

Women, Peace and Security Index

2025/26

INCLUSION



JUSTICE

SECURITY

SUMMARY



GIWPS

Georgetown Institute for
Women, Peace and Security



PRIO Centre on
Gender, Peace and Security

Countries and index scores by rank, 2025/26 WPS Index

RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE	RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE	RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE
TOP QUINTILE			62	Cabo Verde	.741	123	Algeria	.621
1	Denmark	.939	63	Belarus	.739	124	São Tomé and Príncipe	.620
2	Iceland	.932	63	Chile	.739	125	Egypt	.617
3	Norway	.924	63	Palau	.739	126	Lesotho	.614
3	Sweden	.924	63	Saudi Arabia	.739	127	Ecuador	.612
5	Finland	.921	67	Malaysia	.738	128	Iran	.608
6	Luxembourg	.918	68	Albania	.731	128	Libya	.608
7	Belgium	.912	68	Fiji	.731	128	Namibia	.608
8	Netherlands	.905	70	Kuwait	.723	131	India	.607
9	Austria	.898	70	Qatar	.723	131	Philippines	.607
9	New Zealand	.898	72	Kazakhstan	.722	133	Angola	.601
11	Australia	.896	THIRD QUINTILE			133	Sierra Leone	.601
11	Estonia	.896	73	Viet Nam	.721	135	Comoros	.590
13	Ireland	.891	74	Turkmenistan	.720	135	Zimbabwe	.590
14	Slovenia	.889	75	Russian Federation	.718	137	Côte d'Ivoire	.589
15	Lithuania	.887	76	Puerto Rico	.707	138	Benin	.587
16	Canada	.885	77	Sri Lanka	.706	138	Uganda	.587
17	Latvia	.884	78	Maldives	.704	140	Congo	.583
17	Singapore	.884	79	Jamaica	.703	141	Lebanon	.575
19	Switzerland	.877	80	Bolivia	.701	142	Zambia	.566
20	United Arab Emirates	.872	80	Peru	.701	143	Togo	.562
21	Germany	.869	82	Kosovo	.700	144	Guatemala	.561
22	Japan	.866	83	Lao PDR	.698	144	Honduras	.561
23	France	.864	84	Israel	.697	BOTTOM QUINTILE		
23	United Kingdom	.864	84	Kyrgyzstan	.697	146	Djibouti	.560
25	Spain	.862	86	Panama	.696	147	Mexico	.558
26	Portugal	.861	87	El Salvador	.691	148	Eswatini	.556
27	Poland	.854	88	Jordan	.686	149	Colombia	.551
27	Taiwan	.854	89	China	.685	150	Malawi	.549
29	Serbia	.844	89	Samoa	.685	151	Mozambique	.548
30	Malta	.841	89	Tajikistan	.685	152	Kenya	.542
31	United States	.840	89	Tonga	.685	153	Gambia	.528
32	Czechia	.832	89	Trinidad and Tobago	.685	154	Guinea	.527
32	Hungary	.832	94	Gabon	.679	155	Bangladesh	.526
34	Costa Rica	.824	94	Mauritius	.679	156	Ethiopia	.516
35	Uruguay	.822	96	Indonesia	.678	157	Liberia	.512
36	Moldova	.821	97	Dominican Republic	.675	158	Iraq	.510
SECOND QUINTILE			98	Uzbekistan	.674	159	Guinea-Bissau	.508
37	South Korea	.815	99	Bhutan	.673	160	Burkina Faso	.507
38	Bulgaria	.814	100	Tunisia	.671	160	Papua New Guinea	.507
39	Italy	.811	101	Marshall Islands	.670	162	Nigeria	.495
40	Seychelles	.810	102	Morocco	.668	163	Niger	.492
41	Hong Kong	.809	102	Timor-Leste	.668	164	Mali	.478
42	Barbados	.807	104	Belize	.667	165	Chad	.476
43	Romania	.801	104	Cambodia	.667	166	Mauritania	.475
44	Mongolia	.799	106	Türkiye	.664	167	Palestine	.469
45	Georgia	.798	107	Nicaragua	.659	168	Madagascar	.466
46	Slovakia	.797	108	Botswana	.658	169	Pakistan	.462
47	Argentina	.791	108	Solomon Islands	.658	170	Somalia	.455
48	Croatia	.788	FOURTH QUINTILE			171	Cameroon	.451
49	Grenada	.787	110	Senegal	.657	172	Myanmar	.442
49	North Macedonia	.787	111	Azerbaijan	.653	173	South Sudan	.411
51	Suriname	.779	112	Kiribati	.652	174	Burundi	.407
52	Cyprus	.770	113	Federated States of Micronesia	.648	175	Democratic Republic of the Congo	.405
52	Guyana	.770	113	South Africa	.648	176	Haiti	.399
54	Paraguay	.768	115	Vanuatu	.646	177	Sudan	.397
55	Bahrain	.765	116	Ukraine	.645	178	Syrian Arab Republic	.364
56	Armenia	.762	117	Ghana	.639	179	Central African Republic	.362
57	Thailand	.761	118	Venezuela	.638	180	Yemen	.323
58	Oman	.755	119	Brazil	.632	181	Afghanistan	.279
59	Bosnia and Herzegovina	.753	120	Nepal	.631			
60	Greece	.752	121	Rwanda	.624			
61	Montenegro	.743	121	Tanzania	.624			

Possible scores range from a low of 0 to a high of 100. Please see the inside back cover for more information.

Possible scores range from a low of 0 to a high of 1.
Please see the inside back cover for an alphabetical list of countries and ranks.

Women, Peace and Security Index

2025/26

SUMMARY

Georgetown University's Institute for Women, Peace and Security (GIWPS) seeks to promote a more stable, peaceful, and just world by focusing on the important role women play in preventing conflict and building peace, growing economies, and addressing global threats like climate change and violent extremism. The institute pursues this mission through research that is accessible to practitioners and policy-makers, global convenings, strategic partnerships, and nurturing of the next generation of leaders. Melanne Verwee, the first U.S. Ambassador for Global Women's Issues, is the institute's executive director. Hillary Rodham Clinton is the institute's honorary founding chair.

The Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) conducts research on the conditions for peaceful relations between states, groups, and people. Researchers at PRIO seek to understand the processes that bring societies together or split them apart. Founded in 1959, PRIO is an independent research institution known for its effective synergy of basic and policy-relevant research. In addition to such research, PRIO conducts graduate training and promotes peace through conflict resolution, dialogue and reconciliation, public information, and policy-making activities.

This fifth edition of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Index report was produced through a collaboration between the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security (GIWPS) and the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) and its Centre on Gender, Peace and Security (PRIO GPS Centre). The work on the WPS Index and report was conducted by a team led by Syeda Haleema Hasan, WPS Index Research Manager and Lead Author (GIWPS). The report team comprised Milorad Kovacevic (consultant) with Michael Gottschalk (International Monetary Fund), who were responsible for construction of the WPS Index, and Ava Kawamura and Laura Montgomery (GIWPS), who provided extensive research analysis, writing, and support. GIWPS partnered with Siri Aas Rustad (PRIO), who conducted significant research and analysis and wrote parts of the report.

For valuable guidance and review, we thank GIWPS Executive Director Melanne Verwee, along with Managing Director Carla Koppell and Research Director Jessica Smith. We extend our gratitude to Anna Tuohey (GIWPS) for her essential support, and to Jessica Anania (GIWPS), Kristine Baekgaard (GIWPS), Rachel George (GIWPS), Kim Hart (GIWPS), Torunn Tryggestad (PRIO), and Rebecca Turkington (GIWPS) for additional reviews and suggestions. Work on the report was also facilitated by other colleagues at GIWPS, and we are grateful for their support.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the generous funding of the Government of Norway, which made this work possible.

The full report is available at <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/the-index>.

