

## **Sustainable Development Goal 5**

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

## **Sustainable Development Goal 16**

Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies

## **Sustainable Development Goal Target 17.18**

By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts



## CHAPTER 2

# Key Results, Regional and Country Highlights

**T**his chapter highlights the major results and insights that emerge from an analysis of country rankings on the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Index and its dimensions and indicators. The global rankings of 153 countries reveal that alongside some good performers that do well across the board, many others perform unevenly. Large differences within regions illustrate the feasibility of improvements in countries that are below their neighbors' standards. We highlight the top and bottom country performers, and investigate the role of income and correlations among dimensions, followed by a deeper dive into the innovative features of the justice dimension.

### Global rankings and major patterns

The WPS Index results yield valuable findings and insights. A global league ranking displays the overall standing from the top (Iceland, scoring .886) through the bottom (Afghanistan and Syria, each at .385; figure 2.1). The figure also shows the relative performance of countries across terciles—best, middling, and worst performers. (The full set of scores for 153 countries and the underlying indicators are in statistical table 1.)

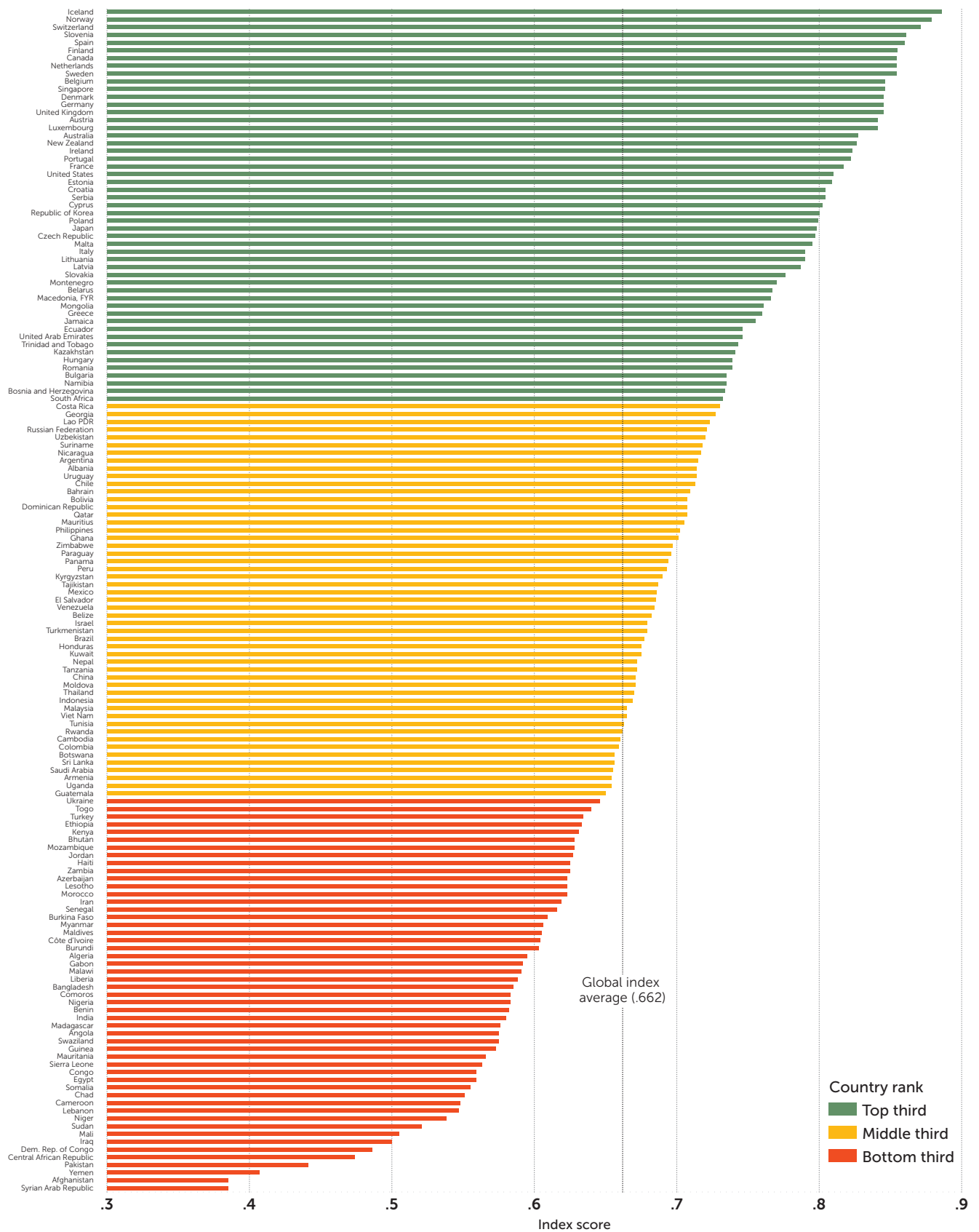
One important finding is that good things often go together—around 30 countries score in the top third for all dimensions and indicators, with achievements in each dimension reinforcing progress more broadly. However, few countries perform uniformly well or badly across the 11 indicators of inclusion, justice, and security. “Traffic lights” visualize good (green), middling (yellow), and bad (red) performance across the indicators (table 2.1).

Performance is also unbalanced across regions and country groups. The patterns of achievement across dimensions reveal that while some country groups attain fairly even achievements—notably the Developed Country group, Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and East Asia and the Pacific—other regions show unbalanced performance (figure 2.2). Latin America and the Caribbean, for example, does much better on justice than on inclusion. Several other country groups perform very poorly on inclusion, notably the Middle East and North Africa, South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Fragile States group. The Fragile States tend to score relatively poorly overall, with especially weak performance on the inclusion and security dimensions. Fewer than 1 in 10 women in the countries in this group have financial accounts—ranging as low as 1 in 50 in Yemen.

### A regional lens

Alongside commonalities, there are major differences within regions, illustrating the scope for countries to improve in order to reach the standards of their neighbors (figure 2.3; see also tables 2.2 and 2.3 later in the chapter). The Middle East and North Africa region performs poorly on the index overall, which can be traced largely to high levels of organized violence, discriminatory laws that continue to disempower women, and low rates of inclusion. However, its within-region differences are also striking; for example, when comparing the United Arab Emirates with Syria. (Spotlight 1 at the end of chapter 1 illustrates some countries' patterns of achievement and gives a sense of the factors driving the ratings.)

**FIGURE 2.1 Iceland tops the index ranking, while Afghanistan and Syria are at the bottom**



Note: Possible Women, Peace, and Security Index scores range from a low of 0 to a high of 1. See statistical table 1 for detailed scores and date ranges.  
 Source: Authors' estimates. See statistical table 1 for data sources.





