

# UGANDA SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND GENDER INDEX (UGANDA-SIGI)

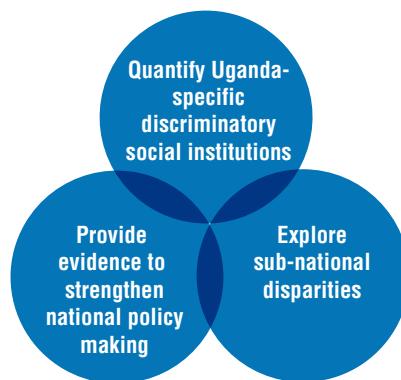


With the support of the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) and in partnership with the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), the OECD Development Centre launched the first country pilot of the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) in Uganda in 2013 to strengthen national policy making aimed at tackling the root causes of gender inequalities.

The Uganda-SIGI provides policy makers, civil society and the development community with a comprehensive database of information on discriminatory social institutions at the sub-national level. For the first time, discriminatory informal laws, attitudes, norms and practices have been recorded and quantified across the different regions of Uganda, putting the spotlight on the effects of discrimination on gender inequalities, poverty and the marginalisation of women.

The results highlight how regional disparities at the sub-national level are often hidden by national-level statistics, and the importance of designing policies that specifically target local issues and involve community actions. New data on discriminatory social institutions across 112 districts of Uganda bring to light the urgency to include social norms in policy approaches aimed at empowering women and eliminating gender inequalities at both the local and national levels.

### **The objectives of the Uganda-SIGI country study**



#### **What are discriminatory social institutions?**

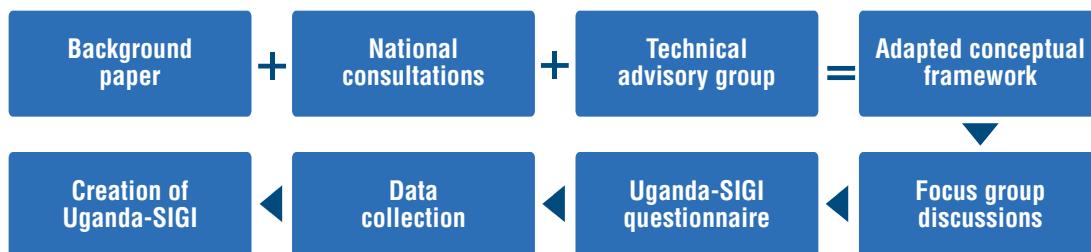
Discriminatory social institutions are formal and informal laws, social norms and practices that restrict women's rights, access to empowerment opportunities and resources.

## The Uganda-SIGI country study

The Uganda-SIGI is a tailor-made policy and research tool, adapting the methodology and conceptual framework of the global SIGI to the national context. The adapted Uganda-SIGI framework is the result of consultations, workshops, in-depth research and surveys including:

- **National consultations** bringing together government officials and policy makers, researchers, civil society organisations and other experts to identify national specificities of Uganda.
- **Commissioned background paper** providing a detailed overview of existing indicators on discriminatory social institutions in Uganda and proposals of discriminatory social institutions which should be included in the index.
- **National Technical Advisory Group** chaired by UBOS and including independent gender experts and representatives of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, of the School of Women and Gender Studies in Makerere University, of civil society and of international organisations.
- **Focus group discussions** conducted in 28 enumeration areas randomly selected from the Uganda-SIGI sample to verify the pertinence of the Uganda-SIGI questionnaire and complement the survey's data findings through qualitative highlights.
- **Uganda-SIGI questionnaire** conducted across Uganda by UBOS and including two modules (household and individual).

### The Uganda-SIGI's approach



## The conceptual framework of the composite index

As a composite index, the Uganda-SIGI scores sub-regions of Uganda on 20 indicators. These indicators combine detailed information on informal laws, cultural and traditional practices as well as social norms and attitudes that discriminate against women.

