Reader's guide

The Social Institutions and Gender Index 2019 conceptual framework

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Centre's Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) is a unique cross-country measure of discriminatory social institutions, which include formal and informal laws, social norms and practices that restrict women's and girls' rights, access to empowerment opportunities and resources. The SIGI comprises four components that provide policy makers with facts and evidence in order to enhance governments' efforts to deliver their gender equality commitments (Box 1).


Box 1. The SIGI components

The SIGI comprises four components:

- country profiles containing comprehensive, qualitative information on legal frameworks and action plans to protect women's rights and promote gender equality (for 180 countries)
- the Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB), comprising variables measuring the level of discrimination in laws (categorical variable), social norms (attitudinal data) and practices (prevalence rates) for 180 countries
- a cross-country ranking classifying 120 countries according to their level of discrimination in social institutions
- a policy simulator allowing policy makers to scope out reform options and assess their likely effects on gender equality in social institutions

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The SIGI and its dimensions look at the gaps that legislation, attitudes and practices create between women's and men's rights and opportunities. The SIGI covers four dimensions, spanning major socio-economic areas that affect women's and girls' entire lifetimes (Figure 1):

- The "Discrimination in the family" dimension captures social institutions that limit women's decision-making power and undervalue their status in the household and the family.
- The "Restricted physical integrity" dimension captures social institutions that increase women's and girls' vulnerability to multiple forms of violence and limit their control over their bodies and reproductive autonomy.
- The "Restricted access to productive and financial resources" dimension captures women's restricted access to and control over critical productive and economic resources and assets.
- The "Restricted civil liberties" dimension captures discriminatory laws and practices restricting women's access to, and participation and voice in, the public and social spheres.

Figure 1. Composition of the SIGI 2019
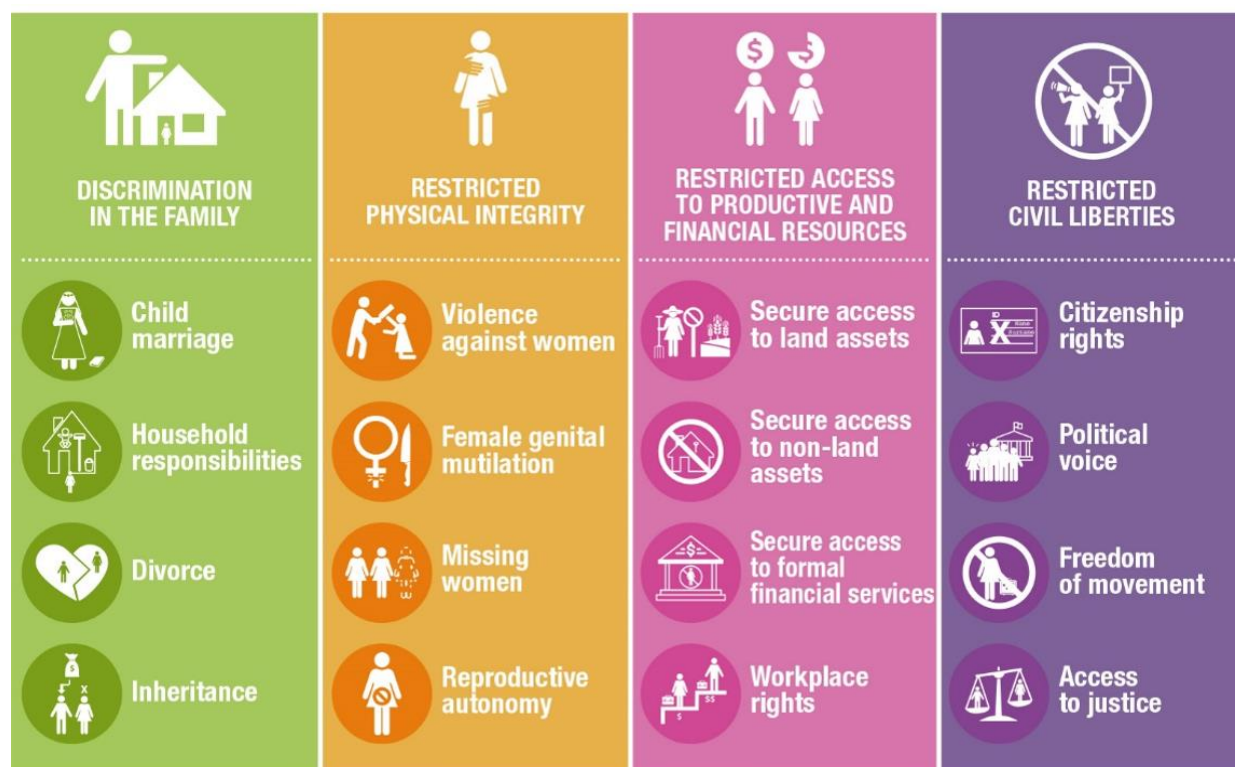
Source: (OECD, n.d.[1]), Social Institutions and Gender Index, www.genderindex.org.

