

Summary of key trends on peace, justice and inclusion

A detailed presentation of key trends on peace, justice and inclusion, with sources for all data referred to, is set out in Annex 1 of this report.



Peace

Violence has become the biggest obstacle to reaching the SDGs. More than 80% of the extreme poor are expected to live in countries affected by violence and conflict by 2030. UNHCR's Global Trends Report 2018 details that an unprecedented **70.8 million people (and increasing) are forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflict and violence.** Seminal studies like the joint United Nations and World Bank Group 'Pathways for Peace' report are also showing that violent conflicts today are more complex than in the past and increasingly protracted, involving more non-state groups as well as regional and international actors. **All countries, including those in the Global North, face risks of violence and societal unrest as governments and institutions contend with perceptions of exclusion related to inequalities across societal groups.** This calls for increasing efforts from multiple actors to focus on preventing both the occurrence and escalation of violence.

70.8 million

people are **forcibly displaced** as a result of persecution, conflict and violence.

80%

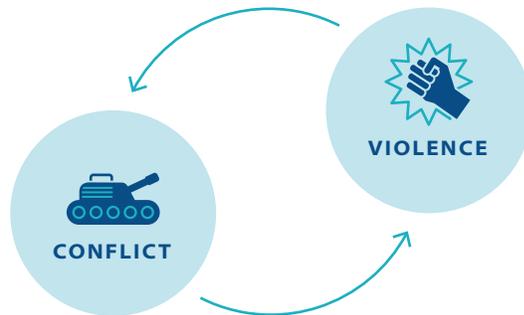
of the **extreme poor** are expected to live in countries affected by **violence and conflict** by 2030.

Protracted conflicts and wars have resulted in chronic fragility, psycho-social and economic trauma, and the destruction of cultural heritage. Societies enduring active conflict require **dialogue, trust, consensus-building, inclusive political settlements and reconciliation to build bridges for peace.** Without ensuring sustained positive peace in these countries, progress across the SDGs will be lacking or unsustainable. In order to live up to the commitment of leaving "no one behind," promoting peace in conflict-affected countries must be prioritized.

There have been positive trends in some indicators on violence. Global homicide rates have slowly declined between 2000 and 2017. However, **high levels of interpersonal violence, especially**

violence against women, can be a warning sign that violence in societies may degenerate into conflict. Once violent conflict breaks out, violence against women and girls may be exacerbated. SDG 16 is stimulating more and better data and statistics on violence against women which is enabling countries to better understand the extent of the problem and respond more effectively.

High levels of **violence against women** can signal that a society might tip into **conflict**. Once conflict breaks out such violence may be exacerbated.



87,000

women were intentionally **killed** in 2017 — and more than half by a partner or family member.

1 billion

children experience some form of **violence** every year.

The aspirations of sustaining peace (as adopted in the 2016 UN Security Council and UN General Assembly Resolutions) and sustainable development are intrinsically linked. Countries are looking beyond post-conflict peacebuilding to embrace the concept of “sustaining peace.” This concept is focused on addressing the root causes and drivers of conflict, highlighting issues of inclusivity, national ownership and the need for a “whole of society” approach. SDG 16+ provides a framework that spans the development, governance, and peacebuilding nexus. The framework can be used to underpin the sustaining-peace approach and align it with the more comprehensive SDG agenda.

Goal 16+ is central to sustaining peace and preventing and responding to conflict by strengthening institutions (including multilateral institutions). It also addresses the root causes of poverty, forced displacement, statelessness and the marginalization of people, as well as educating for a culture of peace and non-violence. UN Security Council Resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018) on youth, peace and security recognize the positive role young people play in sustaining peace. The developing world is now witnessing its largest youth generation in history. Indeed, youth are often the majority of the population in countries, and this younger generation needs a seat at the table in decision-making. UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women and peace and security also reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. The resolution stresses the importance of women’s equal participation and full involvement in the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. The 2030 Agenda, particularly SDGs 4 on education, 5 on gender equality, 10 on equality, and 16 on peace, justice and inclusion, encompass the spirit of these important Resolutions. It recognizes sustaining peace as an inherent component of sustainable development.

BOX 5. Somalia: Peacebuilding and the Rule of Law

Somalia is undergoing a transition that represents the best chance it has had for decades for peace and Statebuilding. The Somalia National Development Plan (NDP) for the period 2017 – 2019 is closely aligned with the SDGs. The plan commits the government to poverty reduction and to progress towards meeting the SDGs. The Federal Member States have also developed their own development strategies which are aligned with the National Development Plan.

