



INTRODUCING THE

ASIA GIRLS' LEADERSHIP INDEX

IN THE 2020 ASIA GIRLS REPORT

WHY INVEST IN **GIRLS' LEADERSHIP**?

1.1 billion girls under the age of 18 live in Asia.

Many girls and women are **undervalued, underestimated** and continue to encounter **gender-related restrictions and inequalities**.

Adolescence is an important window of time when a girl develops the leadership capabilities.

A single decision made for a girl during her second decade has the potential to change her life course forever.



WHY INVEST IN **GIRLS' LEADERSHIP?**

In 2015, **193 countries** adopted the United Nations **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

SDG 5 commits countries to achieving **gender equality** and empowering all women and girls.

There is a **serious lack of data on adolescent girls in Asia and worldwide**. They get lumped into either children or women categories.

By 2030, girls who were 10 years old at the signing of the SDGs will be 25.

How many of these girls will experience a better life than their mothers?



HOW DO WE DEFINE **GIRLS'** **LEADERSHIP?**

No single, universally agreed-upon definition of girls' leadership.

Focus on **enabling and constraining factors** that affect adolescent girls' ability to develop leadership capabilities.

We consider leadership in its broader form as

“individual competencies, skills and environmental conditions required to support girls to exercise agency, voice and participations in their own lives, households and communities”.



ABOUT THE RESEARCH

Report explores the situation of girls and young women Asia through 6 identified domains that can create the conditions that **support or constrain girls' leadership**.

THE DOMAINS ARE:



Countries of focus: 19 South and Southeast Asian countries (SAARC and ASEAN member states including Timor-Leste, which is not a full member of ASEAN but is a member of its Regional Forum)

FOUR MAIN RESEARCH COMPONENTS



**Development of Asia
Girls' Leadership
Index**



Desk Review



Survey



**Key Informant
Interviews**

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

1

Availability and consistency of data

2

Differences in survey respondents

Table 3. Age definitions of ‘youth’ used by various organizations

Organisation	Age Range
UNESCO	15–24
International Labour Organization	15–24
UN Human Settlements Programme	15–32
UN Population Fund	10–24
World Health Organization	10–29
World Bank	15–35
ASEAN Youth Development Index	15–35

Source: Global Youth Development Index Report (2016).

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ASIA GIRLS' LEADERSHIP INDEX



Scan of internationally recognized databases and selection of indicators

Availability across countries

Preferably within the past 3 years

SDG indicators prioritized



Normalization

Accounted for indicators having different measurement units.

*A second process was undertaken to transform all indicators into 'positive' values**

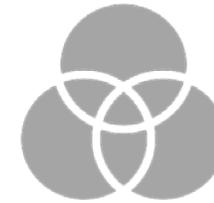
**Some are 'positive' qualities (i.e., the larger the indicator value, the better the situation), and some express 'negative' qualities (i.e., the larger the indicator value, the worse the situation).*



Domain Index Calculation

All indicators are considered important

Each domain and indicator has the same weight



Missing Values

If value can be estimated from other data - indicator was estimated using cross-country regression models or time series.

If value is missing and cannot be estimated-computed the domain index as the average of the other available indicators in this domain.

If all the indicators in a domain are missing for a country – not computed.



Overall Index Calculation

Overall index is obtained by averaging the six domains

ASIA GIRLS' LEADERSHIP INDEX: DOMAINS & INDICATORS

 <p>Education</p>	 <p>Economic Opportunities</p>	 <p>Protection</p>	 <p>Health</p>	 <p>Political Voice & Representation</p>	 <p>Laws & Policies</p>
Secondary Completion	Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET rate)	Child Labor	Adolescent birth rate	Political Representation in national parliaments	Equal Pay
Tertiary Enrolment	Youth Labour Participation	Women married before 18	Need for family planning satisfied	Woman's testimony carries the same evidentiary weight in court	Sexual Harassment
Internet Access	Account Ownership	Physical and/or Sexual Violence	Stunting	Birth Registration	Child Marriage
Mean years of Schooling	Managerial Positions		Suicide Mortality Rate		Criminalization of marital Rape

