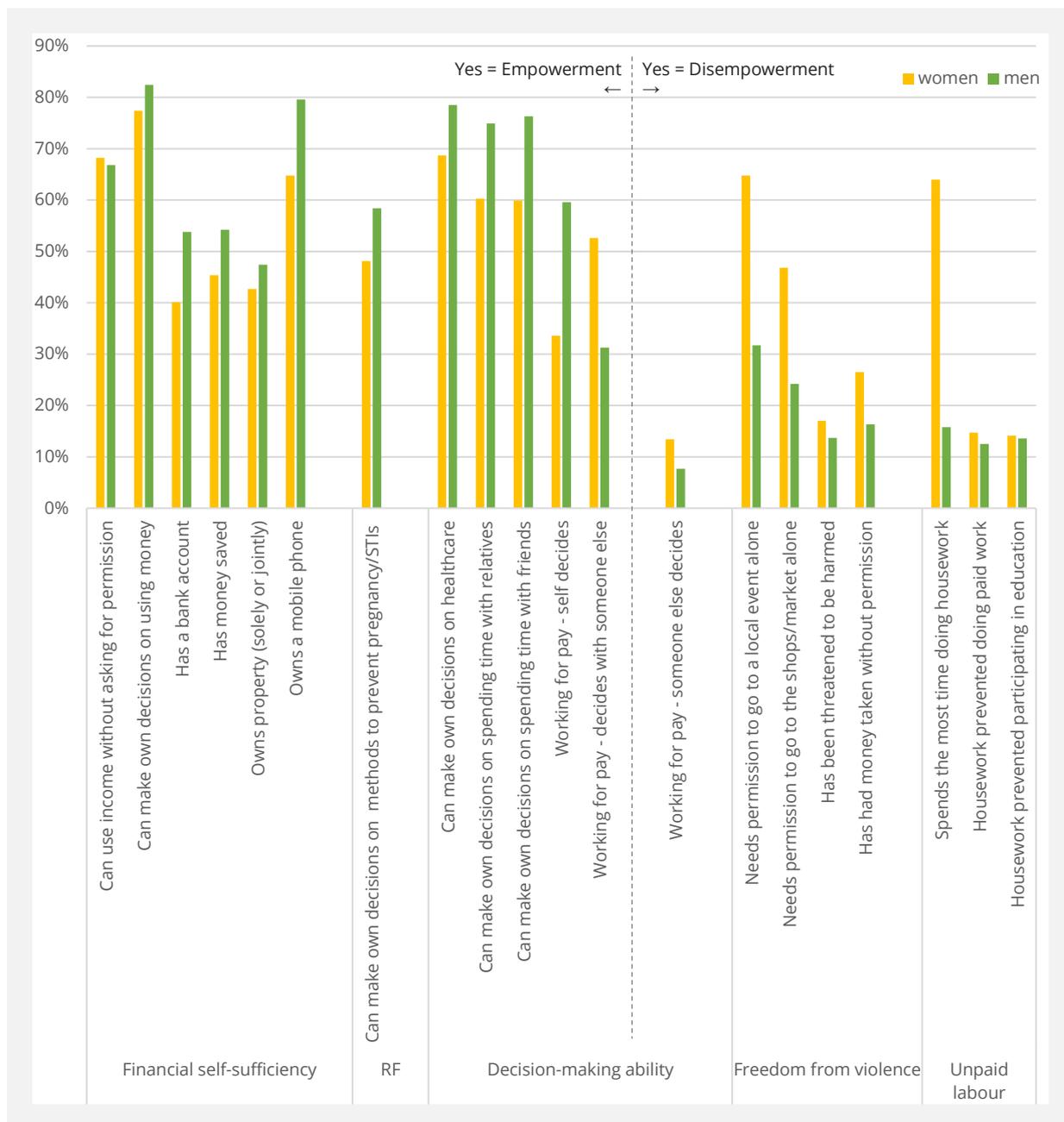
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# Nigeria

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## Gender

In Nigeria, the data indicate marked differences between women and men across all empowerment items, with women experiencing lower levels of empowerment as compared to men (Figure 70). The gap between women and men is greatest for unpaid labour, with women distinctly more likely than men to be the person in their households who spend the most time doing housework. Differences between women and men are also evident in relation to (i) freedom from violence, where women are significantly more likely than men to need a permission to go to a local event or shops/market alone; (ii) decision-making, where men are more likely than women to make their own decisions on whether to work for pay outside of home and on spending their time with friends or relatives; and (iii) financial self-sufficiency, with men being more likely to own a mobile phone or have a bank account than women.



**Figure 70:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men in Nigeria<sup>91</sup>

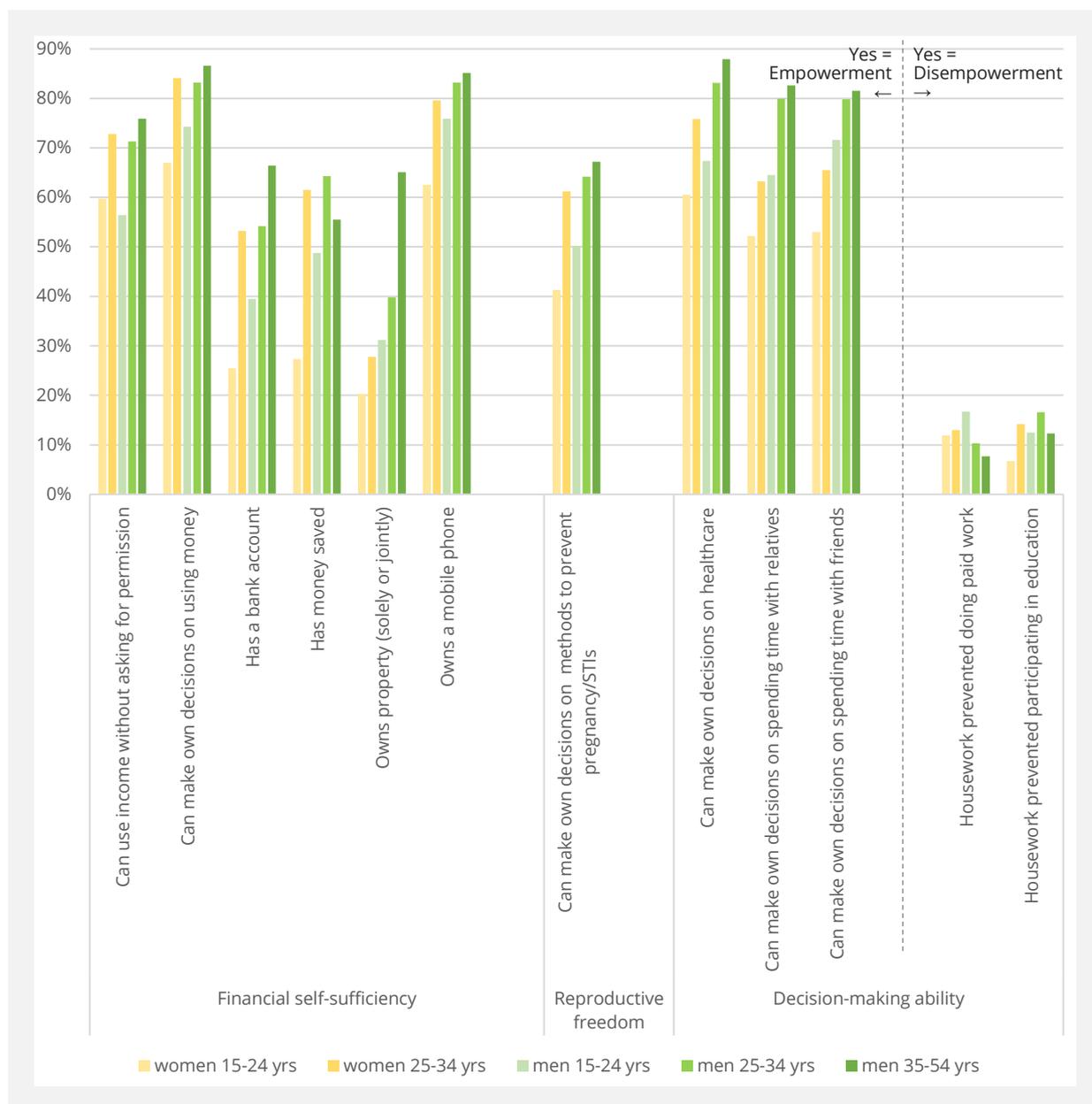
## Gender and age

Due to limited availability of gender- and age-disaggregated data,<sup>92</sup> only partial analysis based on age was possible. The available data indicate that while experiences of empowerment differ by age group, the gap in experienced empowerment between women and men remains significant.

<sup>91</sup> RF = Reproductive freedom

<sup>92</sup> For women in the 15-25 years age group, data were available only for 12 items. For women in the 35-54 years age group, no data were available.

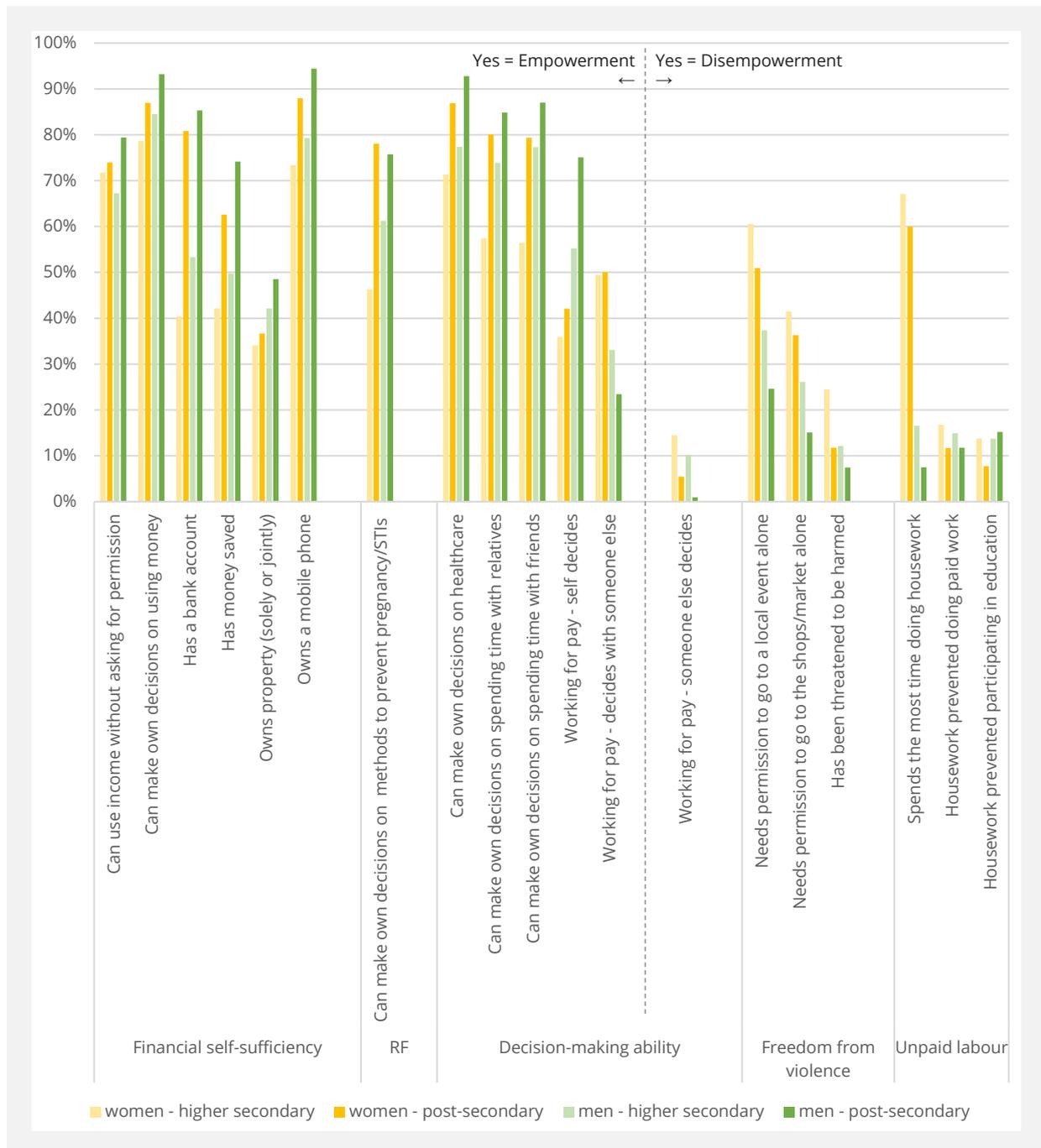
As evident in Figure 71, men in the 25-34 years and 35-54 years age groups reported the highest levels of experienced empowerment, while women aged 15-24 years are the least empowered group. Age-based differences, particularly among women, are more marked in relation to financial self-sufficiency and reproductive freedom, while gender-based differences are more visible for decision-making.



**Figure 71:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by age group, in Nigeria

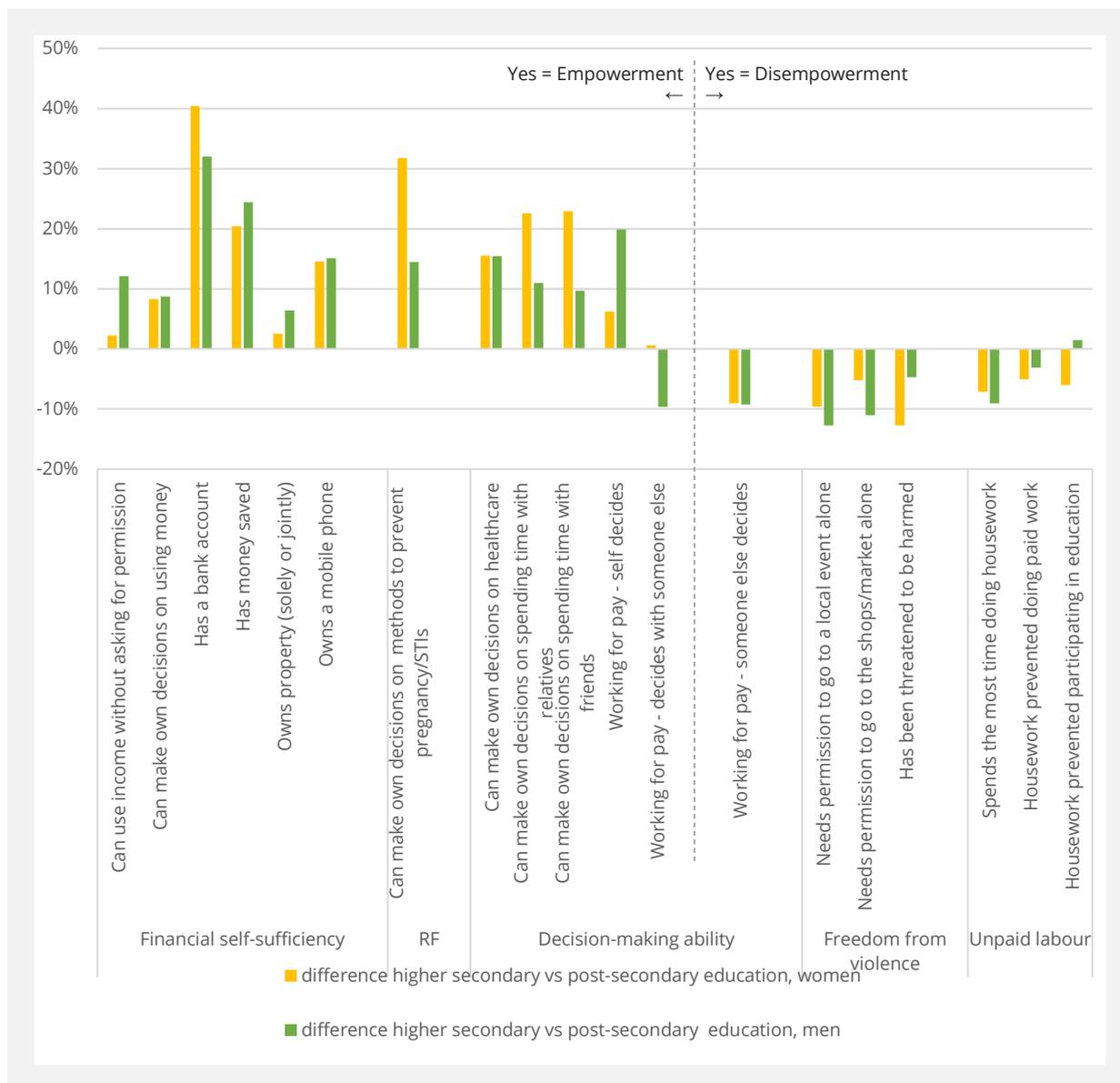
## **Gender and education**

In Nigeria disaggregated, empowerment levels vary with levels of formal education. Gender, however, remains a significant factor in experiencing empowerment across a number of items (Figure 72). In general, lower levels of education correlate with lower levels of empowerment, particularly for women. Women with higher secondary education reported the lowest levels of experienced empowerment across all items. Men with post-secondary education are the group which reported the highest empowerment levels. Education level appears particularly significant with regard to account ownership, with women and men with post-secondary education being more likely to have their own account, as compared to women and men with higher secondary education. Education level is also a factor in relation to having money saved, the ability to make decisions on methods to prevent pregnancy/sexually-transmitted illnesses and mobile phone ownership; with respondents – in particular women – with lower levels of education reporting lower levels of empowerment. Cross-cutting gender and education, marked differences are evident also for decision-making, where women with higher secondary education are less likely to make their own decisions on spending time with friends, relatives and healthcare, as compared to the other gender and age groups.



