

Global Gender Gap Index: Namibia

Overview

2025

1. Executive summary

The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index shows that Namibia has firmly established itself among the global leaders in gender equality, consistently ranking eighth since 2022. In 2025, Namibia achieved a score of 81.1%, the highest in Africa and well above the regional average. This marks Namibia's sixth appearance in the global top 10, underlining sustained progress across education, health, economic participation, and political empowerment.

Cape Verde (30th, 76.9%) is the next-best African performer, while Rwanda once consistently ranked in the global top 10 has fallen behind in recent years. Namibia's consistent standing reflects resilience in maintaining parity in education and health while advancing in political representation and women's economic participation.

2. Analysis

Namibia's ranking (8th, 81.1%) reflects a steady upward trend since the Global Gender Gap Index was first introduced, with an improvement of 12.4 points overall, including a 0.6-point gain in 2025.

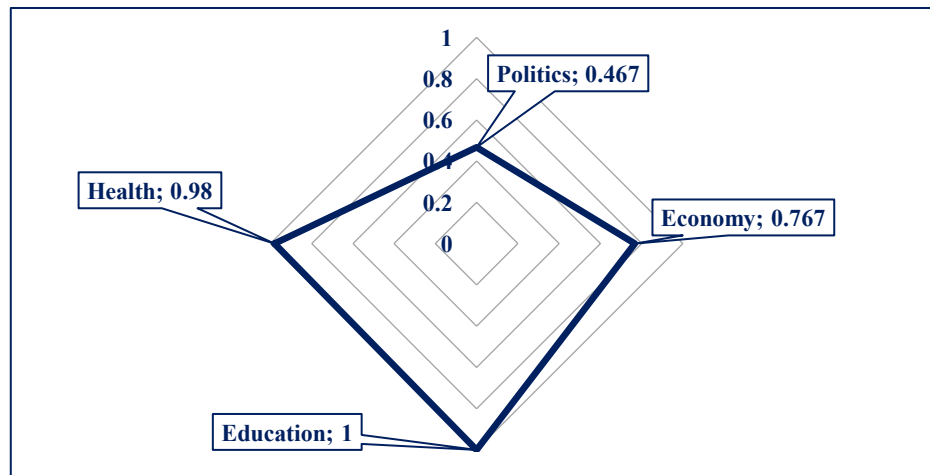
Table 1: Global Gender Gap Index Top 10 (2015 to 2025)

Rank	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
1 st	ISL	ISL	ISL	ISL	ISL	ISL	ISL	ISL	ISL	ISL
2 nd	NOR	FIN	NOR	NOR	NOR	FIN	FIN	NOR	FIN	FIN
3 rd	FIN	NOR	FIN	SWE	FIN	NOR	NOR	FIN	NOR	NOR
4 th	SWE	SWE	RWA	FIN	SWE	NZL	NZL	NZL	NZL	GBR
5 th	IRL	RWA	SWE	NIC	NIC	SWE	SWE	SWE	SWE	NZL
6 th	RWA	IRL	NIC	RWA	NZL	NAM	RWA	DEU	NIC	SWE
7 th	PHL	PHL	SVN	NZL	IRL	RWA	NIC	NIC	DEU	MDA
8 th	CHE	SVN	IRL	PHL	ESP	LTU	NAM	NAM	NAM	NAM
9 th	SVN	NZL	NZL	IRL	RWA	IRL	IRL	LTU	IRL	DEU
10 th	NZL	NIC	PHL	NAM	DEU	CHE	DEU	BEL	ESP	IRL

Source: World Economic Forum: Global Gender Gap Index

Key: BEL = Belgium; DEU = Germany; DNK = Denmark; ESP = Spain; FIN = Finland; IRL = Ireland; LTU = Lithuania; **NAM = Namibia**; NLD = Netherlands; NOR = Norway; NZL = New Zealand; **RWA = Rwanda**; SVN = Slovenia; SWE = Sweden; NIC = Nicaragua; PHL = Philippines; CHE = Switzerland; SVN = Slovenia; NIC = Nicaragua; LTU = Lithuania

Figure 1: Namibia Dimensions Scores, 2025



Source: World Economic Forum: Global Gender Gap Index

1. **Education:** Full parity is maintained, though tertiary enrolment has fallen. Women's enrolment dropped more steeply (33.1% vs. 19.2% for men) but remains higher overall.
2. **Health:** Parity continues, but healthy life expectancy has declined for both sexes (women: 54.6 years; men: 51.0 years).
3. **Economy:** Economic participation has improved by 18.3 points since inception. However, income parity worsened this year as men's earnings rose faster than women's. Workforce representation remains unchanged pending updated data on senior roles.
4. **Politics:** Namibia ranks 15th globally in Political Empowerment (46.7%). Within this:
 - Parliamentary representation: 22nd (68.4%)
 - Ministerial roles: 29th (58.3%)
 - Years with female head of state: 17th (25.0%)

These reflect notable gains in ministerial appointments, though parliamentary parity has slightly weakened.

3. Outlook

Looking ahead, Namibia is poised to strengthen its position as Africa's leader in gender parity and climb higher within the global top 10. The election of a female president, an achievement not yet reflected in the 2025 index, signals a new era of political representation at the highest level. This milestone is expected to substantially improve the "years with female head of state" indicator, lift Namibia's Political Empowerment score, and reinforce the country's reputation as a global frontrunner in advancing gender equality.

The Sixth National Development Plan (NDP6) emphasizes expanding access to higher education and skills development as a cornerstone for inclusive growth. The government's commitment to introducing free tertiary education represents a transformative step in this direction, with the potential to boost enrollment, close existing gaps in advanced education, and equip young women and men with the skills needed for a knowledge-driven economy.

By easing financial barriers, free tertiary education is expected to accelerate progress in human capital development, one of NDP6's central pillars and enhance Namibia's global competitiveness. Over time, this policy could as well strengthen Namibia's position on the education dimension of the Gender Gap Index, ensuring that gains in access translate into greater opportunities in the labor market and leadership roles.

NDP6 also aims to reach an 84% score on the Global Gender Gap Index, a target that seems very achievable given current progress.