ASIA GIRLS' LEADERSHIP INDEX: OVERALL AND DOMAIN RANKINGS

Country	Overall Index Ranking	Overall Index Value	Domain Rankings					
			Education	Economic Opportunities	Protection	Health	Voice	Laws
Afghanistan	17	0.403	19	19	16	16	15	4
Bangladesh	18	0.401	14	17	17	15	17	5
Bhutan	6	0.616	10	15	8	10	4	2
Brunei Darussalam	15	0.502	2	4	-	2	19	4
Cambodia	11	0.582	17	5	9	11	10	3
India	14	0.519	13	13	13	19	12	3
Indonesia	10	0.595	9	9	4	6	13	4
Lao, PDR	8	0.603	16	12	10	13	6	2
Malaysia	9	0.600	3	3	-	3	16	4
Maldives	7	0.611	6	8	2	9	8	4
Myanmar	13	0.528	11	11	6	8	14	5
Nepal	16	0.470	15	16	15	18	11	4
Pakistan	19	0.361	18	18	7	14	18	5
Philippines	2	0.717	4	6	3	12	3	1
Singapore	1	0.778	1	1	1	1	2	3
Sri Lanka	5	0.629	8	10	5	7	9	3
Thailand	4	0.683	5	2	12	4	7	2
Timor-Leste	12	0.570	12	14	14	17	5	2
Vietnam	3	0.712	7	7	11	5	1	1

- ✓ **No single country that received the same ranking across all domains.**
- ✓ **Every country has areas of comparative strength and areas demanding improvement**
- ✓ **Domain values offer a more practical understanding of girls' leadership situation in the region.**
- ✓ **A difference in ranking of one or two positions can reflect a difference in value as much as 0.054 or as little as 0.002**

ASIA GIRLS' LEADERSHIP INDEX: HIGHEST-RANKED COUNTRIES

Overall Rankings

Country	Rank	Index Value
Singapore	1	0.778
Philippines	2	0.717
Vietnam	3	0.712
Thailand	4	0.683
Sri Lanka	5	0.629
Bhutan	6	0.616
Maldives	7	0.611
Lao, PDR	8	0.603
Malaysia	9	0.600
Indonesia	10	0.595
Cambodia	11	0.582
Timor-Leste	12	0.570
Myanmar	13	0.528
India	14	0.519
Brunei Darussalam	15	0.502
Nepal	16	0.470
Afghanistan	17	0.403
Bangladesh	18	0.401
Pakistan	19	0.361

1 SINGAPORE

Scores first-place in education, economic opportunities, protection and health

2 PHILIPPINES

Rankings ranging from 1st (laws & policies) to 12th (health)

3 VIETNAM

Component domain rankings ranging from 1st (voice & participation) to 11th (protection)

ASIA GIRLS' LEADERSHIP INDEX: LOWEST-RANKED COUNTRIES

Overall Rankings

Country	Rank	Index Value
Singapore	1	0.778
Philippines	2	0.717
Vietnam	3	0.712
Thailand	4	0.683
Sri Lanka	5	0.629
Bhutan	6	0.616
Maldives	7	0.611
Lao, PDR	8	0.603
Malaysia	9	0.600
Indonesia	10	0.595
Cambodia	11	0.582
Timor-Leste	12	0.570
Myanmar	13	0.528
India	14	0.519
Brunei Darussalam	15	0.502
Nepal	16	0.470
Afghanistan	17	0.403
Bangladesh	18	0.401
Pakistan	19	0.361

17 AFGHANISTAN

18th-place rankings in 3 domains (education, economics opportunities and voice) and the lowest possible ranking in the laws and policies domain

18 BANGLADESH

14th (of 19) in education to the lowest possible rankings in laws and policies and protections domains (5th of 5 and 17th of 17, respectively)

19 PAKISTAN

15th (of 19) in voice and participation to the lowest possible rankings in the education and economic opportunities domains



EDUCATION



HIGHEST-RANKED COUNTRIES:

1. SINGAPORE
2. BRUNEI DARUSSALAM
3. MALAYSIA

LOWEST-RANKED COUNTRIES:

17. CAMBODIA
18. PAKISTAN
19. AFGHANISTAN

Secondary Completion Does Not Equal Tertiary Enrolment

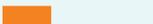
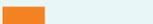
While the top 14 ranked countries in the secondary school completion ratio indicator all reported more than 80% lower secondary school completion for girls, **only one country (Singapore) reported more than 80% enrolment in tertiary education for girls.**

Country	Rank	Index Value	
Singapore	1	0.716	<div style="width: 100%;"></div>
Brunei Darussalam	2	0.611	<div style="width: 85%;"></div>
Malaysia	3	0.580	<div style="width: 80%;"></div>
Philippines	4	0.507	<div style="width: 70%;"></div>
Thailand	5	0.477	<div style="width: 65%;"></div>
Maldives	6	0.466	<div style="width: 60%;"></div>
Vietnam	7	0.449	<div style="width: 55%;"></div>
Sri Lanka	8	0.418	<div style="width: 50%;"></div>
Indonesia	9	0.418	<div style="width: 45%;"></div>
Bhutan	10	0.307	<div style="width: 35%;"></div>
Myanmar	11	0.295	<div style="width: 30%;"></div>
Timor-Leste	12	0.292	<div style="width: 25%;"></div>
India	13	0.290	<div style="width: 20%;"></div>
Bangladesh	14	0.279	<div style="width: 15%;"></div>
Nepal	15	0.277	<div style="width: 10%;"></div>
Lao, PDR	16	0.271	<div style="width: 5%;"></div>
Cambodia	17	0.233	<div style="width: 2%;"></div>
Pakistan	18	0.171	<div style="width: 1%;"></div>
Afghanistan	19	0.111	<div style="width: 0.5%;"></div>