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Foreword

Now is the time to act: Our global measure of women's well-being reveals both crisis and courage

Since 2017, the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, in collaboration with the Peace Research Institute Oslo, has produced the biennial *Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Index*, which ranks countries globally on women's status across three key dimensions: inclusion, justice, and security. Drawing on data for 13 robust and globally recognized indicators, the WPS Index is the only tool that brings together insights from gender, development, and peace and security—providing a uniquely comprehensive picture of women's well-being. It enables comparisons across and within regions, tracks progress and setbacks over time, and holds governments accountable for advancing women's rights and opportunities. Together, the WPS Index's findings underscore the importance of a multidimensional understanding of women's status and the urgent need to invest in women to advance the well-being of all people and societies. Our data reaffirm that societies where women's status is higher are also more peaceful, prosperous, and resilient, including in the face of climate change and economic shocks.

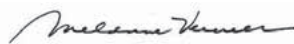
Rights defenders and people of conscience stand at a critical juncture in 2025. Amid worsening conflict and rising backlash against women's rights and gender equality worldwide, we mark the 25th anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and 30 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action on women's equality. Three decades of hard-earned progress are being eroded by authoritarian expansion, while record

levels of conflict and fragility are generating unprecedented violence and vulnerability for women and girls. This report reveals how countries and regions that once performed better on the WPS Index are now backsliding, while temporal trends show stagnation—or even decline—in women’s status worldwide. As wars and conflicts reach a historic peak, progress on women’s rights seems perilously close to a historic low.

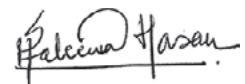
And yet there is hope. The WPS Index shows that some of the greatest improvements in women’s status have come from the most challenging and conflict-affected places. From Congo to Yemen, women have continued to organize, lead, and rebuild despite unimaginable hardship. Their persistence is a powerful reminder that change is possible even in the darkest moments, but it should not be theirs alone to catalyze.

Advancing women’s rights and status is not only an ethical and moral imperative; it is also a practical and collective one. Women have borne the brunt of backlash and violence. They have also been left to shoulder the responsibility of rebuilding their communities and improving their circumstances, often with little support. This reality must compel us to act—not comfort us.

The WPS Index remains a vital tool for governments and policymakers to identify and address areas of progress and decline; for academics and researchers to deepen understanding of global and regional trends; and for civil society, activists, and storytellers to amplify women’s voices and press decision-makers to act. But this year, on the 25th anniversary of UNSCR 1325, the WPS Index also serves as a reminder for all these agents of change: women have not given up—and neither should the rest of us.



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Summary

Of the 181 countries ranked in the 2025/26 WPS Index, Denmark continues to lead the rankings as it did in the last edition, while Afghanistan again performs the worst

Global rankings and key findings: Best and worst performers largely unchanged

The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Index report analyzes data across 13 indicators grouped under the three dimensions of inclusion, justice, and security to understand and monitor women's status globally (box 1). Our approach involves three layers of analysis: a global lens that highlights broad trends, country groups and regions that reveal patterns and contrasts, and country cases that uncover the nuances behind the data.

Of the 181 countries ranked in the 2025/26 WPS Index, **Denmark** continues to lead the rankings as it did in the last edition, while **Afghanistan** again performs the worst (see statistical table 1 in the full report for detailed results). The range of scores, from .279 to .939, is vast, with Denmark scoring more than three times higher than Afghanistan.

All of the 10 best-performing countries are in the Developed Countries group (figure 1).¹ The five Nordic countries—which ranked in the highest seven in the 2023/24 WPS Index—are now in the top five. As in the 2023/24 WPS Index report, a majority of the countries in the top quintile of the rankings are in the Developed Countries group or the Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia region.

This year, for the first time, two countries in the **Latin America and the Caribbean** region are in the top quintile: **Costa Rica** (34th, up from 60th) and **Uruguay** (35th, up from 59th). They are exceptions, however, as other countries in the region perform poorly, leading to a decline in Latin America and the Caribbean's average score.

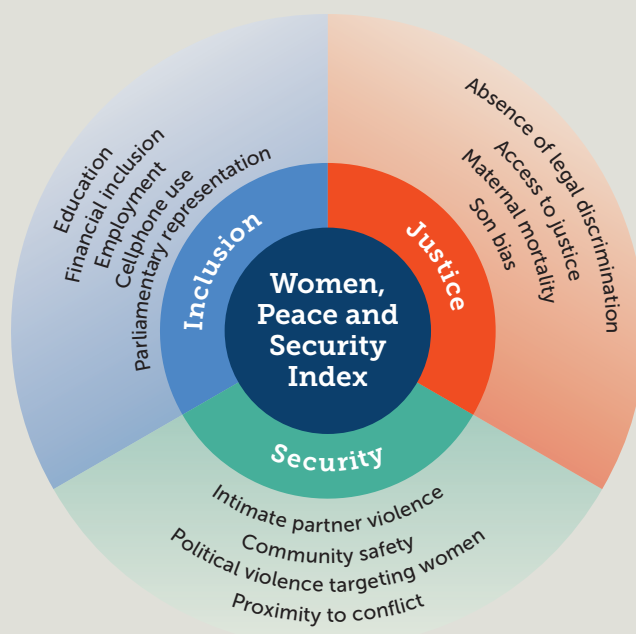
BOX 1 Structure of Women, Peace and Security Index

The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Index captures 13 indicators of women's status classified under three dimensions: inclusion (economic, social, political); justice (formal and informal discrimination); and security (at the individual, community, and societal levels; see figure). A country's performances across the three dimensions are combined to generate its WPS Index score, between 0 and 1, and establish its ranking. The data come from recent and reputable sources, such as UN agencies, the World Bank, and the Gallup World Poll. Table 1.1 in the full report defines and explains the relevance of each of the 13 indicators, while statistical table 1 at the end of the full report offers detailed information, definitions, and sources.

While all indicators represent the most recent values available at the time of the study, data collection cannot keep pace with evolving global events. Consequently, the impacts of current events may not always be accounted for across the data we use. The only indicator in this report with data from 2025 is parliamentary representation—all other data are from 2024 or prior years, depending on availability. This means that the WPS Index rankings do not reflect any dramatic changes in 2025. We have, however, accompanied our findings with qualitative research to reflect the impact on our results, if any, of changes in 2025.

We updated our methodology for the 2023/24 WPS Index, and the current WPS Index follows that updated methodology. Additionally, we recalculated previous WPS indices (2017/18, 2019/20, and 2021/22) using the updated

