

Countries on the rebound making significant climate adaptation progress

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In the lead-up to 21st meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP 21), 10 countries have come from behind to make marked progress in their ability to withstand the shocks and stresses of climate change, while five are distinctly less resilient, according to data released Tuesday (Nov. 17) by the University of Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index (ND-GAIN).

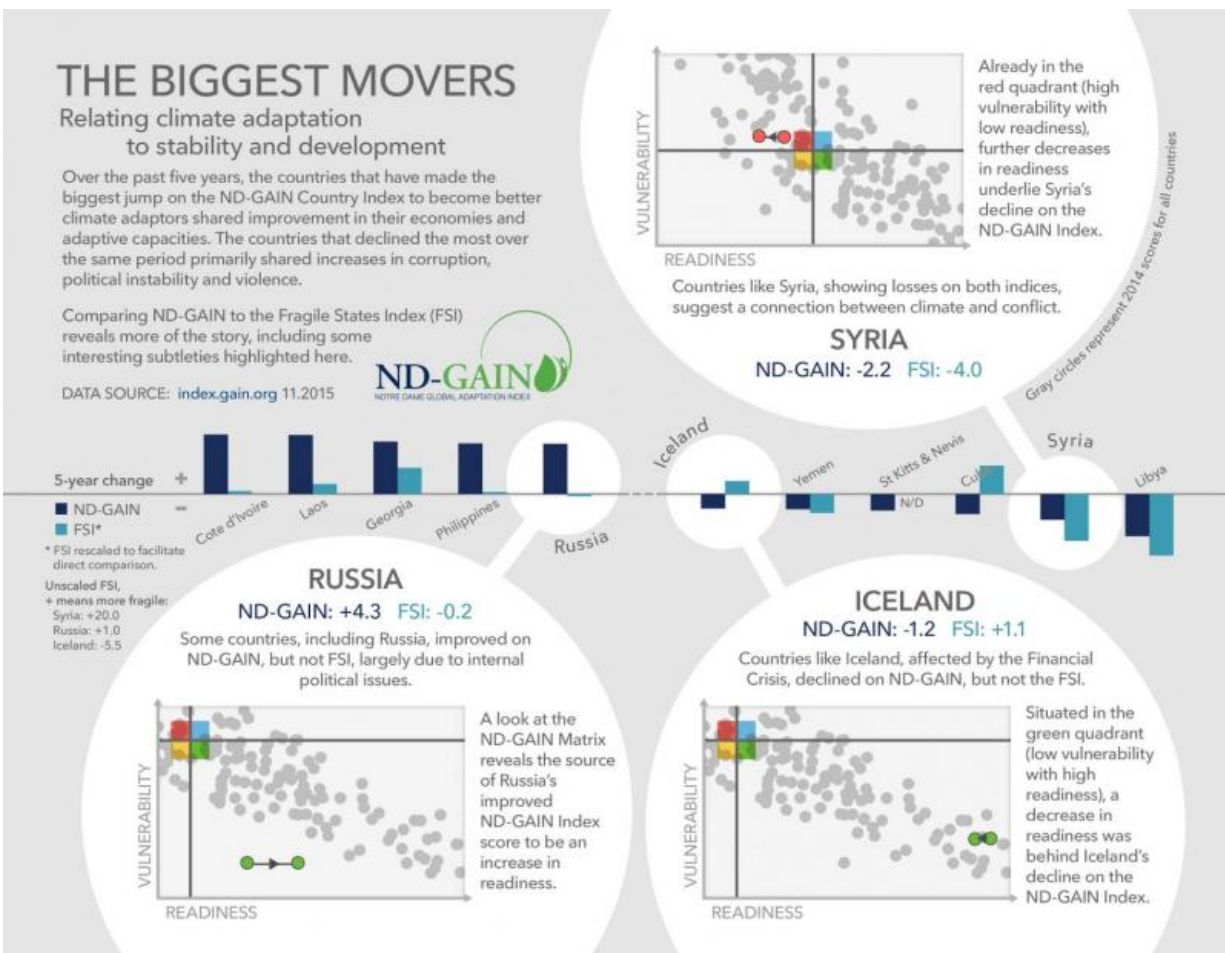
Over the last five years, the 10 countries that have made the biggest jump on the ND-GAIN Country Index to become better climate adapters are Cote d'Ivoire, Laos, Georgia, The Philippines, Russia, Poland, Rwanda, Mongolia, Guinea and the Solomon Islands.

These countries share improvement in common factors that have contributed to the upward movement: primarily their improving economies and improving adaptive capacities, such as increased access to reliable drinking water, improved sanitation, increased agricultural capacity and decreased slum populations and child malnutrition.

On the flip side, a set of countries is heading in the wrong direction. The countries that have deteriorated the most in their ND-GAIN score during the past five years are Libya, Syria, Cuba, Saint Kitts and Yemen.

The contributing factors to these countries' falling scores are primarily increases in corruption, political instability, violence and poor rule of law.

"Interestingly, several countries with the biggest losses on ND-GAIN Country Index are also very fragile, suggesting a connection between climate and conflict," notes ND-GAIN scientific adviser Ian Noble. Comparing ND-GAIN to the Fund for Peace's Fragile States Index, Libya, Syria and Yemen are some of the poorest performers over the past five years on both of these indices. On the other hand, Ukraine is also doing poorly on FSI, but not on ND-GAIN, possibly because the conflict there arose from pressures outside its borders.



The examination of biggest gainers and biggest losers on the ND-GAIN Country Index suggests that investments to increase climate adaptation may pay dividends for a country's stability and development, and vice versa.

The ND-GAIN analysis both reinforces messages in the Pope's recent encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Si'*, and confirms the interrelationship of climate adaptation with many of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, highlighting the collateral benefits

climate action can have on key elements of well-being.

"To save lives and improve livelihoods, we must not only prevent the avoidable, but also prepare for the unavoidable changes in climate," Joyce Coffee, managing director of Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index, said. "In the lead-up to the Paris Conference of the Parties next month, the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index identifies the world's hotspots so that leaders can prioritize investments that help countries to be more adaptive to global changes."

"The aim behind ND-GAIN's data delivery is to provide information for the common good," said Nitesh Chawla, index director of the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index. "Free and open source, the ND-GAIN Country Index also has extensive online tools that allow index users to compare asset risks and opportunities."

The ND-GAIN Country Index aims to unlock global adaptation solutions that save lives and improve livelihoods while strengthening market positions in the private sector and policy decisions in the public sector. Measuring not only vulnerability but also the readiness to take on investment, it informs strategic, operational and reputational decisions regarding supply chains, capital projects and community engagements. The index includes 20 years of data across 46 indicators for 180 [countries](#). ND-GAIN is housed in the Environmental Change Initiative of the University of Notre Dame.

Provided by University of Notre Dame

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