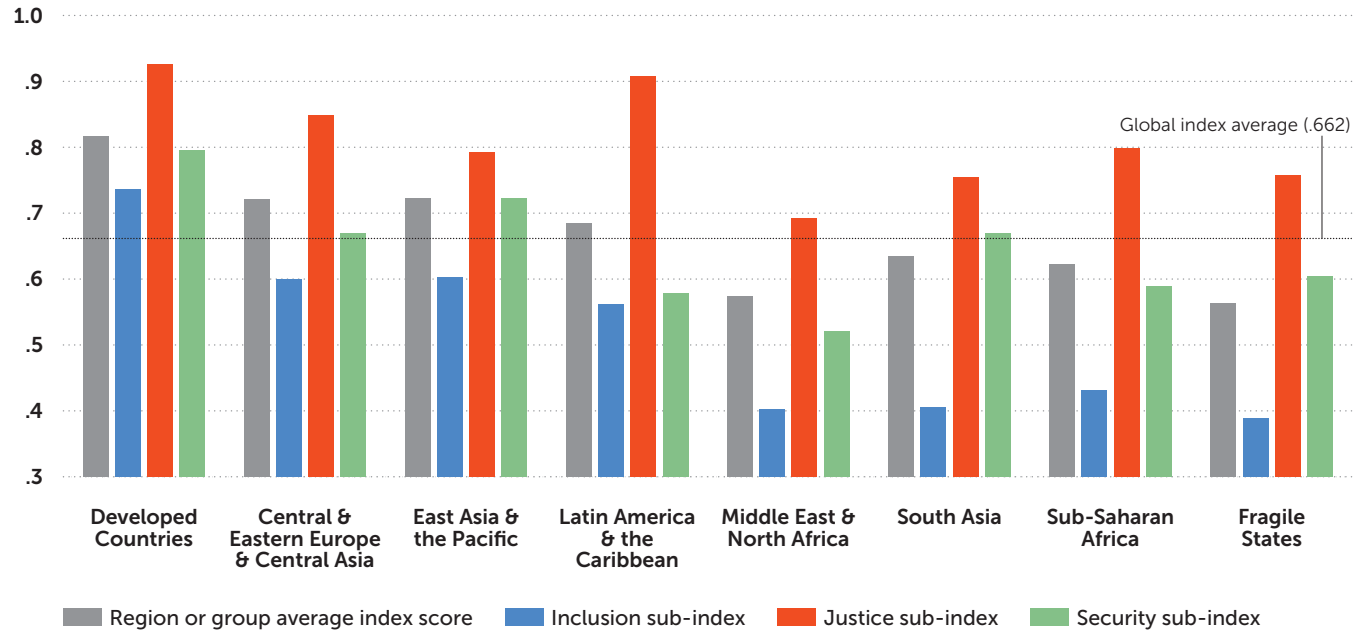
**TABLE 2.1 Few countries perform uniformly well (green), middling (yellow), or badly (red) across the 11 indicators of the index (continued)**

Rank	Country	Overall score	Inclusion				Justice			Security		
			Education	Financial inclusion	Employment	Cellphone use	Parliamentary representation	Legal discrimination	Son bias	Discriminatory norms	Intimate partner violence	Community safety
107	Kenya		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
108	Bhutan		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
108	Mozambique		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
110	Jordan		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
111	Haiti		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
111	Zambia		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
113	Azerbaijan		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
113	Lesotho		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
113	Morocco		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
116	Iran		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
117	Senegal		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
118	Burkina Faso		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
119	Myanmar		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
120	Maldives		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
121	Côte d'Ivoire		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
122	Burundi		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
123	Algeria		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
124	Gabon		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
125	Malawi		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
126	Liberia		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
127	Bangladesh		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
128	Comoros		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
128	Nigeria		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
130	Benin		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
131	India		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
132	Madagascar		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
133	Angola		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
134	Swaziland		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
135	Guinea		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
136	Mauritania		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
137	Sierra Leone		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
138	Congo		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
138	Egypt		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
140	Somalia		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
141	Chad		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
142	Cameroon		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
143	Lebanon		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
144	Niger		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
145	Sudan		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
146	Mali		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
147	Iraq		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
148	Dem. Rep. of Congo		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
149	Central African Republic		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
150	Pakistan		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
151	Yemen		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
152	Afghanistan		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
152	Syrian Arab Republic		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Note: Traffic lights represent results for each Women, Peace, and Security Index indicator partitioned into tertiles. Green lights (●) represent top performers, yellow lights (●) middle performers, and red lights (●) bottom performers. Exceptions are son bias and organized violence, whose scores are unevenly distributed, with many zero values. Son bias scores are partitioned into three groups, with values of 1.05 or less receiving a green light (●), values of 1.06 to 1.07 a yellow light (●), and values greater than 1.07 a red light (●). For organized violence, countries with no reported incidents receive a green light (●), countries with up to 0.192 deaths per 100,000 receive a yellow light (●), and countries above that threshold (0.219 to 172.597) receive a red light (●). See statistical table 1 for detailed scores and date ranges. Source: Authors. See statistical table 1 for data sources and definitions of indicators.

**FIGURE 2.2 Good performance across dimensions of the index for some country groups and unbalanced for others**

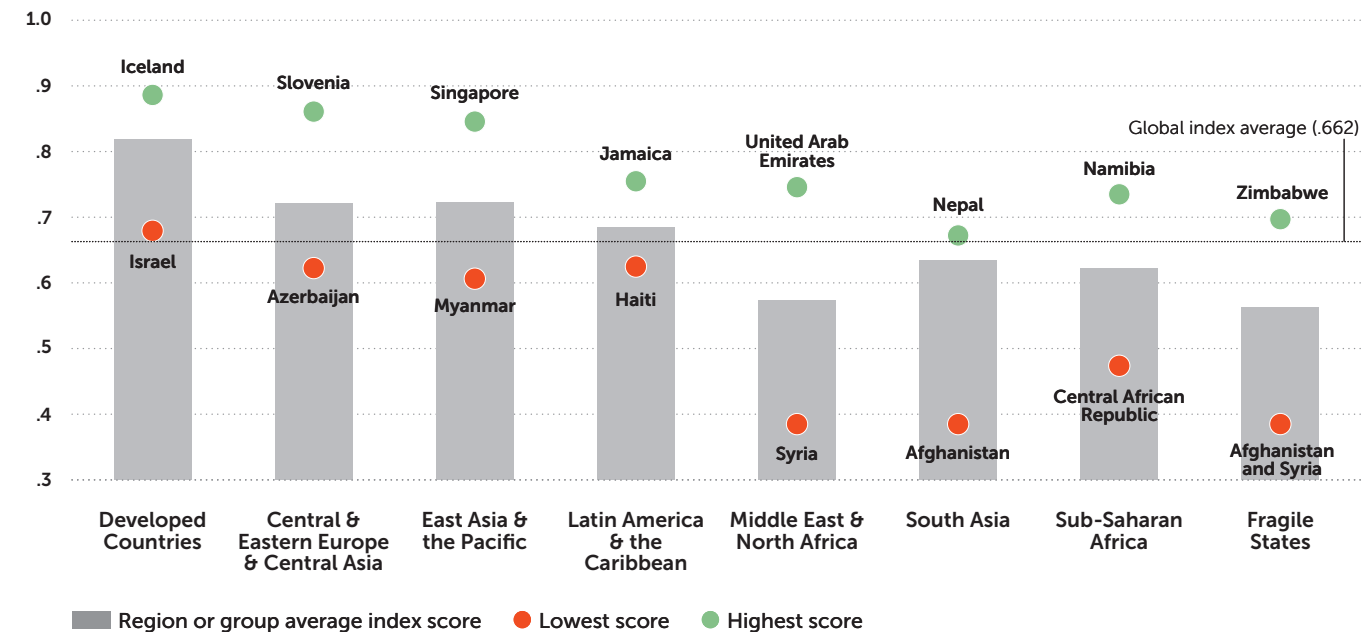
Index and sub-index score



Note: Possible Women, Peace, and Security Index scores range from a low of 0 to a high of 1. See statistical table 1 for detailed scores and date ranges and appendix 2 for region and country groups. Fragile States are also included in their regional group.  
 Source: Authors' estimates. See statistical table 1 for data sources and appendix 1 on how sub-indices are calculated.

