

FILLING IN THE GAPS: PROGRESS AND BACKSLIDING IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 16 INDICATORS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACLED – Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project
 AHA – ASEAN Coordinating Center for Humanitarian Assistance
 AMLO – President Andrés Manuel López Obrador
 ASEAN – Association of Southeast Asian Nations
 BJP – Bharatiya Janata Party
 CSO – Civil Society Organization
 EAO – Ethnic Armed Organization
 EFTA – European Free Trade Association
 ELN – National Liberation Army
 EU – European Union
 FARC – The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
 FAFT – Financial Action Task Force
 FFP – Fund for Peace
 FSI – Fragile State Index
 GANHRI – Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions
 GFA – Global Fragility Act
 GNU – Government of National Unity
 HMRI – Human Rights Measurement Initiative
 ICCS – International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes
 INAI – Federal Institute for Access to Information
 INGO – International Nongovernmental Organization
 LNA – Libyan National Army
 MGE – Myanmar Gems Enterprise
 NDP – National Development Plan
 NGO – Nongovernmental Organization
 NHRI – National Human Rights Institution
 NHS – National Health Service
 NLD – National League for Democracy
 OAS – Organization of American States
 ODA – Official Development Assistance
 OHCHR – UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner
 ONS – Office for National Statistics
 PDF – People’s Defense Force
 SDG – Sustainable Development Goal
 UCDP – Uppsala Conflict Data Program
 UN – United Nations
 UNCCPCJ – UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
 UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
 UNFPOS – United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics
 UNODC – United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The American University Conflict Mitigation and Peacebuilding Practicum team partnered with Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP) to explore the challenges of measuring progress in the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16) and potential lessons for the design of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The American University team of nine graduate students addressed the question from three angles. First, they studied the current state of monitoring and measurement using the 2020 Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) Audit Report. Second, they summarized the international community's major challenges in measuring and implementing SDG 16. Third, they highlighted what lessons on developing, measuring, and implementing SDG 16 can be applied to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

SDG 16 looks to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.” As violent conflict increases globally and the 2030 United Nations (UN) Millennium Goals approach, the international community has begun to pay closer attention to the efficacy of existing mechanisms used to measure SDGs. The interlinkages between governance, security, and development are increasingly important for long-term sustainable peace and development. However, since the addition of Goal 16 to the SDGs, global progress has been uneven. Individually, countries are meeting the targets set out by some indicators, while ignoring others, which creates the illusion that they are by and large on track. Globally, as this report intends to show, progress on SDG 16 has fallen far short of intended goals. In many cases, we believe, 2030 goals may prove to be a bridge too far.

Around the world, there has been an increase in the number of violent conflicts and the number of people living in conflict-affected areas. A record number have been forcibly displaced. Per United Nations (UN) statistics, the global homicide rate declined by 5.2% between 2015 and 2020. Corruption continues to be prevalent in every region of the world. The capacity to meet the targets of not only SDG 16 but all the SDGs is especially problematic in fragile and conflict-affected countries. The COVID-19 global health crisis only exacerbated existing challenges and highlighted the growing importance of effective and inclusive governance.

Due to time and resource constraints, the analysis and findings presented in this report are through the lens of twelve countries and five indicators. The countries were chosen by their rankings on the Fragile State Index (FSI) Heat Map and the indicators by their relevance to the peacebuilding work done by AfP. The methodology used to answer the research question includes desk-top research and analysis, case studies, and expert interviews.

KEY FINDINGS

1. ADDRESS DATA UNIVERSALITY

Data collected for SDG 16 must be universally procured, measured, and reported. Ensuring data universality will lead to better data analysis and more accurate findings. To achieve this goal, the international community must adopt a universal standard for how data is collected, measured, and reported. This would require cooperation between countries to ensure data procurement, measurement, and reporting processes are shared and adapted to an internationally recognized standard. Adherence to an internationally recognized standard will ensure that data measurement and reporting is consistent across all countries.

2. ADDRESS DATA AVAILABILITY

The availability of reliable data is a global issue, affecting countries across a broad spectrum of development. These inconsistencies lead to data gaps, ineffective analysis, and questionable or misleading findings. Capacity-building within conflict-prone and conflict-affected countries is vital to accessing indicator-relevant data. In many cases, a communal level approach to the collection and relaying of data can serve as a solution to the inability of government-bound bodies to carry out procurement and reporting. Furthermore, some countries that possess the ability to collect and report data simply do not participate in data sharing. This applies, for instance, to the United States with respect to 'National Human Rights Institution' (NHRI) data.

3. ADDRESS INDICATOR RELEVANCE

In some cases, the way in which data is measured, or even what information is being measured, can be irrelevant to the purpose of the indicator itself. For example, the National Human Rights Institution indicator only ascertains the existence of an NHRI within a country, but not the strength of the institution itself. It also only looks at countries that abide by the Paris Principles. In the same case, the measurement is obtained through a self-reported survey, which allows bias in the resulting Paris Principles compliance ranking. Data collection, measurement, and reporting must be holistic and well-guided, as well as include each member of the international community, in order to serve the purposes of SDG 16.