In 2018, the SDG 16 Monitoring & Evaluation Project for Somalia was initiated to measure the impact of the UN and the international community's investment in areas of rule of law. Prior to that date, there was limited coordination around data collection in Somalia, and particularly around issues concerning the Rule of Law. The project assesses and measures factors that give rise to violence, insecurity and injustice. It focuses on three areas: 1) coordination surrounding data collection, assimilation and analysis, 2) capacity development of government counterparts within the Federal Government and Federal Member States and 3) methodologies for measuring SDG 16 with a specific focus on target 16.3.

The SDG 16 M&E Project coordinates actors who collect data on peace and security, identifies gaps in data collection coverage in priority locations and provides recommendations to actors who are best placed to engage in targeted data collection. The approach aims to avoid duplicating data collection efforts, which create survey fatigue among Somali communities.

Methodologies for SDG 16 measurement as well as outcome-level analysis of Rule of Law programmes in Somalia are developed through “dipstick audits” in targeted locations. These are then supplemented through data collection and analysis done with key partners. These analyses provide results on the outcomes and impact of the Joint Rule of Law Programs and are published in quarterly bulletins.

The National Federal Parliament and Regional Assemblies are working with UNDP to strengthen parliamentary engagement in the implementation and oversight of the entire SDG approach.

Source: UNCT Somalia

BOX 6. Ukraine: Eliminating discrimination in the security sector through women's participation and leadership

In Ukraine, the Institute of Gender Programmes has given voice to women in the security sector through the Invisible Battalion advocacy campaign. This organization has also contributed to repealing discriminatory legal provisions and practices. It is a vivid example of how cooperation between State officials, MPs, UN Women and a women veterans' collective (NGO) in support of women's participation can contribute to progress on SDG 16, as well as SDG 5 and SDG 10.

Evidence-based advocacy by women in the military and female veterans contributed to Ukraine's efforts to make progress on target 10.2 to “prevent manifestations of discrimination in society,” target 5.1 to “create an environment for ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls” and target 5.4 to “ensure equal opportunities for representation at all levels of decision-making in political and public life.”

The advocacy led to legislative changes in 2016 that opened an additional 63 combat positions which women were previously prohibited from holding. In addition, discriminatory provisions against women in the armed forces were repealed by enforcing an equal retirement age for men and women: 60 years in times of conflict and 45-60 years in peacetime (depending on rank).

Restrictions that previously applied to servicewomen on duty travel and during military training were further repealed. Men and women were also provided with equal opportunities/ responsibilities in fulfilling their military service contracts.

These landmark achievements will benefit approximately 25,000 women currently in the military by guaranteeing them the opportunity to advance their military careers and obtain higher ranks.

Source: UN Women Ukraine Country Office and the NGO Institute of Gender Programmes, Ukraine

BOX 7. United States of America: The GREAT program on strengthening the rule of law through education

The GREAT Programme (Gang, Resistance, Education and Training) in the United States of America is an evidence-based gang and violence intervention that seeks to prevent violence and develop positive relationships between young people, their families and law enforcement.

It is a school-based curriculum led by a law enforcement officer, which focuses on teaching life-skills competencies such as conflict

resolution and problem-solving skills to young people. The programme targets youth and their families and is delivered jointly with community outreach programmes. Evaluations of GREAT have shown increases in the rate of positive attitudes towards the police. An improved sense of collective efficacy has also been associated with lower crime rates, reduced anger, lower gang membership rates and higher rates of altruism.

Sources: UNESCO/UNODC publication on Strengthening the rule of law through education: A guide for policymakers and GREAT programme



Justice

Hundreds of millions of people, including 650 million children, lack proof of legal identity. People **excluded from society through the lack of a legal identity** cannot seek protection from the law or claim their rights and entitlements. They are often invisible to the State and at high risk of being left behind. **Lack of legal identity poses significant barriers to accessing public services (health or education, for example), exercising the right to participate in civic processes (vote, participate in politics), or seek out justice for grievances.** Similarly, access to rights is denied when laws do not live up to key international standards and exclude population groups — such as the right of refugees to access education.

650 million

children lack proof of legal identity.