**FIGURE 2.3 Some countries perform much better—and some much worse—than their regional average on the index**

Index score



Note: Possible Women, Peace, and Security Index scores range from a low of 0 to a high of 1. See statistical table 1 for detailed scores and date ranges and appendix 2 for region and country groups. Fragile States are also included in their regional group.  
 Source: Authors' estimates. See statistical table 1 for data sources.

There are also major differences in achievement in South Asia, such as between Sri Lanka and Afghanistan. Among countries in the Fragile States group, Bosnia and Herzegovina does relatively well.

The data also reveal fronts where too many countries lag way behind global averages, such as women's parliamentary representation. While Rwanda has the global high at 56 percent (for both houses of parliament), Qatar sets the global low at zero, and Yemen's share of women in parliament is only 0.5 percent. And in nearly two dozen countries, the share of women in parliament is only in single digits. On women's employment, behind a global average of about 50 percent, the low is 12 percent (Syria); in five of eight country groups the regional minimum is less than half the global average. Likewise, the share of men who do not accept women working is high in several regions—at or exceeding one-fifth in East Asia and the Pacific, Middle East and North Africa, and South Asia, as well as in the Fragile States group.

There is extensive legal discrimination in all regions. All regions have countries scoring much worse than the global average of 23; Saudi Arabia has a score of 54, the worst in the world. More progress is urgently needed to eliminate legal discrimination, pursuant to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

These patterns underline major potential for improvement to address critical deficits for meeting the goals that all governments have signed up to. Readers can explore these patterns using the data and tools available on the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security website (<https://giwps.georgetown.edu/the-index>). For example, relative to other developed countries, the United States performs poorly on intimate partner violence—more than one-third of American women have experienced such violence (see spotlight 1). At more than twice the South Asian regional average of 39 percent, Sri Lanka performs relatively well on women's financial inclusion, compared with other developing countries, but it lags far behind on political representation, with women's seats in parliament hovering around 5–6 percent for at least two decades.

### **The best and worst performing countries**

We see good performing countries all around the world, not only in better-off regions. For most indicators and most regions, there are countries that do much better than the global average. For example, the global average for women's schooling is about seven years, and in all regions except South Asia some countries are well above that level. Namibia and South Africa in Sub-Saharan Africa and Mongolia in East Asia are all at or above 10 years, and several countries in Central and Eastern Europe average about 13 years, including Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. Likewise, it is striking that there are countries in all regions that have surpassed the global mean rate of women's cellphone use of about 78 percent, notably Botswana in Sub-Saharan Africa,

at 87 percent; Chile in Latin America, at around 92 percent; and Iraq, a fragile state in the Middle East and North Africa, at near universal coverage. The same is true of women's employment rates around the world, which range as high as 93 percent in Rwanda in Sub-Saharan Africa, and more than 87 percent in Burundi and Madagascar, both in Sub-Saharan Africa and in the Fragile States group.

Table 2.2 highlights the patterns of achievement across regions, showing scores for the best and worst performing countries, as well as global and regional averages, for each indicator in the WPS Index. (See statistical table 1 for more detail.)

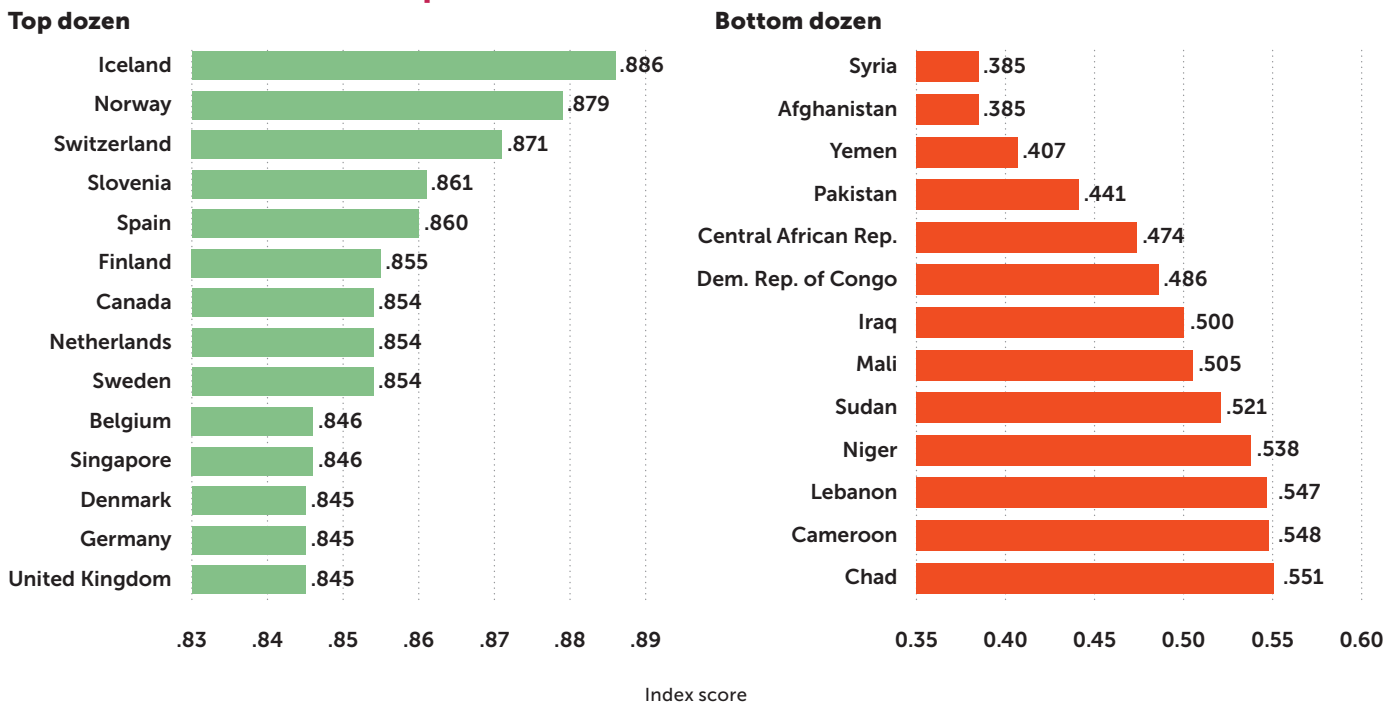
*Who performs best: The top dozen rankings.* Countries in the top dozen rankings on the WPS Index (with ties for some positions)—in descending order Iceland; Norway; Switzerland; Slovenia; Spain; Finland; Canada; Netherlands and Sweden (tied in 7th place); Belgium and Singapore (tied in 10th place); and Denmark, Germany, and the United Kingdom (tied in 12th place)—share some important characteristics (figure 2.4, left panel). Each of these societies is generally peaceful and stable. Each has high scores on multiple aspects of inclusion, especially women's education, financial inclusion, and cellphone use, and very low shares of men believing that it is unacceptable for women to work (see statistical table 1). None of the countries has recorded levels of organized violence.

With the exception of Singapore, it is notable that all these top-performing countries also rank higher on the WPS Index than on their income per capita. Slovenia (with the largest difference) is 30 positions higher on the WPS Index than on income, and Spain 24 positions higher. At the top of the global ranking, Iceland is also distinguished by the highest reported rate of women's employment among the top dozen country rankings on the index.

No country has excellent scores on all dimensions, however. Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden record high rates of intimate partner violence, for example, and fewer than half of women in Belgium, Slovenia, and Spain are in paid work. All of these top-performing countries could improve the legal position of women. For example, although Singapore has a non-discrimination clause in its constitution, it does not explicitly mention gender as a category protected against discrimination. Iceland's constitution does not contain a clause on non-discrimination by gender.