PART I: INTRODUCTION

SCOPE OF WORK

This project was developed in response to a statement of work (SOW) issued by Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP) by nine master's students completing their practicum project at the School of International Service at American University. The work plan for the project was developed and implemented by the students. The work plan and scope of work were agreed upon by all parties and included a research methodology, schedule of activities, and methods of communication.

The research objectives as stated in the Statement of Work (SOW) issued by AfP were as follows:

“A focused analytical research report exploring the challenges of measurement for and progress of sustainable development goal 16 (SDG 16) and the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. The report will include proposed strategies to improve measurement and progress of SDG 16 across and within the selected countries and indicators.”

To appropriately address the research objectives, the students focused on three primary sub-objectives. First, they looked at data availability and measurement across twelve pre-grouped countries and five indicators of SDG 16. Second, they analyzed the major challenges faced in these countries with respect to measurement and gauging progress and compared the challenges within country groupings. Third, they explored policy recommendations for measuring and implementing SDG 16 which can also be applied to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. To complement their analysis, the students interviewed a select number of subject matter experts.

METHODOLOGY

FSI AND COUNTRY SELECTION

This report uses the Fund for Peace (FFP)'s Fragile State Index (FSI) heatmap to categorize twelve subject countries into four groups based on similar levels of risk and vulnerability. On the FSI itself, countries are color-coded by scores based on twelve indicators created used by FFP, and differentiate between “sustainable,” “stable,” “warning,” and “alert.” But for the purposes of this report, countries groupings were labeled depending on level of conflict: “incipient,” “fragile,” “conflict-prone,” and “conflict-affected.” No “sustainable” countries were chosen for this report. To demonstrate a diversity of fragility levels and global regions, countries were chosen based on how well they illustrate their level of conflict, and how well their specific cases can be related to others in the region.

INCIPIENT CONFLICT COUNTRIES

In the context of this report, the phrase “incipient conflict” refers to conditions in a powerful, wealthy country that has recently seen an increase in political and social instability. In these countries, instability most often arises from mutual fear of other social groups, loss of wealth or property by some groups, or the fear that the state could lose the power to protect its citizens. These fears have negatively affected SDG 16 indicator scores in the three countries chosen to represent incipient conflict in this report: France, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States (US).

France is ranked the 162nd most fragile state in the world. Within the parameters of this study, it can also be considered representative of the European Union (EU) countries. The UK is ranked the 150th most fragile state in the world. It is experiencing upheaval from divisive immigration policies, increasing poverty, and an energy crisis, among other challenges. The United States is ranked the 140th most fragile state in the world and suffers from political instability, domestic terrorism, wealth inequality, and poor race relations.

FRAGILE COUNTRIES

Fragile states are vulnerable to conflict and development challenges due to political and/or economic conditions and are represented on the FSI as falling between the “stable” and “warning” categories. Ghana, Brazil, and Indonesia are representative of this group.

Ghana was chosen because of its inclusion in the Global Fragility Act (GFA), US legislation passed in late 2019 that aims to create holistic ways of working with and assisting fragile states. It is the 108th most fragile state in the world and is surrounded by countries with heightened levels of fragility on the FSI's heatmap. Ghana's success in a “bad neighborhood” can lead to useful research about the country's state-building effectiveness. Brazil is ranked the 71st most fragile state in the world. It has experienced extreme political instability and environmental degradation. Indonesia is ranked the 100th most fragile state in the world. It suffers from identity-based discrimination, unequal development, and ethnic conflict, and is surrounded by a diverse group of both fragile and stable countries.

CONFLICT-PRONE COUNTRIES

This designation refers to countries that tend to slide in and out of conflict and are thus consistently between the “warning” and “alert” colors of the FSI heatmap. The three countries chosen for this category are Colombia, India, and Mexico.

Colombia is ranked the 60th most fragile state in the world and has suffered decades of violent conflict. India is ranked the 69th most fragile state in the world and experiences complex conflict dynamics with Pakistan and between Hindus and Muslims. Tensions with China have risen as well. Mexico is ranked the 84th most fragile state in the world. It was chosen because of its high homicide rate, corruption, activities of drug syndicates as well as its proximity to other countries of a similar fragility level.

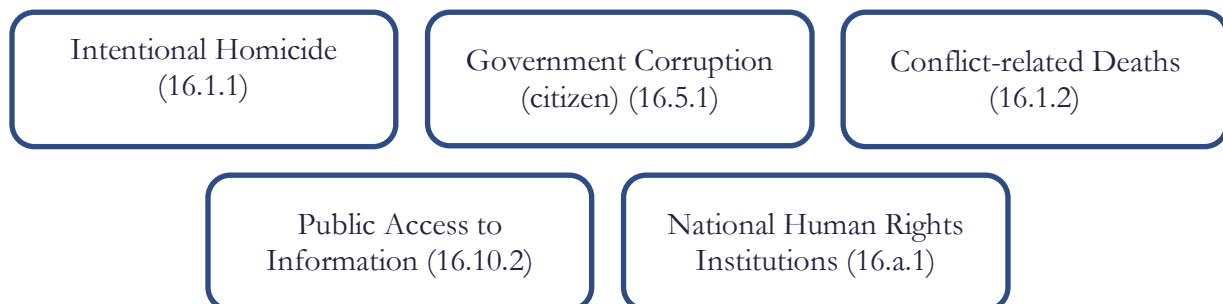
CONFLICT-AFFECTED COUNTRIES

On April 1, 2022, the US government announced four priority countries and one regional grouping to be added to the GFA as part of the ten-year US Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability. Haiti and Libya were both added at that time, and they highlight opportunities for the US to identify lessons learned from decades of engagement in the countries and regions.¹ As such, Haiti and Libya were chosen to represent conflict-affected countries—those most negatively impacted by extreme violence—along with Myanmar.