The indicators are grouped into five sub-indices that each measure one dimension of social institutions related to gender inequality:

- **Discriminatory family code** captures restrictions on women’s decision-making power and status in the family
- **Restricted physical integrity** captures restrictions on women’s control over their bodies
- **Son preference** captures intra-household bias towards sons and devaluation of daughters
- **Restricted resources and assets** captures restrictions on women’s access to, control of and entitlement over resources
- **Restricted civil liberties** captures restrictions on women’s access to, participation and voice in the public and social spheres.

## The composition of the Uganda SIGI

UGANDA Social Institutions and Gender Index				
Discriminatory family code	Restricted physical integrity	Son preference	Restricted resources and assets	Restricted civil liberties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early marriage</li> <li>• Inheritance rights</li> <li>• Widow abuse</li> <li>• Bride price</li> <li>• Gender roles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender-based violence</li> <li>• Reproductive autonomy</li> <li>• Sexual autonomy</li> <li>• Teenage pregnancy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caring responsibilities</li> <li>• Education preferences</li> <li>• Health preferences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure access to financial services</li> <li>• Secure access to non-land assets</li> <li>• Secure access to land</li> <li>• Entrepreneurship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to politics</li> <li>• Domicile</li> <li>• Freedom to move</li> <li>• Access to justice</li> </ul>

## The Uganda-SIGI methodology

### Data collection

The data used to construct the Uganda-SIGI and its sub-indices come from two main surveys (using nationally and regionally representative samples):

- The 2014 Uganda-SIGI Survey was designed in partnership with UBOS to close the data gaps.
- The 2011 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (using a similar sampling procedure).

### Construction of the sub-indices using Principal Component Analysis (PCA)

The Uganda-SIGI grouped 64 variables into 20 indicators. Variables and indicators are selected according to their reliability, conceptual relevance and statistical association, checking whether they capture similar dimensions of social institutions.

The sub-indices aim to provide a summary measure of each dimension of gender discrimination in social institutions by extracting common information captured by variables and indicators, avoiding redundancy and minimising statistical biases. Each sub-index combines indicators using weights defined through a PCA.

### Computing the Uganda-SIGI

The Uganda-SIGI is a composite indicator built as an unweighted average of a non linear function of the sub-indices:

$$\begin{aligned} SIGI = & \frac{1}{5} \textit{Discriminatory family code}^2 + \frac{1}{5} \textit{Restricted physical integrity}^2 \\ & + \frac{1}{5} \textit{Son preference}^2 + \frac{1}{5} \textit{Restricted resources and assets}^2 \\ & + \frac{1}{5} \textit{Restricted civil liberties}^2 \end{aligned}$$

#### Why are the sub-indices equally weighted in the SIGI?

- No dimension is more important than another in terms of the deprivation experienced by women.

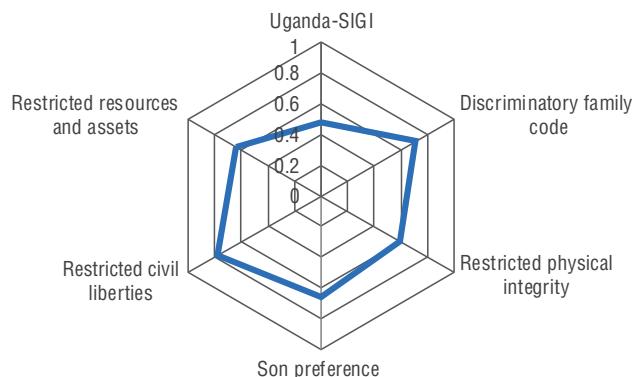
#### Why square each SIGI sub-index?

- Very high inequality in one sub-index can be only partially offset by low inequality in another sub-index.
- The deprivation experienced by the affected women increases more than proportionally when discrimination increases.
- The Uganda-SIGI has an aversion to high values: reducing inequalities from 1 to 0.75 is not equivalent to reducing from 0.25 to 0.