*Who performs worst: The bottom dozen rankings.* The worst performing countries on the WPS Index (ranking 141–152, with a tie for last position) are, from the bottom, Syria and Afghanistan (tied for worst place), Yemen, Pakistan, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Mali, Sudan, Niger, Lebanon, Cameroon, and Chad (figure 2.4, right panel). These countries all perform poorly on multiple fronts and especially poorly on organized violence. Almost every one of these countries has significant levels of organized violence, with Syria having the highest score of nearly 173 battle deaths per 100,000 people, while only Chad and Niger



**FIGURE 2.4 The best and worst performers on the index**

Note: Possible Women, Peace, and Security Index scores range from a low of 0 to a high of 1. See statistical table 1 for detailed scores and date ranges.  
 Source: Authors' estimates. See statistical table 1 for data sources.

experience rates of organized violence below the global average. The total number of deaths from organized violence in Syria has escalated rapidly over the past decade, from around 1 recorded death in 2008 to more than 49,000 deaths in 2016. In 2015 and 2016, three countries in the bottom dozen in the WPS Index ranking—Afghanistan, Central African Republic, and Syria—accounted for more than two-thirds of total global deaths from organized violence.

The bottom dozen rankings include the countries with the worst global scores on female employment (notably Syria, where only one in eight women are in paid work and with low rates predating the conflict) and discriminatory norms (most markedly Pakistan). All have scores on legal discrimination that are worse than the global average.

Several of the countries in the bottom dozen rankings do badly on the WPS Index even relative to a low regional average: Afghanistan is 39 percent lower than its regional average, Syria 33 percent, and Pakistan 31 percent (table 2.3).

But even among the group that does so poorly overall, each country performs as well as or better than the regional average on at least one indicator. For example, Yemen's measure of organized violence, at 7 deaths per 100,000 people, is far below the regional average of almost 21 deaths. Afghanistan's parliamentary representation is better than its regional average (which is attributed to quotas), and Niger does at least as well as its regional average on security indicators.

Table 2.3 highlights the countries that do worse—and some much worse—on key indicators relative to regional

averages.<sup>22</sup> The poor performing countries that do badly relative to their region again highlight the scope for improvement. The table also shows that there are poor performing countries in every region. These data suggest that poor performing countries tend to do much worse than their regional average on financial inclusion and organized violence. Pakistan performs particularly poorly on women's financial inclusion—only 3 percent of women are estimated to have financial accounts. Syria performs better than Pakistan on that indicator, at almost 20 percent, but currently experiences the world's worst level of organized violence. Afghan women experience low levels of financial inclusion and high levels of violence, but the recent conflict does not approach Syrian levels of battle deaths.

### The relationship between performance and income

National income helps performance on the WPS Index, but the two are not always closely correlated. Many countries do substantially better—or worse—than their per capita income rank (figure 2.5). Fifty-seven countries rank at least 10 places better on the WPS Index than their global income ranking—most notably Zimbabwe,<sup>23</sup> Lao PDR, and Nicaragua—while 52 countries do much worse. Saudi Arabia's WPS Index rank is a remarkable 89 places below its rank in per capita income. Among the top 30 countries on the WPS Index, Luxembourg, the United States, and Ireland do much worse than their income ranking; among the bottom third, Iraq and Lebanon do worse (see statistical table 1).

**TABLE 2.2 Indicator global and regional averages and scores for the best and worst performers on the index**

Indicator and performance level	Global	Developed Countries	Central & Eastern Europe & Central Asia	East Asia & the Pacific	Latin America & the Caribbean	Middle East & North Africa	South Asia	Sub-Saharan Africa	Fragile States
<b>Education (mean years of schooling)</b>									
Average	6.8	9.9	9.1	7.1	7.4	5.4	4.4	2.9	5.1
Best country score	14.1	14.1	13.2	11.6	11.9	9.9	5.4	10.3	8.2
Worst country score	1.4	8.9	8.1	3.5	6.3	6.4	2.4	1.4	1.9
<b>Financial inclusion (%)</b>									
Average	55.5	95.5	58.9	65.5	47.5	23.1	39.2	23.3	9.6
Best country score	100.0	100.0	97.5	96.1	77.5	66.7	87.1	80.0	32.9
Worst country score	1.6	83.2	1.6	10.7	14.1	1.7	3.0	2.5	1.7
<b>Employment (%)</b>									
Average	50.3	52.0	52.5	62.0	52.3	20.3	31.5	63.3	26.0
Best country score	92.6	77.2	69.0	80.7	69.1	60.0	80.5	92.6	87.3
Worst country score	12.4	34.5	23.6	33.6	41.4	12.4	13.1	23.8	12.4
<b>Cellphone use (%)</b>									
Average	78.4	90.5	89.7	84.2	74.8	80.2	67.1	63.5	56.0
Best country score	100.0	100.0	96.5	97.5	94.0	100.0	86.9	87.0	100.0
Worst country score	7.6	76.7	76.8	60.4	7.6	34.1	32.6	25.9	17.3
<b>Parliamentary representation (%)</b>									
Average	20.4	25.3	17.8	22.0	24.6	18.8	13.3	22.9	16.0
Best country score	55.7	47.6	34.4	38.5	51.8	31.3	29.6	55.7	37.8
Worst country score	0.5	12.5	9.9	2.0	2.2	0.05	5.8	5.8	0.5
<b>Legal discrimination (aggregate score 0–84)</b>									
Average	23	14	22	24	14	39	27	27	33
Best country score	7	7	8	11	8	25	18	19	19
Worst country score	54	21	29	37	33	54	46	48	48
<b>Son bias (male to female ratio at birth)</b>									
Average	1.08	1.05	1.06	1.13	1.05	1.06	1.1	1.02	1.04
Best country score	1.02	1.04	1.05	1.03	1.03	1.03	1.04	1.02	1.02
Worst country score	1.16	1.07	1.16	1.16	1.08	1.07	1.11	1.06	1.08
<b>Discriminatory norms (%)</b>									
Average	19	2	12	20	9	37	33	16	25
Best country score	0	0	2	2	4	18	18	6	7
Worst country score	73	14	34	37	22	53	73	33	53
<b>Intimate partner violence (%)</b>									
Average	30.3	25.2	20.8	29.8	25.9	18.3	38.6	31.0	28.2
Best country score	6.1	6.4	7.7	6.1	14.1	20.3	19.5	6.4	6.4
Worst country score	78.0	48.3	45.5	67.5	64.1	38.9	67.2	78.0	67.5
<b>Community safety (%)</b>									
Average	60.5	67.3	52.8	67.9	36.1	56.7	63.7	49.9	48.3
Best country score	96.8	81.2	90.3	96.8	60.9	86.1	80.4	85.9	85.9
Worst country score	9.7	48.7	40.3	31.3	9.7	16.9	35.5	27.5	16.9
<b>Organized violence (battle deaths per 100,000 people)</b>									
Average	0.932	0.034	0.062	0.011	0.018	20.752	0.041	2.063	12.942
Best country score	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Worst country score	172.60	6.85	3.26	0.98	1.1	172.60	30.92	30.44	172.60

Note: Scores highlighted in green are the values for the best performers on each indicator of the Women, Peace, and Security Index. See statistical table 1 for detailed scores and date ranges and appendix 2 for region and country groups. Fragile States are also included in their regional group.

