

Women Peace and Security Index: Fast Facts

Women are at the heart of efforts to achieve sustainable peace through inclusion, justice, and security worldwide. The Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security and the Peace Research Institute of Oslo have developed a new global index that provides the most comprehensive measure in terms of capturing the dimensions of inclusion, justice and security which matter most both for women's wellbeing and the prospects for societies as a whole. Our new Women Peace and Security Index captures both peace and security—and women's inclusion and justice—for the first time ever. The Index is made possible by generous support from the government of Norway and the Bank of America Charitable Foundation.

WPS Index: 3 dimensions and 11 indicators

Global indices are increasingly popular, because they can bring together an array of complex information into a single number, and because country rankings can garner political attention. There are a growing number of global indices, but none have brought together important dimensions from gender and development indices with those from peace and security indices.



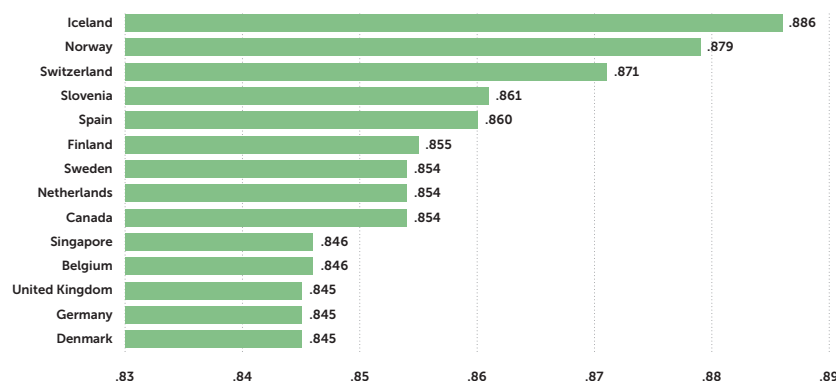
What is the WPS Index?

We draw on recognized international data sources to rank 153 countries around the world—covering more than 98 percent of the world's population—in a way that focuses attention on key achievements and major shortcomings.

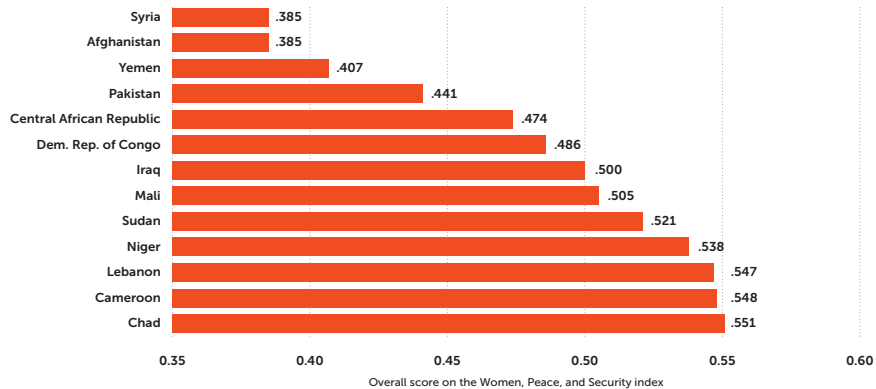
The Index comprises three dimensions—inclusion, justice, and security—that are measured using publicly available data. Inclusion is measured by women's achievements in such dimensions as education, employment, and parliamentary representation, as well as access to cell phones and financial services. Justice is captured in both formal and informal aspects—extent of discrimination in the legal system, alongside a bias in favor of sons and exposure to discriminatory norms. Security is measured at three levels—family, community, and society.

Overall, the Index values range from a high of .886, achieved by Iceland, which leads the world in this first edition of the WPS Index, down to .385 in Afghanistan and Syria, the bottom ranked countries in a tie for last place. Analysis of the Index results reveals key achievements and major deficits in women's inclusion, justice, and security, by country group and for individual countries.