Each dimension builds on four indicators combining qualitative and quantitative information. In theory, each indicator builds on a combination of three variables:

- **law** variables, which are discrete variables, and aim to measure the level of discrimination in formal and informal laws
- **attitudes** and **practices** variables, which are continuous variables, and aim to measure the level of discrimination in social norms.

The variables used as proxies for each indicator depend on data availability, reliability and country coverage. For example, some variables are not available at all (such as information on inheritance practices), and some variables are only available for a few countries (such as the time spent on unpaid care work). Consequently, discrepancies exist between the theoretical framework and the variables effectively included in the SIGI 2019 Global Report. Overall, the SIGI framework builds on 27 core variables.

The SIGI 2019 Global Report is the fourth edition of the SIGI. The conceptual framework was entirely revised, which renders comparison over time impossible at the aggregate level (index, dimensions and indicators). Nevertheless, some comparison over time is possible at the variable level for the attitudes and practices variables. For more details on the SIGI methodology, refer to Annex A.

Geographical coverage

The data collection process for the fourth edition of the SIGI in 2019 covered 11 countries in Southeast Asia:

- Brunei Darussalam;
- Cambodia;
- Indonesia;
- Lao People's Democratic Republic (hereafter "Lao PDR");
- Malaysia;
- Myanmar;
- Philippines;
- Singapore;
- Thailand;
- Timor-Leste; and
- Viet Nam.

Due to data limitations and the fact that an overall SIGI score can only be computed for countries with data points in every single indicator and variable composing the index, only eight Southeast Asian countries were given a SIGI score in 2019 (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Number of SIGI dimensions and indicators computed, by country
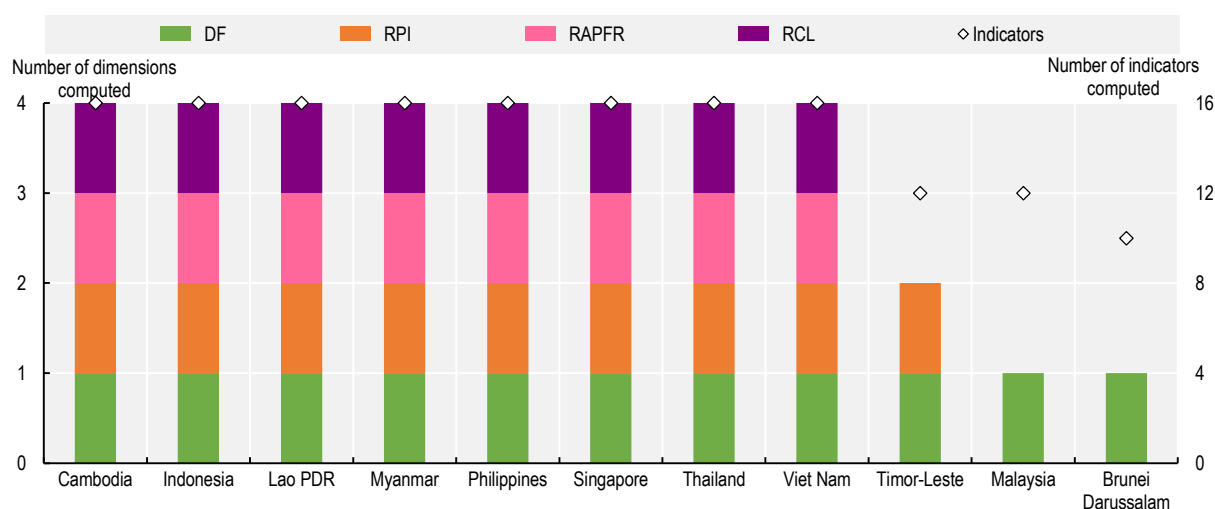
Note: The SIGI framework comprises a total of 4 dimensions and 16 indicators.
Source: (OECD, 2019[2]), Social Institutions and Gender Index, https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/f0c48e52-en.