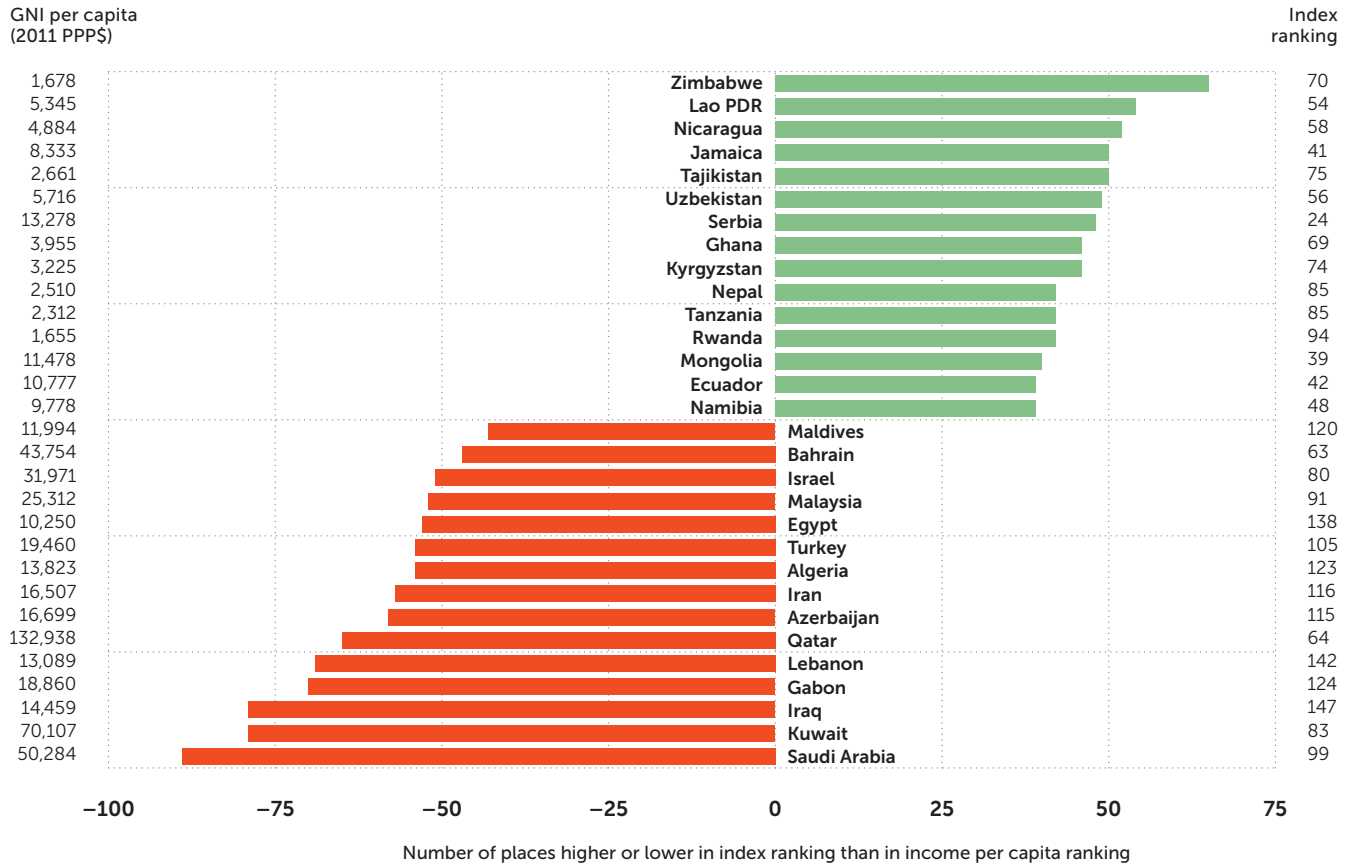
Source: Authors. See statistical table 1 for data sources.

**TABLE 2.3 How far the worst performing countries fall behind regional averages on the Women, Peace, and Security Index**

Country (Index value)	Shortfall to regional average (%)	Inclusion					Justice			Security		
		Education	Financial inclusion	Employment	Cellphone use	Parliamentary representation	Legal discrimination	Son bias	Discriminatory norms	Lifetime intimate partner violence	Community safety	Organized violence
<b>Central &amp; Eastern Europe &amp; Central Asia (.721)</b>												
Azerbaijan (.623)	≈-14	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Turkey (.634)	-12	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Ukraine (.646)	-10	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Armenia (.654)	-9	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Moldova (.671)	-7	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>East Asia &amp; the Pacific (.723)</b>												
Myanmar (.606)	-16	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Cambodia (.660)	-9	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Malaysia (.665)	-8	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Viet Nam (.665)	-8	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Indonesia (.669)	-7	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>Latin America &amp; the Caribbean (.685)</b>												
Haiti (.625)	-9	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Guatemala (.650)	-5	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>Middle East &amp; North Africa (.574)</b>												
Syria (.385)	-33	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Yemen (.407)	-29	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Iraq (.500)	-13	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>South Asia (.635)</b>												
Afghanistan (.385)	-39	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Pakistan (.441)	-31	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa (.622)</b>												
Central African Republic (.474)	-24	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Dem. Rep. of Congo (.486)	-22	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Mali (.505)	-19	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Sudan (.521)	-16	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Niger (.538)	≈-14	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
<b>Developed Countries (.819)</b>												
Israel (.679)	-17	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Greece (.760)	-7	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Italy (.790)	-4	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Malta (.795)	-3	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

● Much better than regional average: > 0.25 higher than the regional average. ● Better than regional average: > 0.1 to 0.25 higher than the regional average. ● Approximately the same as regional average: 0.1 higher or lower than the regional average. ● Worse than regional average: > 0.1 to 0.25 lower than the regional average. ● Much worse than regional average: > 0.25 lower than the regional average. Note: Possible index scores range from a low of 0 to a high of 1. See statistical table 1 for detailed scores and date ranges and appendix 2 for region and country groups. The Fragile States group is not shown in this table because countries naturally compare themselves with countries in their region, and developed countries with each other; fragile states do not. Source: Authors' estimates. See statistical table 1 for data sources.

**FIGURE 2.5 Countries that perform much better and some that perform much worse on the index than on per capita income**



Note: Green indicates a gain in rank on the Women, Peace, and Security Index relative to rank in income per capita and red indicates a loss. Source: Authors’ estimates. See statistical table 1 for data sources for the WPS Index and the World Bank World Development Indicators database for gross national income (GNI) per capita in purchasing power parity terms in constant 2011 prices (World Bank 2016b).

**Correlations between dimensions**

The WPS Index allows us to investigate correlations at the country level between pairs of dimensions (figure 2.6). Countries in the upper right quadrant in the three panels in figure 2.6 have higher levels of achievement on both dimensions, whereas countries in the bottom left quadrant have lower levels of achievement. While, as discussed above, the general tendency is that all three dimensions are positively associated with each other, as indicated by the upward sloping fitted line in each panel of the figure, some countries do poorly on some dimensions but very well on others. The Maldives, for example, is among the low-ranking countries in inclusion and justice (panel C), but in the top right quadrant on security. The substantial variation around the fitted line is also striking, underlining the value of capturing and exploring each of these dimensions separately.

