

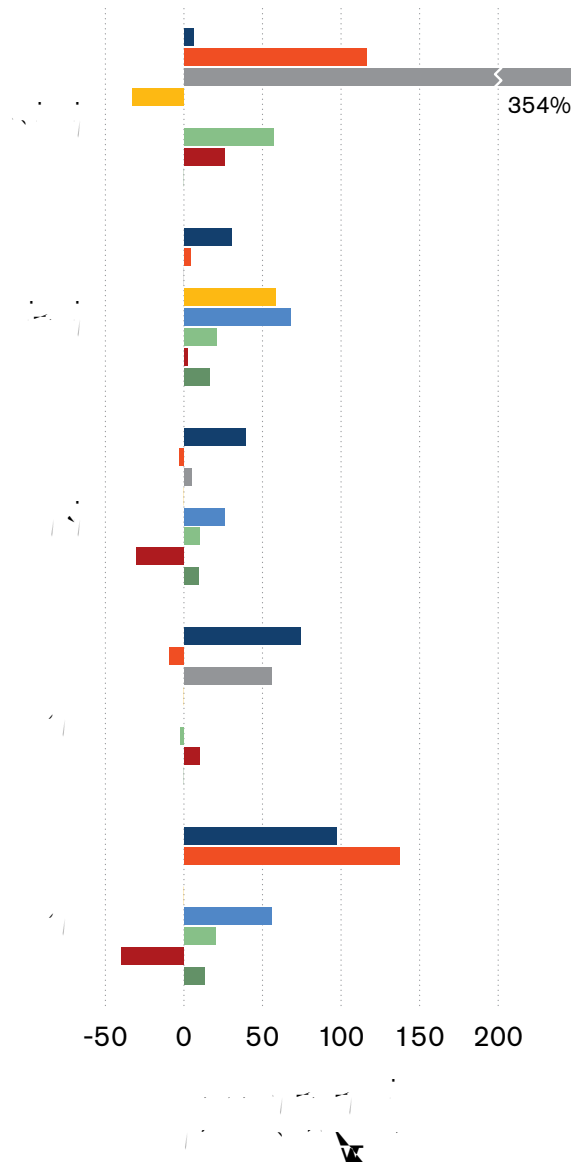
The Women Peace and Security Index: A new lens on forced displacement

The Women Peace and Security (WPS) Index, published by Georgetown University's Institute for Women, Peace and Security (GIWPS) and the PRIO Centre on Gender, Peace and Security (PRIO GPS) draws on recognized data sources to measure and rank women's inclusion, justice, and security across 11 indicators in 170 countries. This year, Norway, Finland, and Iceland lead the rankings, while Afghanistan, Syria and Yemen are at the bottom.

With the population of forcibly displaced approaching 90 million and at an all-time high, the WPS Index methodology has been adapted and applied to systematically measure the situation of forcibly displaced women. The results for five African countries – Ethiopia, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan – found that displaced women experience an average disadvantage of about 24 percent compared to host community women. Displaced women faced greater economic marginalisation and financial exclusion, and often felt less free to move about. And they generally faced much higher risks than host community women of intimate partner violence at home, rising as high as 42 percent in South Sudan.

Three years ago, the international community established the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) – a multi sector 'programme of action' to support countries hosting large numbers of refugees and build refugee self-reliance.¹ This briefing by GIWPS and the International Rescue Committee uncovers some of the factors that compound gender discrimination and deepen displaced women's

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Source: GIWPS and PRIO 2021.

To capture the legal situation of displaced women, we combined seven elements, equally weighted, to generate the indicator. Figure 4 outlines the main components, and more details on the methodology are available in Annex 1. Scores out of seven were translated into summary percentages to factor into index scores. Ethiopia has the highest score, 93 percent, and Sudan has the lowest, 29 percent. Since these scores are national, they do not differentiate by gender, but do provide insight into displaced women's legal setting.

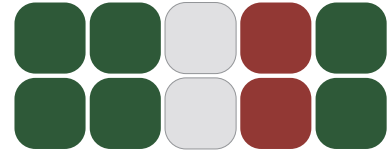
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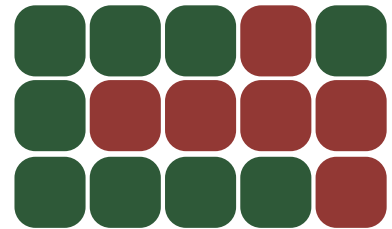
Can refugees work in the private sector?



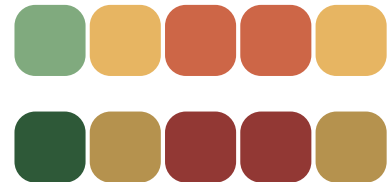
Can refugees buy property?