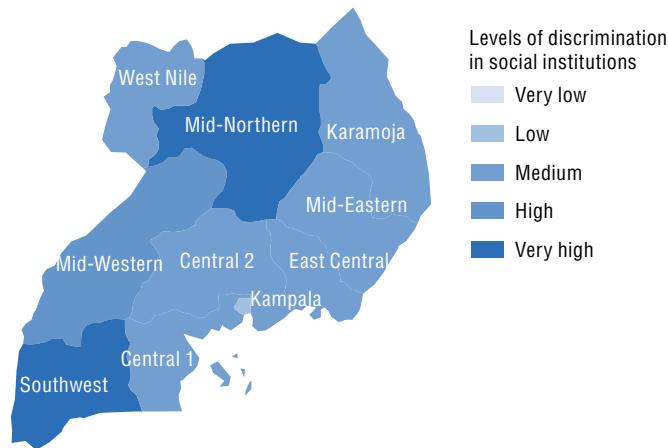
## Key findings

The Uganda-SIGI shows that investment in reducing gender inequalities holds important potential to improve women's rights and reduce gender gaps. Over the past two decades, Uganda has achieved solid progress, courtesy of comprehensive laws and policies strengthening women's political participation and land rights, among others. However, gaps and challenges remain across some key areas affecting women's rights. Gaps between opinions, and perceived and actual practices highlight the urgency to tackle discriminatory social institutions through a multi-pronged and holistic approach.

- **Discriminatory family code:** Prevalence of **early marriage** remains pervasive with regional disparities: on average one in two Ugandan women was married before turning 18, up to two in three women in the East Central, Mid-Eastern and Mid-Northern sub-regions. Early marriage is widely accepted, but only for girls: 45% of respondents declare that girls should be married by 18, while 85% believe that men should be married later.
- **Restricted physical integrity:** Prevalence and acceptance of **domestic violence** are still high: twice as many women than men experienced spousal violence in their lifetime; one in two Ugandan women has been victim at least once during their life and one in three in the last 12 months. More than one in two Ugandans agree that spousal violence against women is justified under certain circumstances – two in three in the West Nile and Mid-Eastern sub-regions.



Note: The sub-index ranges from 0 for no discrimination to 1 for very high levels of discrimination.  
Source: OECD (2015), Uganda Social Institutions and Gender Index, <http://stats.oecd.org>.



- **Son preference:** Improving attitudes towards the **division of household chores** and caring activities between girls and boys are not translating into changes in practice. While two-thirds of Ugandans agree that girls and boys should have an equal share of caring responsibilities, half of the population reports that in practice, girls are still performing more housework.
- **Restricted resources and assets:** Land rights and management remain male-dominated: only one-third of land is owned or co-owned by women. There is widespread support for this inequality: 27% of the population supports unequal land rights, reaching as high as 54% in the Mid-Northern sub-region.
- **Restricted civil liberties:** Securing women's **access to justice** remains a challenge: one-third of the population believe that women do not enjoy the same opportunities as men to access justice, i.e. police, courts of law and local traditional authorities; this rises to 60% in the Southwest sub-region. The same share agrees that unequal access is justified.

The OECD Development Centre was established in 1962 as an independent platform for knowledge sharing and policy dialogue between OECD member countries and developing economies, allowing these countries to interact on an equal footing. Today, 27 OECD countries and 22 non-OECD countries are members of the Centre. The Centre draws attention to emerging systemic issues likely to have an impact on global development and more specific development challenges faced by today's developing and emerging economies. It uses evidence-based analysis and strategic partnerships to help countries formulate innovative policy solutions to the global challenges of development.

For more information on the Centre and its members, please see [www.oecd.org/dev](http://www.oecd.org/dev).



WITH FUNDING FROM  
 AUSTRIAN  
DEVELOPMENT  
COOPERATION

For more information about the OECD Development Centre's gender programme:

[dev.gender@oecd.org](mailto:dev.gender@oecd.org)

[www.genderindex.org](http://www.genderindex.org)