**Figure 72:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Nigeria

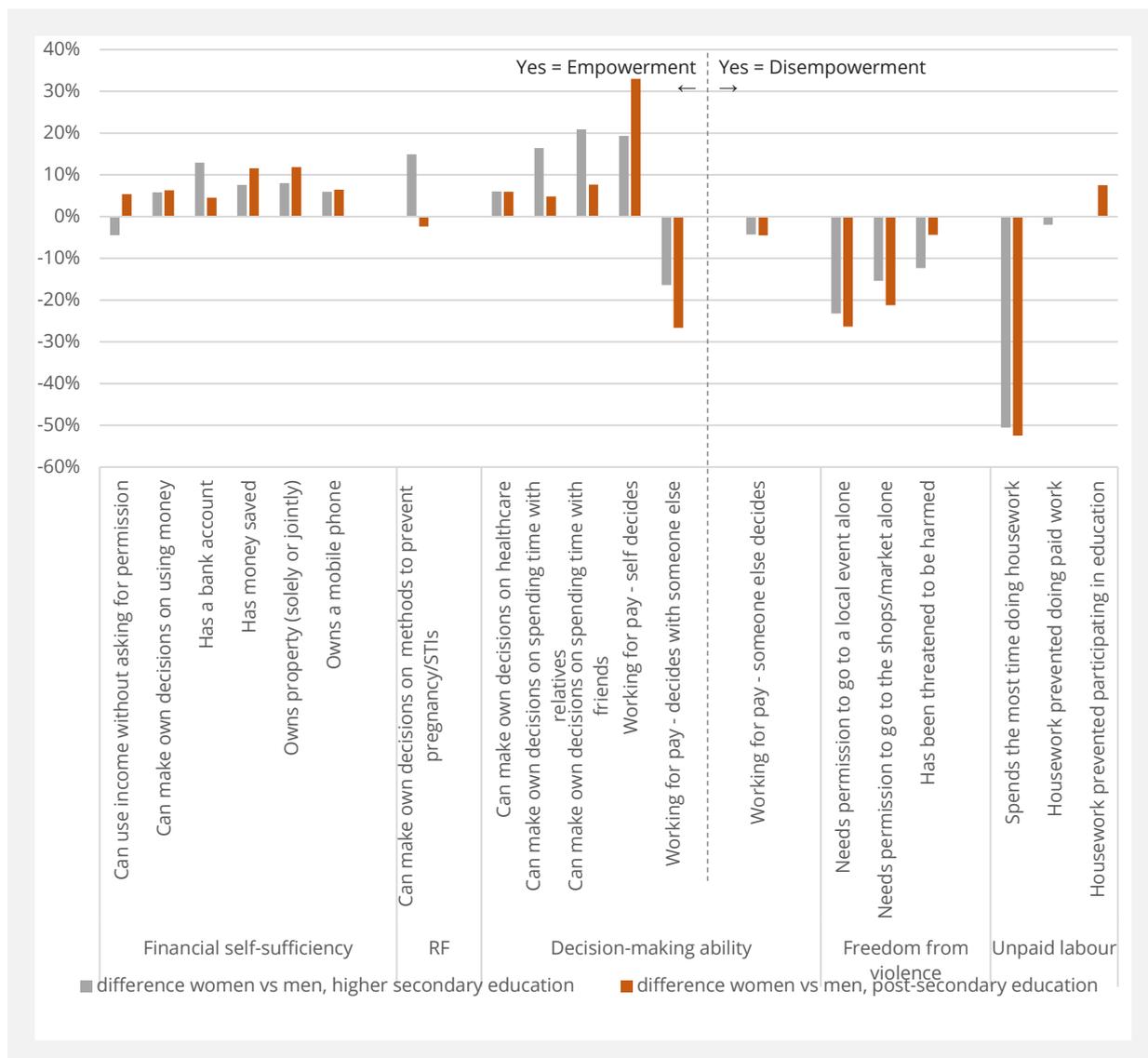
Differences in empowerment by education level are more marked among women, than men. For women, the empowerment gap between those with higher secondary and post-secondary education is most significant in relation to bank account ownership and ability to make decisions on the use of contraception. Among men, differences in empowerment between those with higher secondary and post-secondary education are most marked for bank account ownership and having money saved, though the gap is smaller as compared to women (Figure 73).



**Figure 73:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Nigeria<sup>93</sup>

When comparing experiences of empowerment of women and men with the same education levels across the 18 items, the empowerment gap is most marked for (i) unpaid labour and freedom from violence, with a slightly bigger difference in empowerment between women and men with post-secondary education as compared to those with higher secondary education; (ii) the ability to decide whether or not to work for pay, where the empowerment gap is larger for women and men with post-secondary education; and (iii) decision-making on spending time with friends or relatives, where the empowerment gap is larger for women and men with higher secondary education (Figure 74).

<sup>93</sup> % difference = % of responses by respondents with lower secondary education - % of responses by respondents with primary education



**Figure 74:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men,<sup>94</sup> in the same education groups, in Nigeria

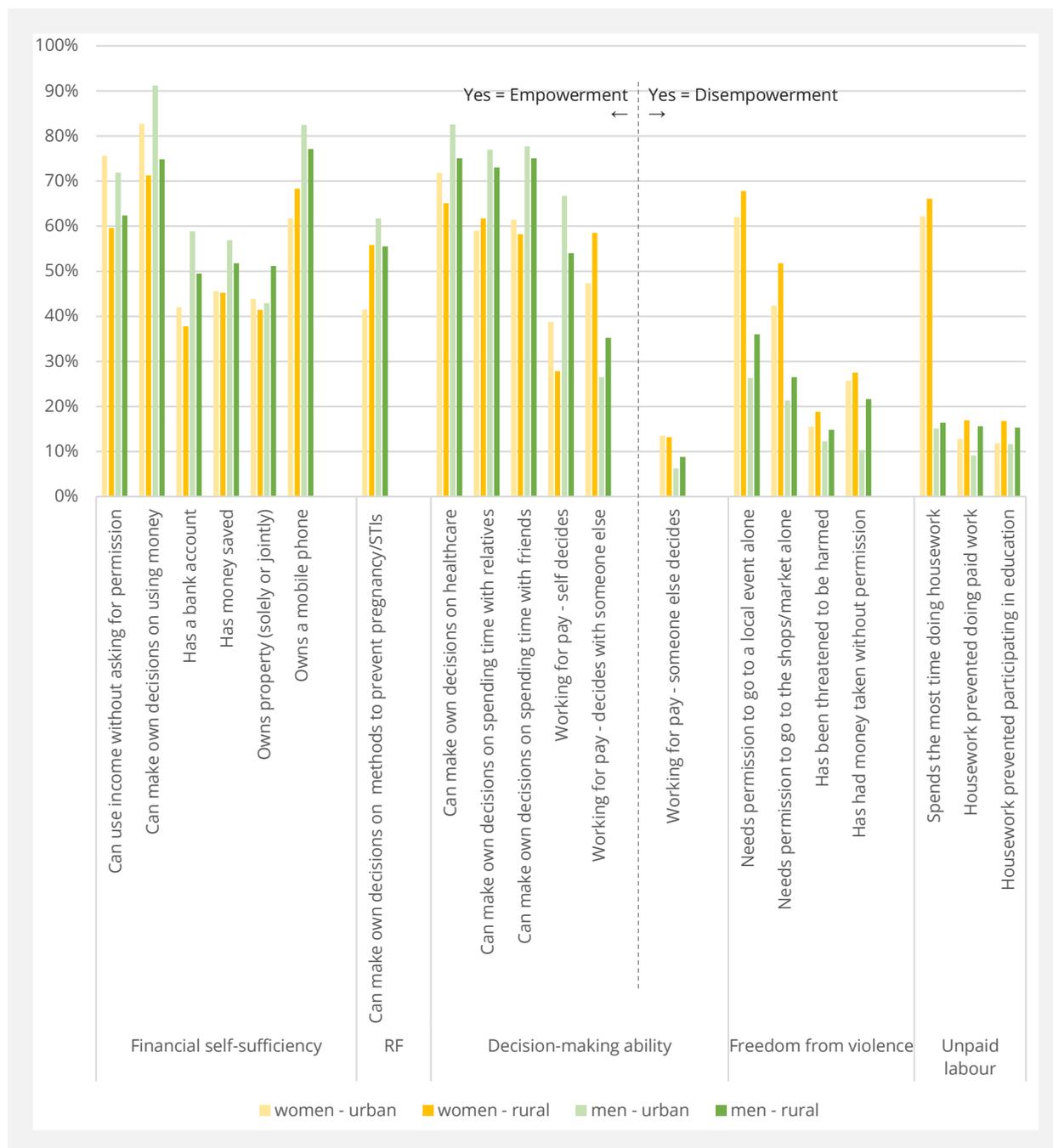
## Gender and location

While location – rural or urban – has an impact on levels of experienced empowerment, gender is a more significant factor. In general, urban men are the most empowered group, while rural women are the least empowered group (Figure 75).

Location, rather than gender, is a significant factor in regard to the possibility to use income without asking for permission and the ability to make decisions on using money saved, with urban women and men being more empowered than rural women and men. Across the remaining

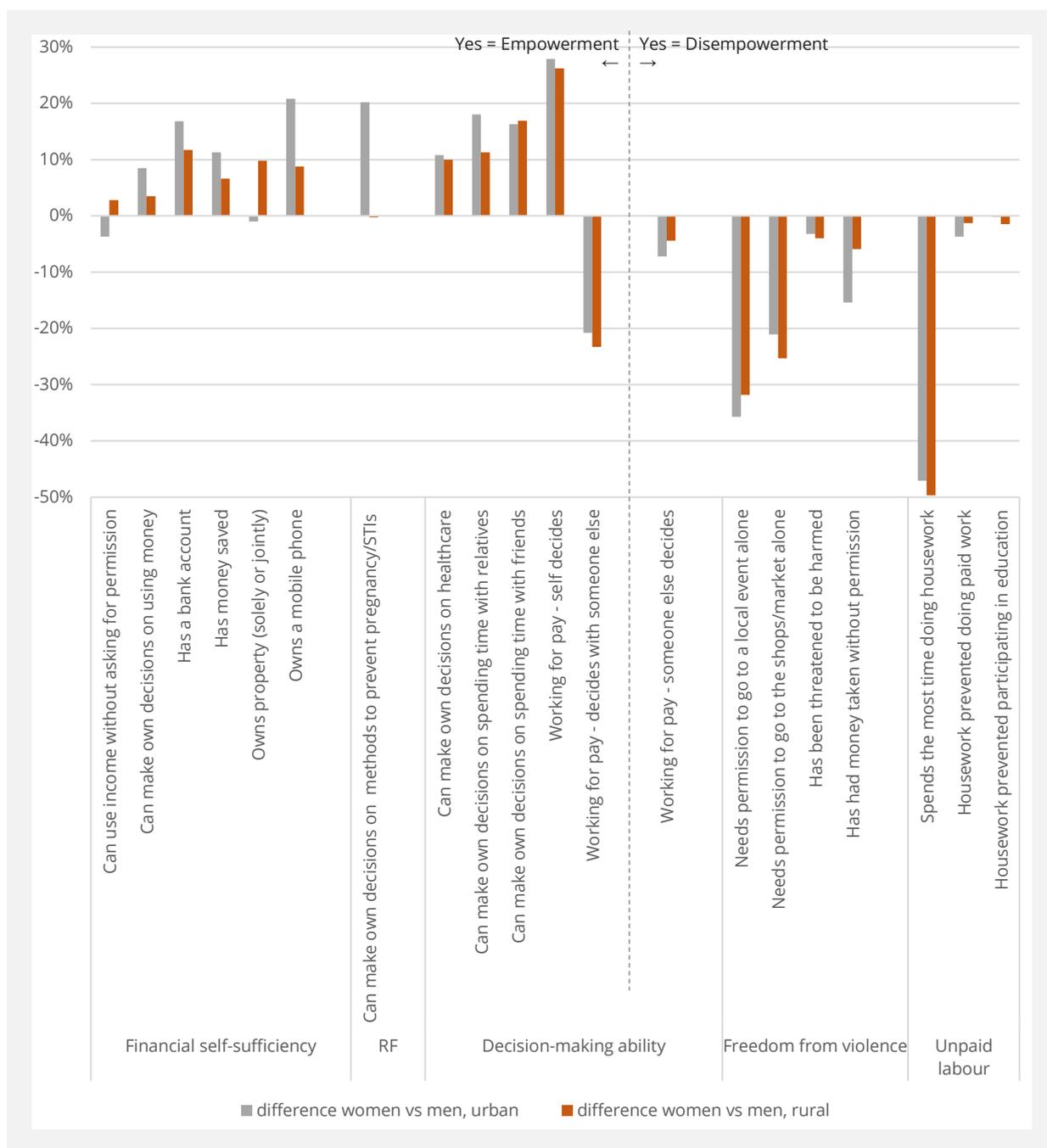
<sup>94</sup> % difference = men - women

empowerment items, the gap based on gender remains most marked than that for location. Cross-cutting gender and location, urban women are significantly less likely than the other groups to make their own decisions on methods to prevent pregnancy and sexually-transmitted illnesses.



**Figure 75:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in Nigeria

For most of the empowerment items, the gap between women and men is more marked in urban, than rural, areas; particularly for reproductive freedom, decision-making and financial self-sufficiency (Figure 76).



**Figure 76:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men, in rural and urban locations, in Nigeria

In Nigeria, gender is a significant factor in determining whether a person feels and is empowered. Experiences of empowerment are, however, moderated by age, education level and location, and more so for women than for men.

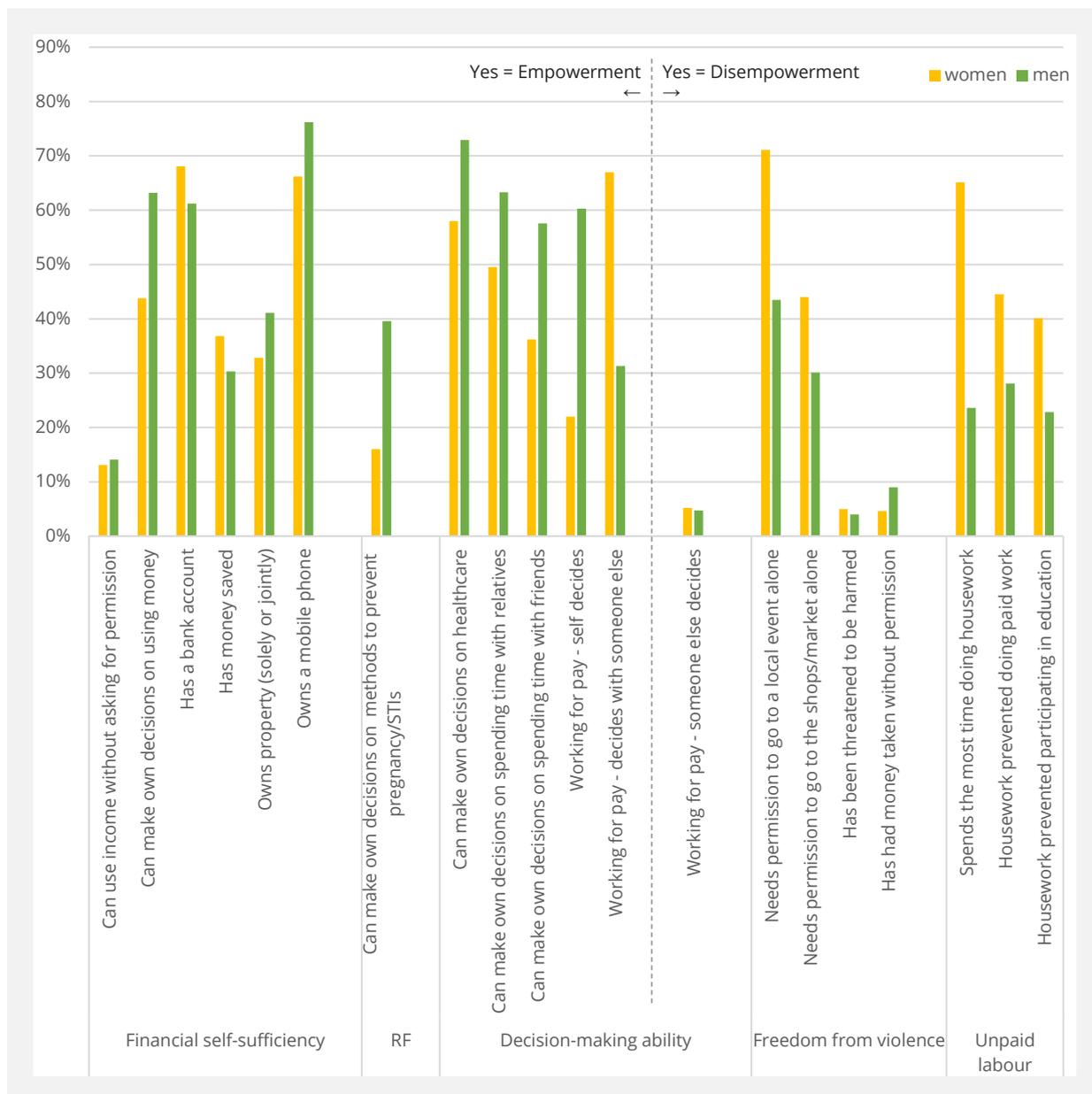
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# Sri Lanka

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## Gender

In Sri Lanka, the data indicate marked differences between women and men, with women experiencing lower levels of empowerment as compared to men across most of the items (Figure 77). The gap between women and men is greatest for unpaid labour, with women distinctly more likely than men to be the person in their households who spend the most time doing housework. Marked differences between women and men are also evident in relation to (i) decision-making, where men are more likely than women to make their own decisions on whether to work for pay outside of the home and on spending their time with friends; and (ii) freedom from violence, with women being more likely than men to need permission to go to a local event and shop or market; (iii) reproductive freedom, where women are less likely than men to make their own decisions on methods to prevent pregnancy and sexually-transmitted illnesses; and (iv) financial self-sufficiency, with men being more likely than women to make their own decisions on using money. Women, however, are more likely than men to own a bank account and have money saved.