Haiti is ranked the 11th most fragile state in the world and faces prominent challenges when viewed through the lens of SDG 16, especially regarding such factors as political instability, environmental degradation, extreme poverty, and gang violence. Libya is ranked 21st most fragile state in the world and its inclusion in the project provides representation for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. It has a unique, fragile ceasefire, and the political situation highlights many challenges with which fragile countries around the world must contend. Myanmar is ranked the 10th most fragile state in the world and represents Southeast Asia. Its extreme violence, political repression, and recent genocide have all uniquely impacted Myanmar’s SDG 16 score.

INDICATORS

Out of the fifty-six indicators of SDG 16, this report examines five. They are as follows:



INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE (16.1.1)

Intentional homicides, as per the indicator, is defined by UNODC as “an unlawful death inflicted on a person with the intent to cause serious injury or death.”¹ The data for this indicator comes from national

data on offenses and victims collected by the UN Survey on Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice System (UN-CTS) and measured by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Three elements make up this definition:

1. The killing of a person by another person (objective element);
2. The intent of the perpetrator to kill or seriously injure the victim (subjective element);
3. The unlawfulness of the killing (legal element).

The UNODC only considers killings that meet the previous criteria as intentional homicide, regardless of the definitions created by national legislations or practices. The data was last updated June 6, 2022.

GOVERNMENT CORRUPTION (16.5.1)

Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer measures bribery based on the aggregation of whether the survey respondent paid a bribe to one of six public service sectors surveyed in the past twelve months.² The six service sectors and thus questions that compile the aggregation of total bribery. The total data was last released in 2019, but several states have since updated it.

CONFLICT-RELATED DEATHS (16.1.2)

This indicator is defined as the total count of conflict-related deaths divided by the total population, expressed per 100,000 population.³ Conflict is defined as “armed conflict” in reference to a terminology enshrined in International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and applied to situations based on the assessment of the UN and other international entities. “Conflict-related deaths” refers to direct and indirect deaths associated with armed conflict. “Population” refers to total resident population in each situation of armed conflict. Population data is derived from annual estimates produced by the UN Population Division (UNPD).

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION (16.10.2)

This indicator urges countries to ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements. “Public access to information” is based upon the established human right to the fundamental freedom of expression and association.⁴ States are duty-bearers for this right and measuring the fulfillment of this duty allows for assessment of progress.

In terms of defining what is being measured, Access to Information has two principle components: the obligation for states to have a legal framework that is also implemented in practice, that:

1. Entitles public to request access to information (documents and other information recorded in any format) and to respond to such requests in a timely fashion, and
2. Obliges authorities to ensure that information of public interest is put into the public domain so that citizens can access it without submitting requests.

Data for public access to information was obtained from the WJP Rule of Law Index.

NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (16.a.1)

The existence of independent national human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles.⁵ The main source of data on the indicator is the administrative records of the Subcommittee on Accreditation Reports of the GANHRI. OHCHR compiles the data into a global directory of NHRI status accreditation updated every six months, after the Subcommittee on Accreditation submits its report. As of 2021, there are 84 National Human Rights Institutions accredited with “A” Status by the GANHRI in compliance with the Paris Principles, and 33 accredited with “B” status. Measurement for this indicator is conducted through an international survey sent to the national human rights institution, which completes it and sends it back to the international mechanism. The latter also uses complementary information received from civil society organizations, if available.

This is a potentially weak measurement as there does not seem to be much oversight in this process. The approval is peer-reviewed but based on self-reported data.

These five indicators were chosen because they best correlate to conflict mitigation and peacebuilding, as well as the needs of the AFP. The report paints a picture of the level of violence in each of the twelve states through its evaluation of conflict-related deaths and intentional homicide. Examining government corruption (citizen), public access to information, and national human rights campaigns reveals the capacity of state institutions to fix problems, build a healthier state and progress toward their 2030 goals. Together, these five indicators display the varying levels of peacefulness within each state and the strength of civilian freedoms to help best locate and address societal problems.

PART II: INCIPIENT CONFLICT COUNTRIES

INTRODUCTION

While France is a pillar of the EU and its collective approach to SDG implementation, the country has seen a rise in nationalism, crime, and unemployment. Most recently, France has experienced a deterioration of social cohesion and citizens are increasingly dissatisfied with the government and national leadership. Although France has made major contributions towards SDG implementation, social grievances and the lack of cohesion nationwide have slowed progress towards complete implementation.

In contrast, the United Kingdom has deviated from the European approach to SDG implementation after its departure from the European Union in 2016. Due largely to the COVID-19 pandemic, political turmoil, economic fluctuation, and an energy crisis, conditions in the UK have become more fragile. Because of this fragility, work to achieve SDG targets has stalled, specifically across the selected indicators related to SDG 16.

