Introduction

The Global Peace Index (GPI) is produced by the Institute for Economics and Peace in collaboration with the Economist Intelligence Unit to rank countries based on their internal and external "peacefulness," or absence of violence based on 23 indicators. The data for each indicator is based on different sources and is scaled to have a value from 1 to 5, with 1 being most peaceful and 5 least peaceful. The indicators are also weighted and then averaged to obtain the overall GPI score. The purpose of the GPI is to create a more in-depth measure of peacefulness than simply counting the number of violent conflicts or homicides. The index incorporates indicators of drivers of peace and the level of violence. For example, the index includes indicators for respect of human rights and political stability. The GPI has been produced since 2007. However, due to methodological changes, only data from 2009–2012 are comparable. 158 countries are covered in the 2012 report, including five additional countries since the 2011 report: Benin, Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, and Mauritius. Only 88 countries from the 2012 report which received USAID assistance greater than $2 million in 2010 are included in this snapshot.

Peacefulness vs. Violence in USAID Assisted Countries

Chile ranked as the most peaceful country receiving USAID assistance in 2012, rising above Vietnam and Costa Rica which held the top two spots in 2011. Chile has improved protection for human rights and lowered its homicide rate since 2011. Vietnam also improved its GPI score from 2011 by decreasing the number of heavy weapons per 100,000 people. Sierra Leone and Morocco moved into the top ten most peaceful countries in 2012, while Panama and Malawi dropped out.

The least peaceful country in 2011 and 2012 was Somalia. Civil war has ravaged Somalia since 1991 and violent clashes between the Transitional Federal Government and Islamist rebel groups continue to wreak havoc. Chances for a peaceful transition to democracy in Somalia were undermined by the resignation of the Prime Minister, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farnajo, in June 2011. In addition to violent conflict, famine has contributed to a massive exodus of Somalis from their homes, with more than 20 percent of the population being displaced.

Most Peaceful Countries, 2011–2012

	2011			*2012*	
Rank	Country	GPI	Rank	Country	GPI
1	Vietnam	1.67	1	Chile	1.62
2	Costa Rica	1.68	2	Vietnam	1.64
3	Chile	1.71	3	Costa Rica	1.66
4	Malawi	1.74	4	Mozambique	1.80
5	Ghana	1.75	5	Namibia	1.80
6	Mozambique	1.81	6	Ghana	1.81
7	Panama	1.81	7	Zambia	1.83
8	Zambia	1.83	8	Sierra Leone	1.86
9	Namibia	1.85	9	Morocco	1.87
10	Tanzania	1.86	10	Tanzania	1.87

Since 2011, Afghanistan has fallen two places and become the second least peaceful country. The UN estimates that 3,021 civilians were killed in 2011, up from 2,790 in 2010, making 2011 the most deadly period for civilians since 2001. The number of displaced people due to conflict increased for the second successive year, to over 3 million, or about 11.4 percent of the population. Several high profile assassinations in 2011, including the killing of Ahmed Wali Karzai, the leader of the Kandahar Provincial Council,

Least Peaceful Countries, 2011–2012

	2011			*2012*	
Rank	Country	GPI	Rank	Country	GPI
77	Chad	2.74	79	Chad	2.67
78	Nigeria	2.74	80	Nigeria	2.80
79	Israel	2.90	81	Pakistan	2.83
80	Pakistan	2.91	82	Israel	2.84
81	Russia	2.97	83	Russia	2.94
82	Congo (Kinshasa)	3.02	84	Congo (Kinshasa)	3.07
83	Afghanistan	3.21	85	Iraq	3.19
84	Sudan	3.22	86	Sudan	3.19
85	Iraq	3.30	87	Afghanistan	3.25
86	Somalia	3.38	88	Somalia	3.39

and Burhanuddin Rabbani, the head of the High Peace Council, contributed to a deterioration of political stability.