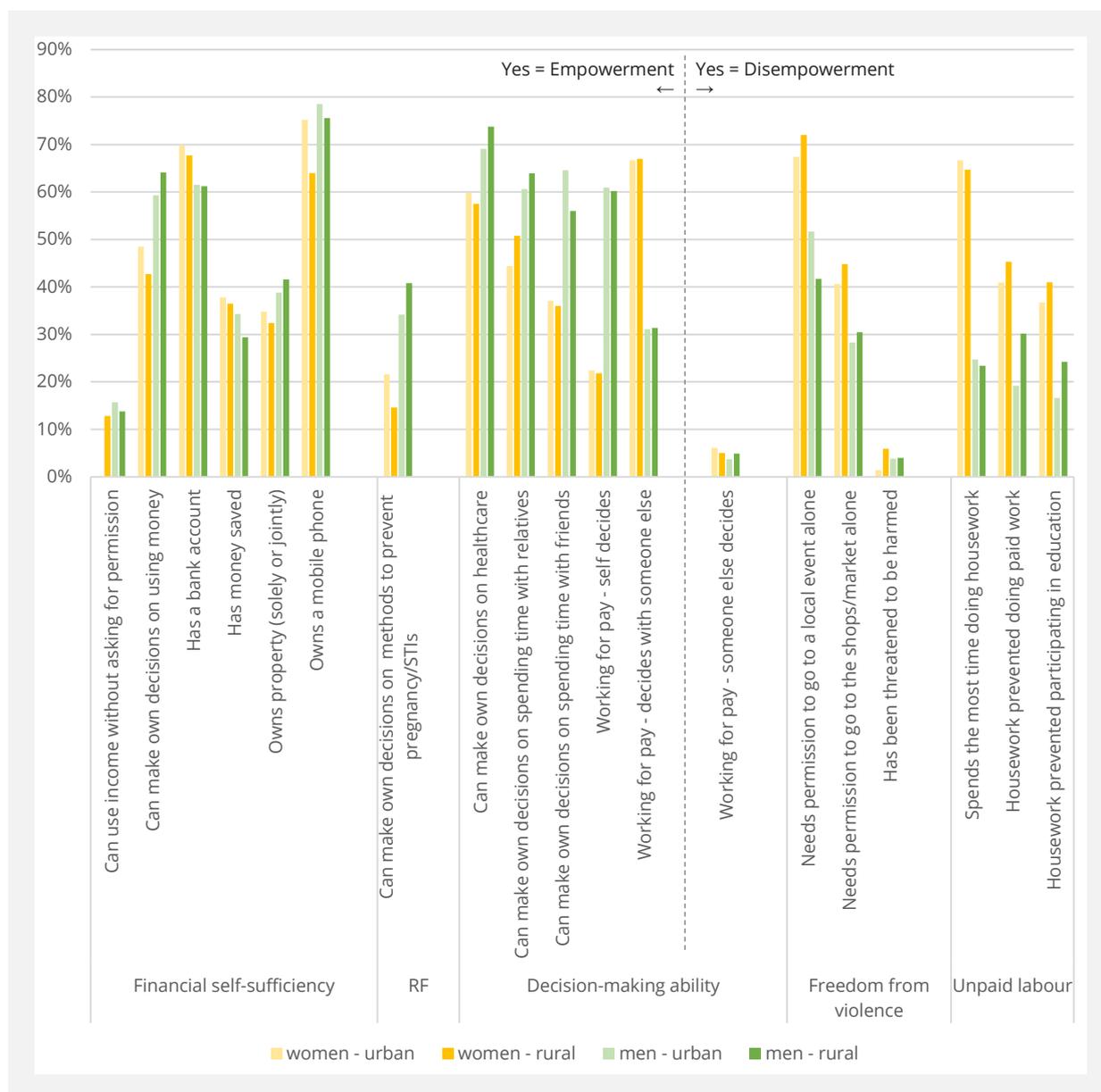
**Figure 77:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men in Sri Lanka<sup>95</sup>

## Gender and location

Location – rural or urban – has a limited impact on levels of experienced empowerment in Sri Lanka. The gap based on gender remains larger than differences based on location. As shown in Figure 78, location does, however, influence experienced empowerment. Rural women are less likely to own a mobile phone, make their own decisions on methods to prevent pregnancy or sexually-transmitted illnesses, and make their own decisions on using money, as compared to urban women and rural and urban men. For men, location is relevant for unpaid labour, with rural

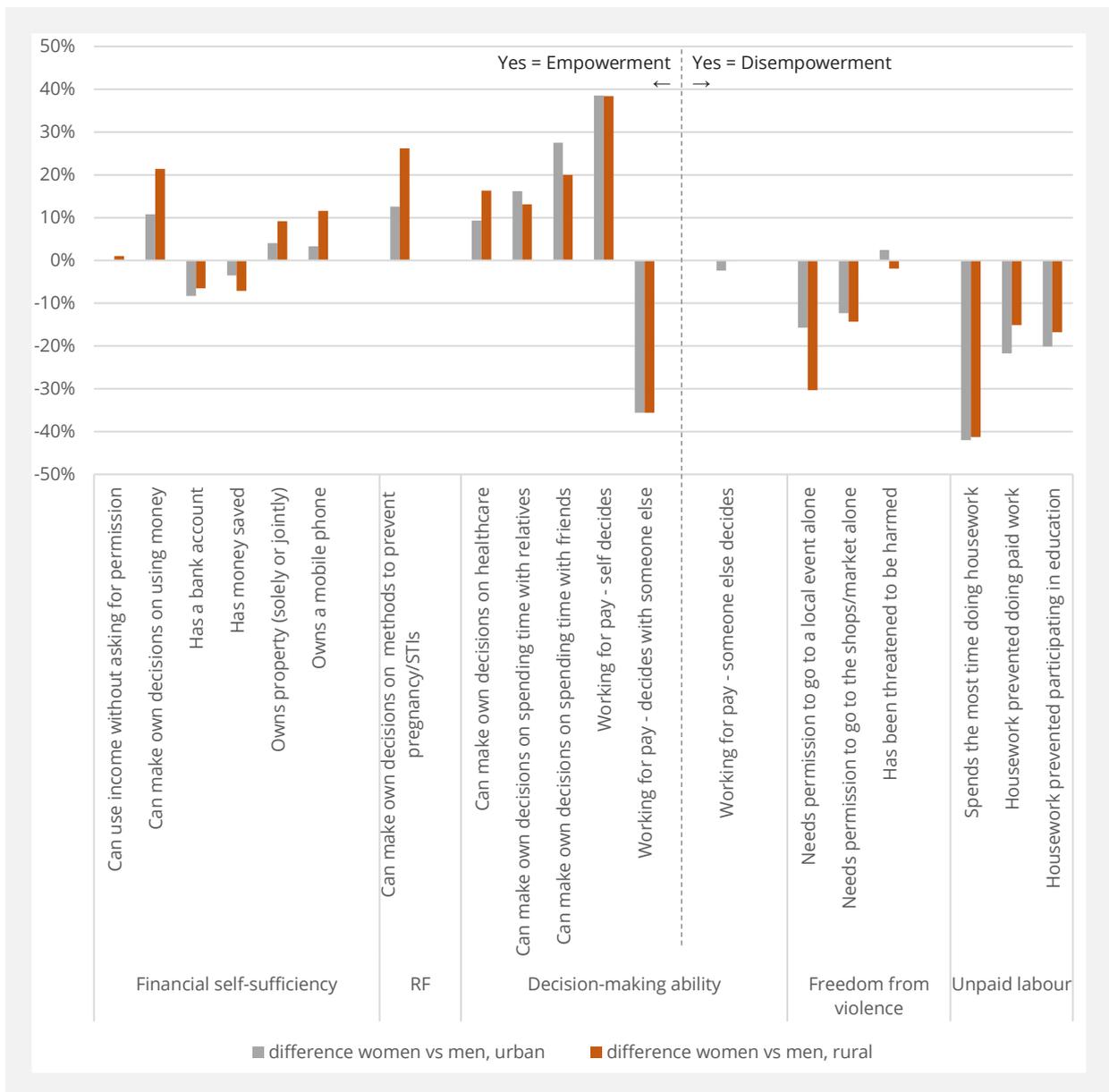
<sup>95</sup> RF = Reproductive freedom

men reporting more frequently to have been prevented, by housework, from participating in education or doing paid work and being more likely to make their own decisions on methods to prevent pregnancy or sexually-transmitted illnesses, as compared to urban men. Urban men, however, are more likely to make their own decisions on spending time with friends than rural men.



**Figure 78:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in Sri Lanka

For most of the empowerment items, the gap between women and men is slightly more marked in rural, than urban, areas; particularly for reproductive freedom and freedom from violence (Figure 79).



**Figure 79:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men, in rural and urban locations, in Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, gender is a significant factor in determining whether a person feels and is empowered.

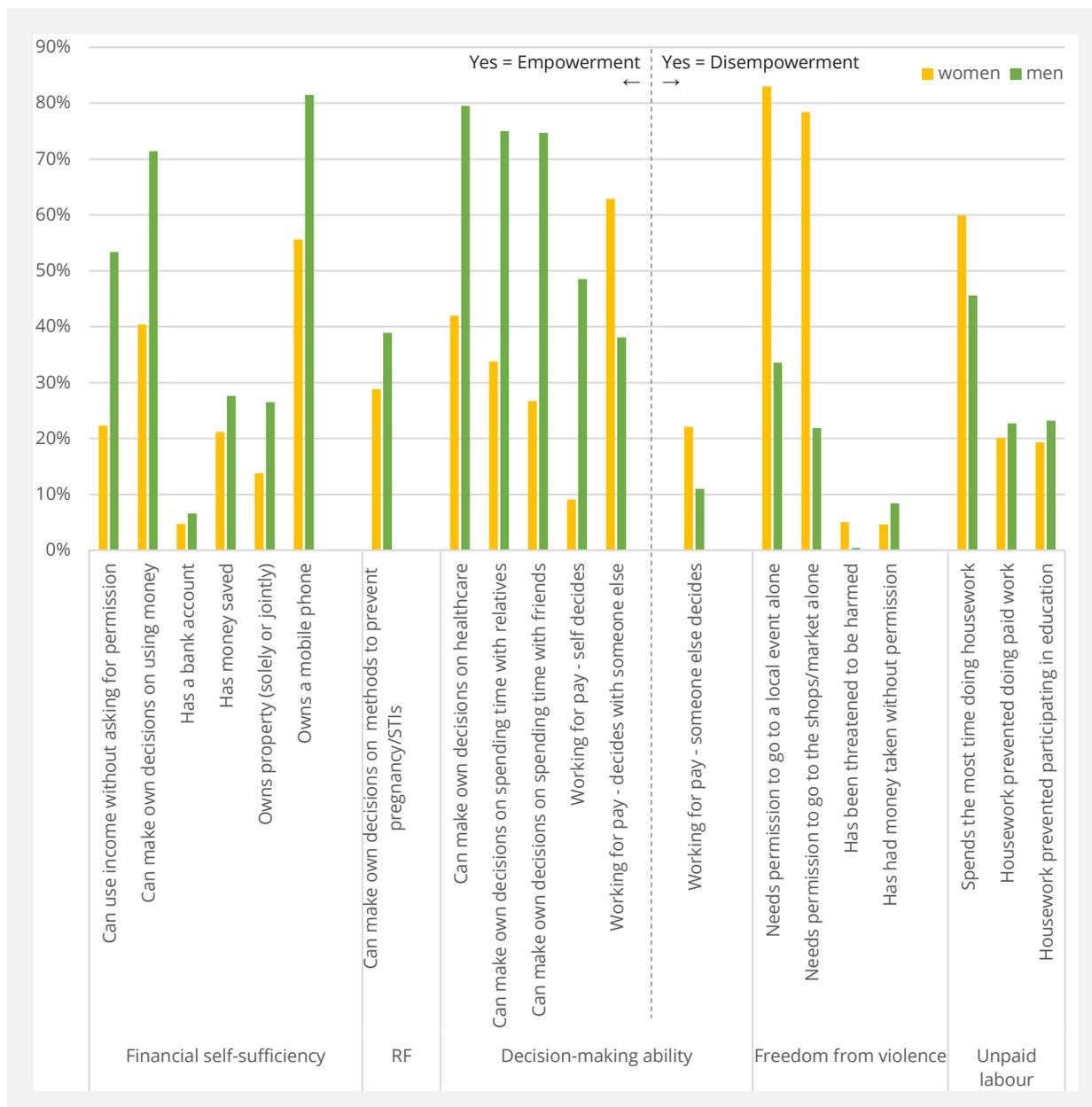
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# Tajikistan

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## Gender

In Tajikistan, the data indicate marked differences between women and men across all empowerment items, with women experiencing significantly lower levels of empowerment as compared to men. The gap between women and men is greatest for the (i) freedom from violence dimension, with women being significantly more likely than men to need permission to go to the shops/market or to a local event alone; and in (ii) decision-making, where men are more likely than women to make their own decisions on spending their time with friends, relatives, healthcare, and on whether to work for pay outside of home. Marked differences between women and men are also evident in relation to financial self-sufficiency, with men being more likely to make their own decisions on using money or own a mobile phone (Figure 80).



**Figure 80:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men in Tajikistan<sup>96</sup>

## Gender and age

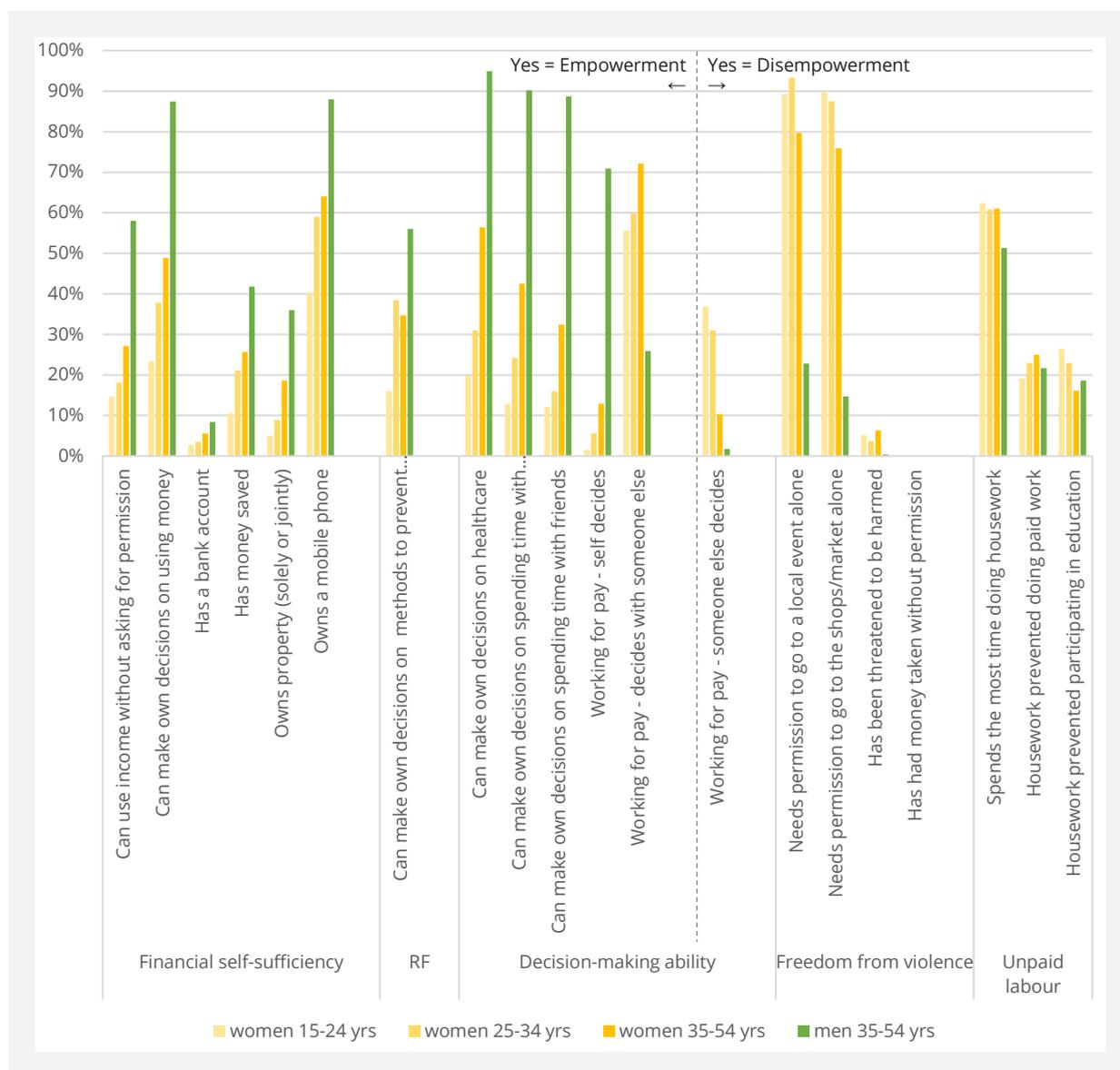
Limited availability of gender- and age-disaggregated data meant that analysis on the basis of age could only be done for women, not for men.<sup>97</sup>

Among women, those in the 15-24 years age group reported the lowest level of empowerment, particularly in regard to reproductive freedom. On the contrary, women in the 35-54 years age

<sup>96</sup> RF = Reproductive freedom

<sup>97</sup> For men, data were available only for the 35-54 years age group.

group reported the highest level of empowerment, as compared to women in the other two age groups, notably for decision-making. There is a gap between women and men in the 35-54 years age group, with men being significantly more empowered than women, especially regarding decision-making and freedom from violence (Figure 81).



**Figure 81:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by age group, in Tajikistan

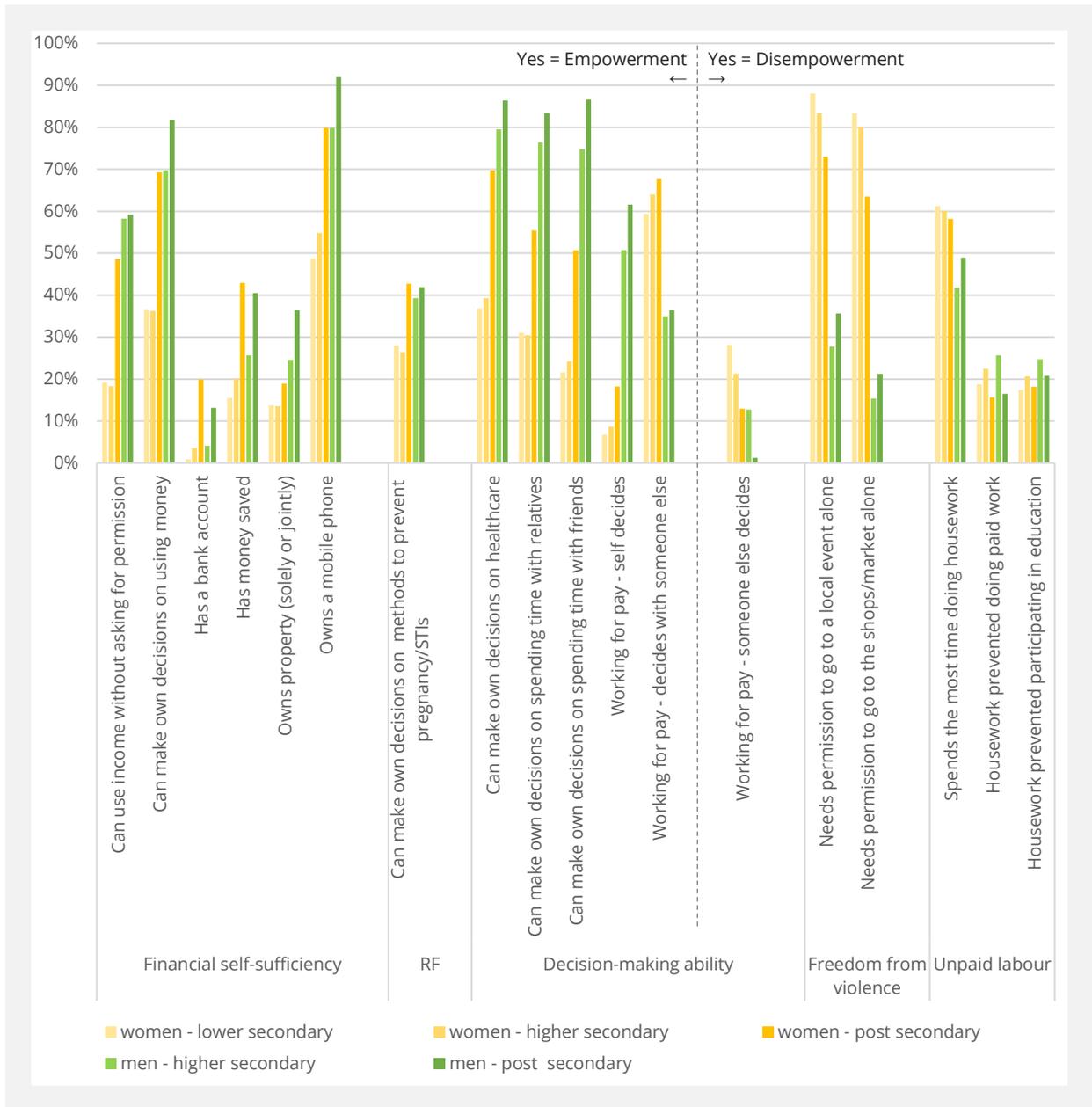
## Gender and education

Tajikistan data disaggregated by level of education show that while differences in empowerment vary with levels of formal education, the gender gap in empowerment levels remains marked

(Figure 82).<sup>98</sup> Men with post-secondary education are the group reporting the highest level of empowerment across most items, while women with lower and higher secondary education are the least empowered groups. While there are not significant differences in empowerment levels between women with lower secondary and higher secondary education, education at post-secondary level seems to be a particularly significant factor for women's empowerment. Women with post-secondary education reported being more empowered than women with lower and higher secondary education, in particular for financial self-sufficiency and decision-making (Figure 82). Under financial self-sufficiency, the highest level of education for women correlates with a reduced gender gap: women with post-secondary education reported, for several items, empowerment levels similar to men with higher secondary education. When it comes to having a bank account or money saved, women with post-secondary education reported being more empowered than men with post-secondary education. Under decision-making, however, the empowerment gap between women and men remains marked.