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Three countries – namely Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia and Timor-Leste – do not have enough data to compute scores across all 16 SIGI indicators (Table 1). In Timor-Leste, four variables are missing and scores could only be calculated for two dimensions. In Malaysia, data points in four variables are also missing but only one dimension could be calculated because of missing data in the lifetime prevalence

rate of violence against women. Finally, Brunei Darussalam has missing data in seven variables and only one dimension score was computed ("Discrimination in the family").

Table 1. Number of SIGI variables available, by country

		Cambodia	Indonesia	Lao PDR	Myanmar	Philippines	Singapore	Thailand	Viet Nam	Malaysia	Timor-Leste	Brunei Darussalam
Child marriage	Laws	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
	Practices	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Household responsibilities	Laws	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Divorce	Laws	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Inheritance	Laws	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Violence against women	Laws	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
	Attitudes	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-
	Practices	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-
Female genital mutilation	Attitudes	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
	Practices	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Missing women	Practices	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Reproductive autonomy	Laws	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
	Practices	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-
Land assets	Laws	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Non-land assets	Laws	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Financial services	Laws	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
	Practices	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-
Workplace rights	Laws	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
	Attitudes	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-
	Practices	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Citizenship rights	Laws	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Political voice	Laws	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
	Practices	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Freedom of movement	Laws	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
	Practices	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-
Access to justice	Laws	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
	Practices	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-
Number of variables available		**27**	**27**	**27**	**27**	**27**	**27**	**27**	**27**	**23**	**23**	**20**
Number of variables missing		**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**4**	**4**	**7**

Source: (OECD, n.d.[1]), Social Institutions and Gender Index, www.genderindex.org.

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Timing and data sources

Qualitative data

The qualitative information for the 11 Southeast Asian country profiles was developed through a multiple-stage internal drafting and reviewing process. First, legal consultants responded to a questionnaire comprising 312 questions on social institutions and fully referenced country profiles, following a standardised structure to ensure comparability across countries/territories. Second, gender experts and/or government representatives with knowledge of the policy and legal landscape for gender equality and

women's rights at a national level validated the responses. The cut-off date for the qualitative information was 30 June 2017 – publishing qualitative (i.e. legal variables) across 180 countries is a multistage and complex process (data collection, process, management, validation and dissemination) which spans over one year and explains the delay between the collection cut-off date and the publication of data. All country profiles can be retrieved from the website www.genderindex.org.

A coding manual was created to quantify the level of legal discrimination based on the qualitative information collected. The coding manual ensures consistency across variables, guarantees objectivity in the selection criteria for scoring, and allows for comparability across countries as well as over time (See Annex A). Of the 312 questions, 144 were used to assign a discrete value to each of the 14 legal variables. The coding manual is based on all applicable legal frameworks, including civil, as well as customary, religious or traditional practices or laws. When information is missing or insufficient, variables do not receive a value. A five-level scale (0, 25, 50, 75 and 1) serves as the basis for encoding the categorical variables and reflects the level of discrimination in formal and informal laws (Table 2).

Table 2. Scoring methodology for legal variables

	Score
The legal framework provides women with the same rights as men, with no exceptions, and applies to all groups of women. There are no customary, religious or traditional practices or laws that discriminate against women.	0
The legal framework provides women with the same rights as men, with no exceptions, and applies to all groups of women. However, some customary, religious or traditional practices or laws do discriminate against women.	25
The legal framework provides women with the same rights as men. However, it foresees exceptions, or does not apply to all groups of women.	50
The legal framework restricts some women's rights.	75
The legal framework fully discriminates against women's rights.	1

Source: (OECD, n.d.[1]), Social Institutions and Gender Index, www.genderindex.org.

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Quantitative data

Quantitative information, such as attitudinal and prevalence data, was collected from various secondary data sources according to the country and variable. The OECD Development Centre's Gender Team used international data sources – such as Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), the World Values Survey (WVS), and the National Household Survey (NHS) – and then proceeded to harmonise the data in order to ensure comparability across countries. The cut-off date for the quantitative information was 31 December 2017.

SIGI scores and classification

The SIGI is a composite index. The scores for the overall index, the dimensions and the indicators range from 0 to 100, with 0 indicating no discrimination and 100 indicating absolute discrimination against women. In order to facilitate the analysis and presentation of results, countries are classified into five categories at the index level, as well as at the dimension and indicator levels. Table 3 summarises the categories and the cut-off points of the different categories based on the SIGI scores on the one hand, and on the dimension and indicator scores on the other hand.