Lack of legal identity limits people's access to:



justice



education



work



health services



civic processes



property rights

Seeking justice is often **prohibitively expensive and legal proceedings are lengthy.** Moreover, for many marginalized groups, confidence in the justice system's ability to protect their rights is often very low. The Taskforce on Justice, an initiative of the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies, has estimated that there is a 'justice gap' affecting more than 5 billion people worldwide who cannot access legal services to resolve their problems. The High-Level Group on Justice for Women posits that **women's justice needs are shaped by overlapping disadvantages, legal discrimination and discriminatory practices.**

Countries around the world are grappling with ineffective justice systems that often reflect and perpetuate the structural inequalities, low levels of integrity and power disparities in broader society. However, there is an increasing recognition that a **human rights-based and people-centered**

approach to access to justice is necessary to ensure that legal frameworks do not exclude certain population groups, that justice institutions are more responsive to people seeking redress for grievances or to resolve disputes and that people themselves are more empowered to seek out and claim their rights.

With shrinking democratic space in many countries, **the robustness and independence of institutions can be critical to safeguarding the rights of marginalized populations and upholding the rule of law.** The judiciary can play a critical role in such situations — whether in fragile or conflict-affected contexts or high/middle income countries. However, **the independence of the judiciary is under threat** in a number of countries where politicians attempt to exert control over the judiciary. Governments have made use of parliamentary majorities to **change the statutory rules on judicial appointments and the composition of appointment panels.** Furthermore, population surveys show that experiences with and perceptions of corruption in the courts are widespread.

+5 billion

people worldwide cannot access **legal services.**

People are often **unable to seek justice** due to:



elevated
costs



lengthy
proceedings



lack of legal
identity

80%

of people turn to **informal justice systems** to solve their problems.

0.5 - 3% GDP

is the estimated **cost** of leaving civil needs unmet.

People are increasingly turning to **informal, traditional and customary justice systems** to seek quick, accessible, inexpensive resolution of disputes. This tends to happen more frequently in areas outside the reach of State authority, although these systems may not be aligned with the human rights protections afforded under international law. Countries are searching for **efficient and effective ways to deliver justice**, including alternative dispute resolution fora, mobile courts and legal aid provision. They are also looking into community-based legal services and paralegals who can advise and assist people through the justice system, focusing on those most at risk of being left behind.

People seek resolution for a range of civil, administrative and criminal needs. In criminal matters, access to legal aid is the foundation for the enjoyment of the right to a fair trial and a safeguard that prevents corruption and ensures fairness and public trust in the criminal justice process. The UNDP/UNODC Global Study on Legal Aid identified improving the coverage (including for vulnerable groups) and the quality of legal aid services as priority needs in most countries. **To deliver justice for all countries must also recognize the civil justice needs of people.** Legal aid to access justice in a range of civil and administrative matters from property and housing issues to employment and education needs is lacking for many people around the world. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and

Development (OECD) notes that a conservative estimate of the cost of leaving civil legal needs unmet ranges from 0.5 to 3% of GDP in most OECD countries.

Building just societies contributes to preventing violence and conflict: group-based grievances around exclusion and feelings of injustice as well as abusive actions by State actors accelerate violence and the risks of conflict. Sustainable peace and development are more attainable **when justice is pursued for those grievances, including through transitional justice measures.** These

will include establishing victim-centric processes to deal with legacies of mass violations of human rights, incorporating victims' voices in peace processes, returning property to people in the aftermath of conflict and investing in more broad-based, institutional reforms.

BOX 8. Netherlands: Access to justice

In 2016, the Dutch Council for the Judiciary started an initiative to make the administration of justice more effective for court users and for society as a whole. The initiative was called "Effective Judging for Society."

One pilot scheme was implemented in District Court Noord Nederland from 2016 to 2018. The court experimented with enabling informal access to a judge. No formal petitions were necessary and the judge attempted to resolve the dispute through a "serious conversation" with the parties. Over the next one and a half years, a total of 160 disputes were submitted to the Court. In 64 of the 160 cases, both parties agreed to the alternative procedure.

A large amount of these cases concerned disputes between neighbors. Court users expressed satisfaction that their cases were handled speedily. They also paid less for this form of dispute resolution and valued the judge's personal approach. Some court users stated that the duration of the court sessions was long and some court users said they felt pressured by the judge to reach a settlement. The District court of Noord Nederland, where the pilot took

place, stated that there was a higher cost involved for the court in handling the cases because they were more labour-intensive and time-consuming than regular cases.

Two similar pilot projects are currently running at the District Court of The Hague and the District Court of Rotterdam. The Hague pilot project focuses specifically on disputes between neighbours, such as conflicts between housing corporations and tenants or between members of homeowners' associations. The Rotterdam pilot project focuses on non-complex cases involving disputes related to tenancy, employment law, consumer law and disputes between neighbors.