The election of Donald Trump in 2016 exacerbated existing social and political cleavages in the United States. Since the election, the US has seen an increase in nationalism and isolationism. It went so far as to remove itself from programs and bodies that engage in SDG implementation. Therefore, the US has struggled, and will continue to struggle, to make progress across all chosen indicators.

FRANCE

France is a pillar of the EU and uses EU mechanisms to implement SDGs. Recently, the country has seen a rise in nationalism, crime, and unemployment, while faith in government leadership has declined. Further, according to the most recent SDG Report, the nation has one of the lowest levels of confidence in EU institutions, and, out of all European countries, one of the lowest degrees of faith in the country's justice system. Despite these challenges, France is on track to meet and even surpass the outlined 2030 goals for the selected indicators. France's homicide numbers and perception of corruption are lower than the EU average, while its accessibility to information is ranked one of the highest.

INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE (16.1.1)

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has made data available for French intentional homicides in 2019 and 2020 in the country's three largest cities (See [Appendix A](#)). The data group differentiates gender, type of homicide (intimate partner, gang, and the like), and citizenship status, with a section that lists the total number of homicides.

From 2019 to 2020, the total number of intentional homicide incidents rose from 861 people in 2019 to 879 in 2020. Although a 2.09% increase, it did not change the usual rate of one intentional homicide per 100,000 people between 2019 and 2020. Men are more likely than women to commit intentional homicide in both 2019 and 2020. However, the number of male intentional homicides in France (617 persons) remained the same from 2019 to 2020. The number of women dropped from 285 persons to 240 persons, but for victims of unknown sex, intentional homicides have risen from 25 persons to 31. Overall, the data shows no dramatic changes in intentional homicide rates, although the rate has gone up slightly. In 2019, the rate per 100,000 people was 1.32. In 2020, it was 1.34.

The number of homicides in France has remained stable in the last decade, with the most notable spikes being the terror attacks in Paris in 2015 and Nice in 2016. To improve its crime statistics, France has begun incorporating citizen reports that include crimes that went unreported. Currently, only crimes reported to the police are acknowledged.

France has one of the lowest homicide rates in the European Union, but crime and insecurity have been major political issues in the past two decades. Although France is not immune to occurrences of gang brawls, murders, and kidnappings, various terrorist attacks and stabbings have caused fluctuations in rates.

CONFLICT-RELATED DEATHS (16.1.2)

Although measured by the Upsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) database, France does not have any 16.1.2 data past 2018. While there has been no official reported data since 2018, the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic increased gang violence. An increase in gang violence is not specific to France, but unemployment and social media propaganda have exacerbated the situation.

In addition to violence within France, French forces have been fighting in Mali since 2013 with over a dozen civilians having been killed. The French military's process for identifying targets and decision-making on when and how to attack has been criticized by the UN, with calls for an independent inquiry into an attack on the Mali village of Bounti in January 2021, where 19 civilian casualties were confirmed.⁶ Human Rights Watch also called for an independent investigation into the village killings in 2021. The

French military, however, has ignored all urges to conduct any investigation into their anti-Jihadist efforts in the Sahel.

CORRUPTION (16.5.1)

New data for French corruption is available on Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer thanks to the fieldwork on bribery done by Leaderfield from October 13, 2020, to December 1, 2020, on a sample of 3,600 French citizens. In the report findings, between 3-5% (138 citizens) of those surveyed paid a bribe while 80% (2,884 citizens) did not. 16-17% (598 citizens) of those surveyed had no contact with surveyors. One respondent (<0.03 percent) did not know/refused to answer the question. The survey did not reach French territories, like Corsica, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Guyana, La Réunion, and Mayotte.

Surveyors in the 2016 Europe and Central Asia corruption barometer did not ask French citizens questions about bribery in the public service sector. Therefore, measurements of French corruption between these two surveys cannot be compared, which hurts policymakers' abilities to monitor the country's 16.5.1 progress. France aims at promoting transparency and accountability in the public sector, and has pushed for more internal auditing, protection of whistleblowers, and proper law enforcement cooperation.

To combat fraud and corruption, France's High Authority for Transparency in Public Life audits and publishes public figures' declarations of assets and interests. France is very committed to the fight against corruption and has developed legal instruments to create a specific and effective system for combating corruption that concerns the authorities, procedures, and methods for investigation. France's Anti-Bribery Strategy Report, which is mentioned in its Cooperation Action 2021-2030 document, outlines some key objectives for fighting corruption. These include, but are not limited to, promoting better governance in international cooperation, and supporting the work of international organizations, non-state actors, and local institutions.

There have been isolated reports of government corruption in France, with the biggest reports being of former high-profile politicians. Most recently in November 2020, former president Nicolas Sarkozy stood trial for corruption after he tried to obtain confidential information through his lawyer a judge. In 2021, former minister of justice and candidate for major, Rachida Dati, was indicted for illegal lobbying while serving as a member of the European Parliament.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION (16.10.2)

The Public Access to Information indicator of the World Justice Project Rule of Law proxy index for SDG 16.10.2 has data for France from 2019, 2020, and 2022. France, categorized as EU + EFTA + North America and High income, scored 0.73 in both 2019 and 2020 but decreased by 5.48% to 0.69 in 2021. Furthermore, France's regional ranking dropped from 6th to 9th out of 24 countries between 2019 and 2020. While other countries in the EU + EFTA + North America category improved their public access to information, France did not.