The WPS Index captures 13 indicators of women's status within three dimensions



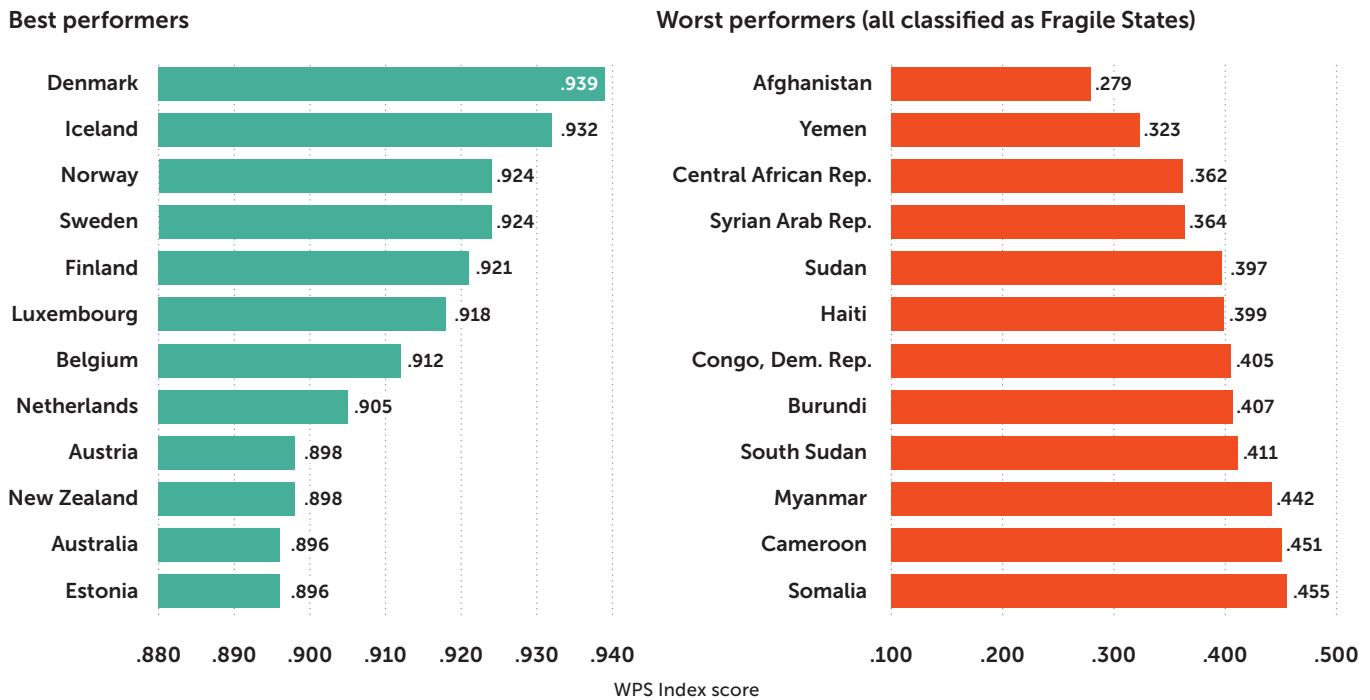
Source: Authors.

methodology, publishing our key findings from the revised estimates in December 2023. You can read the brief on our website: <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/resource/trends-in-womens-status-over-time-2017-2023/>.

Seven countries have remained in the bottom dozen since the inaugural WPS Index in 2017/18: **South Sudan, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Syrian Arab Republic, Central African Republic, Yemen, and Afghanistan**. On average, in the dozen worst-performing countries, more than one in five women experienced intimate partner violence in the 12 months before the survey, fewer than half of women report feeling safe in their communities, and almost three in four women live within 50 kilometers of armed conflict. However, Yemen and some other low-ranking countries are making notable progress across various indicators, even as they struggle to improve their overall rank (see case studies in the full report).

Globally, as gains in women's status stall, conflicts escalate

Backlash and rollbacks of women's rights coincide with alarming increases in conflict and violence. The previous WPS Index report documented record-high numbers worldwide of conflict- and battle-related deaths

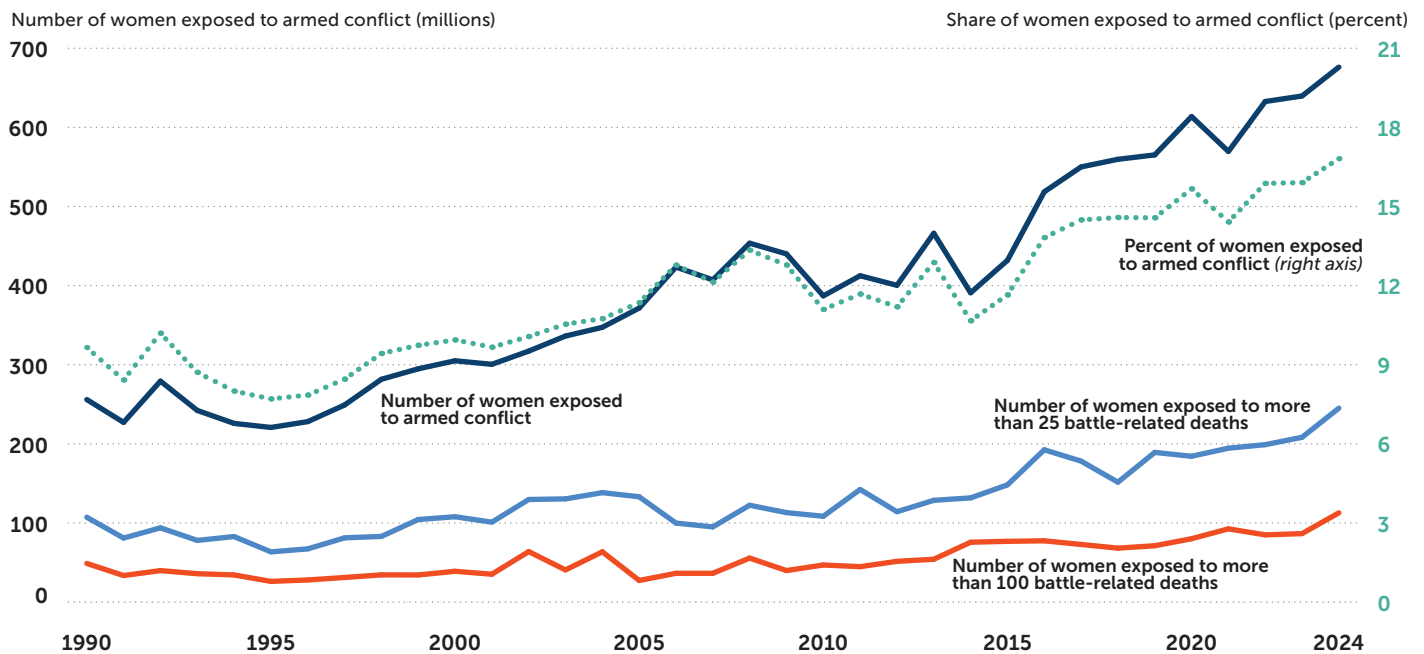
FIGURE 1 The dozen best and worst performers on the 2025/26 WPS Index

Note: Possible WPS Index scores range from a low of 0 to a high of 1. See statistical table 1 in the full report for data sources, detailed scores, and date ranges.
Source: Authors' estimates.

(fatalities caused by warring parties that are directly related to combat, including civilian losses).² The situation has worsened since then. Recent data show approximately one person in six worldwide is exposed to conflict. In the past five years, there have been more battle-related deaths than in any other five-year period since the end of the Cold War in 1991, with the exception of the genocide in Rwanda in 1994.³

In 2024, more than 676 million women globally lived in **proximity to conflict** (within 50 kilometers of armed conflict), a staggering 74 percent rise since 2010 and the highest number and proportion of women ever recorded (figure 2).⁴ Armed conflict has disproportionate impacts on women and vulnerable groups, which are exacerbated by rising violence and backlash. Between 2022 and 2023, United Nations-verified cases of conflict-related sexual violence rose by 50 percent, while women made up half of the world's 117.5 million displaced people, largely driven by the rising number of armed conflicts.⁵

Women's proximity to conflict adversely affects their well-being. Countries that perform the worst globally on this indicator also perform poorly on several other indicators. They score an average of 1.9 out of 4 on **access to justice** and have an average **maternal mortality ratio** of 226 deaths per 100,000 live births, which is worse than the global average (188 deaths). Moreover, the rate of **political violence targeting women** in these countries (0.279 event per 100,000) is three times the global average (0.070).

FIGURE 2 Sharp rise in women living in proximity to conflict over the past three decades

Source: Authors' estimates based on Uppsala Conflict Data Program (2025); CIESIN (2018); and UNDESA (2025, online edition).