Indicators:

- 1 Completion rate, lower secondary education, female (%)
- 2 Gross enrolment ratio for tertiary education, female (%)
- 3 Access to the Internet, female (%)
- 4 Mean years of schooling, female (years)

Economic Opportunities

Country	Rank	Index Value	
Singapore	1	0.682	
Thailand	2	0.596	
Malaysia	3	0.574	
Brunei Darussalam*	4	0.569	
Cambodia	5	0.553	
Philippines	6	0.520	
Vietnam	7	0.519	
Maldives	8	0.518	
Indonesia	9	0.495	
Sri Lanka	10	0.495	
Myanmar	11	0.484	
Lao, PDR	12	0.482	
India	13	0.398	
Timor-Leste	14	0.387	
Bhutan	15	0.382	
Nepal	16	0.332	
Bangladesh	17	0.330	
Pakistan	18	0.192	
Afghanistan	19	0.167	

* For Brunei, only Female Youth NEET Rate, Female Youth Labour Participation Rate and Female share of employment in managerial positions were available and used in the calculation of the Index value.

Indicators:

1. Share of youth not in employment, education or training (NEET), female (%)
2. Youth labour participation rate, female (%)
3. Account ownership at a financial institution or with a mobile service provider, female (%)
4. Share of employment in managerial positions, female (%)

HIGHEST-RANKED COUNTRIES:

1. SINGAPORE
2. THAILAND
3. MALAYSIA

LOWEST-RANKED COUNTRIES:

17. BANGLADESH
18. PAKISTAN
19. AFGHANISTAN



Cambodia has the lowest rates in ASEAN for both secondary school completion and tertiary education enrolment rates for girls.

However, the country has the **highest female youth labour participation rate in the region**, suggesting economic participation for young women may be coming at the expense of (rather than as a result of) quality secondary and tertiary education opportunities.



Health

Country	Rank	Index Value	
Singapore*	1	0.932	
Brunei Darussalam	2	0.868	
Malaysia	3	0.851	
Thailand	4	0.842	
Vietnam	5	0.816	
Indonesia	6	0.761	
Sri Lanka	7	0.744	
Myanmar	8	0.724	
Maldives	9	0.701	
Bhutan	10	0.688	
Cambodia	11	0.678	
Phillippines	12	0.659	
Lao, PDR	13	0.646	
Pakistan	14	0.587	
Bangladesh	15	0.581	
Afghanistan	16	0.566	
Timor-Leste	17	0.557	
Nepal	18	0.527	
India	19	0.484	

* For Singapore, Rate of family planning satisfied with modern methods for women 15–19 years was not publicly available.

Indicators:

1. Adolescent birth rate (births per 1,000 females aged 15–19)
2. Family-planning needs have been satisfied with modern methods; females aged 15–19 (%)
3. Prevalence of stunted height for age, females under the age of 5 (%)
4. Suicide mortality rate (suicides per 100,000 females aged 15–19)

HIGHEST-RANKED COUNTRIES:

1. SINGAPORE
2. BRUNEI DARUSSALAM
3. MALAYSIA

LOWEST-RANKED COUNTRIES:

17. TIMOR-LESTE
18. NEPAL
19. INDIA



While **India** is succeeding in lowering adolescent birth rates (ranking 7th of 19) and providing modern family planning (13th of 19), it is still experiencing a **high prevalence of stunting (17th of 19) and suicides among adolescent girls (last of 19).**

ASIA GIRLS' LEADERSHIP INDEX DOMAIN: Laws & Policies

Country	Rank	Index Value
Philippines	1	1.000
Vietnam	1	1.000
Bhutan	2	0.800
Lao, PDR	2	0.800
Thailand	2	0.800
Timor-Leste	2	0.800
Cambodia	3	0.600
India	3	0.600
Singapore	3	0.600
Sri Lanka	3	0.600
Afghanistan	4	0.400
Brunei Darussalam	4	0.400
Indonesia	4	0.400
Malaysia	4	0.400
Maldives	4	0.400
Nepal	4	0.400
Bangladesh	5	0.200
Myanmar	5	0.200
Pakistan	5	0.200