The law on Free Access to Administrative Documents (Law No. 78-753) was created in 1978 and provides a right to access all persons to administrative documents held by public bodies. Despite being a law for many years, it is little known and little used. In its 2020 Rule of Law Report, the European Commission

said that the efficiency of civil justice has deteriorated in recent years, with a surge of online and offline threats against journalists.

HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (16.A.1)

One of the founding principles of France is human rights. France has a national independent institution for human rights called the French National Consultative Commission on Human Rights (CNCDH), which was established in 1947. It is the oldest human rights institution in France that monitors the implementation of all policy recommendations from international and European committees. The commission also raises public awareness and educates the public on human rights topics with educational tools public events. These efforts improve public confidence. France is also an active supporter of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OCHCR).

This does not, however, mean that France is not susceptible to human rights violations within its border. Indeed, there have been credible reports of violence against journalists, the existence of criminal defamation laws, and targeted violence or threats of violence against religious and ethnic minorities, migrants, and members of the LGBTQ community. 2021 alone showed numerous human rights violations through laws infringing upon freedom of expression, association, and concerning mass surveillance. Police have used excessive force breaching both national and international law and forcibly returned refugees to their homelands despite these actions violating rulings by the national asylum court.

Additionally, the CNCDH called on the French government to facilitate an EU mechanism to take shared responsibility for the Afghan nationals fleeing the Taliban in 2021, a plea that was seconded by President Macron. However, the government continued to issue deportation orders. Despite the French Constitutional Court ruling that proposed provisions infringing on citizen privacy are unconstitutional, authorities have continued to go around the confines of the law. The technological advances and use of drones instead of just facial recognition technologies by law enforcement officials also aid officials in finding legal loopholes.

As reported by Amnesty International,⁷ in September [2021], President Macron announced measures to ensure accountability for human rights violations committed by police, including parliamentary oversight. However, no independent oversight commission has been established.

UNITED KINGDOM

The United Kingdom, known as one of the most stable countries in Western Europe, does enjoy high indicator scores, but numerous crises threaten to destabilize the country. COVID has killed nearly 200,000 people in the UK,⁸ and its economy is the only one in Western Europe to have never recovered from the pandemic.⁹ The war in Ukraine has brought a spike in commodity prices, caused an energy crisis, and reduced household incomes.¹⁰ Winter 2022 may be “truly, truly horrific for a large number of people” as energy costs become unsustainable,¹¹ which may undermine the UK’s wealth, stability, and high SDG 16 indicator scores.

INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE (16.1.1)

The UNODC does not display data for the UK on its website, but the data is available on their downloadable datasets. Overall, the number of intentional homicides slightly decreased in the UK from 2019 to 2020. Men are more likely to be victims of intentional homicide than women, but women fall victim to intentional homicide by an intimate partner at a significantly higher rate. Most homicides occurred in public places, with a knife, and over drugs; 31% of victims were drug users, and 15% drug dealers.¹² According to ONS, COVID-19 lockdowns did not increase domestic homicides.¹³ Terrorism has not had a substantial impact on the UK as of late. The last attack from Northern Irish insurgents came in April 2021, when some members of the New IRA attacked an off-duty police officer in Dungiven, Northern Ireland.¹⁴ On March 22, 2022, the terror threat level for Northern Ireland decreased for the first time in twelve years.

Despite this progress, a substantial amount of data is missing from the UNODC database: the age of each victim, the context of the homicide, the relationship between victim and perpetrator, and general data for the “UK and Great Britain.” This gap in data hurts policymakers’ abilities to analyze the data to make and implement policy recommendations.

CONFLICT-RELATED DEATHS (16.1.2)

The UCDP database includes data for the UK for 2019 and 2020. Starting at the best estimate of four conflict-related deaths in 2019, the number fell to one death in 2020. It is interesting to note that the UK had any recent conflict-related deaths at all when compared to France and the US.

CORRUPTION (16.5.1)

With the exit of the UK from the EU, no new official data is available. However, British anticorruption bodies are successful in preventing large-scale corruption.¹⁵ Pieces of legislation like the Bribery Act of 2010 embed “tough” penalties for various forms of corruption into law.¹⁶ Right now, the UK is under the auspices of the anti-corruption strategy, which, as of October 2022, has fulfilled “50 of the 134 commitments made.... with a further 68 on track to be met.” It expires in December 2022, and the government has a new plan in development.¹⁷

Despite these strengths, minor forms of corruption exist that undermine government legitimacy. For example, in 2021, former Health Secretary Matt Hancock did not publish details of government contracts and failed to disclose how he awarded a National Health Service (NHS) contract to a company owned by members of his family.¹⁸ Further, an NHS officer sold PPE equipment for his personal gain during the pandemic.¹⁹ Money has been used to buy influence and even secure positions of public office, with not

enough regulations in place to monitor the flow of political money.²⁰ The UK remains a hub of international dirty money as well. Professor of anti-corruption at the University of Sussex Robert Barrington claims that corruption in the UK is getting worse.²¹

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION (16.10.2)

The Public Access to Information indicator of the World Justice Project Rule of Law proxy index for SDG 16.10.2 has data for the UK from 2019 to 2021. The UK, in the same category as France, scored a 0.80 in 2019, but then dropped to 0.79 in 2020 and 2021, a score stagnation after a brief period of decline.