Sri Lanka has achieved remarkable improvements in peacefulness following the defeat of the Tamil Tigers in May 2009 that ended two decades of civil war. In August 2011, President Mahinda Rajapaksa lifted the state of emergency in place since 1963. However, there remain intermittent cases of violence and reports of abductions and disappearances.

Lebanon has made steady progress in improving its GPI score since 2009. Lebanon has successfully decreased the number of terrorist acts, deaths from internal organized conflict, internal and external conflicts fought, and perceptions of criminality in society as well as raised respect for human rights. However, these improvements could prove vulnerable to heightened tensions from spillover effects of the conflict in neighboring Syria. Nearly 30,000 Syrian refugees in Lebanon are registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as of August 2012 and gun fights have broken out in Beirut and Tripoli.

Egypt is experiencing a tumultuous period following the revolution that toppled Hosni Mubarak in February 2011. Pro-democracy protestors and the military continue to clash and there has been resurgence in sectarian tensions resulting in casualties across the country.

Most and Least Improved Countries, 2009–2012

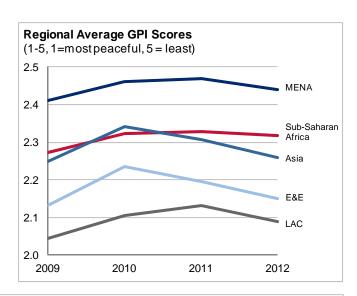| Rank	Country	2009	2012	Change
	Most Improved			
1	Sri Lanka	2.48	2.15	-0.34
2	Lebanon	2.72	2.46	-0.26
3	Chad	2.88	2.67	-0.21
4	Zimbabwe	2.74	2.54	-0.20
5	Georgia	2.74	2.54	-0.19
6	Israel	3.04	2.84	-0.19
7	Ecuador	2.21	2.03	-0.18
8	Guyana	2.10	1.94	-0.16
9	Mongolia	2.04	1.88	-0.16
10	Haiti	2.33	2.18	-0.15
	Least Improved			
70	Russia	2.75	2.94	0.19
71	Nigeria	2.60	2.80	0.20
72	Nicaragua	1.80	2.01	0.20
73	Madagascar	1.91	2.12	0.21
74	Cyprus	1.74	1.96	0.22
75	Rwanda	2.03	2.25	0.22
76	Mexico	2.21	2.44	0.24
77	Yemen	2.36	2.60	0.24
78	Sudan	2.92	3.19	0.27
79	Egypt	1.77	2.22	0.45

While Sudan's GPI score has deteriorated since 2009, there was a slight improvement from 2011 to 2012 mainly reflecting positive developments in the refugee crisis in Darfur. However, hopes for an end to the Darfur conflict following the signing of a peace accord between the Sudanese government and the Justice and Equality
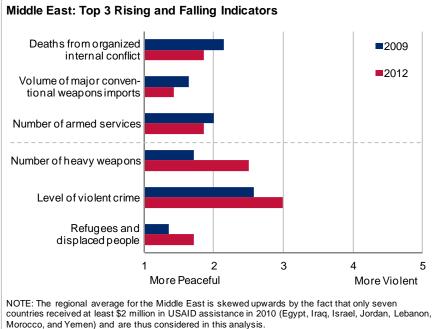
Movement (JEM) in March 2011 have been diminished as a result of continued disagreements over unsettled issues and renewed violent clashes with smaller rebel groups. The independence of South Sudan on July 9, 2011 also sparked renewed hopes for peace. Unfortunately the celebrations have been dampened by continued violence in border regions with Sudan as well as interethnic conflicts within South Sudan.

Regional Analysis of Global Peace Index Scores 2012

Overall, peacefulness increased in all USAID regions since the 2011 report. However, in 2012 there was a slight change in the methodology to calculate the GPI Index which contributed to a decline in the scores for "Terrorist Acts." This indicator was previously based on a qualitative estimation of the potential for terrorist incidents by the Economist Intelligence Unit, but has been changed to a quantitative measure of the number of terrorist incidents compiled by the University of Maryland. The weighting for the "Terrorist Acts" indicator was also increased in 2012. As a result, the indicator for "Terrorist Acts" has not been included in the regional analysis of changes in the charts below.