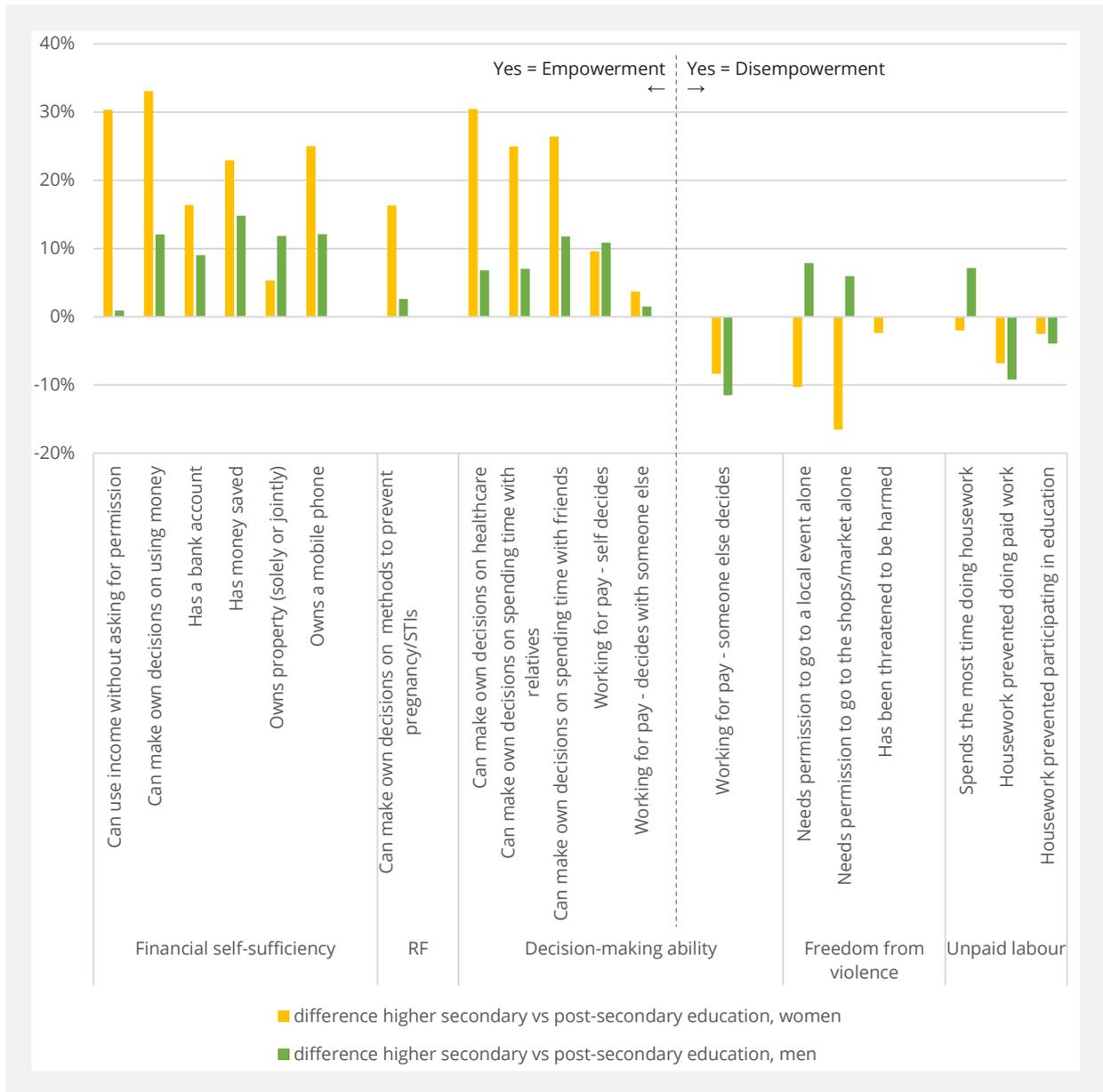
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<sup>98</sup> Data for men in the lower secondary education group were not available.



**Figure 82:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Tajikistan

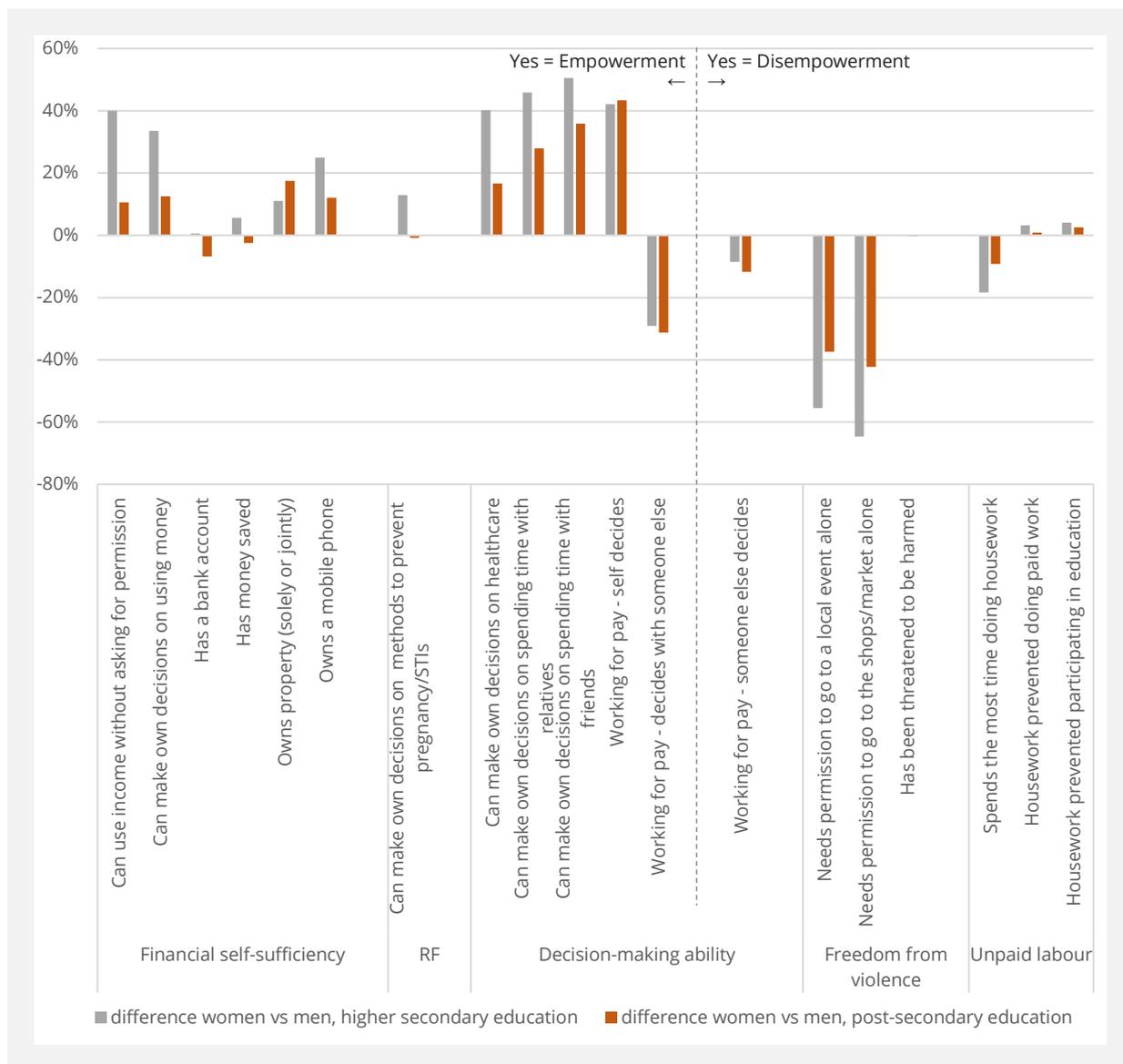
Differences in empowerment by education level is more marked among women, than for men (Figure 83).



**Figure 83:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Tajikistan<sup>99</sup>

When comparing experiences of empowerment of women and men with the same education levels across the 18 items, the empowerment gap between women and men with higher secondary education is larger than the empowerment gap between women and men with post-secondary education (Figure 84).

<sup>99</sup> % difference = % of responses by respondents with post-secondary education - % of responses by respondents with higher secondary education



**Figure 84:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men,<sup>100</sup> in the same education groups, in Tajikistan

## Gender and location

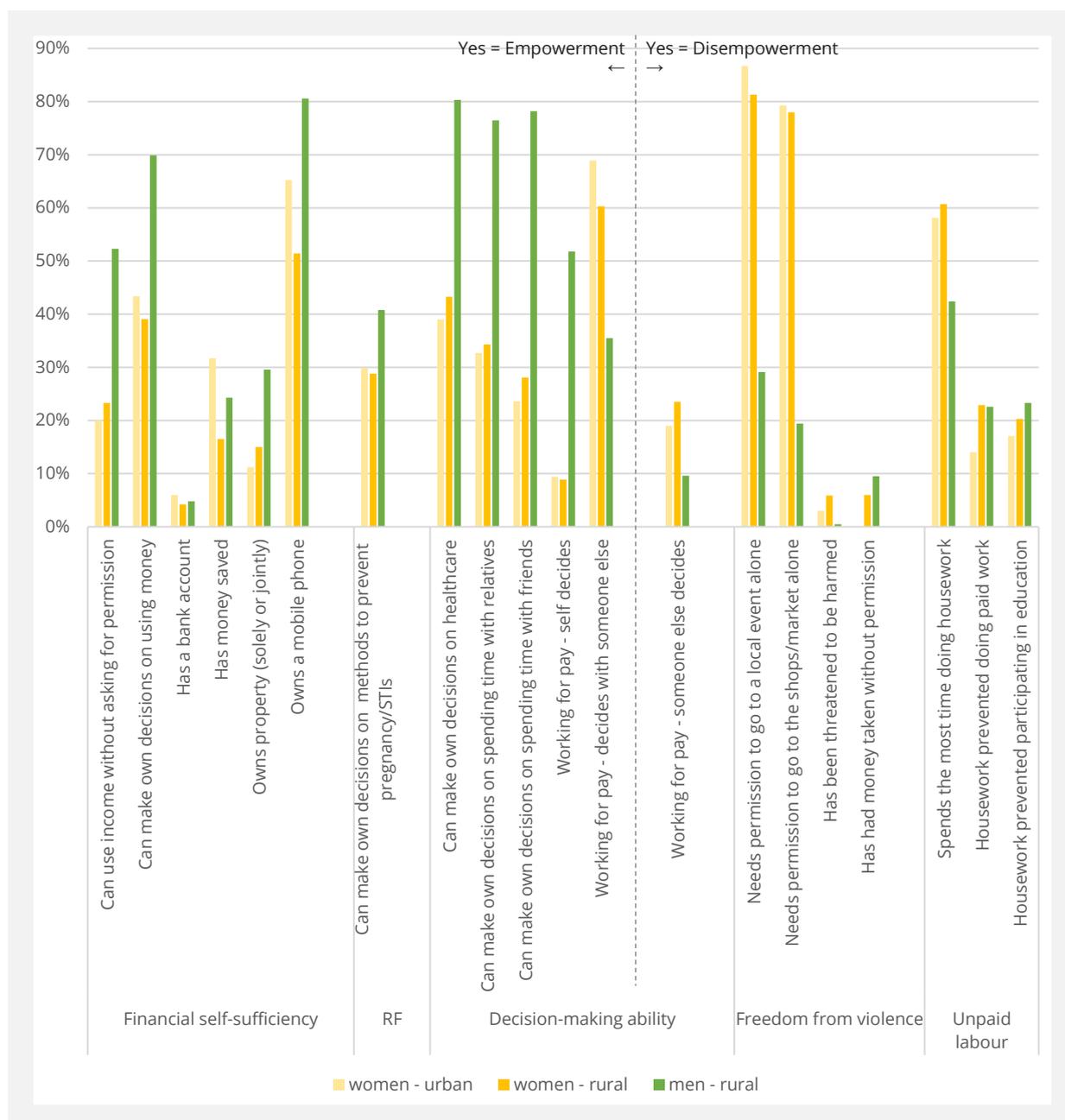
Due to limited available data,<sup>101</sup> only partial analysis by location was possible. While location – rural or urban – has an impact on levels of experienced empowerment, gender is a more significant factor (Figure 85).

Among women, urban location correlates with higher levels of empowerment in the financial self-sufficiency dimension. Urban women are more likely to own a mobile phone or have money saved

<sup>100</sup> % difference = men - women

<sup>101</sup> Data for men in urban locations were not available.

than rural women, yet reported slightly lower empowerment in decision-making and mobility, as compared to rural women.



**Figure 85:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in Tajikistan

In Tajikistan, gender is a significant factor in determining whether a person feels and is empowered. Experiences of empowerment are, however, moderated by age, education level and location, and more so for women than for men.

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# Thailand

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## **Gender**

In Thailand, the data indicate only marginal differences between women and men across all empowerment items, with the exception of unpaid labour, where women are distinctly more likely than men to be the person in their households who spend the most time doing housework. Differences between women and men are also evident in relation to bank account ownership, with women slightly more likely to have a bank account as compared to men (Figure 86).



**Figure 86:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men in Thailand<sup>102</sup>

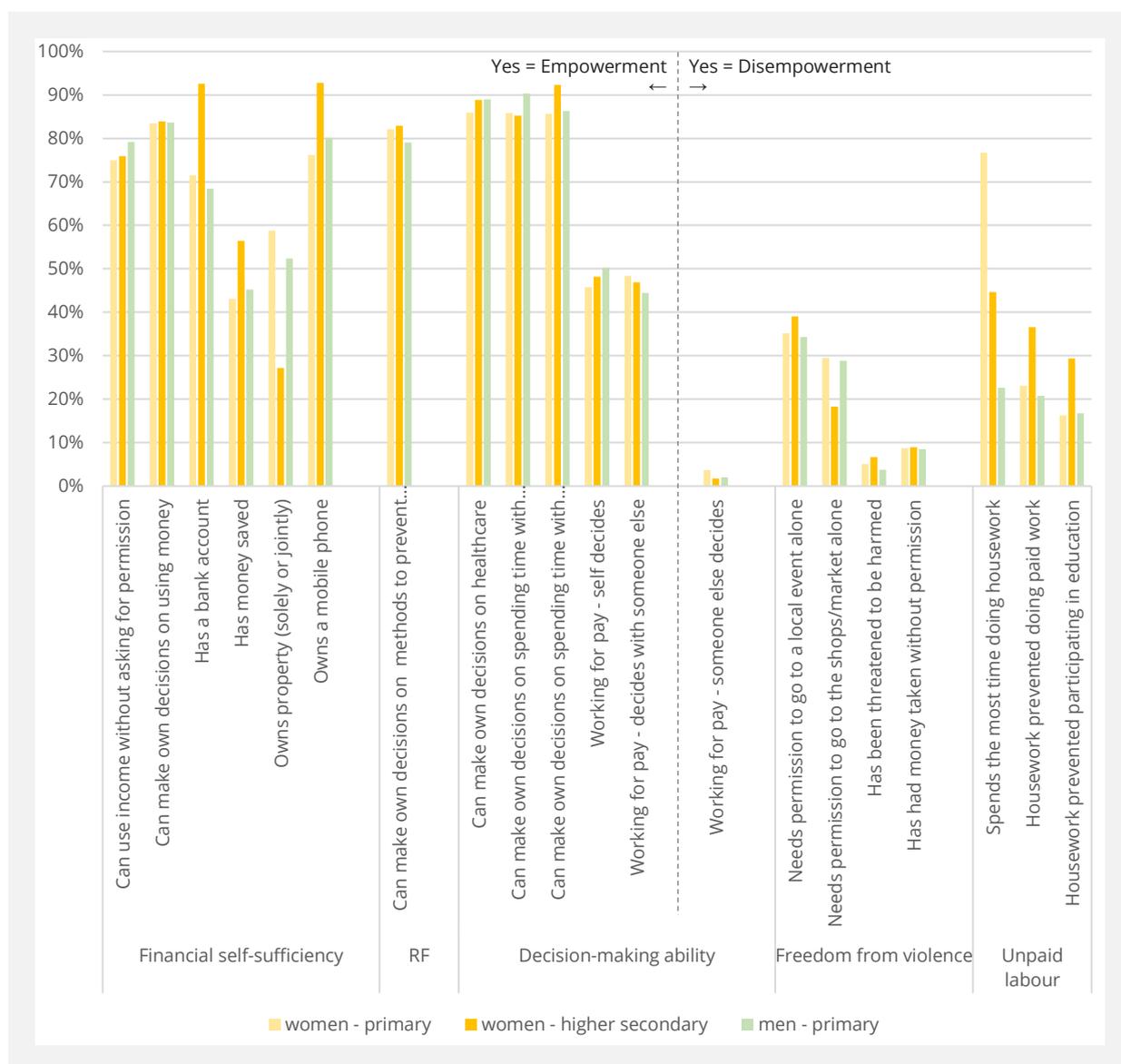
## Gender and education

Due to limited availability of disaggregated data,<sup>103</sup> only partial analysis based on gender and education was possible. For women, empowerment levels vary with levels of formal education, in particular in regard to (i) financial self-sufficiency, where women with higher secondary education

<sup>102</sup> RF = Reproductive freedom

<sup>103</sup> Disaggregated data were available for women in the primary and higher secondary education groups, and for men in the primary education group only.

are more likely to have a bank account, own a mobile phone and have money saved, but significantly less likely to own property, as compared to women with primary education; and (ii) unpaid labour dimensions, where women with higher secondary education are significantly less likely to be the person in the household spending the most time doing housework, but are more likely to have been prevented by housework to participate in education or do paid work, as compared to women with primary education (Figure 87). Men with primary education report similar empowerment levels as women with primary education, with the exception of unpaid labour, where women with primary education are markedly more likely to be the person in the household spending most time doing housework.