Numerous protections for public access to information are in place. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the government, local authorities, the NHS, state schools, and the police to publish information, and gives citizens the power to request information.²² In general, “information must be released unless there is a good reason not to.”²³ A robust system of checks and balances prevents encroachments on media freedom from the government. After the Ministry of Defense blacklisted *Declassified UK* for reporting on a British soldier who protested the war in Yemen, the Council of Europe successfully intervened.²⁴ The current media environment remains “lively and competitive,” with no barriers to access.²⁵

There are some concerns. The British government did not pass any official regulations about mass surveillance of private conversations after the *Nems of the World* phone hacking scandal.²⁶ During the pandemic, anti-lockdown activists and Northern Irish paramilitary groups harassed and threatened journalists.²⁷ There is no evidence, however, that this led to any hindrance in reliable reporting.

HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (16.A.1)

Human rights institutions function without issue in the UK. They enforce several pieces of legislation, including the Human Rights Act 1998, which protects twelve rights by law,²⁸ and the Equality Act 2010, which streamlined three anti-discrimination laws related to sex, race, and disability.²⁹ The Equality and Human Rights Commission is the overarching human rights organization that monitors and combats human rights abuses in the UK.³⁰

UNITED STATES

In recent years, the United States has experienced social unrest, political divide, domestic terrorism, and increased levels of gun violence. The US saw a rise in violence throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, which has contributed to the political polarization in the country. The US' inability to address the systemic issues has hindered the successful implementation of SDG 16 throughout the country.

INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE (16.1.1)

The UNODC has increased data availability for the US's intentional homicides in 2019 and 2020. It includes gender-segregated data in the country's three largest cities (New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago) and differentiates types of homicide. From 2019 to 2020, the total number of intentional homicide incidents rose from 16,669 to 21,570. This represents a 29% increase in overall deaths. Deaths in the three largest cities also increased in 2020, from 492, 319 and 258 deaths respectively to 771, 468, and 351. The last official value that the US reported for Intentional Homicide was in 2020, at 6.28 homicides per 100,000 people.

The destabilizing events of 2020, like the COVID-19 pandemic and the public murder of George Floyd at the hands of law enforcement, could explain the sharp numerical increase of violent crime that year. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 19,384 of the 24,576 American homicides in 2020 were caused by firearms.³¹ Gun violence has only worsened since 2020. In 2022, the US has recorded 579 events of mass shootings, many of which resulted in at least one person dying.³² The inability of the government to pass legislation that attempts to address the growing problem of gun violence means that firearms will continue to drive the US further away from their goal of 0.3 homicides per 100,000 people.

CONFLICT-RELATED DEATHS (16.1.2)

According to the data in the UCDP database, the US has had no conflict-related deaths since 2017. Officially, the United States has not reported a conflict-related death since 2001. There is no new data for this indicator. However, since this reporting, there have been deaths of American soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. There is no understanding as to why the United States has failed to report conflict related deaths, but the failure of not adhering to international standards creates significant holes in data.

CORRUPTION (16.5.1.5)

There was no data available for the US for corruption in Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer, but the UNODC has data for 2010 to 2020. Most recently, in 2020, the US scored a corruption value of 2.84 per 100,000 people.³³ Transparency International lists the US as the 27th least corrupt country out of 180.³⁴

Corruption in the US has only gotten worse, as the public confidence in US elections has been undercut by disinformation and record amounts of untraceable money in elections.³⁵ As the political scene in the United States becomes more intense, aspiring and established politicians will continue to gain more capital influence for funding their campaigns. With these campaigns will come higher levels of corruption, which will then continue to add to the lack of trust in elections and public institutions in general.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION (16.10.2)

The Public Access to Information indicator of the World Justice Project Rule of Law proxy index for SDG 16.10.2 has data for the US from 2019, 2020, and 2022. The US scored a 0.72 in both 2019 and 2020 but decreased by 5.48% to 0.69 in 2021. Furthermore, the US' regional ranking dropped from 14th to 20th out of 24 countries between 2019 and 2021, a dramatic and concerning decline.

The US signed the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) into law in 1967,³⁶ which allows the public to request access to records from any federal agency. Federal agencies are required to disclose any information requested under the FOIA unless it falls under one of the nine exemptions.³⁷ In recent years, the FOIA has been criticized for its long processes and heavy burden of the nine exemptions. The FOIA is flawed, and it brings into question whether citizens truly have full access to information from the government.

HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (16.A.1)

As the United States has not ratified the Paris Principles, they do not meet the targets of this indicator. The United States, however, has other human rights organizations that operate similarly in capacity to a national human rights institution. Organizations such as Human Rights Watch, Human Rights first, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and Human Rights Campaign, hold the government accountable at both local and national levels. Gross human rights violations such as racial killings, criminalization of homelessness and poverty, police brutality, and increasing surveillance, have increased in the past decade. These often go unchecked at the federal level, suggesting the need for another institution to aid in monitoring progress for this indicator and respect for human rights.

LOOKING AHEAD

The UK has faced a series of crises that has hurt the Union's stability and legitimacy. Because of the war in Ukraine, annual household energy bills have already increased 54% to £1,971. Without government intervention, costs could soar to around £6,433. But the need for a higher defense budget and the economy already reeling from the COVID-19 pandemic means that the government cannot cut spending.³⁸ Frustration with Conservative leadership has risen: "to live in Britain now is to feel like nothing works: not the National Health Service, not the railways, and not even work itself...." This frustration could boil over into societal upheaval.³⁹

At the same time, independence movements in Northern Ireland and Scotland are strengthening. In May 2022, the nationalist and anti-unionist Sinn Fein party won the majority in the Northern Ireland Assembly for the first time.⁴⁰ Scottish calls for independence are weaker than those in Northern Ireland but have still grown more popular. Recent polls say that 49% of the population favors independence, up from 45% from the independence referendum in 2014.⁴¹

The US continues to struggle with social, political, and economic division. These issues are supported by decades of damaging policies and a political system that has failed to ensure equality and progressive change to a more inclusive society. Although the US has more capacity for human security than other countries in this report, the glamor and the history of American exceptionalism have often hidden the reality of current issues crippling the progress of the United States and the successful implementation of SDG 16.

PART III: FRAGILE COUNTRIES

INTRODUCTION

The first country in the fragile state category, Brazil, has been plagued by nationalism and corruption. Following the 2018 general elections, the country has experienced a rise in human rights violations. The recent 2022 Presidential elections cycle spurred disinformation, political violence, and even more division. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's victory, which was the tightest election in Brazil's democratic history, may signal a desire by the people for better institutions and a true democracy. The vast political corruption, inaccurate reporting, and aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic impacts caused Brazil to backslide with respect to SDG 16 goals. A transformative agenda, however, could help Brazil achieve progress towards the 2030 Agenda.

Despite ranking as the most peaceful country in Western Africa (according to the Fragility Index), Ghana struggles with corruption, a deteriorating security apparatus, and demographic fragmentation between elites and average citizens. While implementation of SDG 16 is ongoing, these challenges threaten to stall progress, especially relating to the "intentional homicide" and "corruption" indicators.

The third country in this category, Indonesia, has experienced state fractioning due to its vast geographic spread and social pluralism due in part to its diverse population. Indonesia faces challenges stemming from corruption and socio-political fractionalization. While the country is on track to meet its 2030 goals for homicide and combatant related deaths, Indonesia struggles with many of the same challenges as Brazil and Ghana. These factors make it difficult for Indonesia to combat pervasive corruption, entrenched nationalism, and authoritarian tendencies countrywide. Although Indonesia has made notable progress across a variety of SDG 16 indicators, little to no progress has been made with others, such as human rights institutions (16.a.1) and government corruption (16.5.1).

BRAZIL

Nationalism, corruption, and human rights violations are longstanding problems in Brazil. Human Rights Watch has warned that under former president Jair Bolsonaro, the foundations of democracy in Brazil were being attacked and undermined with baseless and dangerous accusations. The 2018 and 2020 elections were marked with unprecedented levels of violence, including increasing attacks on freedom of expression of journalists and human rights advocates. However, newly elected President Lula has promised that with his return to power, he will repair Brazil's international brand and create a government truly for the people, a stark contrast to the previous administration's governing technique.

INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE (16.1.1)

Brazil has a history of lethal violence driven by drugs and arms trafficking in addition to land conflicts. The UNODC increased data availability for intentional homicides in Brazil in 2019 and 2020. It includes gender segregated data in the country's three largest cities (São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Brasília) and differentiates type of homicide.

From 2019 to 2020, the total number of intentional homicide incidents rose from 44,073 people to 47,722 people, an 8.28% increase. Further, the homicide rate per 100,000 persons in Brazil increased from 21 to 22. Men fall victim to intentional homicide more than females. In 2019, male homicides were at approximately 39 homicides per 100,000, and women 3 per 100,000 people. In 2020, male homicides increased to 42 per 100,000 people, and women to 4 per 100,000.

Brazil's three largest cities do not account for a large portion of the country's homicide rate. In 2019, the total intentional homicides in the three largest cities were 2,169, only 4.92% of the countrywide total (See [Appendix A](#)). In 2020, the number decreased to 2,016 intentional homicides, or 4.22% of the total. Most intentional violence occurs outside Brazil's three largest cities. In 2019, the rate per 100,000 people was 20.88; in 2020 it was 22.45. As of 2022, Brazil has the lowest homicide rate in fifteen years.

Experts warn that this decline does not mean public security policies are effective.⁴² The COVID-19 pandemic further increased violence against women and children, and the number of firearms in the hands of civilians doubled under former President Bolsonaro, which led to an increase in circumstantial homicides. Circumstantial homicides result from arguments in public places such as bars, nightclubs, and even in traffic. High levels of poverty, social inequality, and urbanization are also factors directly contributing to homicide rates in Brazil. These factors perpetuate a kind of structural violence that can be mitigated best by institutional reforms and policies.