Regional clustering is prominent, as is evident from the clustering of the different colors of circles in figure 2.6. Countries in the Developed Country group generally do well, except

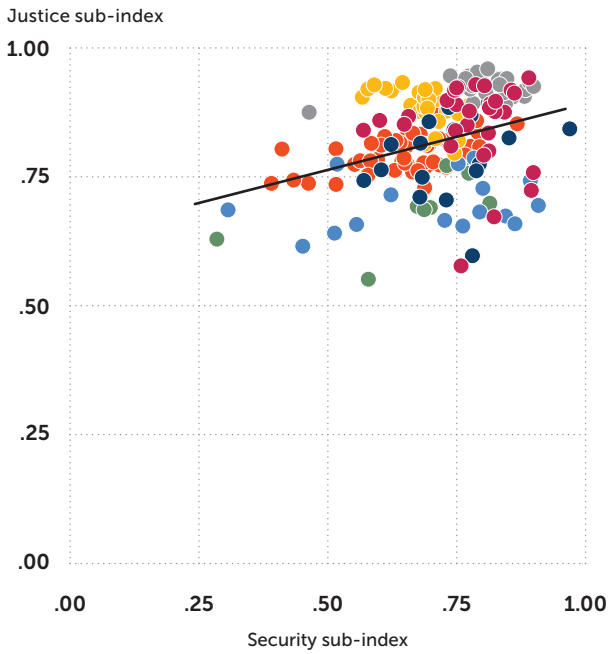
for Israel, which performs poorly on security. Countries in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia perform relatively well on justice and security but less well on inclusion. Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa tend to fall along the fitted line in each of the panels in figure 2.6, indicating that countries tend to perform similarly across the three dimensions—good performers like Ghana, Namibia, and South Africa do well on inclusion, justice and security, whereas Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, and Sudan are among the countries doing badly on inclusion and security. Countries in the Middle East and North Africa typically perform very poorly on the justice dimension but do somewhat better on the other two dimensions.

**A closer look at two indicators of social injustice: Son bias and discriminatory norms**

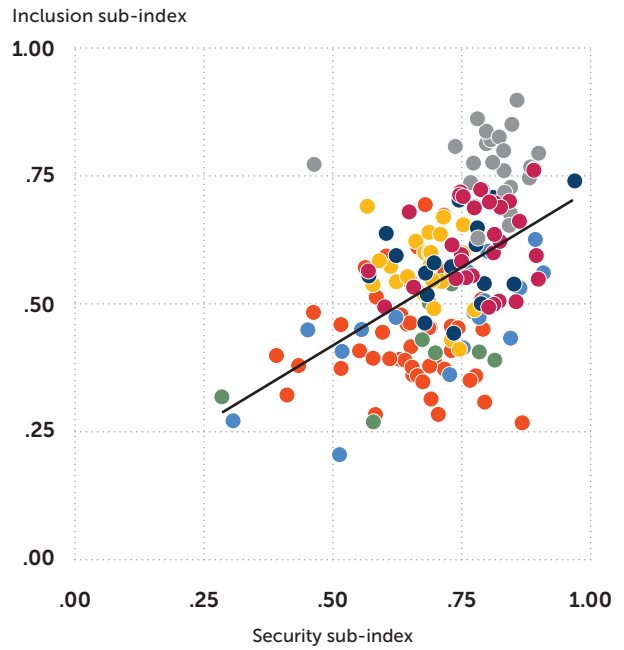
The index underlines that in too many countries women face serious constraints to justice and security, even where some progress has been made on inclusion. In Afghanistan, for

**FIGURE 2.6 Correlations show positive associations between dimensions and regional clustering**

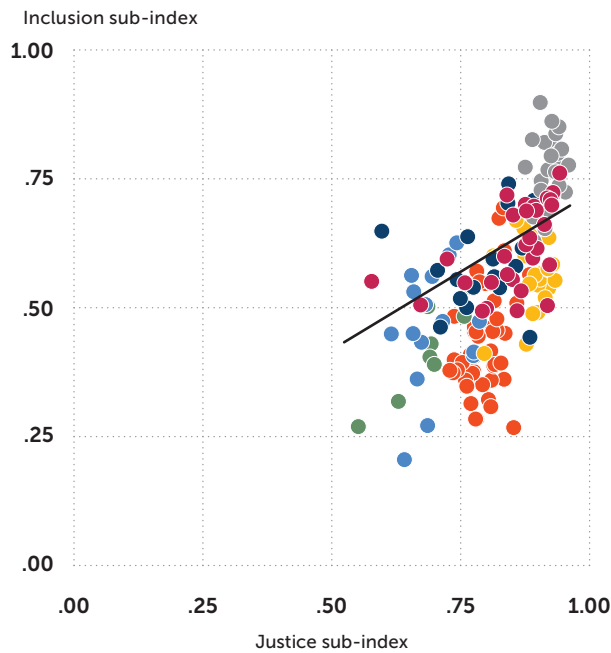
**A. Justice and security**



**B. Inclusion and security**



**C. Inclusion and justice**



- Developed Countries    ● Central & Eastern Europe & Central Asia    ● East Asia & the Pacific
- Latin America & the Caribbean    ● Middle East & North Africa    ● South Asia    ● Sub-Saharan Africa

Note: Possible scores on the dimension sub-indices of the Women, Peace, and Security Index range from a low of 0 to a high of 1. See statistical table 1 for detailed scores and date ranges, appendix 1 for calculation of sub-indices, and appendix 2 for region and country groups.  
 Source: Authors' estimates. See statistical table 1 for data sources.

example, a multitude of legal constraints combined with prejudice against women in paid work conspire against progress in women's well-being more broadly (see table 2.3), as is also the case in Saudi Arabia.

Because social injustices can be deeply entrenched and detrimental to women's well-being, the WPS Index directly captures two manifestations of this injustice, in indicators of son bias and discriminatory norms.

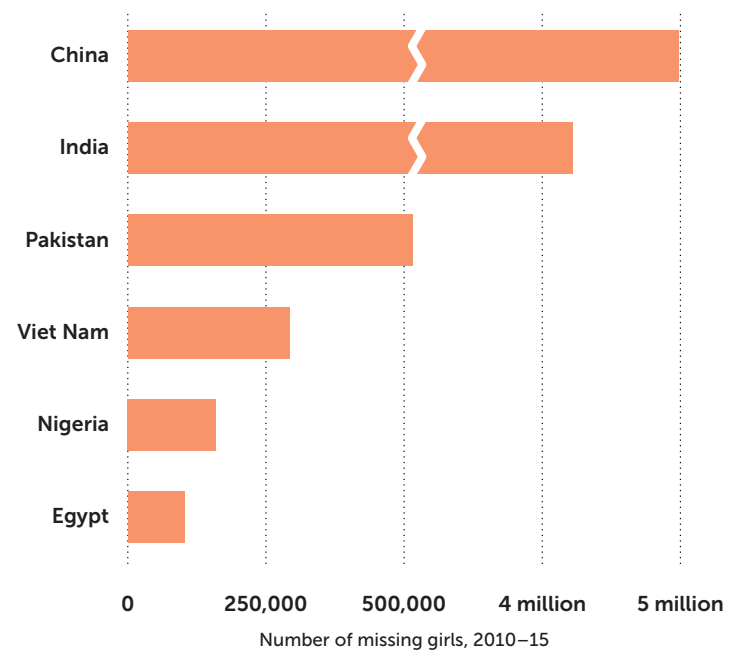
**Son bias.** Son bias is a stark manifestation of discrimination against girls and women. In an influential 1990 article, Amartya Sen examined the high ratios of men to women in several countries and estimated that more than 100 million women were "missing" worldwide, underlining that "these numbers tell us, quietly, a terrible story of inequality and neglect leading to the excess mortality of women."<sup>24</sup> Women and girls are missing because of an entrenched preference for sons over daughters in some communities, leading to prenatal sex selection.<sup>25</sup>

Azerbaijan and China top the list of 10 countries with the worst son bias, with 116 boys born for every 100 girls, followed by Armenia (114), Viet Nam (112), India and Georgia (111), the Maldives (110), Pakistan (109), and Albania and Papua New Guinea (108). China's son bias threatens to become a major social challenge: according to the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' *Analysis and Forecast of China's Social Situation 2009*, by 2020 one in five young men in China will not be able to find a female partner. Some researchers have concluded that China is on the cusp of a major social crisis due to the dramatic deterioration in men's marital prospects.