**Figure 87:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Thailand

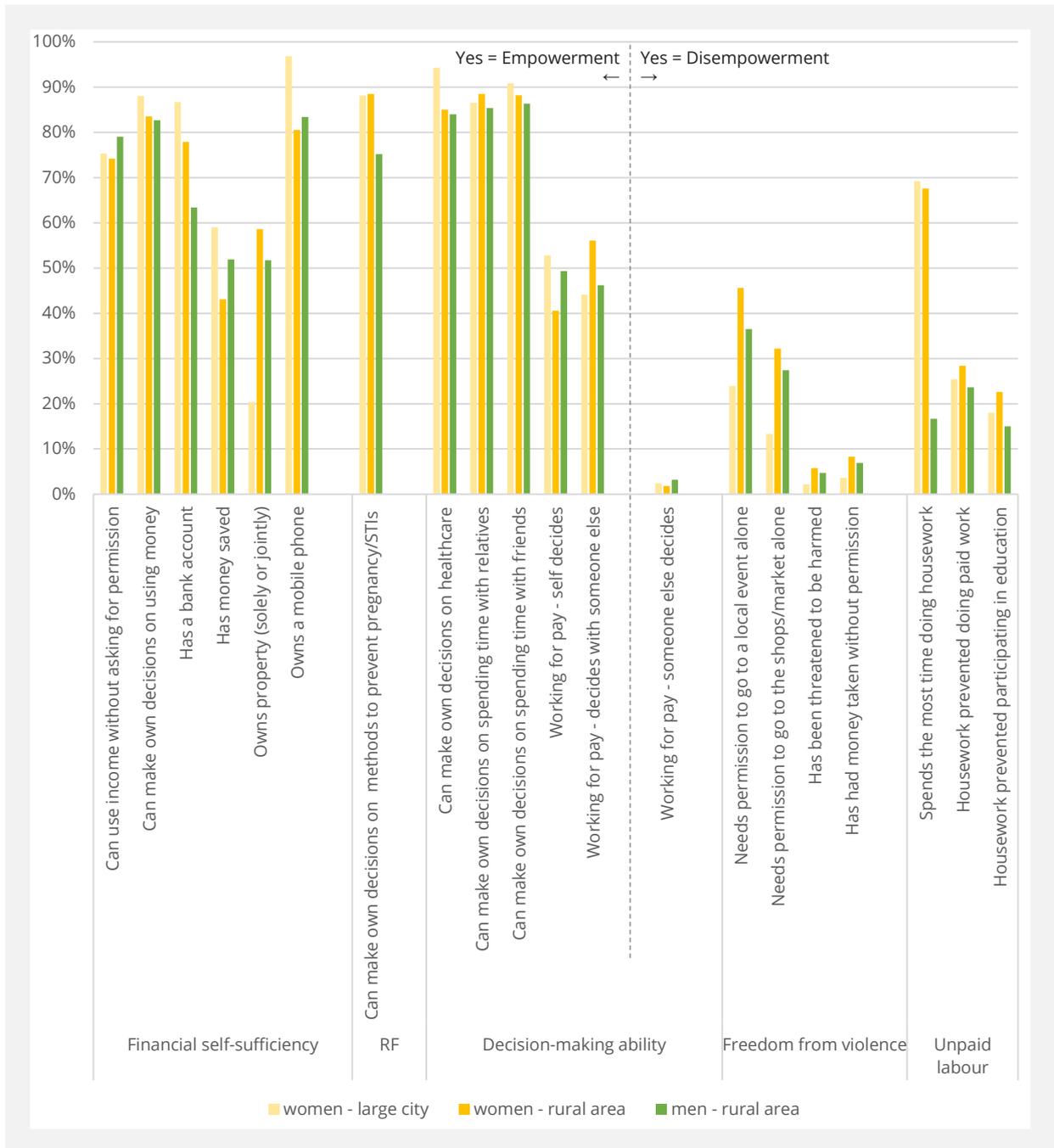
## Gender and location

Due to limited availability of disaggregated data,<sup>104</sup> only partial analysis based on gender and education was possible. As with education, for women, location – large city or rural area – has an impact on levels of experienced empowerment, in particular in relation to (i) financial self-sufficiency, with women living in a large city being significantly less likely to own property, but more likely to own a mobile phone or have money saved, as compared to rural women; (ii) freedom from violence, where women living in a large city are significantly less likely to need a permission to go to a local event or to shops than rural women (Figure 88). Women from a large city are also more likely to make their own decisions on healthcare and whether or not to work for pay outside of the house.

While women and men in rural areas reported similar levels of empowerment across several items, rural women are significantly more likely to be the person in the household spending the most time doing housework. Rural women are also more likely to (i) make their own decisions on methods to prevent pregnancy and sexually-transmitted illnesses; (ii) have a bank account and own property, and (iii) need permission to go alone to a local event or shops, as compared to rural men. Rural men, by contrast, are more likely to make their own decisions on whether to work for pay outside of the house, as compared to rural women. Women from a large city reported higher levels of empowerment as compared to rural men for most items, with the exception of property ownership and unpaid labour.

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<sup>104</sup> Disaggregated data were available for women in large city and rural area categories, and for men in the rural area category only.



**Figure 88:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in Thailand

In Thailand, gender does not emerge as significant a factor in determining whether a person feels and is empowered, compared to the other polled countries. Experiences of empowerment for women and men are, however, somewhat moderated by education level and location.

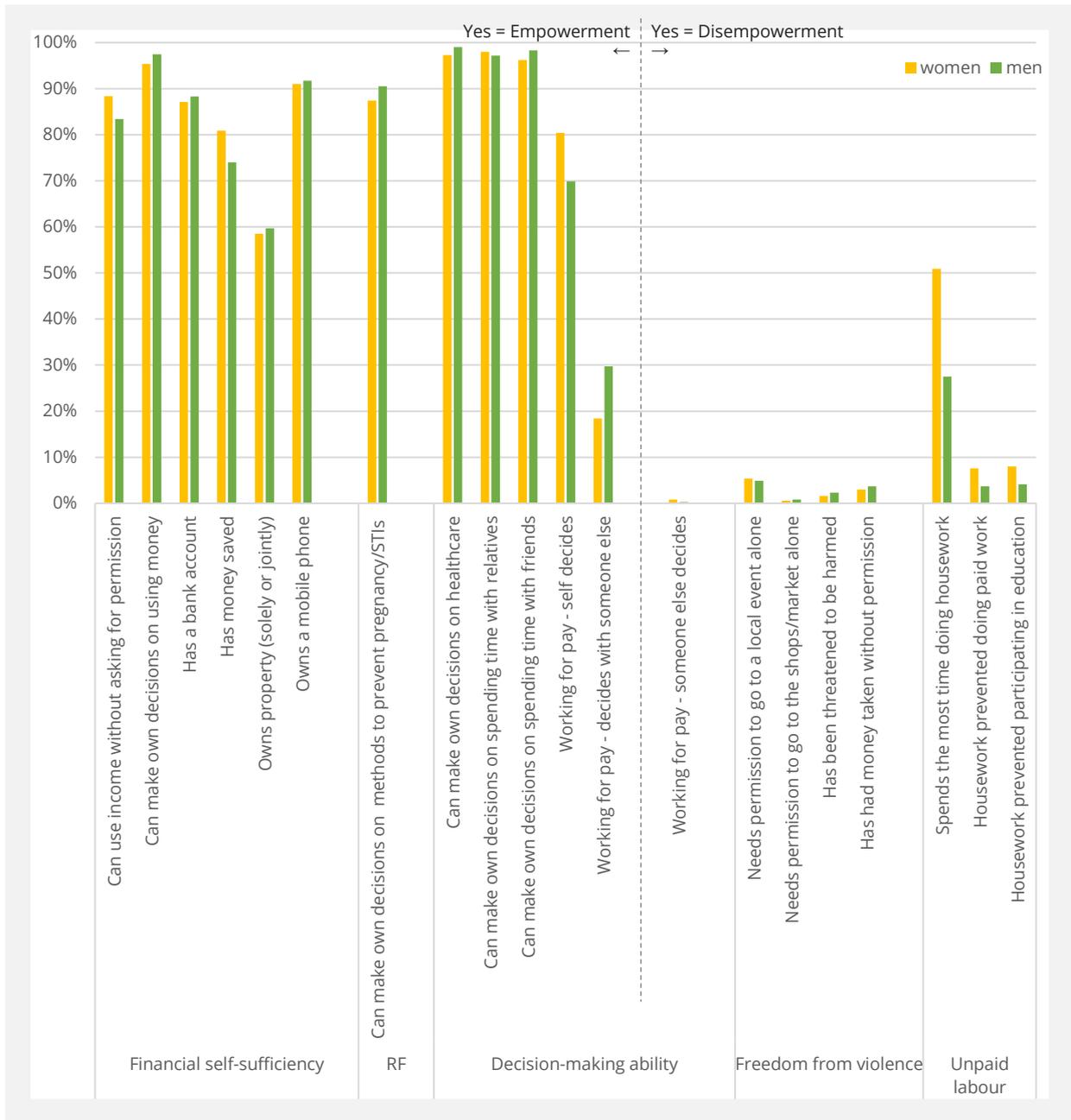
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# United Kingdom

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## **Gender**

In the UK, the data indicate marginal differences between women and men across almost all empowerment items (Figure 89). The gap between women and men is most marked for the unpaid labour dimension, with women more likely than men to be the person in their households who spend the most time doing housework. Differences between women and men are also visible in relation to (i) decision-making, where women are more likely than men to make their own decisions on whether to work for pay outside of home; and (ii) financial self-sufficiency, with women being more likely to have money saved than men.



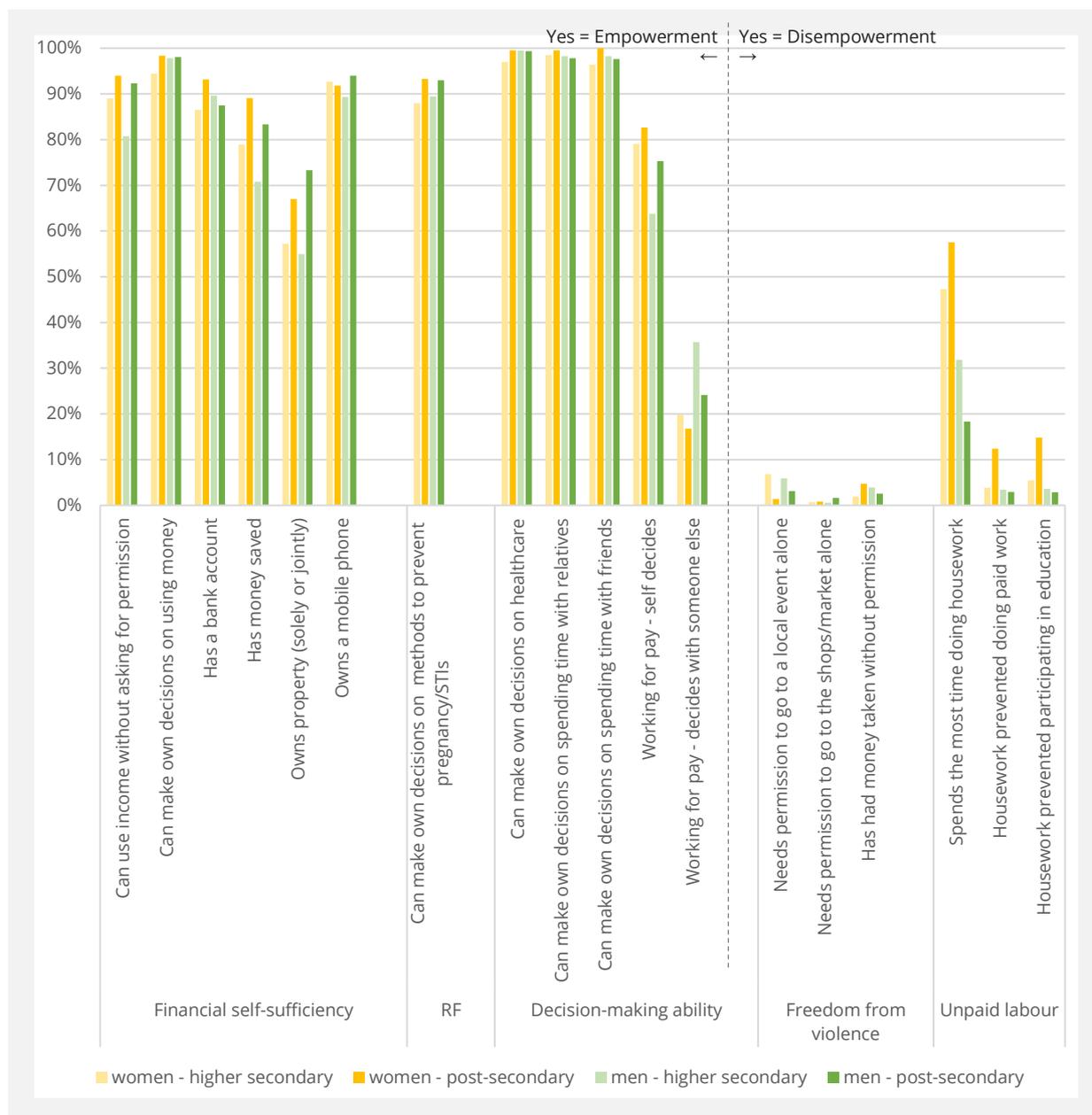
**Figure 89:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men in the UK<sup>105</sup>

## Gender and education

Education level is a factor in experiencing empowerment across a number of items, in particular for financial self-sufficiency (Figure 90). Education, rather than gender, is significant in regard to property ownership, with women and men with post-secondary education more likely to own property than women and men with higher secondary education. Women, and to a lesser extent

<sup>105</sup> RF = Reproductive freedom

men, with post-secondary education are also more likely to have money saved, as compared to women and men with higher secondary education. Cross-cutting gender and education, men with higher secondary education report being less empowered, as compared to the other groups, in regard to the ability to use income without asking for permission and decide alone whether or not to work for pay outside of home. Women with post-secondary education are most likely, and men with post-secondary education least likely, to be the person in the household spending the most time doing housework.



**Figure 90:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in the UK

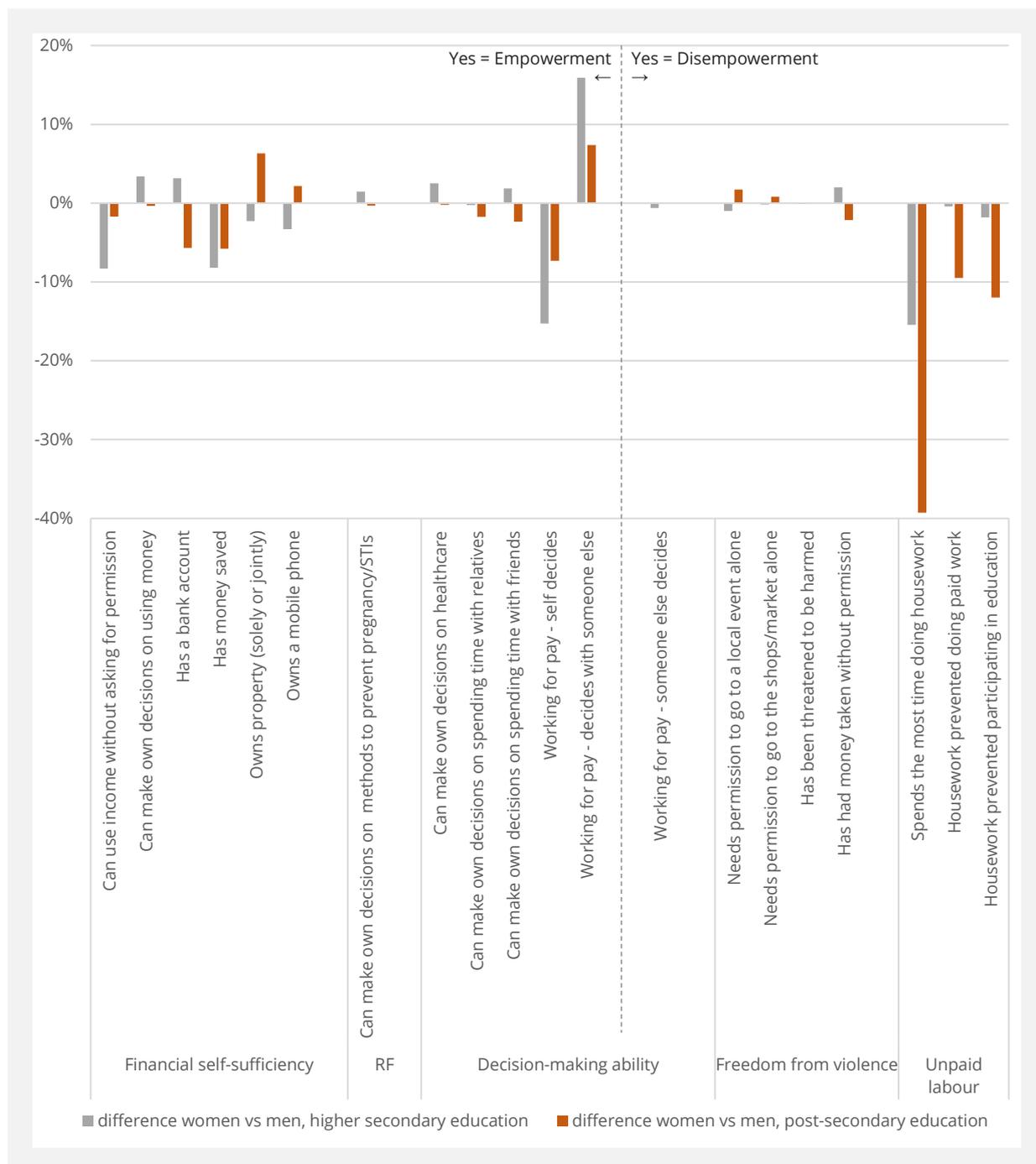
Differences in empowerment by education level are more marked among men, than for women; though for women differences exist across more empowerment items. Among men, the more significant differences by education level pertain to (i) financial self-sufficiency, especially property ownership, as well as having money saved and the ability to use income without asking for permission; (ii) the ability to decide alone whether to work for pay outside of home; and (iii) spending time doing housework. Among women, the more significant differences by education level are in regard to financial self-sufficiency and unpaid labour (Figure 91).



**Figure 91:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in the UK<sup>106</sup>

<sup>106</sup> % difference = % of responses by respondents with post-secondary education - % of responses by respondents with higher secondary education

When comparing experiences of empowerment of women and men with the same education levels across the 18 items, a marked empowerment gap is evident between women and men with post-secondary education in relation to unpaid labour (Figure 92).