Indicators:

1. Legislation ensures equal rights between sons and daughters to inherit assets from parents
2. Legislation ensures equal remuneration for work of equal value
3. Legislation addresses sexual harassment in the workplace
4. Legislation prohibits or invalidates child marriage
5. Legislation explicitly criminalises marital rape

Asia Girls' Leadership Index Domain:

LAWS & POLICIES

COUNTRIES WITH ALL LAWS IN PLACE:

- PHILIPPINES
- VIETNAM

Construction of laws and policies

The information used to construct this domain was drawn from the World Bank's 2017 and 2018 Women, Business and the Law databases. At the time of index development, the databases did not reflect Nepal's legislation supporting inheritance rights between sons and daughters or Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal's legislation to protect against child marriage.



ASIA GIRLS' LEADERSHIP INDEX DOMAIN:

Protection

Country	Rank	Index Value	
Singapore	1	0.969	<div style="width: 96.9%;"></div>
Maldives	2	0.895	<div style="width: 89.5%;"></div>
Philippines	3	0.845	<div style="width: 84.5%;"></div>
Indonesia	4	0.843	<div style="width: 84.3%;"></div>
Sri Lanka	5	0.835	<div style="width: 83.5%;"></div>
Myanmar	6	0.813	<div style="width: 81.3%;"></div>
Pakistan	7	0.786	<div style="width: 78.6%;"></div>
Bhutan	8	0.783	<div style="width: 78.3%;"></div>
Cambodia	9	0.763	<div style="width: 76.3%;"></div>
Lao, PDR	10	0.719	<div style="width: 71.9%;"></div>
Vietnam	11	0.718	<div style="width: 71.8%;"></div>
Thailand	12	0.693	<div style="width: 69.3%;"></div>
India	13	0.684	<div style="width: 68.4%;"></div>
Timor-Leste	14	0.672	<div style="width: 67.2%;"></div>
Nepal	15	0.621	<div style="width: 62.1%;"></div>
Afghanistan	16	0.575	<div style="width: 57.5%;"></div>
Bangladesh	17	0.526	<div style="width: 52.6%;"></div>
Brunei Darussalam*	-	-	
Malaysia*	-	-	

* For these countries, there are no publicly available data for these indicators.

Indicators:

1. Women aged 20–24 who were married before age 18 (%)
2. Females aged 15 and older who have ever experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner (%)
3. Girls aged 5–17 engaged in child labour (%)

HIGHEST-RANKED COUNTRIES:

1. SINGAPORE
2. MALDIVES
3. PHILIPPINES

LOWEST-RANKED COUNTRIES:

15. NEPAL
16. AFGHANISTAN
17. BANGLADESH



In **2017**, the **Bangladesh government** enacted the Child Marriage Restraint Act

In **2018**, the **Nepalese government** enacted new legislation to annul existing marriages in which one person is under 20 years and prescribe punishment for individuals in violation of the law.

In **2019**, the **Myanmar government** enacted the Child Rights Law.

Political Voice & Representation

Country	Rank	Index Value
Vietnam	1	0.773
Singapore	2	0.769
Philippines	3	0.768
Bhutan	4	0.732
Timor-Leste	5	0.714
Lao, PDR	6	0.699
Thailand	7	0.689
Maldives	8	0.685
Sri Lanka	9	0.680
Cambodia	10	0.665
Nepal	11	0.663
India	12	0.656
Indonesia	13	0.656
Myanmar	14	0.652
Afghanistan	15	0.596
Malaysia*	16	0.596
Bangladesh	17	0.492
Pakistan	18	0.229
Brunei Darussalam*	19	0.061

* For these countries, Proportion of girls under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority is not publicly available, so the index is calculated based on only two indicators.

Indicators:

1. Girls under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority (%)
2. Seats held by women in national parliaments (%)
3. Woman's testimony carries the same evidentiary weight in court as a man's

HIGHEST-RANKED COUNTRIES:

1. VIETNAM
2. SINGAPORE
3. PHILIPPINES

LOWEST-RANKED COUNTRIES:

17. BANGLADESH
18. PAKISTAN
19. BRUNEI DARUSSALAM



Vietnam is a stand-out performer on the Asia Girls' Leadership Index, ranking third of 19 countries, but **in the protection domain it places in the bottom half, ranking 11th of 17 countries for the protection of adolescent girls.**

This is primarily because of its **high rates of child labour** (14th of 17) and **physical and sexual violence** (13th of 17).

“BY WORKING TOGETHER,
WE WILL UNLOCK THE
POWER OF GIRLS!”

-Youth Advocate, Sabina

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