The number of missing girls (girls who would have been born according to normal sex ratios at birth) was estimated for 2010–15 as part of our work on developing the WPS Index.<sup>26</sup> Given the combination of adverse sex ratios and large population size, China (5 million missing girls) and India (4 million) account for the vast majority over the five-year period, followed by Pakistan, Viet Nam, Nigeria, and Egypt (figure 2.7). Beyond this five year period, the aggregate numbers of missing girls are obviously much larger—estimated on the order of about 66 million in China, for example.<sup>27</sup>

**Discriminatory norms.** For discriminatory norms, the WPS Index uses a new measure derived from the Gallup World Poll question that asked respondents whether "it is perfectly acceptable for any woman in your family to have a paid job outside the home if she wants one."<sup>28</sup> The extent of male

**FIGURE 2.7 Six countries account for the largest number of missing girls, led by China and India**



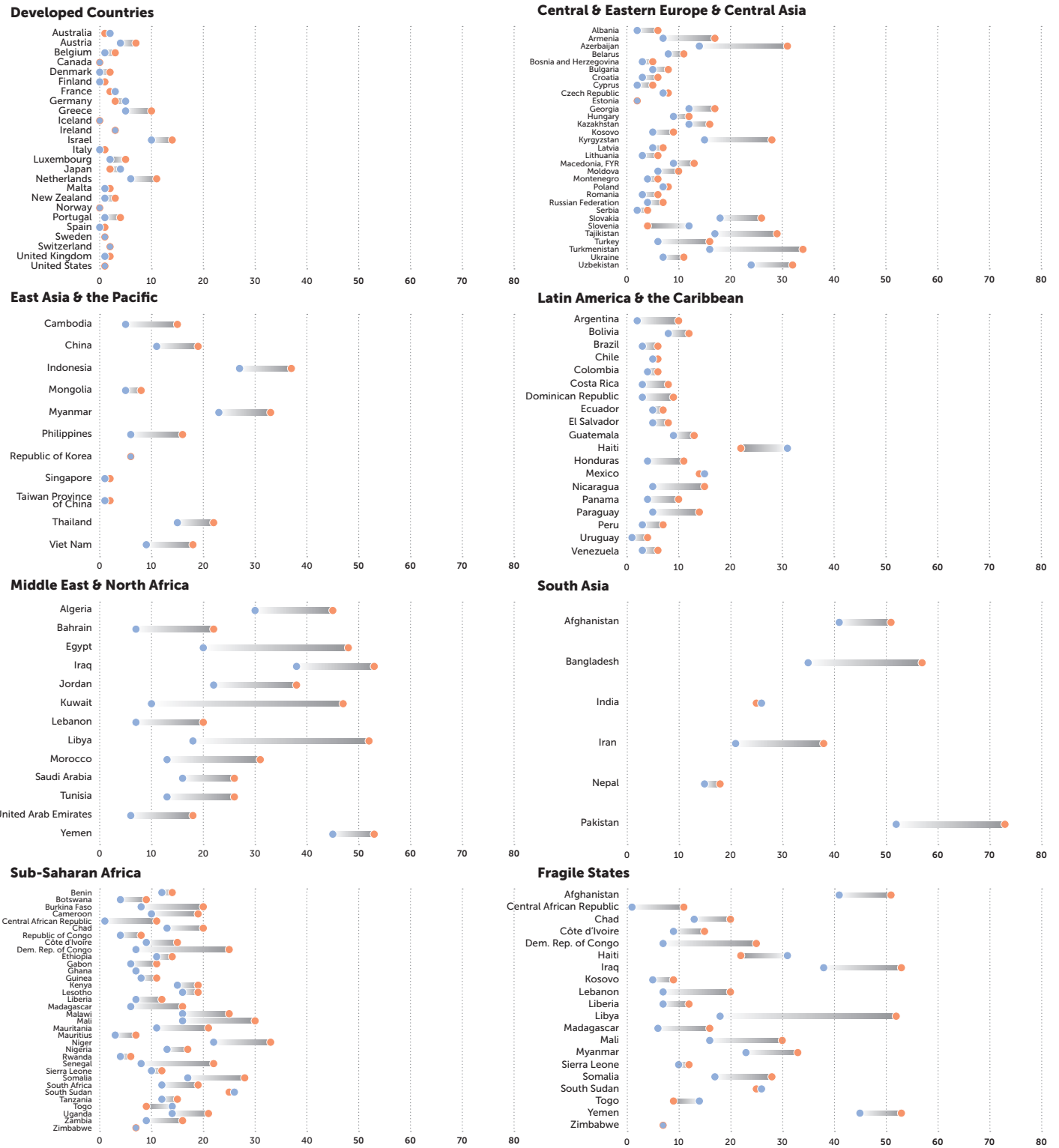
Note: Demographers estimate a natural sex ratio at birth as 1.05 male births to 1 female birth. We estimate missing girls as  $G = (X/F)M$ , where  $G$  is missing girls,  $X$  is the number of boys born in excess of 1.05 times the number of girls born,  $F$  is total number of girls born, and  $M$  is total number of boys born.

Source: Author estimates based on data from UN Population Division database and UNDESA (2015).

disagreement with this proposition—which ranges as high as 73 percent in Pakistan—is used as the measure of discriminatory norms. Male disapproval exceeds 50 percent in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iraq, Libya, and Yemen. In even the best-performing countries in several regions—the Middle East and North Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, and South Asia—male disapproval of women working stands at close to one-fifth (18 percent of men disapprove of women working in the United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam, and Nepal). It is also notable that figure 2.8 shows that differences between men and women in the acceptance of women working are large in much of the Middle East and North Africa, notably in Egypt, Kuwait, and Libya, as well as in several Eastern and Central Europe and Central Asia countries, including Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan.

**FIGURE 2.8 Gender gaps remain large in many countries for disapproval of women working**

Percent ● Male ● Female



Note: Figure is based on expressed disagreement with the proposition: "It is perfectly acceptable for any woman in your family to have a paid job outside the home if she wants one."

Source: Authors' estimates based on Gallup and ILO (2017).

## SPOTLIGHT 2 Women, peace, and security in countries emerging from conflict

**Bosnia and Herzegovina** has made gender equality part of its institutional architecture, but women still lack full participation in politics and the economy. The national Law on Gender Equality, adopted in 2003, mandates gender mainstreaming in all public policies and legislation (Pozarny and Rohwerder 2016). Legal discrimination is less extensive than in many countries, yet women's political participation remains limited; fewer than one in five parliamentarians are women. The priorities of the country's 2010 National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security include increasing women's participation in decision-making, but the plan is vague on funding, a key to implementation (Miller, Pournik, and Swaine 2014).

For both men and women, employment rates are low, at just half the regional average (Goldstein, Davies, and Fendler 2015). However, women have high levels of education in line with regional standards. Nearly half of all women have access to formal financial institutions. The country ranks an impressive 16 on the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Index's security dimension and illustrates the potential for reforms to yield progress in the wake of conflict.