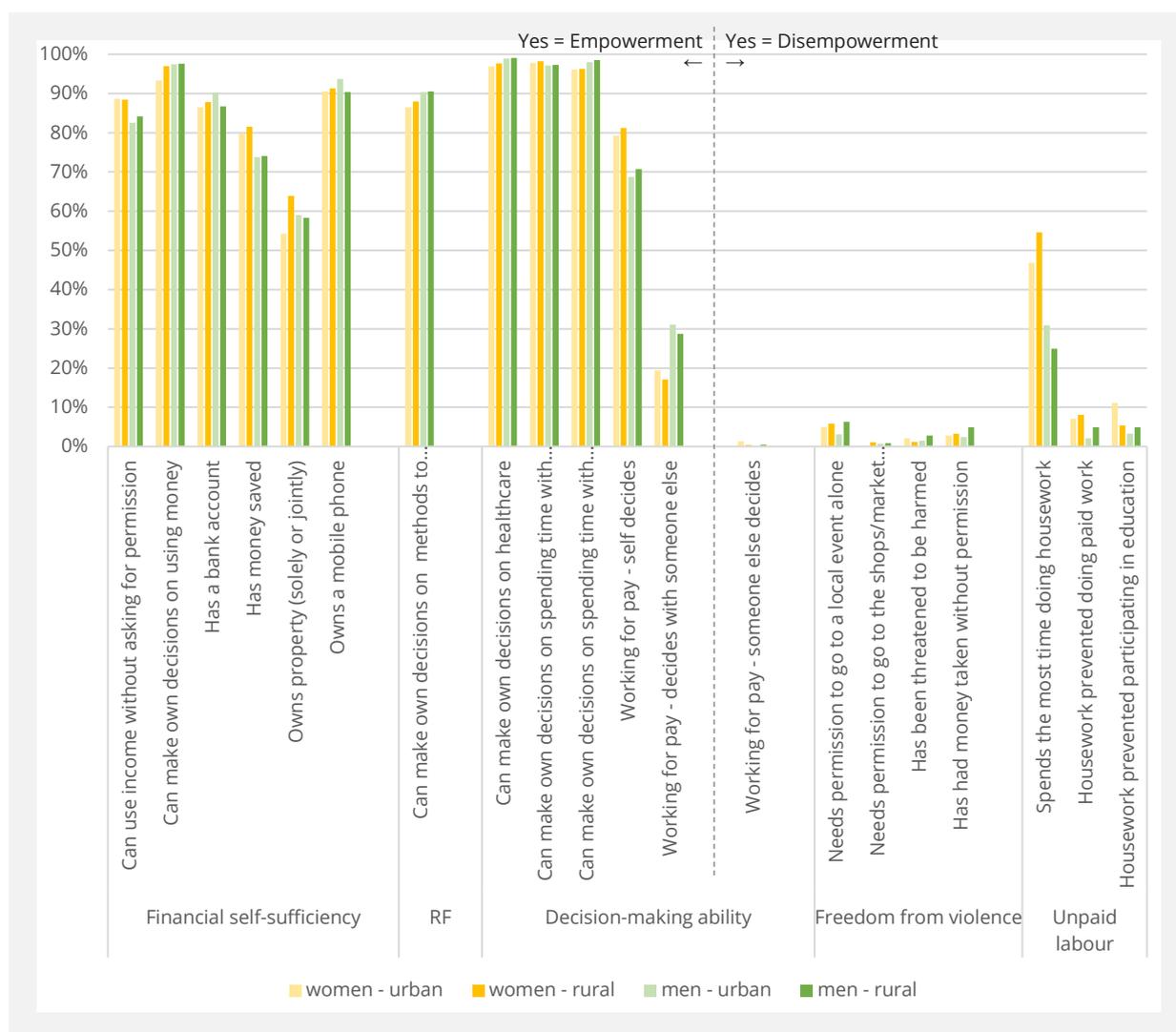


**Figure 92:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men,<sup>107</sup> in the same education groups, in the UK

<sup>107</sup> % difference = men - women

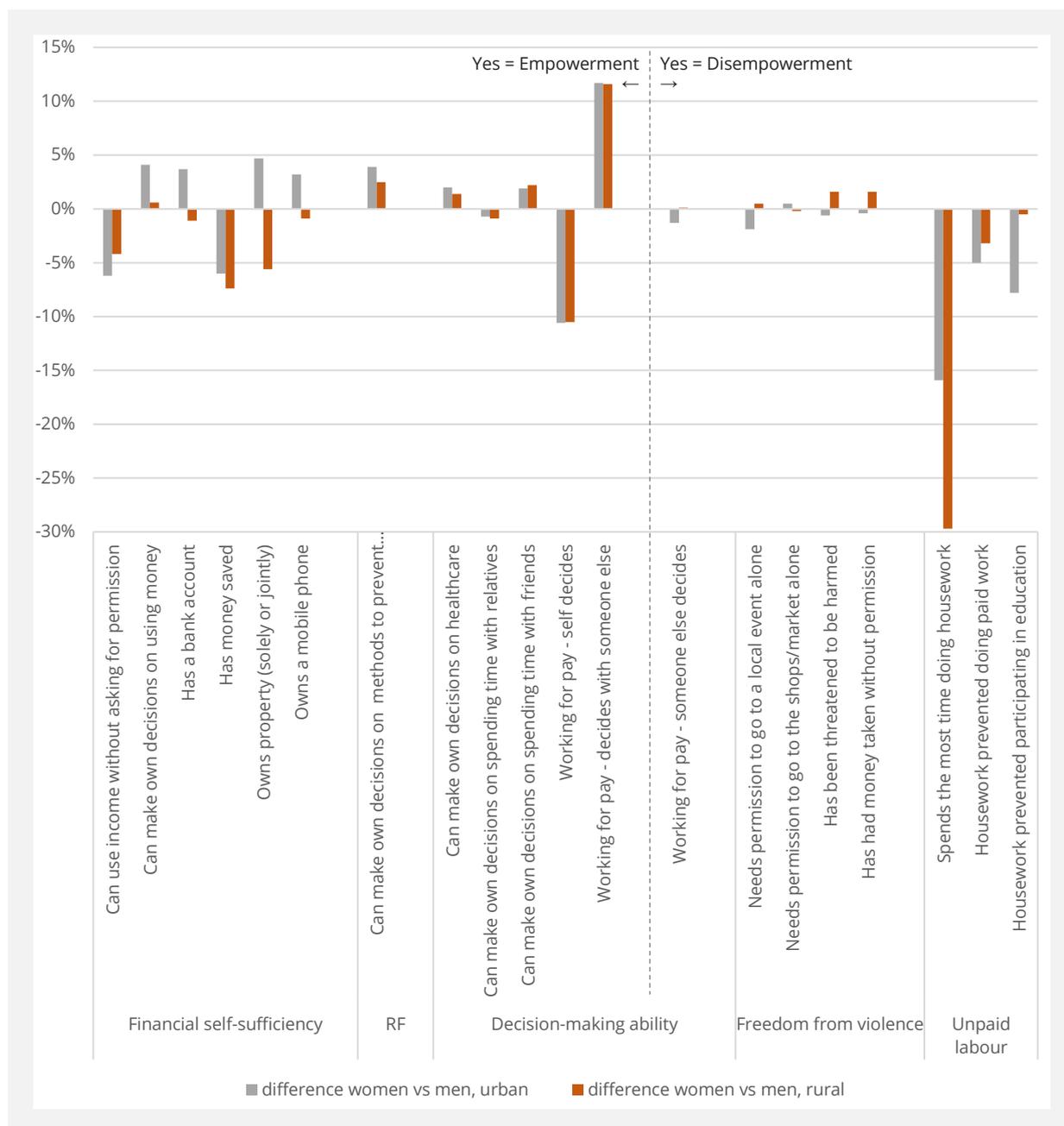
## Gender and location

Location – rural or urban – has only marginal impact on levels of experienced empowerment. In the items where an empowerment gap between women and men exists, the gender gap is more marked than gap based on location. Location is a factor in regard to (i) property ownership, with rural women being slightly more likely to own property as compared to the other groups; and (ii) unpaid labour, where rural women more likely than urban women – and than urban and rural men – to be the person in the household spending the most time doing housework. On the other hand, rural men are the least likely to be the person in the household spending most time doing housework (Figure 93).



**Figure 93:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in the UK

Comparing differences between women and men in rural and in urban areas, the item with most significant gap is unpaid labour, with the difference being more marked in rural, than urban, areas (Figure 94).



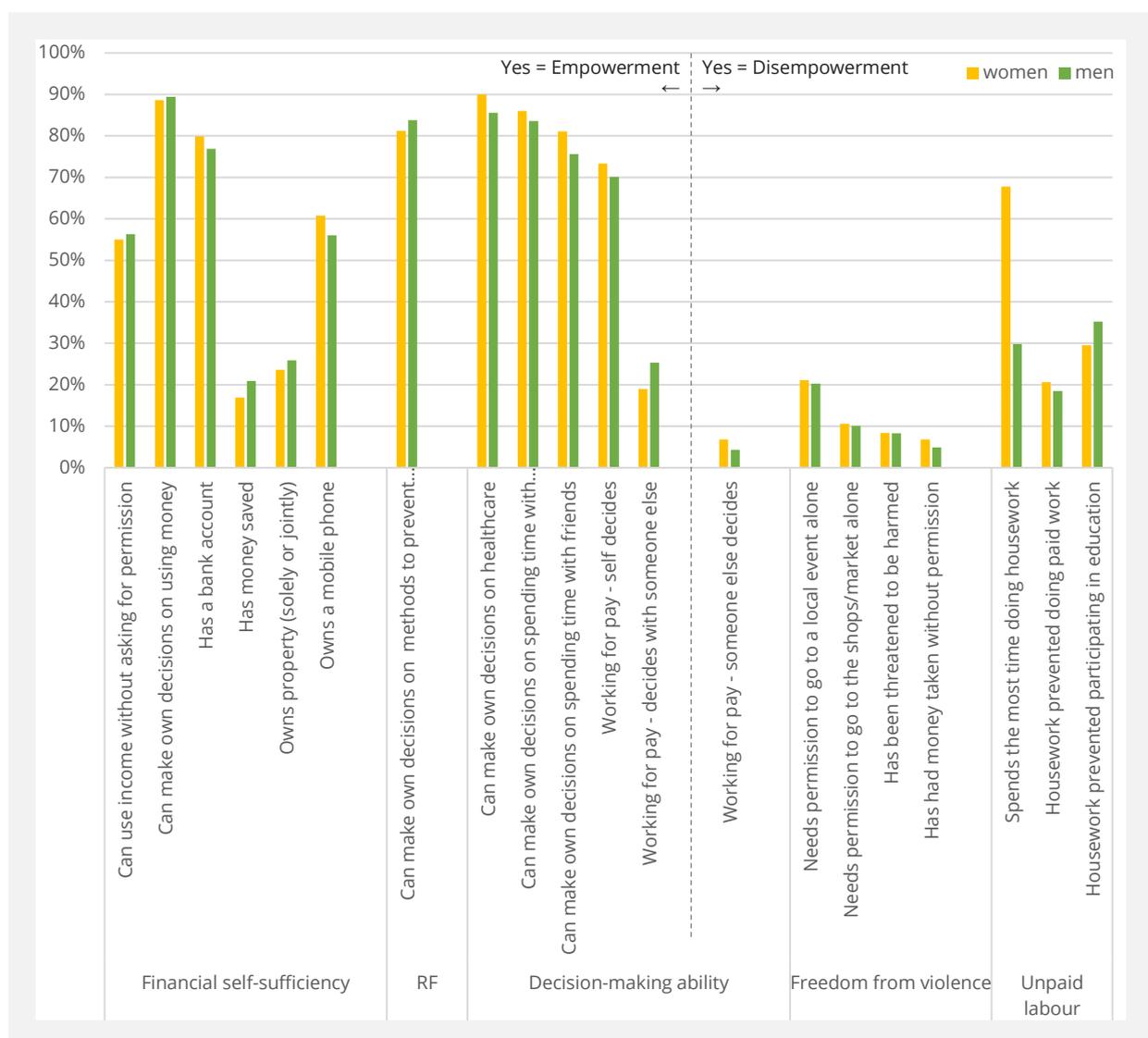
**Figure 94:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men, in rural and urban locations, in the UK

In the UK, there are marginal gender differences in determining whether a person feels and is empowered. Experiences of empowerment are moderated by education level.

# Venezuela

## Gender

In Venezuela, the data indicate only marginal differences between women and men across all empowerment items, except for unpaid labour, with women distinctly more likely than men to be the person in their households who spend the most time doing housework (Figure 95). Slight gender differences are evident for decision-making, where women reported slightly higher levels of empowerment as compared to men.



**Figure 95:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men in Venezuela<sup>108</sup>

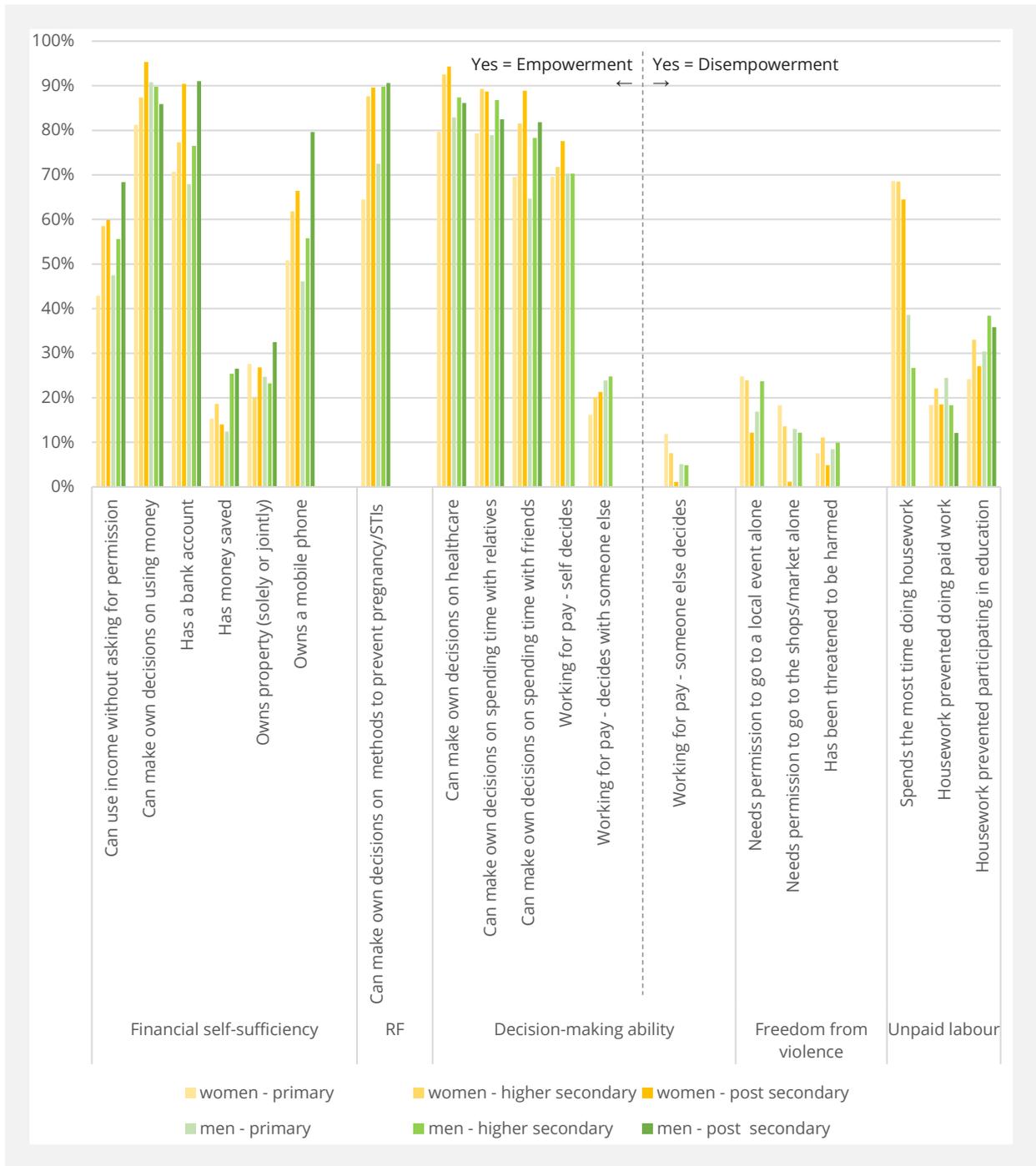
<sup>108</sup> RF = Reproductive freedom

## Gender and education

Disaggregation of the Venezuela data by education show that, across a number of the items, levels of formal education are a significant factor in experiencing empowerment (Figure 96)<sup>109</sup> In general, lower levels of education correlate with lower levels of empowerment for both women and men. Women and men with higher education levels – higher secondary and especially post-secondary – reported being more empowered, than women and men with primary education. Education-related empowerment gaps are apparent for reproductive freedom, mobile phone ownership, bank account ownership, ability to use money without asking for permission and ability to make own decisions on spending time with friends, where women and men with primary education reported lower levels of empowerment as compared to the other groups. Gender is, however, a more significant factor than education level in regard to unpaid work, with women of any education level being significantly more likely than men to be the person in the household spending the most time doing housework.

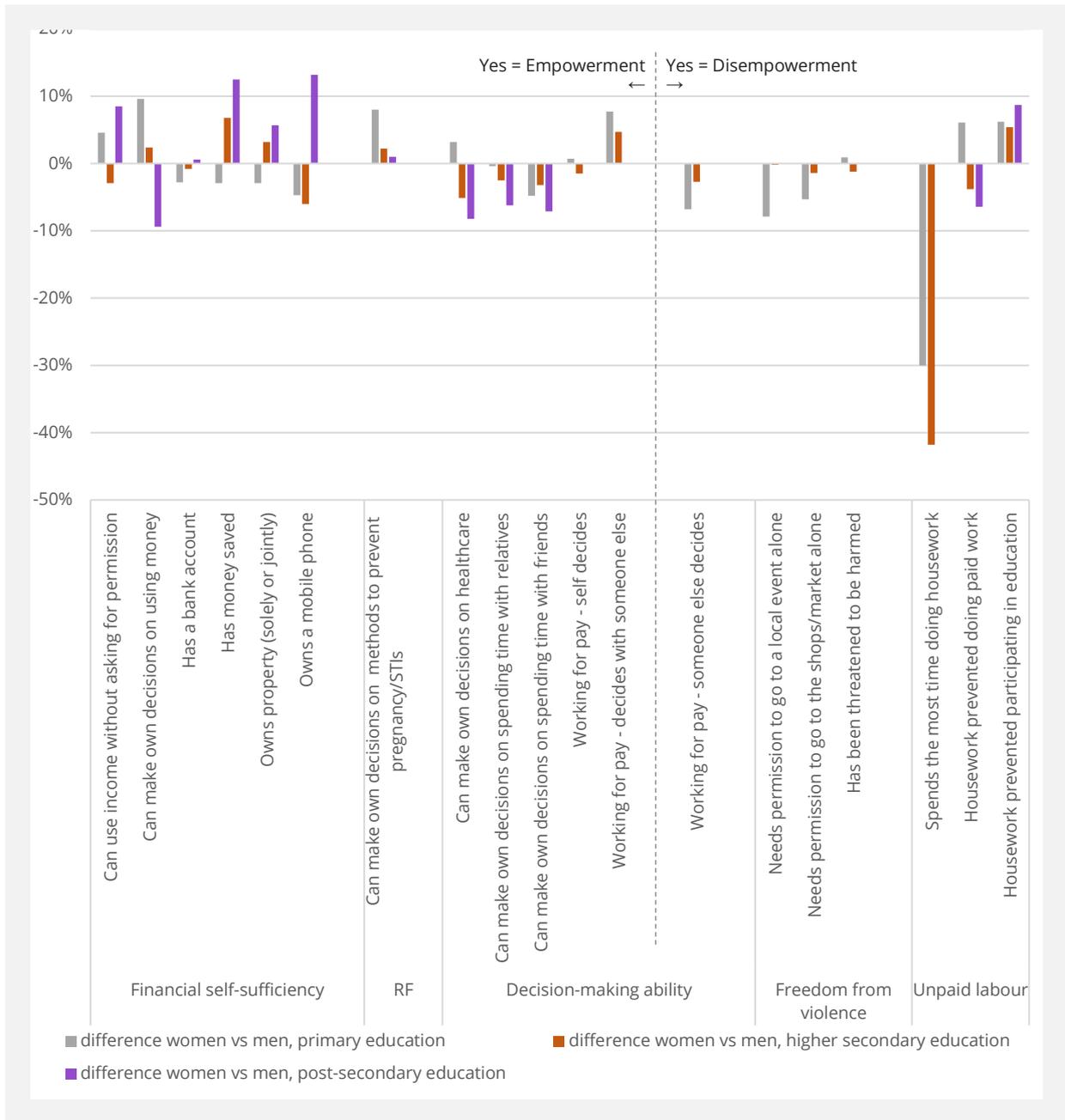
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<sup>109</sup> Disaggregated data for men with post-secondary education were not available for all empowerment items.