From Ethiopia to Ukraine: Why the WPS Agenda cannot wait

We examined the situation in five conflict-affected countries—**Ethiopia**, **Myanmar**, **Palestine**, **Sudan**, and **Ukraine**—to understand the impacts of elevated levels of armed violence. In 2024, Ukraine, Myanmar, and Palestine dominated battle-related deaths globally.⁶ In Ukraine, 92 percent of women lived within 50 kilometers of armed conflict, while in Myanmar and Palestine, this proportion was 100 percent.⁷

Ethiopia, which had one of the highest numbers of battle-related deaths in 2022–2023, remains at risk of escalation as violence and human rights abuses continue in parts of the country two years after a peace agreement was signed.⁸ An estimated 120,000 or more women and girls have been raped during the conflict, with many still enduring pain, infection, and trauma, with little recourse or access to justice.⁹

Myanmar has been embroiled in civil war since a 2021 coup, compounding the lasting impacts of the 2016–2017 genocide against the Rohingya population.¹⁰ Today, 10.4 million women and girls need humanitarian assistance, with women-led households 1.2 times more likely to live in poverty than male-led households.¹¹ Since 2020, the amount of Official Developmental Assistance to the country has dropped by 61 percent, with less than 1 percent going to women's rights groups.¹²

Palestine was designated as the most dangerous and violent place in the world in 2024.¹³ Israel's genocide in Gaza resulted in an estimated 50,000 deaths between 2023 and 2024,¹⁴ and nearly all Palestinians in Gaza had been internally displaced by 2024.¹⁵ By mid-2026, 132,000 children under age five are projected to be suffering from acute malnutrition, and

nearly 55,500 malnourished pregnant and breastfeeding women will need immediate nutritional support.¹⁶ The United Nations Population Fund reports that a quarter million women and girls lack access to reproductive healthcare.¹⁷

In April 2023, civil war broke out in **Sudan**. Women and children account for more than half (53 percent) of the 12 million displaced people.¹⁸ Some 12.1 million people (25 percent of the population) are at risk of gender-based violence, and demand for gender-based violence services rose 288 percent as of the end of 2024.¹⁹ Nearly 5 million children and pregnant women are acutely malnourished. An October 2024 UN report documented at least 400 cases of conflict-related sexual violence in the year ending July 2024, though the actual number is believed to be much higher.²⁰

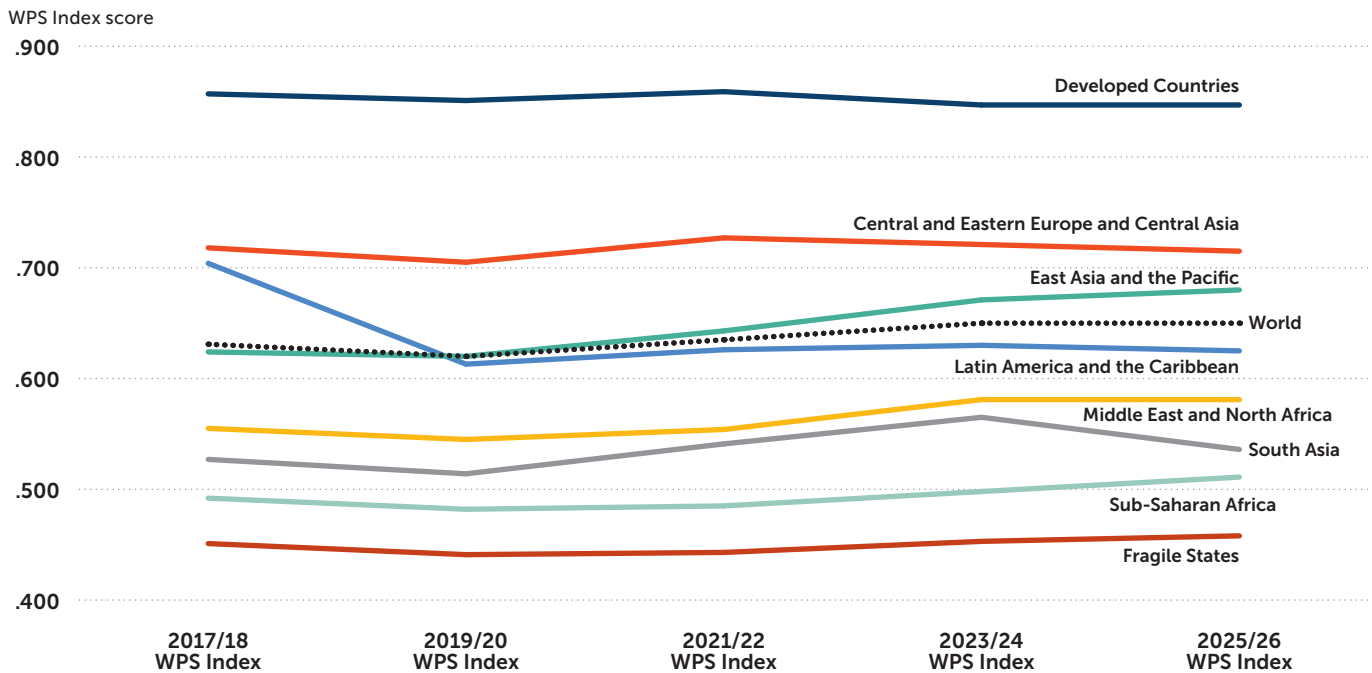
The full-scale war of aggression in **Ukraine** was the deadliest conflict between 2019 and 2024, with a record 75,700 battle-related deaths in 2024 from Russian attacks.²¹ Most (63 percent) of the 6.8 million refugees in Ukraine since 2022 are women,²² and 8 million women and girls are in need of humanitarian aid.²³ Reported cases of conflict-related gender-based violence are up 36 percent since 2022.²⁴ Negotiations on a ceasefire have stalled, while Russia continues its assault on Ukraine, and humanitarian aid is scaled back amid funding cuts.²⁵ Ukrainian women have been central to both the war effort and the humanitarian response, but their local organizations receive less than 1 percent of global relief funds, which have been further reduced by recent aid cuts.²⁶

These country cases also illustrate how long-term tensions between groups, rising violence, and the rollback of WPS commitments can quickly escalate into mass atrocities, which must be addressed as part of the WPS Agenda.²⁷ For **Myanmar, Palestine, Sudan, and Ukraine**, cases have been brought to the International Court of Justice involving accusations of genocide and war crimes.²⁸

WPS Index scores reveal a stagnating trend since 2017/18

As conflicts worsen and backlash rises worldwide, WPS Index trends show stalling progress on women's status and even reversals of gains. This is evident in the average WPS Index scores for regions over the eight years since the inaugural WPS Index of 2017/18, which show largely flat trendlines and some declines (figure 3). All regions registered decreases in average WPS Index scores in 2019/20, before recovering in 2021/22, followed by mixed performance in the 2023/24 and 2025/26 WPS Index editions. Regions that were previously high scorers also have had alarming changes in performance. The average WPS Index score for the best-performing **Developed Countries** group declined in the 2023/24 WPS Index and has stagnated since. The average score for the **Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia** region, the second-best performing region, fell in both the 2023/24 WPS Index and the current edition. These patterns may reflect the delayed effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as the impacts of worsening conflicts, which take time to appear in the data.

As conflicts worsen and backlash rises worldwide, WPS Index trends show stalling progress on women's status and even reversals of gains

FIGURE 3 Between the 2017/18 WPS Index and the current one, average regional scores have stagnated

Note: Possible WPS Index scores range from a low of 0 to a high of 1. See statistical table 1 in the full report for data sources, detailed scores, and date ranges.
Source: Authors' estimates.