In all three pilot projects (in Noord-Nederland, The Hague and Rotterdam), the procedures have been simplified (an application form with a short description of the dispute is sufficient); sped up (cases are handled within a few weeks after filing); inexpensive for the court users (both parties in a private dispute pay a court fee of 40.50 Euros, around US \$45) and solution-oriented (a judge can consider non-legal issues and use mediation).

Source: Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the UN

BOX 9. Albania: Free Legal Aid Programme

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) in Albania, in close cooperation with courts, specialized civil society organizations, and the support of UNDP Albania, championed the passage of the Free Legal Aid Law (FLA). This law grants equitable and inclusive access to justice to the most marginalized and vulnerable people in society. In Albania, those people include individuals in urban and rural areas that cannot afford to pay for legal services, as well as marginalized communities including Gender-based-violence and Domestic Violence victims, Roma and Egyptian communities, Persons with Disabilities, members of the LGBTI community and elderly persons.

A 2017 Access to Justice Survey by UNDP Albania revealed that almost half of the respondents had experienced legal problems in the

previous five years. Moreover, nearly three quarters of Albanians did not believe the national justice system adequately protected their rights. According to this survey, three key factors contributed to a fragile framework for access to justice in Albania: low levels of legal literacy, dubious attitudes towards what was just and a lack of trust in the justice system.

Six FLA centers have been established at district courts and four more FLA centres are in the pipeline for 2019. There is potential for further scaling up of the good practices already established in the six operational FLA centres.

Source: UNDP Albania



Inclusion

Civic space is shrinking in many countries across the world. Civil society organizations report an increasing number of cases in which legal and political barriers are suppressing and weakening civil society. **Shrinking civic space is highly likely to halt or reverse progress towards reducing inequality, ensuring inclusion and improving sustainability.** It is often precisely those at greatest risk whom civil society seeks to empower and protect, including women, youth, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Intersex community and other marginalized groups. From a human rights perspective, this trend also impinges upon the fundamental freedoms of the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of association.

181 restrictions

have been imposed on CSOs in 82 countries since 2013, targeting:

the 'lifecycle' of CSOs (formation, registration or operation)

58%

peaceful assembly

20%

access to international funding

22%

There has been **good progress in recognizing the right of individuals to access information held by public authorities.** However, **certain groups — such as women — are disproportionately disadvantaged in the exercise of this right.** Moreover, the protection of freedom of expression is being threatened by **violations of the safety** of those who gather and report information to the public, principally **journalists, media workers and human rights defenders.** Media freedom, journalist safety, freedom of assembly — not to mention an independent and effective National Human Rights Institution in accordance with the Paris Principles — are all prerequisites for establishing effective, accountable and transparent institutions.

1,456

journalists and human rights defenders have been killed in 61 countries since 2015.



125

countries have adopted laws and policies to guarantee people's right to information.



Countries are recognizing that responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making can strengthen the legitimacy of public institutions and also facilitate the adoption of policies that address the needs and rights of all people. This is as true for education (SDG 4) as it is for decent work (SDG 8). The picture of **women's representation in public institutions (the judiciary, parliament and the public service), however, is mixed.** Some regions are steadily improving the proportion of women occupying decision-making positions in public institutions,

whereas other regions remain stagnant. Representation of other demographic groups in public institutions — e.g., youth, ethnic groups, the disabled — is more challenging to assess, as only a handful of countries are systematically producing and monitoring this data. **Young people’s participation and representation in deliberative bodies and in policy making processes is impossible** in some contexts. This is due to formal rules restricting the age of participation, a lack of space for expanding membership and financial constraints on facilitating meaningful participation to ensure a real influence on decision-making.

Women’s representation in national **parliaments** varies widely per region but the average stands at

24%

Young people make up the majority of the world’s population, yet **MPs under 30** make up less than

2%

Inclusion, or its lack, starts early and is often determined by legal status and identity. It begins at the time of birth — underscoring the importance of birth registration for proof of official identity and nationality — and continues as children enter the education system. **The gap between male and female out-of-school rates has narrowed over the years, but among children of primary age, girls are still more likely to be out of school than boys.** Depending on the country, **asylum seekers and refugees might be legally excluded from accessing certain rights and associated services.** Legal identity secures important legal protection mechanisms, safeguards equal access to key social services such as health and education and foster income-generating opportunities. It also helps to ensure that these individuals are counted in official statistics.

BOX 10. Timor Leste: Inclusion of youth in governance

The second youngest nation in Asia, with 62% of the population under the age of 25, Timor-Leste is committed to transforming its large numbers of youth into a “demographic dividend” by 2030.