**Figure 96:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Venezuela

When comparing experiences of empowerment of women and men with the same education levels across the 18 items, the empowerment gap between women and men with post-secondary education is slightly larger than the empowerment gap between women and men with primary education, and between women and men with higher secondary education (Figure 97).



**Figure 97:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men,<sup>110</sup> in the same education groups, in Venezuela

In Venezuela, gender, unlike education, does not emerge as a significant factor in determining whether a person feels and is empowered.

<sup>110</sup> % difference = men – women. Data for men with post-secondary education not available in the freedom from violence dimension, on decision-making on whether to work for pay outside of home, and on who is the person in the household spending most time doing housework.

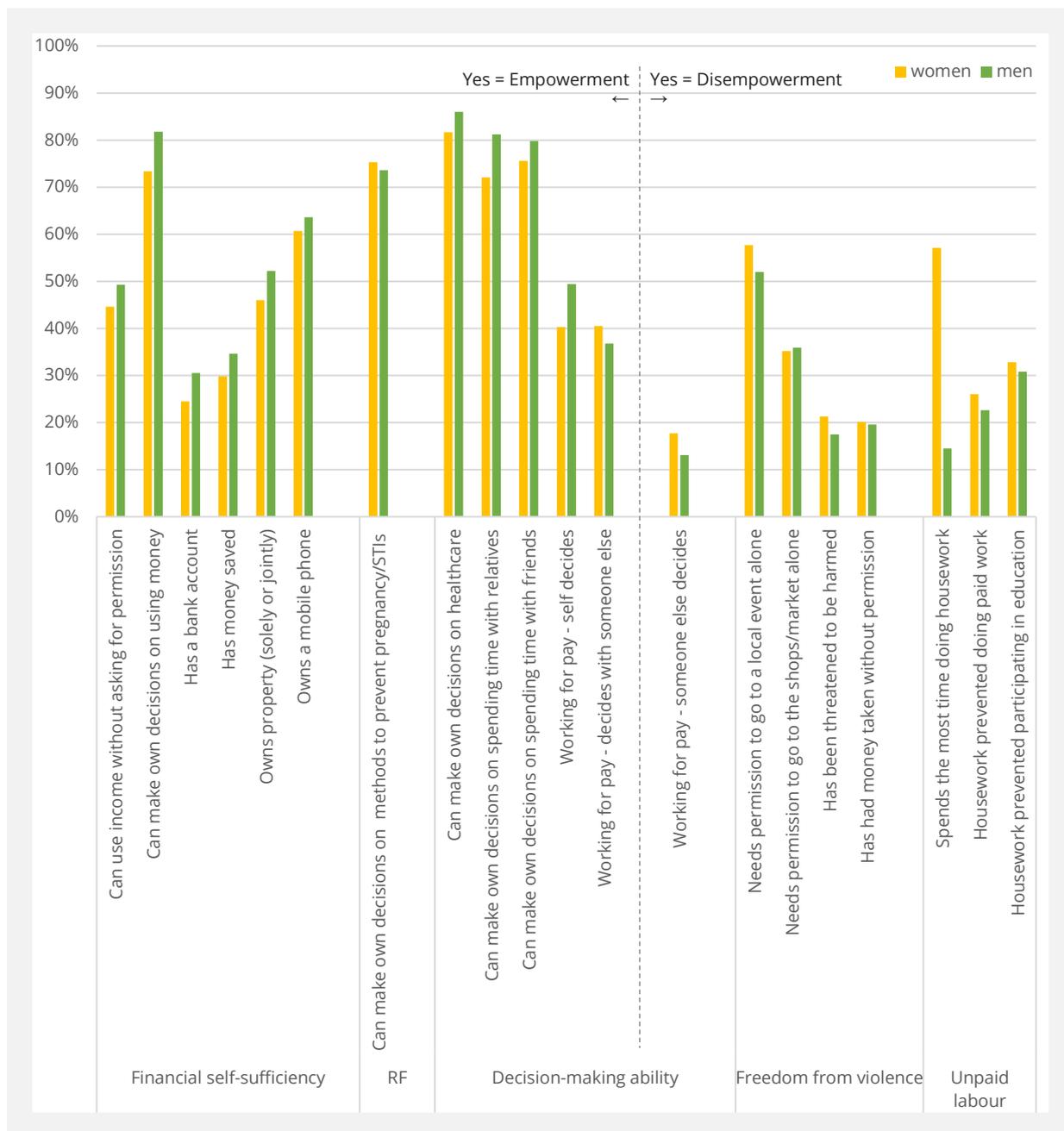
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# Zambia

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## **Gender**

In Zambia, the data indicate differences between women and men, with women experiencing lower levels of empowerment as compared to men for the majority of items (Figure 98). The gap between women and men is greatest for unpaid labour, with women distinctly more likely than men to be the person in their households who spend the most time doing housework. The gender gap is less marked for the other dimensions. Differences are evident mostly in relation to decision making, with men being more likely than women to make their own decisions on whether to work for pay outside of home, on spending their time with relatives, and on using money.



**Figure 98:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men in Zambia<sup>111</sup>

## Gender and age

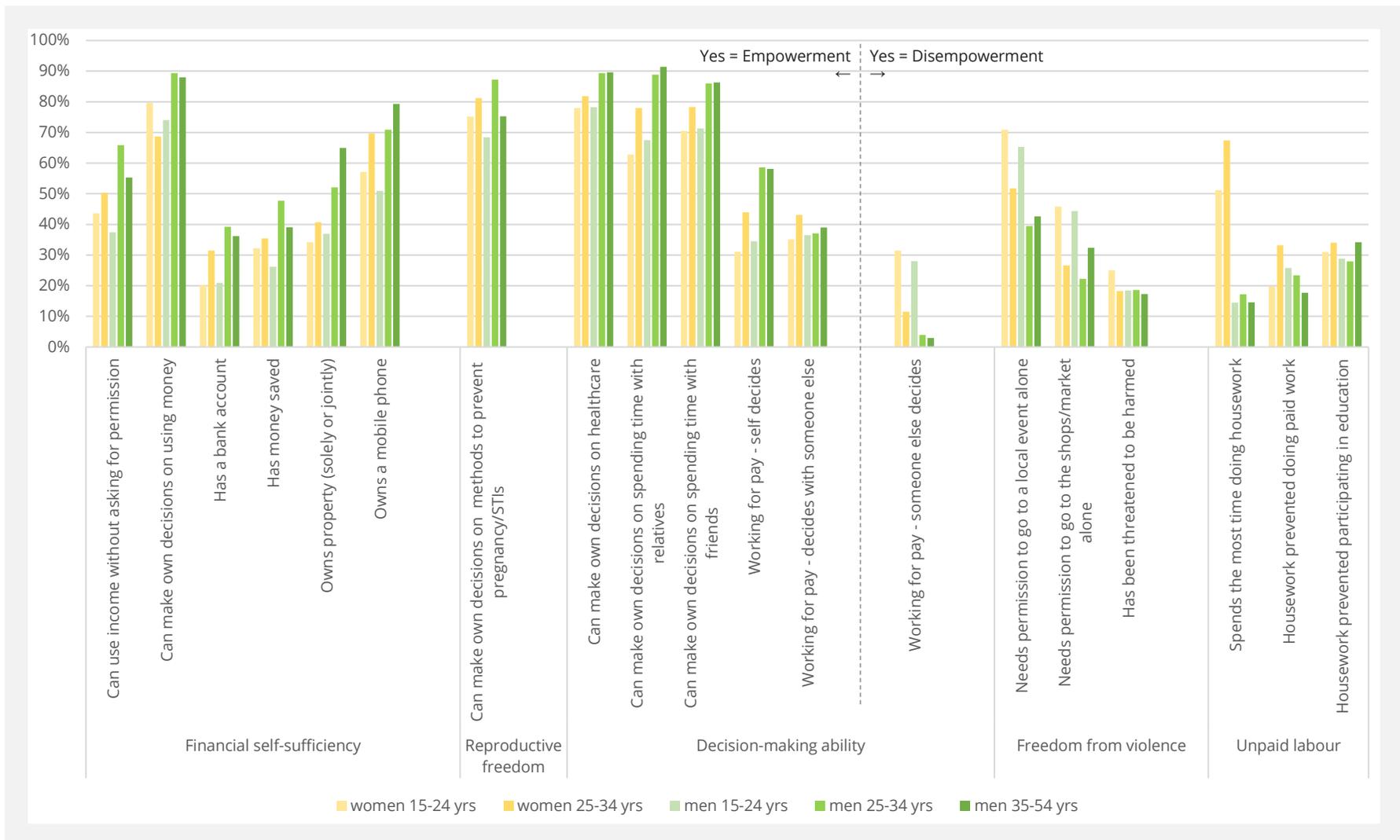
Disaggregation of the Zambia data by age show that experiences of empowerment differ by age group, with differences in experienced empowerment between women and men remaining.<sup>112</sup> As shown in (Figure 99), in, in terms of gender and age, men aged 25-35 years and 34-54 years are

<sup>111</sup> RF = Reproductive freedom

<sup>112</sup> Data for women in the 35-54 years age group were not available.

the groups who reported the highest levels of empowerment. Women and men in the 15-24 years are the age group which reported the lowest levels of empowerment.

In the 15-24 years group, there are only marginal differences between women and men, except for unpaid labour, where women are significantly more likely than men to be the person in the household who spends the most time doing housework. Women aged 15-24 years reported slightly higher empowerment levels than men aged 15-24 years, particular in relation to financial self-sufficiency. For the 24-35 years age group, the gender gap is more marked than that for the 15-24 years age group, with men aged 24-35 years reporting a higher level of empowerment than women aged 24-35 years across all items and especially for unpaid labour, the ability to make decisions on using money, the ability to make decisions on working for pay outside of home, and the ability to use income without asking for permission.



**Figure 99:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by age group, in Zambia

## Gender and education

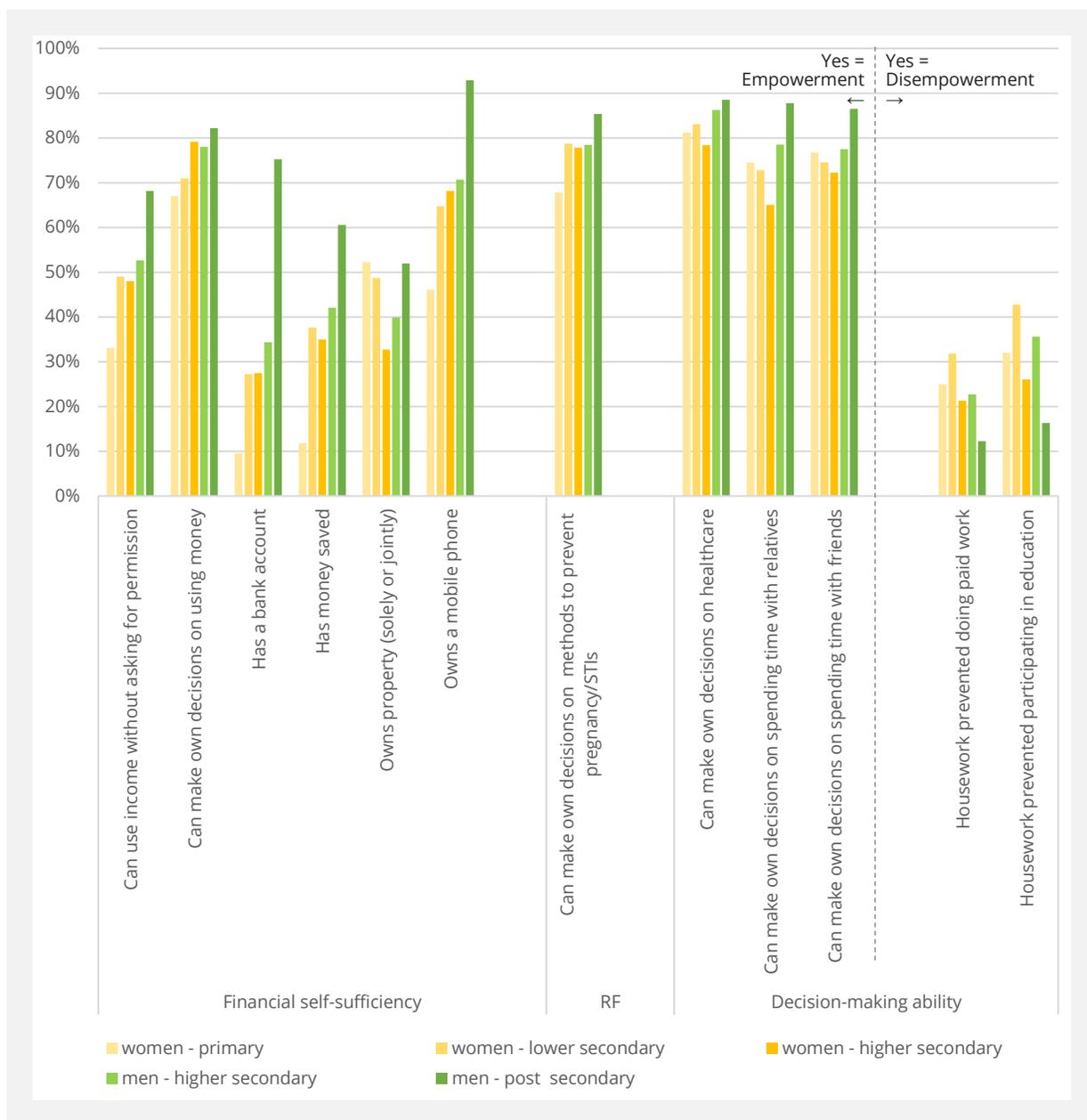
Due to limited disaggregated data,<sup>113</sup> only partial analysis based on gender and education was possible. While differences in empowerment vary with levels of formal education, gender is a more significant factor in experiencing empowerment than is education (Figure 100).

Men with post-secondary education are the group which reported the highest level of empowerment, while noting that no data were available on empowerment levels of women with post-secondary education. The gap between men with post-secondary education and the remaining gender and age groups is largest in regard to bank account and mobile phone ownership. Higher levels of education correlate with higher levels of empowerment across all categories for men, but not for women. Women with higher secondary education reported lower levels of empowerment, as compared to women with lower secondary and primary education, in relation to property ownership, ability to make own decisions on spending time with friends and relatives, and on whether to work for pay outside of home, as well as needing permission to go to a local event alone. Data on men with lower secondary and primary education are not available.

Comparison of women and men with the same level education – higher secondary – shows that men are more empowered than women, particularly with regard to (i) unpaid labour, with women being significantly more likely to be the person in the household spending the most time doing housework; and (ii) decision-making, with men being more likely than women to make their own decisions on spending time with relatives and friends, and on their healthcare. Differences are less marked in relation to financial self-sufficiency and freedom from violence, with a marginal difference for reproductive freedom.

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<sup>113</sup> Data were available only for women in the primary, lower secondary and higher secondary education groups; and for men in the higher secondary and post-secondary education groups.



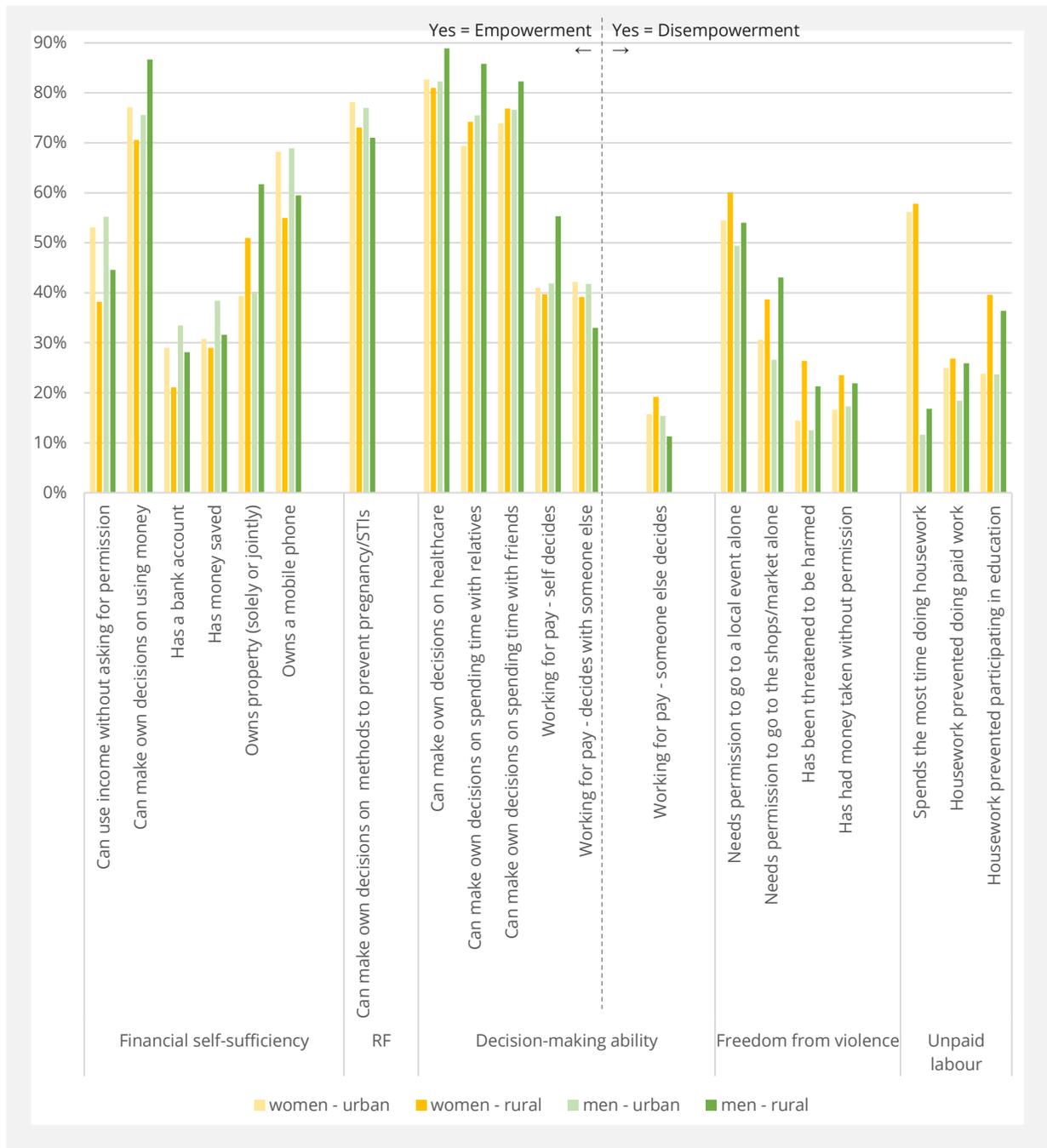
**Figure 100:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by education level, in Zambia

## Gender and location

Disaggregation of data showed that location – rural or urban – has an impact on empowerment experienced by women and men (Figure 101). Urban men are the group which reported the highest level of empowerment across most items, with the exception of (i) decision-making, (ii) property ownership, and (iii) the ability to make decisions on using money, where rural men are the most

empowered group. Among women, urban women reported being more empowered than rural women for (i) financial self-sufficiency, except for property ownership, (ii) freedom from violence, and (iii) reproductive freedom. For decision-making, a marginal difference between urban and rural women is evident. While rural women are significantly more likely than urban women to be prevented by housework from attending education, in the remaining two unpaid labour items there are only marginal differences between rural and urban women.