**Burundi**, emerging from a 12-year civil war in 2006, made major gains in women's empowerment, despite high levels of poverty. After 2006, girls' primary school enrollment rose, and many women entered paid work. The 2005 constitution includes quotas, which increased women's parliamentary representation to 38 percent, which is well above the global average.

Key aspects of inclusion remain unfulfilled, however. The average number of years of schooling, at less than two, is still among the lowest in the world. Cellphone use among women is also low, at only 26 percent, compared with neighbors: 48 percent in Rwanda and 87 percent in Kenya. Women's financial inclusion is extremely low, at 7 percent, against a Sub-Saharan African regional average of 23 percent.

However, the resumption of conflict poses major threats. At least 325,000 people have fled the country, and several hundred people have been killed (Human Rights Watch 2017b). Widespread rape and sexual violence have been perpetrated, including by security forces, police, military, and members of the youth wing of the ruling party (Imbonerakure; Vigaud-Walsh 2015). Many women say that they were raped because of a family member's link to an opposition party or because of a grievance against their husband (Human Rights Watch 2016).

Women have sought to end the current conflict. They have organized non-violent marches to demand peace and security as preconditions for new elections and to

support implementation of the 2006 Arusha peace agreement (Alleblas, Cools, and Messina Laurette 2016). The Women's Platform for the Peace, Security, and Cooperation Framework Agreement in Africa's Great Lakes region promotes women's participation in peacebuilding and public life, as well as protection and respect for women's rights (Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes in Africa 2016).

**Colombia**, a middle-income country, has embedded the right to equality for women in its constitution since 1991 and has advanced women's parliamentary representation from single digits to around 20 percent following the introduction of quotas in 2011. Women's education achievements, at eight years, and cellphone use, at 85 percent, are favorable by regional and global standards. Colombia attained these gains despite the world's longest-running conflict, which involved leftist guerrillas, narco-traffickers, right-wing paramilitaries, and the state military. The human costs of the conflict were enormous, including an estimated 220,000 fatalities and around 7 million displaced people (UNHCR 2016).

Rates of intimate partner violence are high—estimated lifetime rates exceed 37 percent—and the official victims' registry of the conflict includes 10,000 victims of conflict-related sexual violence, a number that is believed to be vastly underreported (ABColumbia, Corporación Sisma Mujer, and U.S. Office on Colombia 2013).

This uneven pattern of achievement is reflected in Colombia's scores across the WPS Index dimensions: ranking well on inclusion but falling to 120 on the security dimension, for an overall ranking of 96. Looking ahead, the 2016 peace accords commit to ending impunity for sexual violence, require women's participation in transitional justice, and promote formalized rural property rights for women, all of which augur well for future gains for women.

**Mali** is among the poorest countries in the world and ranks in the bottom dozen on the WPS Index. Women's years of schooling average less than two—one of the lowest in the world. Malian women are also underrepresented in political and economic spheres. They made up less than 9 percent of the members of parliament in 2016, or less than half the regional average, despite the adoption in 2015 of a 30 percent gender quota. (The share of women in the National Assembly has even fallen, from about 10 percent in 2010.) Fewer than half of Malian women are in paid employment, compared with a regional average of 63 percent, and only 10 percent of Malian women have a financial account.

Mali's 2012–15 armed conflict had serious ramifications for women and girls. Armed groups occupying northern

*(continued)*



## SPOTLIGHT 2 Women, peace, and security in countries emerging from conflict *(continued)*

regions forced women to veil, and those accused of breaking the law were flogged and publicly stoned. Many girls were forced into marriage with members of armed groups. These types of violence have long-term repercussions, while fear of reprisals prevents women from speaking out about their experiences. The United Nations also reports that women have experienced increasingly severe poverty due to the conflict (MINUSMA n.d.).

On the positive side, women helped shape the 2015 peace agreement. The Platform for Women Leaders of Mali worked to ensure their representation in peace processes by advertising on TV and radio, sponsoring public debates, training women in conflict mediation techniques, and raising awareness of the peace agreement (UN Women 2015c). Although the situation in Mali remains tense, there are some signs of progress. Women in civil society have been vocal about their needs during the post-conflict period, lobbying decision-makers about their priorities for reconstruction (UN Women 2015c). A new land reform policy set aside 15 percent of government-managed land for women's associations and other vulnerable groups (Coulibaly 2017).

**Myanmar** is in transition after its first democratic elections and a nationwide ceasefire agreement with eight ethnic armed groups in 2015 (Radio Free Asia 2015). Despite some promising steps, fighting continues, the military still plays a major role in government, and laws restricting individual freedoms remain in place. While women's parliamentary representation has risen from below 5 percent in 2012 to about 10 percent in 2016, Myanmar still lags behind neighboring Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam. Women account for less than 5 percent of regional parliamentarians and have virtually no representation (0.25 percent) among village-level administrators (Human Rights Watch 2017a).

Women were largely excluded from peace negotiations; only 2 of 32 negotiators in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement were women (Asian Development Bank et al. 2016). Gender discrimination, housework, and family responsibilities impede women's entry into the workforce (Kanayde 2016). Women fare better in education settings. Mean years of schooling is about seven, and gender parity has been achieved at primary and secondary school levels (Asian Development Bank et al. 2016). However, there are concerns over low retention rates, student performance, and the quality of education, and national averages also mask regional inequalities.

The constitution ostensibly guarantees equal rights and protection before the law, yet the 2015 Race and Religion Protection Laws discriminate against women. These laws restrict reproductive rights by imposing birth spacing

requirements and restricting the right of Buddhist women to marry men of other faiths. As elsewhere in the world, crimes of intimate partner violence often go unreported in a culture of silence and victim blaming (Dinmore and Myint 2015; Aung 2016). There are no laws criminalizing spousal abuse or marital rape. Recent conflict has been associated with reports of sexual violence, as well as exploitation and trafficking of women (U.S. Department of State 2015; Human Rights Watch 2017a). Yet because the military adjudicates crimes committed by its own members, as in many countries around the world, there is impunity for military perpetrators in many sexual violence cases (Women's League of Burma 2016).

**The Philippines** ranks 32 places higher on the WPS Index than on income per capita, reflecting major achievements in inclusion, despite long-running conflicts in some parts of the country. In 2009, the national government adopted a Magna Carta for Women, a national plan to implement the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. This followed earlier commitments to gender equality in the 1987 constitution and the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development 1995–2025 (Philippine Commission on Women 2009). Also in 2009, the Philippines became the first Asian country to adopt a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, committing to more gender-responsive peace processes and agreements. The 2014 Comprehensive Peace Agreement was the world's first to be brokered and signed with a rebel group by a female peace negotiator. Although there were no formal mechanisms for women's participation in the peace process, women influenced the shape of the agreement, including, for example, establishing designated development funds for women's programs and economic programs for decommissioned female forces (Chang et al. 2015).

In the Philippines, women's parliamentary representation is high by regional standards, almost 30 percent in the House of Representatives and 25 percent in the Senate (IPU 2016). Yet, gender inequality persists in the labor market, including, for example, a gender wage gap in annual earnings exceeding 40 percent (Asian Development Bank 2013). Women's employment rate in the Philippines also falls below the regional average of 62 percent. In addition, women's access to justice is limited. A woman cannot be head of household or convey citizenship in the same way as a man (World Bank 2016b). While comprehensive domestic violence legislation covers physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence, the courts in the Philippines are reportedly congested and corrupt, and litigation is lengthy (de Silva de Alwis and Klugman 2015).