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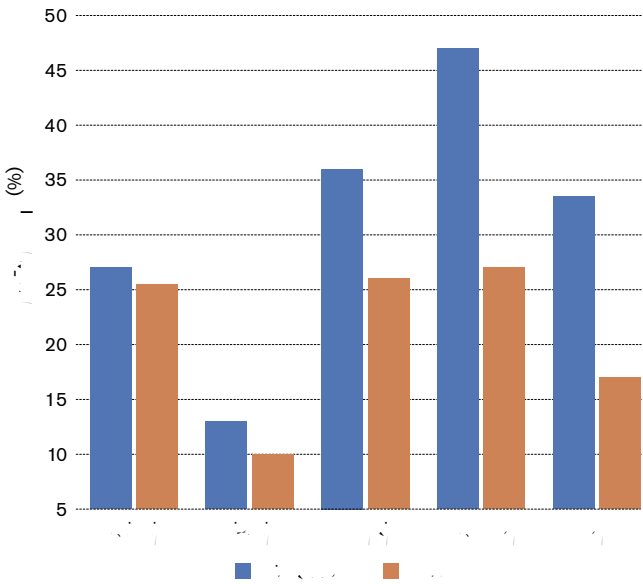


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The security dimension results highlight the heightened insecurity faced by displaced women. In all five countries, levels of current intimate partner violence were higher among displaced women than among women in the host population (Figure 5). In Somalia, displaced women experienced intimate partner violence at a rate nearly 30 percent higher than host country women (36 percent versus 26 percent), and in South Sudan, nearly half (47 percent) of displaced women had experienced intimate partner violence in the past year – a rate nearly double the national average of 27 percent and quadruple the global average of about 12 percent.

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such as language barriers, lower literacy rates, unpaid care responsibilities, and gender norms that limit women's mobility can compound constraints on refugee women's economic opportunities.¹⁷

Comparisons between displaced women and host country men exposed even starker gaps, highlighting the cumulative effects of displacement and gender inequality (Figure 7). In Ethiopia, for example, almost three times the share of host country men were employed compared to the share of refugee women. The results suggest that even in countries where displaced women are legally permitted to work (the case for all five countries in our analysis), many faced discriminatory norms and regulatory barriers.

Financial inclusion disparities between displaced women and host men were significantly wider than those

between displaced women and men, again showing how displacement compounds gender inequality. In Ethiopia, Nigeria, Somalia, and Sudan, differences in financial inclusion between displaced men and women were within two percentage points of each other but ranged from around two percent in Ethiopia to 59 percent in Somalia. Between displaced women and host men, gaps ranged as high as 1,063 percent in Ethiopia and surpassed 50 percent in

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South Sudan ranks third worst on the global WPS index, highlighting the low overall status of women in the country. Disparities between forcibly displaced and host country women were the greatest among the five-country sample, with displaced women scoring about 42 percent worse than host country women. Displaced and host women had similar access

Results from the index show that gender and displacement have compounding discriminatory impacts on the economic and financial inclusion of displaced women. These impacts are reinforced by regulatory and practical barriers to economic opportunities. Even where refugees are permitted by law to work in the private sector – as is the case for all five countries – there remain barriers in practice to access decent work, which are more challenging for women. UNHCR's latest Global Compact for Refugees Indicator Report shows that while 75 percent of refugees have access in law to key attributes of decent work, only two-thirds are allowed to move freely, and much fewer enjoy these rights in practice,³⁴

Policy and program design needs to be informed by the lived experiences of women and girls. Learning from qualitative information from displaced groups, and including the voices of displaced women, especially those facing multiple disadvantages is key as they are best placed to understand and represent their needs and demands.⁵⁰ However, both quantitative and qualitative data on the gendered impacts of forced displacement are often lacking. This is manifest in the new UNHCR Indicator report on the GCR, which

Three years since the adoption of the GCR, forcibly displaced women and girls are still left behind. Urgent progress is needed to implement commitments on self-reliance, financial inclusion and protection from violence.

An overarching recommendation is the need to ensure that programmes and policies simultaneously address the effects of multiple intersecting inequalities and discrimination faced by women affected by displacement, to ensure that their needs and priorities are addressed holistically.

The international community must show stronger support for the GCR and urgently prioritise, empower and protect displaced women and girls, monitor and report data disaggregated by gender, in addition to age and diversity. We recommend in particular:

Take concrete steps to review and, where necessary, revise national laws and policies to achieve gender equality and enhance economic inclusion for forcibly displaced populations, including measures to:

- Increase free movement and access to labour markets and financial services.
- Expand inclusive social protection to people affected by crisis and displacement.
- Provide safe, affordable and accessible care services, notably quality childcare provision.
- Direct more multi-year, flexible funding to frontline responders in fragile and conflict-affected contexts including via local, national and international NGOs and women's rights organisations – including women-led workers' organisations and women led businesses.
- Direct more multi-year, flexible funding towards investments and programming that focus on comprehensive and gender transformative interventions, products and services to complement programming focused on increased access.
- Support the use of indicators that women themselves identify as important to track progress on investments.
- Take steps to increase coherence between relevant key policy frameworks, including across gender, development, women, peace and security, humanitarian and economic development policy – for example via better linkages between humanitarian cash transfer programs and social protection systems.

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- Include forcibly displaced populations in population wide and household-based data collection, especially in countries where there are significant numbers of displaced people. Large samples with adequate representation of forcibly displaced women and girls are needed to underpin research on social and economic characteristics across the life course.
- Collect individual level data disaggregated by gender, age and displacement status, including about labour market participation, hours of paid work (and ideally unpaid work), earnings and transfers as well as other relevant indicators defined by displaced women themselves.
- Collect longitudinal and panel data on displaced communities and hosts to enable tracking of trends over time, and better understanding of drivers.

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: We constructed WPS indices for five African countries characterized by high levels of displacement: Ethiopia, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan.

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