Countries in the top dozen rankings on the WPS Index



Countries in the bottom dozen rankings on the WPS Index



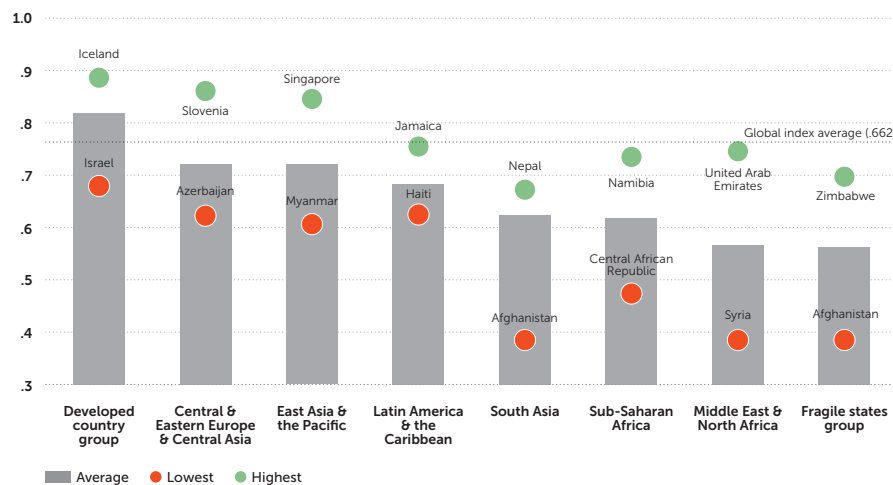
What are the headlines?

First, the Index demonstrates that good things often go together. Around 30 countries score in the top third for all three dimensions, with achievements in each dimension reinforcing progress more broadly.

Second, however, such favorable synergies are not a given, as patterns of unbalanced achievement across dimensions are also common. For example, Latin America does well on justice but performs unimpressively on inclusion—a dimension on which several other regions also perform poorly, most notably the Middle East and North Africa and South Asia.

Third, while there are clear regional patterns in performance, there are also major differences *within* regions, illustrating the feasibility of improvements to reach the standards of neighbors. For example, it is striking that there are countries in every region that have surpassed the global mean rate of female cellphone use of about 78 percent, given the rapidly accumulating evidence about the importance of such access to women’s agency and economic opportunities.

Country group averages and countries with highest and lowest WPS Index values



Fourth, attainments in too many countries are well below global averages. In the inclusion dimension, for example, nearly two dozen countries have a share of women in parliament in single digits. In the justice dimension, legal discrimination is extensive in the worst-scoring countries in all regions.

Fifth, in too many countries, even those that have made partial progress, women face serious justice and security constraints. In Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia, for example, a raft of legal constraints and prejudices against women in paid work conspire against overall progress in women's well-being.

Finally, money matters, but many countries do far better on the WPS Index—or far worse—than their per capita income rank. More than 50 countries do much worse: Iraq, for example, drops a stunning 83 places on the WPS Index relative to its per capita income.

How can the Index be used to advance support for WPS and women's rights more broadly?

Policymakers can draw on the Index results to set priorities for action to improve women's inclusion, justice, or security in countries that are performing poorly or where achievements are unbalanced across the three dimensions and the underlying indicators. Civil society can use the results to spotlight achievements as well as injustice and to hold decision-makers to account, especially given the links to the WPS agenda. Business and investors can better analyze risks and assess the policy environment in countries based on rankings

A primary goal of the Index is to accelerate progress on both the international Women, Peace and Security agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. Our Index is the first gender index to be developed in the framework of the 2030 Agenda, and reflects a shared vision that countries are more peaceful and prosperous when women are accorded full and equal rights and opportunity. The Index will be updated every two years and will track progress ahead of the UN High-level Political Forum in 2019, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 20th anniversary of 2000 UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

Our global Index is a valuable new tool to assess and compare national progress against major goals and commitments of the international community, by distilling an array of complex information into a single number and ranking, and ready access to the underlying indicators. It provides stakeholders a comprehensive picture of achievements and gaps across a critical range of fronts, offering a critical resource to advance the WPS agenda.