The Timor Leste government, supported by the UN, has established a Youth Centre for Entrepreneurship (KJFL). This is a one-stop youth innovation and entrepreneurship hub, where young people can access information about employment opportunities and receive training. The Centre reached more than 5,000 young people in 2018 and supported many in starting their own businesses. The government has also provided support to rural youth on civic education and entrepreneurship development through Municipal Youth Centres and the National Youth Council.

Young people in Timor Leste are politically engaged. The voting age in Timor Leste is 17 and in the two recent elections, slightly over 50% of registered voters were between the age of 17 and 30.

In 2009, the country established a Youth Parliament, composed of Timorese between 12 and 17 years of age. The idea was that these young people would represent their municipalities in national debates on key issues and make recommendations to the parliament and government. Some municipalities have also established working groups where youth are represented. In addition, each political party has a youth wing. Dominance of the older generation means that young people’s voices are not always heard in practice. The two youth representatives on each village council reportedly have limited influence over actual decision-making.

In the past few years, young people have established dynamic civil society groups like HATUTAN (Connect), The Feminist Group in Timor-Leste and The Movement of Women Youth. In 2017, The Feminist Group played an important role in maintaining the existing availability of family planning resources when a draft law surfaced that would have limited these to married couples only. HATUTAN also ...

successfully led the organization of the first Pride Marches in Timor-Leste in 2017 and 2018. Its awareness-raising around LGBTI rights was supported in 2017 by then Prime Minister, Dr. Rui Maria de Araújo, who called for families and society to accept people of different sexual orientations.

Research conducted by the NGO Belun and the UN indicates that several youth categories face challenges to participating in society due to stigma and discrimination. These include young people with

disabilities and lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender and intersex community youth. The SDG Roadmap identifies young people as both a development opportunity and a potential source of instability. Data shows that young people are overrepresented among the unemployed. According to the 2015 Census, 20% of youth between the ages of 15-24 are not employed and not in education or training (NEET). There are concerns that NEET youth in particular are drawn into martial arts groups, some of which have been involved in violence in their communities.

Source: UNCT Timor Leste

BOX 11. Paraguay: Freedom of expression and access to information laws

In 2014, Paraguay became the 100th country in the world to pass a freedom of information law, asserting the public's right to access government documents.

In 2013, the Supreme Court of Justice ruled in a pioneering case on access to public information. Drawing on standards from the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, that landmark case established the right of citizens to access data from a municipality. The ruling was considered historical and constituted a substantial advancement in freedom of information and transparency in Paraguay. It championed transparency in Paraguayan public institutions and laid the groundwork for the passage of the freedom of information law in 2014.

The Access to Public Information and Transparency Law requires government bodies and functionaries to publish their budgets and disclose information requested by citizens. The relevant information runs the gamut from policy documents and official travel and contracts, to salaries and expenditures, as well as any information not protected from disclosure for security reasons. A dedicated website was launched where individuals can file requests for specific information.

When the law was passed, there was no national body of case law or legal expertise to guide the process of accessing information. A national working group composed of representatives of all branches of government, relevant ministries as well as representatives of civil society was formed to chart the national process.

In response to the new law, the Supreme Court created a Directorship of Transparency and Access to Information, which is charged with implementing policy and capacity-building strategies related to SDG 16, including open justice, access to information, freedom of expression and the safety of journalists.

"The law provides great opportunities for citizen participation in and a greater capacity for control of public management. That means democracy can grow substantively, and not just in name," says José María Costa, Advisor and Director of Transparency and Access to Public Information of the Supreme Court of Justice (Paraguay).

2014 was also marked by the assassination of three Paraguayan journalists investigating corruption and organized crime. "The safety of journalists and freedom of the press are essential," Costa says. "Freedom of expression is a collective right which empowers citizens to participate in democracy and makes sustainable development possible. Without access to quality information, a free and secure press, an informed, active and engaged citizenry is not possible."

In 2016, the three branches of government signed an agreement to support a safety mechanism to investigate threats made against journalists and media workers. The system is designed to cultivate a shared responsibility among government entities and civil society. It also provides for the permanent monitoring of cases via a WhatsApp group in which all participating institutions can report potential threats and aggressions against journalists. In addition, a rapid-response procedure was created for the safeguarding of journalists under imminent threat to determine the most effective course of action, including formal protection and legal action.

Source: UNCT Paraguay

Enabling the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through SDG 16+: Anchoring peace, justice and inclusion (2019).

The Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies, available at: <https://www.sdg16hub.org>