Location is a significant factor in regard to (i) property ownership, with rural women, and in particular rural men, being more likely to own property than urban women and men; (ii) mobile phone ownership and the ability to use income without asking for permission, with urban women and men reporting higher empowerment levels in both items than rural women and men; (iii) freedom from violence, with rural women and men being less empowered than urban women and men across all items in that dimension; (iv) unpaid labour, with rural women and men reporting more frequently than urban women and men to have been prevented by housework from participating in education.



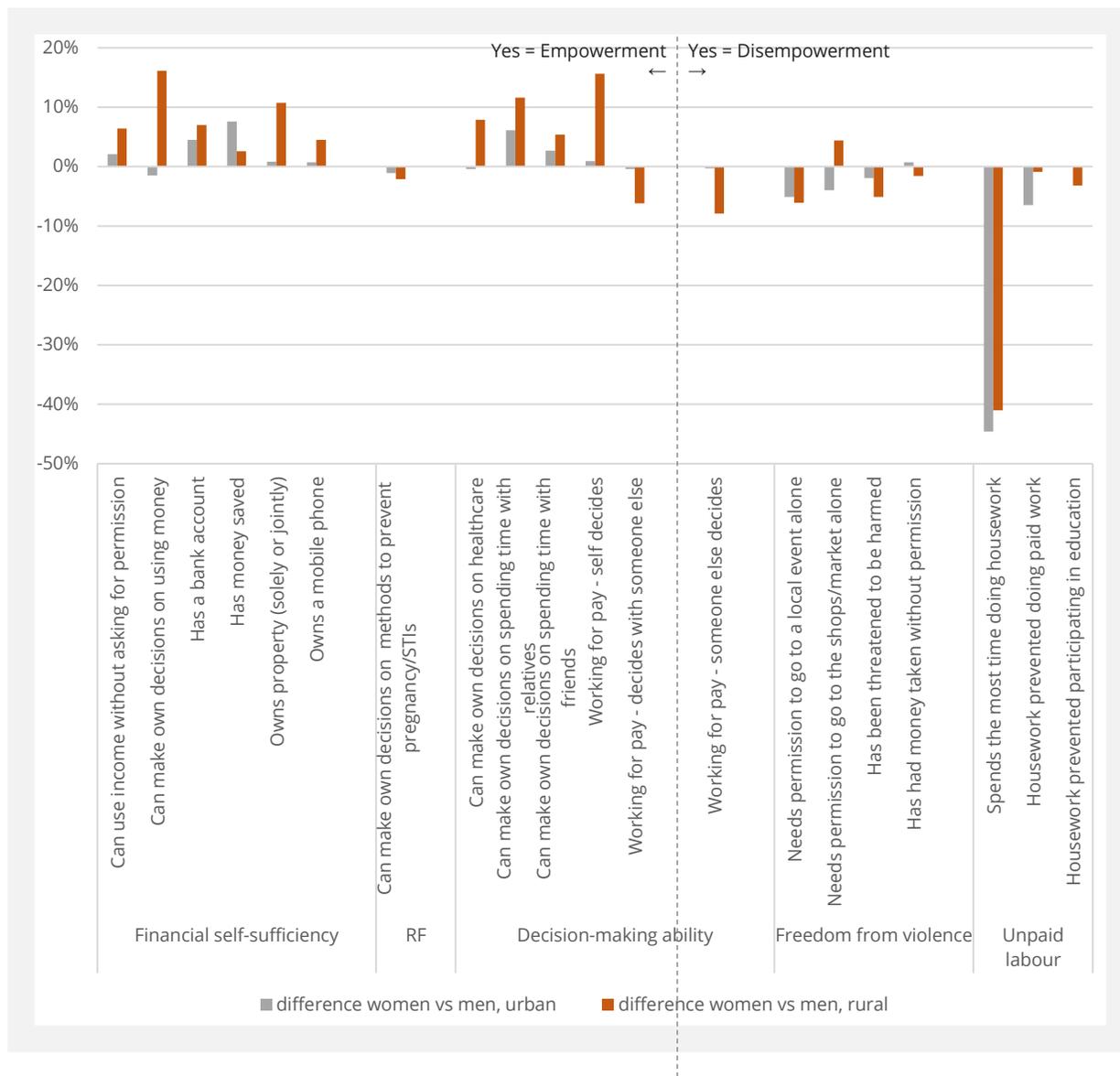
**Figure 101:** Experiences of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in Zambia

The gap based on location is more significant for men, than it is for women (Figure 102).



**Figure 102:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between of dis/empowerment of women and men, by location, in Zambia

For most of the empowerment items, the gap between women and men is more marked in rural, than urban, areas (Figure 103).



**Figure 103:** Differences in experiences of dis/empowerment between women and men, in rural and urban locations, in Zambia

In Zambia, gender is a significant factor in determining whether a person feels and is empowered. Experiences of empowerment are, however, moderated by age, education level and location.

# Chapter 4: Insights for informing policy and programming

Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls remain global goals. 2020 marks the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, the start of the Decade of Action, the year in which another world conference on women will be held,<sup>114</sup> and progression to the fifth wave of feminism. For more inclusive understanding and empowering action, the many manifestations of inequality and their intersectionality need to be visible and valued. Recognition, and sometimes revelation, are a first step in the commitment “to reach the furthest behind first” for human rights, social justice and sustainable development. In this endeavour, it is acknowledged that “quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data will be needed to help with the measurement of progress and to ensure that no one is left behind.”<sup>115</sup>

In this context, the GE4FS measure is being developed as a prospective tool for informing policies and programming that effectively and equitably address the basic needs (for adequate food) and strategic interests (like the power to act for oneself and others) of the diverse women and men (and girls and boys) with whom humanitarian and development actors (like WFP) work.

The statistical analyses of the current GE4FS data pool indicate that (i) empowerment reduces the probability of a person experiencing food insecurity, (ii) the effect of empowerment levels on food insecurity is similar for women and men, and (iii) empowerment levels are, on average, higher for men than for women. The FIES data show that women are generally more likely to be food insecure than are men. For three of the four countries where minimal differences in empowerment were reported between women and men, there were similarly non-significant differences in food insecurity prevalence.

With additional data collection and analyses needed to develop and validate the GE4FS measure, a preliminary data-based deduction is that hunger cannot be reduced or eliminated solely through the provision of adequate food. Rather, the multiple dimensions of empowerment – the factors experienced by individuals that establish equality – need to be understood and addressed. The GE4FS measure (in the making) suggests that decision-making, financial self-sufficiency, reproductive

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<sup>114</sup> The Generation Equality Forum, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/get-involved/beijing-plus-25/generation-equality-forum>

<sup>115</sup> United Nations General Assembly (2015), *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, A/Res/70/1, [https://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E](https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E) (paragraph 48)

freedom, freedom from violence and unpaid labour need to be tackled to reduce inequalities and food insecurity. Of those dimensions, the GE4FS country data suggest that recognising, reducing and redistributing unpaid care and domestic work should be prioritised, particularly for the empowerment of women; as is recognised in target 5.4 of Sustainable Development Goal 5 and has been recently restated through other research.<sup>116</sup>

While further data and computations are needed for reliable intersectional analyses, the country-level data indicate that gender is often a more significant factor than are age, education and location in determining empowerment but that, for some women and men, experiences of empowerment are mediated by these three factors.<sup>117</sup>

Age, for example, appears to influence experiences of empowerment in Lesotho, Liberia and Zambia, and more so for men in Kyrgyzstan and women in Egypt and Nicaragua. In countries like Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria and Zambia, levels of empowerment increase with age, while in such countries as Cambodia, Kenya and Tajikistan, changes in levels of empowerment do not show a linear trajectory with age.

Where education influences experiences of empowerment, there is a tendency for empowerment levels to increase with years of formal education in countries including Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Venezuela, Tajikistan and the United Kingdom. In some countries, like Bangladesh and Zambia, education has a greater influence on empowerment for men, than for women; while in other countries, education is a more significant influence for women, than for men, such as in Egypt, Mozambique, Nicaragua and Tajikistan.

In several countries – examples including Bangladesh, Cambodia, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria and Zambia – levels of experienced empowerment increase as a person moves from a rural or village environment, to an urban or city location. This trajectory is not universal with, for example, rural women in Kenya reporting being more empowered than women in urban locations. Gender remains an influencing factor, with another trend of men being more empowered than women, regardless of location.

What is evident from the GE4FS data is the necessity of seeing and understanding gender inequalities, while also recognising and responding to the diversity that comprises the categories of ‘women’ and ‘men’, to devise and implement relevant policies and programmes, including those intended to

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<sup>116</sup> See, for example, the 2020 Oxfam report “Time to Care”, <https://indepth.oxfam.org.uk/time-to-care/>

<sup>117</sup> Gender appears to be more significant than age in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Egypt, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan and Mozambique; than education in Bangladesh, Egypt, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tajikistan and Zambia; and location in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Egypt, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, Sri Lanka and Tajikistan. Age, education, and/or location are more commonly a factor in the empowerment for women, than for men, in Egypt, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Tajikistan; but for men, as compared to women, in Bangladesh. Age, education and location exercise a relatively similar influence on the empowerment of women and men in Cambodia, Lesotho, Liberia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the United Kingdom, Venezuela and Zambia.

eliminate hunger and achieve food security.<sup>118</sup> In this respect, it is critical that the person – in all of her/his/their diversity – be seen, understood and empowered necessitating individual-level data collection and engagement.

## Continuing construction and caveats

The GE4FS measure is being constructed. Determination of the validity of the GE4FS measure requires collection and analysis of data from more countries and, possibly, from some of the 17 countries already surveyed. The analytical work would include (i) examining possible differences in how the scale functions in different countries, (ii) modelling the relationship between the empowerment and FIES scores, adjusting for gender, country and the interaction between gender and empowerment, (iii) determining means of enabling cross-country score comparisons, and (iv) expanding on possibilities for intersectional analyses (gender by age, education level, location and other factors that shape the lives and identities of individuals).

Accordingly, consideration of, and the drawing of conclusions from, the data collected from the 17 countries should be complemented with other sources of information, including qualitative research, time use surveys and other person-based data collection tools.<sup>119</sup> Juxtaposing the preliminary GE4FS data with the data of global indices may offer interesting insights on women's and men's experiences of inequality and food insecurity.

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<sup>118</sup> The background paper to the 32nd ALNAP annual meeting - <https://www.alnap.org/help-library/background-paper-alnap-32nd-annual-meeting-more-relevant-10-ways-to-approach-what> – presents ten dimensions for a relevant response, being comprehensive, inclusive, holistic, dynamic, polyphonic, choice, tailored, co-designed, adaptive and complementary.

<sup>119</sup> For example, the Individual Deprivation Measure, <https://www.individualdeprivationmeasure.org/>

# Annex 1: Gender equality (empowerment) items

## Introduction (read)

This next section is about your ability to make decisions about different areas of your life, including economic and personal decisions. There are also questions about your personal safety and choices. Please remember that all information you provide is completely confidential.

## Items (i.e. questions)

	Response Options
In the past 12 months, did you have income that you could use without asking for permission from anyone?	Yes No Don't know Refused
If you wanted to, can you make your own decisions about what to do with money you receive from any source?	Yes No Don't know Refused
If you wanted to, can you make your own decisions about seeking medical or healthcare services?	Yes No Don't know Refused
If you wanted to, can you make your own decisions about spending time with relatives who do not live with you?	Yes No Not applicable Don't know Refused
If you wanted to, can you make your own decisions about spending time with friends who do not live with you?	Yes No Not applicable Don't know Refused

Do you have your own account with a bank or other financial institution, such as a savings, current/transaction, or checking account? Please do not think about accounts that you share with others.	Yes No Don't know Refused
Do you, personally, have any money saved that you could use if you needed it?	Yes No Don't know Refused
Do you, by yourself or with someone else, own property, such as land, a home or other dwelling?	Yes No Don't know Refused
Do you, by yourself, own a mobile phone?	Yes No Don't know Refused
In your household, WHO decides whether you can work for pay outside of the home, if you wanted to? Only you, you together with someone else, or only someone else?	Only you You together with someone else Only someone else Don't know Refused
In the past 12 months, did anyone in your household take money you earned, received, or had saved, without your permission?	Yes No Don't know Refused
Would you have to get permission from anyone in your household before you could go to a local event by yourself, such as a community or neighbourhood celebration or meeting?	Yes No Don't know Refused
Would you have to get permission from anyone in your household before you could go to the market or shops by yourself?	Yes No Don't know Refused
In your household, are you the person who spends the most time doing housework, such as cleaning, cooking, and/or caring for children or other household members?	Yes No Spends equal / same amount Don't know Refused

In the past 12 months, has housework, such as cleaning, cooking, and/or caring for children or other household members prevented you from doing paid work, if you wanted to?	Yes No Don't know Refused
In the past 12 months, has housework, such as cleaning, cooking, and/or caring for children or other household members prevented you from participating in education or training, if you wanted to?	Yes No Don't know Refused
Are you able to decide on your own whether to use any methods to prevent pregnancy or sexually-transmitted illnesses, such as birth control or condoms?	Yes No Not applicable Don't know Refused
In the past 12 months, has anyone in your household threatened to harm you or someone you care about?	Yes No Don't know Refused

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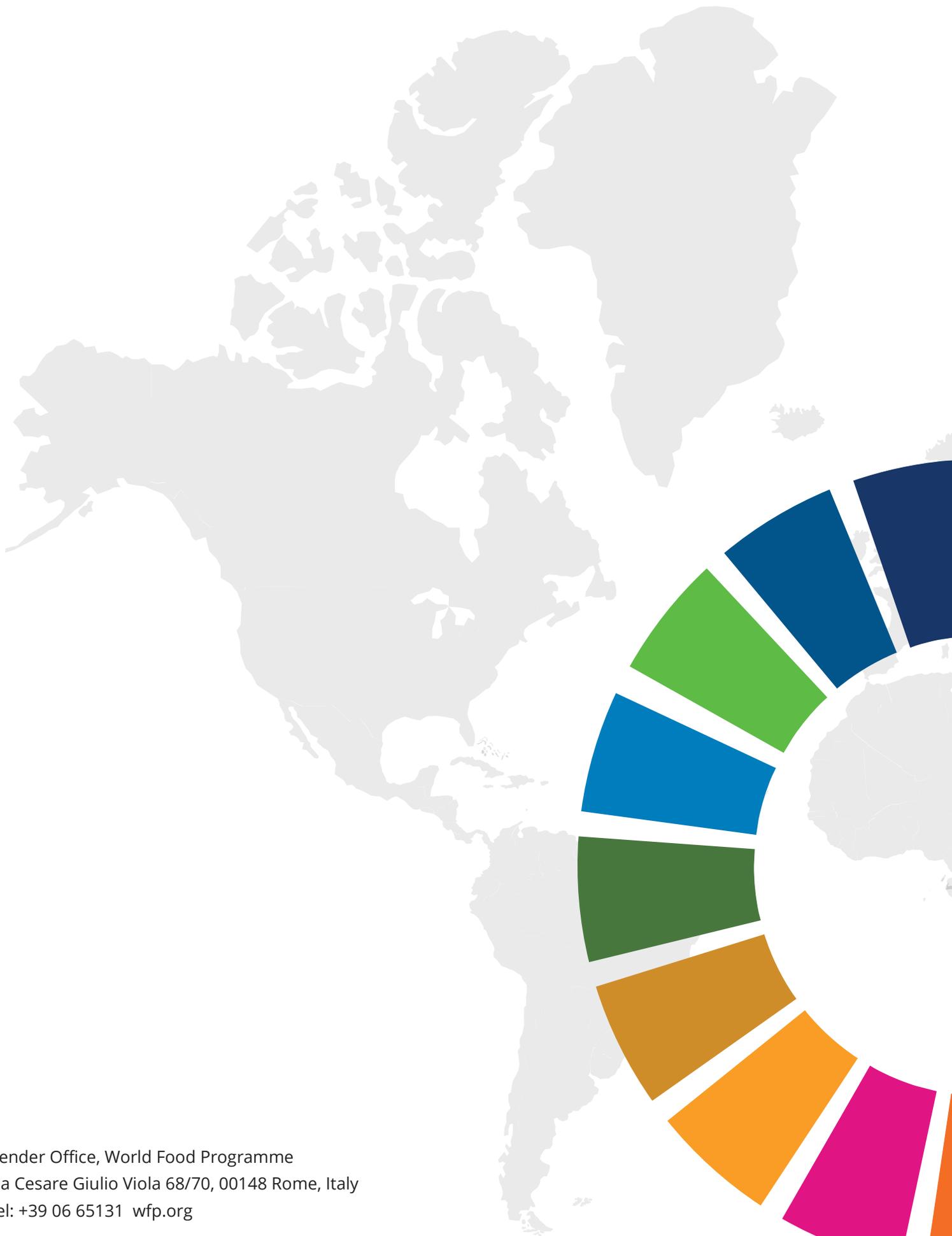
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Gender Office, World Food Programme  
Via Cesare Giulio Viola 68/70, 00148 Rome, Italy  
Tel: +39 06 65131 wfp.org