Regional Average GPI Scores
(1-5, 1=most peaceful, 5 = least)

The turbulence associated with the Arab Spring has contributed to instability and violence in the Middle East and North Africa region since 2010. Increased peacefulness in Lebanon, Israel, and Iraq from 2009 to 2012 has been offset by declines in decreased peacefulness in Morocco, Jordan, Yemen, and Egypt, particularly in 2010 and 2011. From 2009 to 2012 the greatest improvements in peacefulness in the Middle East included significantly decreasing the number of deaths from organized internal conflict; however, the regional average for this indicator remains high.
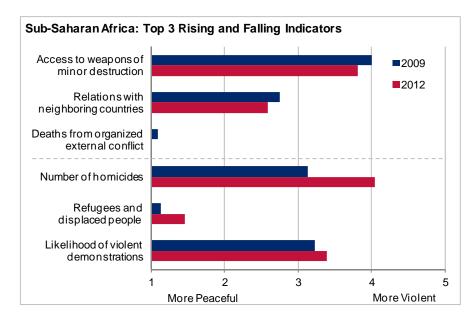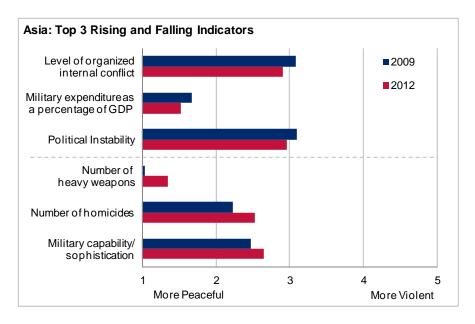
Middle East: Top 3 Rising and Falling Indicators

NOTE: The regional average for the Middle East is skewed upwards by the fact that only seven countries received at least $2 million in USAID assistance in 2010 (Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, and Yemen) and are thus considered in this analysis.

The average GPI score for Sub-Saharan African countries receiving USAID assistance decreased modestly from 2011 to 2012. Only 8 out of 22 Sub-Saharan Africa countries with GPI scores for all four years, or 36 percent, achieved an increase in peacefulness from 2009 to 2012; however, 14 out of 22 Sub-Saharan African countries, or nearly 64 percent, achieved greater peacefulness from 2011 to 2012. The region's greatest improvements over the past four GPI reports include decreasing access to weapons of minor destruction and improving relations with neighboring countries.

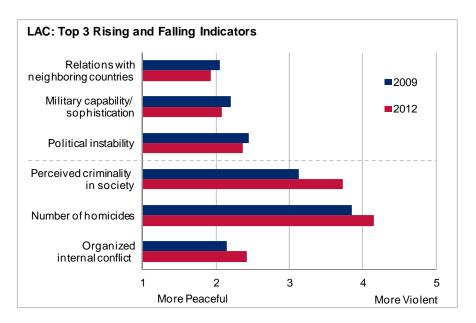**Sub-Saharan Africa: Top 3 Rising and Falling Indicators**

The Asia region's GPI scores reflect marked diversity. While several East Asian countries, such as China and Vietnam, have relatively low scores showing overall peacefulness, other Central and South Asian countries, such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Burma (Myanmar), have much higher GPI scores due to high levels of conflict. High levels of militarization in Burma (Myanmar) have harmed its GPI score, although improvements on this front beginning in 2011 have led towards greater peacefuln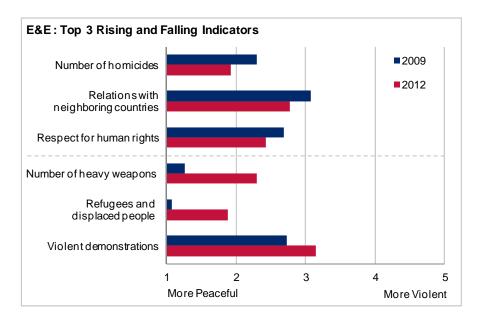ess. While declines were made in average military spending as a percentage of GDP across the region from 2009 to 2012, the number of heavy weapons per 100,000 people increased.