Amid alarming results, unlikely places progressed

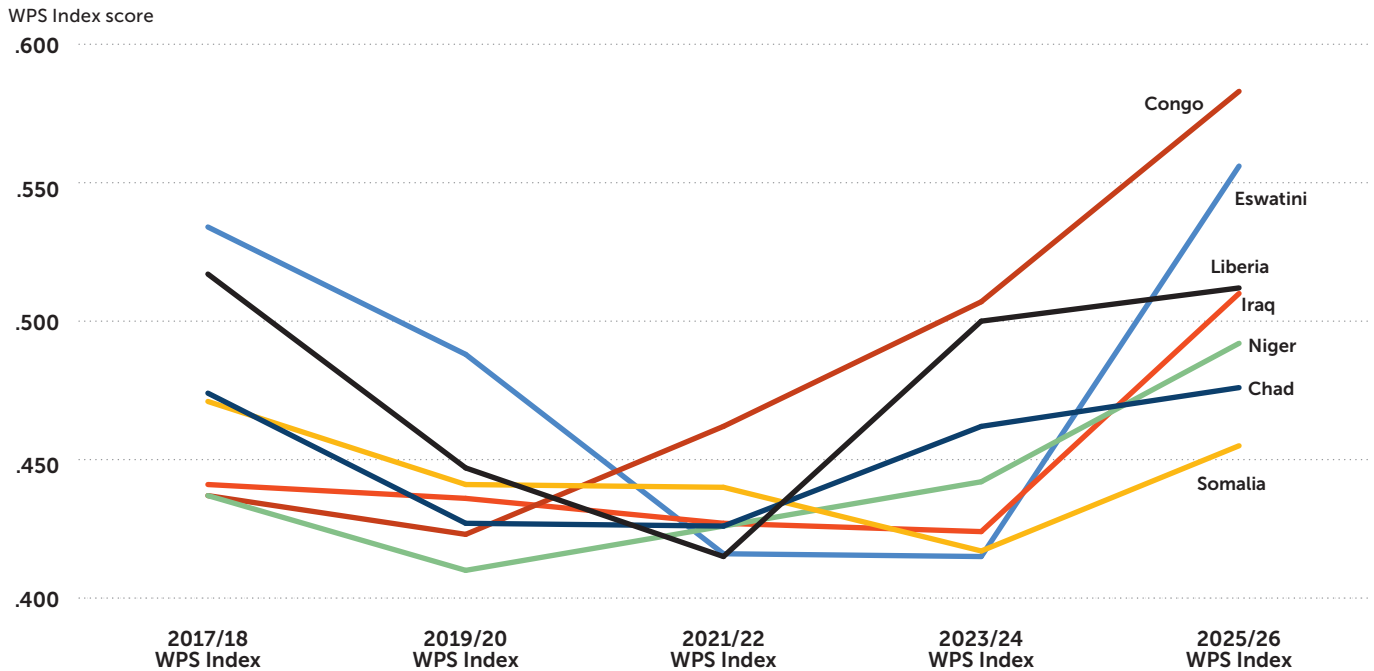
Changes in country performance on the WPS Index since 2017/18 range widely, but progress has come from some unlikely places. **Congo** and **South Sudan**, both classified as Fragile States, improved the most, with their scores rising by 33.4 percent and 26.9 percent, respectively. Of the 10 countries with the largest improvements in their scores, 5 are in the Sub-Saharan Africa region and 4 are in the Middle East and North Africa region; 5 of the 10 are classified as Fragile States.

In some cases, countries' improvements in one or two dimensions are offset by declines in other dimensions, leaving overall scores largely unchanged. This affects the average WPS Index scores of their country groups and regions and may explain the stalling regional performance. For instance, while some countries in the **Fragile States** group and in the **Sub-Saharan Africa** region had the largest improvement in inclusion and justice dimensions since the 2017/18 WPS Index, some other countries in those groups also had the largest declines in dimensional trends, thereby offsetting any gains in overall group average scores.

No country in the **South Asia** region, the **Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia** region, or the **Developed Countries** group features among the 10 countries whose WPS Index score improved or deteriorated the most, which aligns with the trend of stagnating scores for these regions.

Divergent paths: Why some countries climb the WPS Index rankings while others lag

How much and how fast a country advances on WPS Index indicators compared with other countries determines its position in the rankings. The

FIGURE 4 Sharp score increases have helped countries rise from the bottom 10 of the rankings since 2017/18

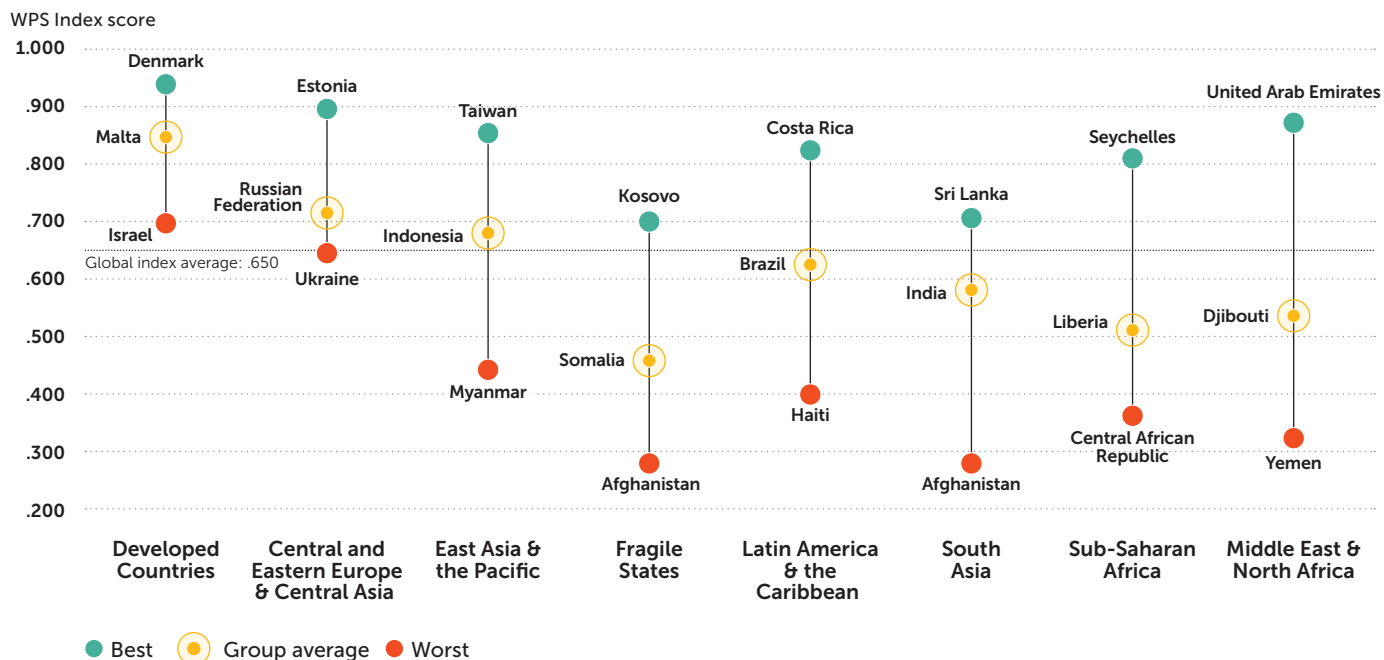
Note: Possible WPS Index scores range from a low of 0 to a high of 1. See statistical table 1 in the full report for data sources, detailed scores, and date ranges.
 Source: Authors' estimates.

WPS Index measures absolute levels of women's status, so countries with very low absolute levels need to make large or sustained gains to improve their ranking. Countries with higher absolute levels can rise quickly in the rankings with large gains in one indicator, gains across multiple indicators, or smaller but steady gains over time. Country examples discussed in the full report illustrate this phenomenon. For instance, seven countries that rose out of the bottom 10 on the current WPS Index (**Chad, Congo, Eswatini, Iraq, Liberia, Niger, and Somalia**) demonstrate how the level and pace of progress matter. These countries had both upward trends and some sharp increases in their WPS Index scores in recent years that moved them up in the rankings (figure 4).

Regional scores mostly unchanged since 2023/24 as country gains offset losses

Most regional scores have stagnated since the last WPS Index, reflecting uneven and mostly lackluster country performance, which has also ranged widely within regions (figure 5).

Despite a rise in its average score on the current WPS Index, the **Fragile States** group remains at the bottom of the regional rankings. Women in the Fragile States group have 5.3 years of schooling on average, below the world average of 8.4 years, and three in five live in proximity to conflict. Leading the rankings in the group are **Kosovo, Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, and Timor-Leste**—the only countries classified as Fragile States to rank in the third quintile. Kosovo had the largest improvement in rankings among Fragile States since the 2023/24 WPS Index. It advanced 18 positions, joining the group of 10 countries that improved the most

FIGURE 5 A wide range of performance on the 2025/26 WPS Index across and within regions

Note: Possible WPS Index scores range from a low of 0 to a high of 1. The countries near the yellow dots have a WPS Index score that is closest to the average for the country group or region. See statistical table 1 in the full report for data sources, detailed scores, and date ranges and appendix 2 for countries in each group and region. Countries in the Fragile States group are also included in their regional group.