Table 3. Classification of countries based on SIGI scores and dimension/indicator scores the title

Level of discrimination	SIGI scores	Dimension/indicator scores
Very low	[0-20]	[0-10]
Low level	[20-30]	[10-25]
Medium level	[30-40]	[25-50]
High level	[40-50]	[50-75]
Very high level	[50-100]	[75-100]

Note: Both SIGI scores and dimension/indicator scores range from 0 to 100, with 0 indicating no discrimination and 100 indicating absolute discrimination.
Source: (OECD, n.d.[1]), Social Institutions and Gender Index, www.genderindex.org.

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Glossary

Table 4. Glossary and definition of terms

Term	Definition	Reference
Child marriage	Any formal marriage or informal union between a child under the age of 18 years and an adult or another child	(UNICEF, n.d.[3])
Customary, religious or traditional practices or laws	Customs, religions and traditional practices observed among a specific community	(OECD, n.d.[1])
Discrimination against women	Any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women	(United Nations, 1979[4])
Domestic violence	Violence that occurs within the private sphere, generally between individuals who are related through blood, intimacy or law	(CEDAW, 2017[5])
Equal access	Equal opportunities to have access to resources, assets, services, training and education opportunities, markets, sources of income, and decent employment opportunities	(FAO, 2016[6])
Equal opportunity	Equality in employment regardless of race, skin colour, sex, religion and so forth; non-discriminatory practices in hiring employees	(United Nations, n.d.[7])
Female genital mutilation	All procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons	(United Nations, 2008[8])
Femicide	Intentional killing of females (women or girls) because they are females	
Forced marriage	A marriage that takes place without the free or valid consent of one or both of the partners and involves either physical or emotional duress	(OHCHR, n.d.[9])
Gender-based violence	Any harmful act directed against individuals or groups of individuals on the basis of their gender or sex	(United Nations, 1993[10]) (UN Women, n.d.[11])
Gender gap	Disproportionate difference between men and women and boys and girls, particularly as reflected in attainment of development goals, access to resources and levels of participation	(UN Women, n.d.[11])
Gender norms	Ideas about how men and women should be and act. Most of such rules are learned and internalised early in life, which creates an inter-generational cycle of gender socialisation and stereotyping.	(UN Women, n.d.[11])
Gender-responsiveness	Creation of an environment that reflects an understanding of girls' and women's realities and needs, and that addresses them by paying attention to the unique needs of females; valuing their perspectives; respecting their experiences; understanding developmental differences between girls and boys, women and men; and ultimately empowering girls and women	(UNICEF, 2017[12])
Missing women	Concept first introduced by Amartya Sen in 1990. He hypothesised that more than 100 million women were missing due to the excess mortality of women from inequality and neglect. The missing women phenomenon is captured by the shortfall in the number of girls aged 0-4 years, relative to their expected survival rate in the absence of sex-selective abortions and female infanticide, and with similar levels of health and nutrition to boys, correcting for natural biological and physiological differences.	(Sen, 1990[13])

Sexual and reproductive health and rights	Right for all to make choices regarding their own sexuality and reproduction, providing they respect the rights of others to bodily integrity. This definition also includes the right to access information and services needed to support these choices and optimise health.	(UN Women, n.d.[11])
Sexual harassment	Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature Unwelcome behaviours, advances and practices of a sexual nature that may include, but are not limited to sexual suggestions or demands; requests for sexual favours; and sexual, verbal or physical conduct or gestures that are or might reasonably be perceived as offensive or humiliating	(United Nations, 2018[14])
Unmet need for family planning	Gap between women's reproductive intentions and their contraceptive behaviour, defined as the proportion of currently married or in-union women of reproductive age (15-49 years) who want to cease or delay childbearing but are not using any method of contraception	(United Nations, 2014[15])
Violence against women	Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life	(United Nations, 1993[10])

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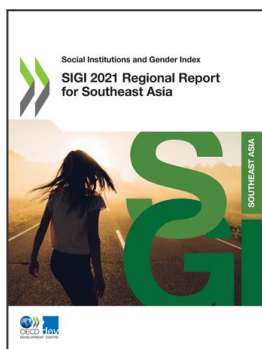
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