Asia: Top 3 Rising and Falling Indicators

Chile and Costa Rica rank as the most peaceful countries in LAC in contrast to Colombia and Mexico which rank among the least peaceful in the region. Colombia has made progress towards improving its GPI score since the 2010 GPI report. On the other hand, the security situation has deteriorated in Mexico over the same time period due to mounting drug-related violence and crime rates. Regional averages for indicators related to external conflict, such as relations with neighboring countries and military capability, have improved in Latin America from 2009 to 2012. However, indicators related to internal conflict, including perceived criminality and the homicide rate, remain unabated.

LAC: Top 3 Rising and Falling Indicators

The Europe and Eurasia region was the second most peaceful USAID region in 2011 and 2012 following Latin America and the Caribbean. Russia and Georgia are the lowest ranked countries in this region. Russia improved its GPI score in 2012 in part by reducing the proportion of its population incarcerated. However, Russia still has one of the highest percentages of people jailed in the world. Overall, the E&E region has made significant progress in decreasing the number of homicides, improving relations with neighboring countries, and increasing respect for human rights.

E&E : Top 3 Rising and Falling Indicators

Calculating the Global Peace Index

The GPI overall composite score and index is calculated by applying a weight of 60 percent to the measure of internal peace and 40 percent for external peace. An advisory panel of independent experts apportioned weights for each indicator based on the relative importance of each indicator on a 1–5 scale. The table below summarizes the indicators and weights included in the GPI.

GPI Calculation

Indicator	Weight (1–5)
Internal Peace Sub-Index (60 percent)	
Level of perceived criminality in society	3
Number of internal security officers and police per 100,000 people	3
Number of homicides per 100,000 people	4
Number of jailed population per 100,000 people	3
Ease of access to small weapons and light weapons	3
Level of organized conflict (internal)	5
Likelihood of violent demonstrations	3
Level of violent crime	4
Political instability	4
Political Terror Scale	4
Volume of transfers of major conventional weapons, as recipient (imports) per 100,000 people	2
Terrorist acts	2
Number of deaths from organized conflict (internal)	5
External Peace Sub-Index (40 percent)	
Military expenditure as a percentage of GDP	2
Number of armed services personnel per 100,000 people	2
Financial contribution to UN peacekeeping missions	2
Aggregate weighted number of heavy weapons per 100,000 people	3
Volume of transfers of major conventional weapons as supplier (exports) per 100,000 people	3
Military capability/sophistication	2
Number of displaced people as a percentage of the pop.	4
Relations with neighboring countries	5

NOTE: The latest available data from multiple sources are used. Data from the Economist Intelligence Unit for the 2012 report are from March 2011 to March 2012; however, the most recent data from some sources are from 2010. Raw indicator scores are "banded" to a scale of 1–5. Please see the GPI Methodology for definitions, sources and descriptions of how data are converted to the 1–5 scale. (http://www.visionofhumanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/2012-Global-Peace-Index-Report.pdf).

Additional Information

For questions or more information, please contact Cris de Brey at cdebrey@devtechsys.com.

To access the complete Global Peace Index dataset, please visit the Economic and Social Database (ESDB) at http://esdb.eads.usaidallnet.gov/. The ESDB website also offers related datasets, such as the Foreign Policy Magazine and Fund for Peace, Failed States Index and other sources.

The full report, is available from the Vision for Humanity, Global Peace Index site at http://www.visionofhumanity.org/gpi-data/.