Source: Authors' estimates.

in rankings in this edition. However, women in Kosovo continue to face discrimination and violence, with fewer than 25 percent of women employed and fewer than half of women having access to their own bank account.

The **Sub-Saharan Africa** region again has the second-lowest score among country groups (.511). Countries in the region dominate the bottom quintile of the WPS Index (many are classified as Fragile States). Women in the region have just 5.3 years of schooling on average, and maternal mortality is the second highest of any region (437 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births). Two countries were among the dozen that have deteriorated the most in rankings since the 2023/24 WPS Index: **South Africa** fell from 91st to 113th and **Rwanda** from 103rd to 121st. Yet despite its position near the bottom of the country group rankings, the Sub-Saharan Africa region continued its upward trajectory from the 2023/24 WPS Index. Eight indicators have improved, with average employment in the region (71 percent) higher than the global average (56 percent) and the second highest in the world after the **Developed Countries** group (73 percent). The **Middle East and North Africa** region performs third-worst overall, while having the widest range of both scores (difference of .550) and rankings (difference of 160 positions); the **United Arab Emirates** scores .872 (ranking 20th), while **Yemen** scores .323 (180th).

The **Developed Countries** group has been the top-performing country group since the inaugural 2017/18 WPS Index. It has the highest average score across 10 indicators, except on community safety, parliamentary representation, and son bias. This group also has the narrowest range of

scores and rankings, with **Denmark** scoring .939 in the 1st position and **Israel** scoring .697 in the 84th. As in previous editions of the WPS Index, Israel is the only country in this group that ranks in the third quintile. Additionally, **South Korea** and **Italy** fell from the first quintile of rankings on the current WPS Index. The **United States** returned to the top quintile this year (from the second quintile in 2023/24), improving in both ranking (rising from 37th to 31st) and score (from .823 to .840). However, the country still ranks lowest among Developed Countries in the top quintile, and recent policy changes threaten to undo progress.

As on the 2023/24 WPS Index, the **Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia** region, led by **Estonia** (ranked 11th), has the highest average score (.715) after the **Developed Countries** group. However, its performance has declined for the second consecutive edition of the WPS Index. Each of the remaining regions has one country in the bottom dozen, all of them Fragile States: **Myanmar** in the **East Asia and the Pacific** region, **Haiti** in the **Latin America and the Caribbean** region, and **Afghanistan** in the **South Asia** region. Afghanistan has ranked lowest on the WPS Index since 2019/20. **Pakistan**, although not classified as a Fragile State, currently ranks 169th. It performs second-worst in the world on the inclusion dimension and is the only country where fewer than a third of women have their own cellphone. **Bangladesh** performs the worst in the South Asia region on women's proximity to conflict, at 86 percent, up from 28 percent in the 2023/24 WPS Index.

Dimension performance reveals that women are still being left behind

Analysis of country performance on overall dimensions and their individual indicators reveals some encouraging results but largely limited progress. Moreover, variation in dimension performance shows that countries can be high achievers in one dimension but perform poorly in others, demonstrating the need for multidimensional assessments. These findings reinforce the need for urgent and comprehensive action to preserve existing gains while continuing efforts to improve women's status.

Variance in results shows why multidimensional analysis matters

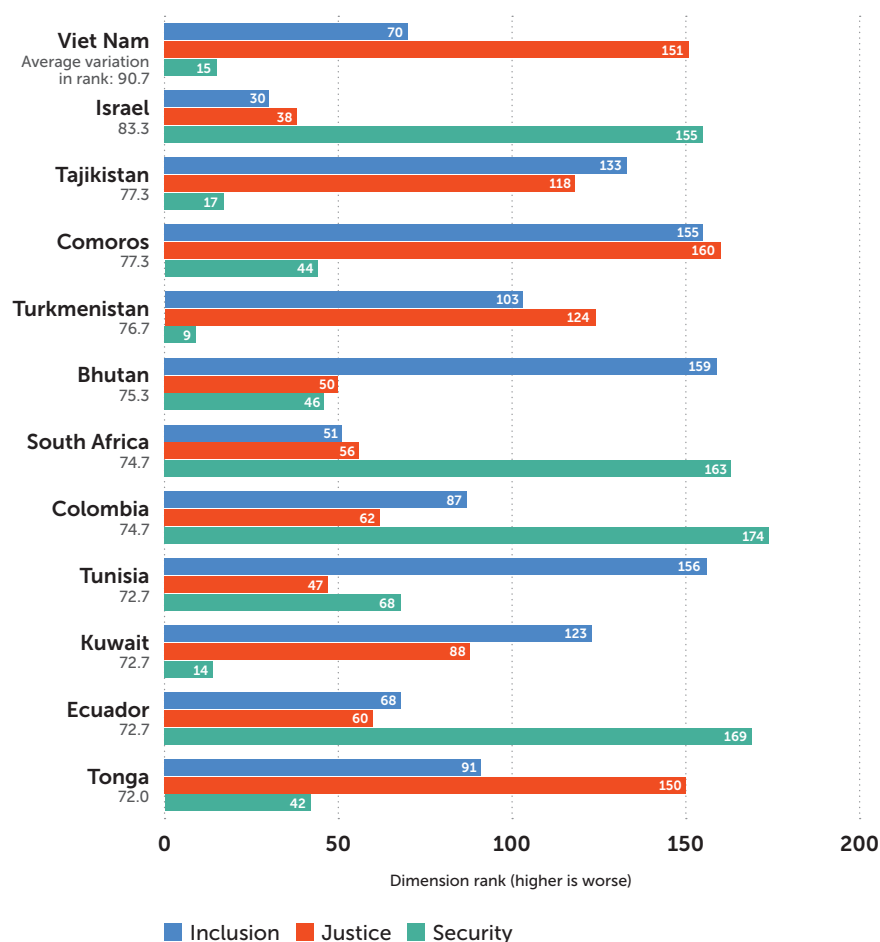
While most countries continued to perform similarly across the three dimensions of inclusion, justice, and security, some performed notably better on one or two dimensions and worse on others (figure 6).

Of the dozen countries with the largest variation in ranking across dimensions on the current WPS Index, seven—**Viet Nam, Israel, Bhutan, Colombia, Tonga, Tunisia, and Ecuador**—were also among the dozen with the largest variation on the 2023/24 WPS Index. On average across the three dimensions, countries scored lowest on the security dimension (.615), followed by the inclusion dimension (.625), and highest on the justice dimension (.713).

Indicator performance has improved little since the 2023/24 WPS Index

Across the indicators that make up each dimension of the WPS Index, performance is uneven. *Inclusion indicators* show a wide disparity in results. For instance, the global average for the *education indicator* stands at 8.4 years.

Variations in dimension performance reinforce the need for urgent and comprehensive action to preserve existing gains while continuing efforts to improve women's status

FIGURE 6 The dozen countries with the largest variation in ranking across dimensions of the current WPS Index

Note: Rankings range from 1 to 181, and higher is worse. Countries are ordered from largest to smallest average rank difference between dimensions. See statistical table 1 in the full report for data sources, detailed scores, and date ranges.

Source: Authors' estimates.

The top performers, where women receive over 12 years of schooling on average, are countries classified as high income and with very high Human Development Index rankings, while low performers are classified as the opposite.²⁹ The **Sub-Saharan Africa** region and the **Fragile States** group score at the bottom, with an average of 5.3 years of schooling.

Similarly, the global average for the *employment indicator* is 56 percent, ranging from 73 percent for the **Developed Countries** group to 24 percent in the **Middle East and North Africa** region. Half of the 10 top-ranked countries on this indicator are in the Sub-Saharan Africa region (**Burundi, Tanzania, Nigeria, Benin, and Togo**). Notably, Burundi, classified as a Fragile State, is tied as the highest-ranking country in the world on this indicator, with roughly 90 percent of women employed.

Performance on *justice indicators* has also been mixed. For instance, **Denmark** ranks highest on the **access to justice** indicator, more than 40 times higher than bottom-ranking **Nicaragua**. Eight of the ten highest-ranking countries on this indicator are in the **Developed Countries** group, whose

average score on this indicator is 3.5. No other region has an overall average above 2.2.

The global average *maternal mortality ratio* improved from 212 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2023/24 to approximately 188 on the current WPS Index.³⁰ **Belarus** and **Norway** have the lowest maternal mortality ratio, at 1 death per 100,000 live births. The **United States**, at 17 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, has the worst maternal mortality ratio in the Developed Countries group. **Nigeria** has the highest maternal mortality ratio globally, with 993 deaths per 100,000 live births due to pregnancy-related causes. **South Sudan**, which was the worst-performing country on this indicator in the 2023/24 WPS Index with 1,223 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, has nearly halved that number to 692.

Security indicators showed slight improvements but still demonstrate poor conditions for women. *Community safety* rose from 64 percent globally on the previous WPS Index to 66 percent on the current one. But that means more than one-third of women feel unsafe walking alone at night in their communities. In highest-ranking **Singapore**, 97 percent of women feel safe walking alone at night, while in lowest-ranking **Syrian Arab Republic**, only 17 percent do. Community safety is one of the few indicators on which the **Developed Countries** group does not perform best. Its score of 65 percent puts it behind the **East Asia and the Pacific** region, at 84 percent.

Political violence targeting women improved minimally, from 0.080 event per 100,000 women in the 2023/24 WPS Index to 0.070 event in the current WPS Index. The **Latin America and the Caribbean** region continues to have the highest rate of political violence targeting women, at 0.338 event per 100,000 women. It also has the second-highest share of **women living in proximity to conflict** (46.6 percent, up from 43.5 percent). These results reinforce the relationship between feelings of safety at the local level and instability at the societal level.

From stagnation to possibility: Pathways to progress

This fifth edition of the WPS Index shows a world of both crisis and courage. It confirms what women's movements have long asserted: women's status remains persistently low worldwide and is worsening amid rising backlash and violence. No country achieved a perfect score, regional averages are stagnating or declining, and risks of reversals are widening amid shrinking resources.

Yet our results also show pathways forward. Some of the steepest gains since the inaugural 2017/18 WPS Index have been in fragile and conflict-affected states, underscoring that progress is possible even in the most difficult contexts—when women leaders, civil society, and committed governments work together. The WPS Index's strong, clear correlations with other indices reaffirm that the well-being of women and the well-being of nations go hand in hand. These results should galvanize stakeholders to recognize the urgency of the current moment and ensure strong and sustained action to deploy the WPS Agenda for the benefit of both women and peaceful, prosperous societies. Table 1 provides a starting point that stakeholders can use to understand the areas of women's status where countries are doing well, where they are stagnating, and where they are performing especially poorly.

Some of the steepest gains since the inaugural WPS Index have been in fragile and conflict-affected states, underscoring that progress is possible even in the most difficult contexts

TABLE 1 Changes in country performance across the WPS Index dimensions (continued)

[illegible]

TABLE 1 Changes in country performance across the WPS Index dimensions (continued)

COUNTRY	WPS INDEX		INCLUSION					JUSTICE				SECURITY			
	RANK	SCORE	Education	Financial Inclusion	Employment	Cellphone use	Parliamentary representation	Absence of legal discrimination	Access to justice	Maternal mortality	Son bias	Intimate partner violence	Community safety	Political violence targeting women	Proximity to conflict
Montenegro	61	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Morocco	102	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Mozambique	150	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Myanmar	172	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Namibia	128	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Nepal	120	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Netherlands	8	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
New Zealand	9	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Nicaragua	107	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Niger	163	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Nigeria	162	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
North Macedonia	49	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Norway	3	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Oman	58	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Pakistan	169	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Palestine	167	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Panama	86	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Papua New Guinea	160	●	●	● ^a	●	● ^a	●	●	●	●	●	●	● ^a	●	●
Paraguay	54	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Peru	80	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Philippines	130	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Poland	27	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Portugal	26	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Puerto Rico	76	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	● ^a	●	●	●	●	●	●
Qatar	70	●	●	●	●	● ^a	●	●	●	●	●	● ^a	●	●	●
Romania	43	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Russian Federation	75	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Rwanda	121	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Samoa	89	●	●	● ^a	●	● ^a	●	●	● ^a	●	●	●	● ^a	●	●
São Tomé and Príncipe	124	●	●	● ^a	●	● ^a	●	●	●	●	●	●	● ^a	●	●
Saudi Arabia	63	●	●	●	● ^a	●	●	●	●	●	●	● ^a	●	●	●
Senegal	110	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Serbia	29	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Seychelles	40	●	●	● ^a	●	● ^a	●	●	●	●	●	● ^a	●	●	●
Sierra Leone	132	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Singapore	17	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Slovakia	46	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Slovenia	14	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Solomon Islands	108	●	●	● ^a	●	● ^a	●	●	●	●	●	●	● ^a	●	●
Somalia	170	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	● ^a	●	●	●
South Africa	113	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
South Korea	37	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
South Sudan	173	●	●	●	● ^a	● ^a	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Spain	25	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Sri Lanka	77	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Sudan	177	●	●	●	●	● ^a	●	●	●	●	●	●	● ^a	●	●
Suriname	51	●	●	● ^a	●	● ^a	●	●	●	●	●	●	● ^a	●	●
Sweden	3	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Switzerland	19	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Syrian Arab Republic	178	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Taiwan	27	●	● ^a	●	●	● ^a	●	●	●	●	●	● ^a	●	●	●

TABLE 1 Changes in country performance across the WPS Index dimensions (continued)

COUNTRY	WPS INDEX		INCLUSION					JUSTICE			SECURITY				
	RANK	SCORE	Education	Financial inclusion	Employment	Cellphone use	Parliamentary representation	Absence of legal discrimination	Access to justice	Maternal mortality	Son bias	Intimate partner violence	Community safety	Political violence targeting women	Proximity to conflict
Tajikistan	89	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Tanzania	121	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Thailand	57	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Timor-Leste	102	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Togo	142	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Tonga	89	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Trinidad and Tobago	89	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Tunisia	100	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Türkiye	106	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Turkmenistan	74	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Uganda	137	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Ukraine	116	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
United Arab Emirates	20	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
United Kingdom	23	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
United States	31	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Uruguay	35	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Uzbekistan	98	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Vanuatu	115	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Venezuela	118	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Viet Nam	73	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Yemen	180	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Zambia	141	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Zimbabwe	134	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

a. Based on an imputed value for 2025.

Note: Traffic lights indicate the direction and magnitude of change between the indicated periods for each WPS Index indicator. Green lights (●) indicate an improvement of at least 5 percent, yellow lights (●) indicate a change of less than 5 percent or that the country continued to have the best possible value, and red lights (●) indicate a deterioration of at least 5 percent. See statistical table 1 for detailed scores and date ranges. Five countries ranked in the 2025/26 WPS Index are not displayed here because they were excluded from the 2023/24 WPS Index based on data and imputation criteria (see appendix 1): Federated States of Micronesia, Grenada, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, and Palau.

Source: Authors.



Notes

1. For a full list of countries in each country group and region, see appendix 2 in the full report.
2. GIWPS and PRIO 2023.
3. Rustad 2025.
4. Rustad 2025.
5. UNHCR 2023; United Nations Secretary-General 2023.
6. Högladh 2023. Raleigh and Kishi 2024.
7. Palestine and Myanmar are two of five countries globally with 100 percent of the population living in proximity to conflict; the other three are Burundi, Eswatini, and Lebanon. Rustad 2025.
8. Coalition for Genocide Response et al. 2025; Human Rights Watch 2023.
9. Gebremichael et al. 2023.
10. Human Rights Watch 2022.
11. Ebead 2025.
12. World Bank 2025; Peard 2024.
13. Based on number of violent events targeting civilians in the preceding year; ACLED reports 81 percent of Palestine's population is exposed to conflict (52 conflict events per day on average), and in 2024, there were 35,000 recorded fatalities.
14. UNOHCHR 2024.
15. Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre 2025.
16. IPC 2025.
17. UNFPA Palestine 2025.
18. DTM 2025.
19. UNICEF 2025b.
20. UNHRC 2024.
21. Davies et al. 2024; Raleigh and Kishi 2024.
22. OCHA 2025.
23. UN Women 2024a.
24. Mezha 2024; United Nations 2025; United Nations Ukraine 2025.
25. UNHCR 2025.
26. Hagan 2025; UN Women 2024b.
27. Mass atrocities encompass war crimes, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing, and genocide; see Coalition for Genocide Response, Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, Health Professionals Network for Tigray, et al. 2025.
28. ICC 2023.
29. Based on classifications from the United Nations Development Programme for human development and the World Bank for country income levels (UNDP 2025 and World Bank 2025b).
30. WHO 2025.



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Alphabetical key to countries and ranks on the 2025/26 WPS Index

RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE	RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE	RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE
181	Afghanistan	.279	49	Grenada	.787	63	Palau	.739
68	Albania	.731	144	Guatemala	.561	167	Palestine	.469
123	Algeria	.621	154	Guinea	.527	86	Panama	.696
133	Angola	.601	159	Guinea-Bissau	.508	160	Papua New Guinea	.507
47	Argentina	.791	52	Guyana	.770	54	Paraguay	.768
56	Armenia	.762	176	Haiti	.399	80	Peru	.701
11	Australia	.896	144	Honduras	.561	131	Philippines	.607
9	Austria	.898	41	Hong Kong	.809	27	Poland	.854
111	Azerbaijan	.653	32	Hungary	.832	26	Portugal	.861
55	Bahrain	.765	2	Iceland	.932	76	Puerto Rico	.707
155	Bangladesh	.526	131	India	.607	70	Qatar	.723
42	Barbados	.807	96	Indonesia	.678	43	Romania	.801
63	Belarus	.739	128	Iran	.608	75	Russian Federation	.718
7	Belgium	.912	158	Iraq	.510	121	Rwanda	.624
104	Belize	.667	13	Ireland	.891	89	Samoa	.685
138	Benin	.587	84	Israel	.697	124	São Tomé and Príncipe	.620
99	Bhutan	.673	39	Italy	.811	63	Saudi Arabia	.739
80	Bolivia	.701	79	Jamaica	.703	110	Senegal	.657
59	Bosnia and Herzegovina	.753	22	Japan	.866	29	Serbia	.844
108	Botswana	.658	88	Jordan	.686	40	Seychelles	.810
119	Brazil	.632	72	Kazakhstan	.722	133	Sierra Leone	.601
38	Bulgaria	.814	152	Kenya	.542	17	Singapore	.884
160	Burkina Faso	.507	112	Kiribati	.652	46	Slovakia	.797
174	Burundi	.407	82	Kosovo	.700	14	Slovenia	.889
62	Cabo Verde	.741	70	Kuwait	.723	108	Solomon Islands	.658
104	Cambodia	.667	84	Kyrgyzstan	.697	170	Somalia	.455
171	Cameroon	.451	83	Lao PDR	.698	113	South Africa	.648
16	Canada	.885	17	Latvia	.884	37	South Korea	.815
179	Central African Republic	.362	141	Lebanon	.575	173	South Sudan	.411
165	Chad	.476	126	Lesotho	.614	25	Spain	.862
63	Chile	.739	157	Liberia	.512	77	Sri Lanka	.706
89	China	.685	128	Libya	.608	177	Sudan	.397
149	Colombia	.551	15	Lithuania	.887	51	Suriname	.779
135	Comoros	.590	6	Luxembourg	.918	3	Sweden	.924
140	Congo	.583	168	Madagascar	.466	19	Switzerland	.877
34	Costa Rica	.824	150	Malawi	.549	178	Syrian Arab Republic	.364
137	Côte d'Ivoire	.589	67	Malaysia	.738	27	Taiwan	.854
48	Croatia	.788	78	Maldives	.704	89	Tajikistan	.685
52	Cyprus	.770	164	Mali	.478	121	Tanzania	.624
32	Czechia	.832	30	Malta	.841	57	Thailand	.761
175	Democratic Republic of the Congo	.405	101	Marshall Islands	.670	102	Timor-Leste	.668
1	Denmark	.939	166	Mauritania	.475	143	Togo	.562
146	Djibouti	.560	94	Mauritius	.679	89	Tonga	.685
97	Dominican Republic	.675	147	Mexico	.558	89	Trinidad and Tobago	.685
127	Ecuador	.612	36	Moldova	.821	100	Tunisia	.671
125	Egypt	.617	44	Mongolia	.799	106	Türkiye	.664
87	El Salvador	.691	61	Montenegro	.743	74	Turkmenistan	.720
11	Estonia	.896	102	Morocco	.668	138	Uganda	.587
148	Eswatini	.556	151	Mozambique	.548	116	Ukraine	.645
156	Ethiopia	.516	172	Myanmar	.442	20	United Arab Emirates	.872
113	Federated States of Micronesia	.648	128	Namibia	.608	23	United Kingdom	.864
68	Fiji	.731	120	Nepal	.631	31	United States	.840
5	Finland	.921	8	Netherlands	.905	35	Uruguay	.822
23	France	.864	9	New Zealand	.898	98	Uzbekistan	.674
94	Gabon	.679	107	Nicaragua	.659	115	Vanuatu	.646
153	Gambia	.528	163	Niger	.492	118	Venezuela	.638
45	Georgia	.798	162	Nigeria	.495	73	Viet Nam	.721
21	Germany	.869	49	North Macedonia	.787	180	Yemen	.323
117	Ghana	.639	3	Norway	.924	142	Zambia	.566
60	Greece	.752	58	Oman	.755	135	Zimbabwe	.590
			169	Pakistan	.462			

Possible scores range from a low of 0 to a high of 1.

Since 2017, the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, in collaboration with the Peace Research Institute Oslo, has produced the biennial *Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Index*, which ranks countries globally on women's status across three key dimensions: inclusion, justice, and security. Drawing on data for 13 robust and globally recognized indicators, the WPS Index is the only tool that brings together insights from gender, development, and peace and security—providing a uniquely comprehensive picture of women's well-being. The WPS Index's findings underscore the importance of a multidimensional understanding of women's status and the urgent need to invest in women to advance the well-being of all people and societies. Our data reaffirm that societies where women's status is higher are also more peaceful, prosperous, and resilient, including in the face of climate change and economic shocks.

This report reveals how countries and regions that once performed better on the WPS Index are now backsliding, while temporal trends show stagnation in women's status worldwide. As wars and conflicts reach a historic peak, progress on women's rights seems perilously close to a historic low.

And yet there is hope. The WPS Index shows that some of the greatest improvements in women's status have come from the most challenging and conflict-affected places. From Congo to Yemen, women have continued to organize, lead, and rebuild despite unimaginable hardship. *Their persistence is a powerful reminder that change is possible even in the darkest moments, but it should not be theirs alone to catalyze.*

The WPS Index remains a vital tool for governments and policymakers to identify and address areas of progress and decline; for academics and researchers to deepen understanding of global and regional trends; and for civil society, activists, and storytellers to amplify women's voices and press decision-makers to act. But this year, on the 25th anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, the WPS Index also serves as a reminder for all these agents of change: *women have not given up—and neither should the rest of us.*

The full report is available at <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/the-index>.