CONFLICT-RELATED DEATHS (16.1.2)

As seen by the UCDP database information in Figure 1 below, conflict-related deaths in Brazil have sharply increased since the 2019 IEP audit, with the overall number increasing by 70.36%. Various forms of violence infringe upon daily life for Brazil's most disenfranchised. To make matters worse, the number of groups perpetrating this violence increased from five in 2019 to eleven in 2021 (See [Appendix B](#)).



Figure 1

The most common type of conflict in Brazil is social violence, relating mostly to the clashes between organized crime and the state. The number of deaths due to conflicts in rural areas has also increased with a subsequent rise in human rights violations and executions. The main perpetrators of violence are private agents who call themselves farmers, agro-militias, groups of hired gunmen, and the State.⁴³

This is followed by land conflicts, including that between indigenous peoples and other land users. Land conflicts in Brazil broke a record in 2020 for the second year running, reaching 1,576 cases – the highest since 1985, according to the Pastoral Land Commission (CPT).⁴⁴ Violent land attacks against indigenous populations tend to be by gold prospectors looking to exploit the reserves. During his time in office, President Bolsonaro refused to recognize any more Indigenous territories, further allowing these crimes to go unchecked by authorities.

Another form of violence that has recently increased in Brazil has been violence in the electoral process, such as against Brazilian citizens. The brutality against citizens exercising their right to vote in a democratic process is concerning to both the progress of SDG 16 and the state of the seemingly democratic nation. The deaths, threats, and intimidation to voters and policymakers alike is a cause of grave concern for the international community, with the recurrent violence permeating the socio-political and demographic fragmentation.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic hindered access to human rights institutions and community services established to protect the local populations. The lack of government protection and governmental concern remains alarming. None of these conflicts are unique to Brazil, and instead have been perpetuated by a political system rooted in institutionalized discrimination.

CORRUPTION (16.5.1)

New data for Brazilian corruption is available thanks to Ipsos Peru's field work from March 29, 2019 to May 4, 2019, when they surveyed 1,000 Brazilians. In the report findings, excluding non-respondents, 11% of those surveyed paid a bribe while 89% did not. Including non-respondents, percentages change to 8% paying a bribe, 69% not paying a bribe, and 22% not responding. In the previous 2015 corruption barometer for Latin America and the Caribbean, surveyors of 1,204 Brazilians between May 21, 2016 and June 10, 2016 found a 9% corruption rate, excluding non-respondents. Bribery has increased in Brazil, impeding the country's ability to reach targets for indicator 16.5.1.

After a massive 2014 anti-corruption probe dubbed “Operation Car Wash” revealed a major corruption scheme in Brazil, numerous anti-corruption policies and programs have been created. Despite laws such as the 2013 Anti-Corruption Law, which created civil and administrative liability for legal entities and implemented extraterritorial reach for corruption offences, anti-corruption efforts have been under threat. The biggest of the threats is political interference in law enforcement institutions.

In December 2020, the federal government issued its Anti-Corruption Plan, outlining over one hundred actions aimed at enhancing the mechanisms of prevention and detection, and associated with holding entities and individuals liable for corrupt acts. The government has also encouraged and assisted with the establishment of anti-corruption police units by each state police for in Brazil, providing training for officers and civilian personnel to fight money laundering, tax evasion, and other financial crimes. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic slowed roll out of this plan and its implementation. But with a shift in the administration, this plan has the potential to aid Brazil in achieving the targets for this indicator and SDG 16.

However, the anti-corruption measures in Brazil have done little to curb corruption at the highest levels of government. Brazil’s political and electoral systems are at least partially responsible for corruption, as they create a vicious cycle that ensures that pervasive corruption remains. Brazil’s last three presidents have had major corruption scandals. In 2021, there were numerous reports of corruption at various levels of government, and delays in judicial proceedings against persons accused of corruption due to constitutional provisions that protect elected officials from prosecution.⁴⁵ The country’s poorest inhabitants and indigenous populations suffer the most from corruption, but a decline of political participation in Brazil puts this indicator at risk.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION (16.10.2)

The Public Access to Information indicator of the World Justice Project Rule of Law proxy index for SDG 16.10.2 has data for Brazil from 2019 to 2022. Brazil, categorized as Latin American & Caribbean and Upper Middle income, scored 0.62 in 2019, decreased to 0.61 in 2020, and then remained at the same score in 2021. Out of the 128 countries measured in 2020 and the 139 measured in 2021, Brazil’s world ranking shifted from 28th to 32nd. This change shows an increase in worldwide data availability in thirteen states that subsequently affected Brazil’s worldwide ranking. Brazil faltered in pursuit of its SDG 16.10.2 targets, and lags in comparison to other countries included in the index.

The Access to Information Law (AIL) was introduced in Brazil in 2011. The law allows the public to access information with detailed information on the process for acquiring data. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, President Bolsonaro signed a provisional measure that restricted access to government information and suspended the requirement for public institutions to respond to information requests.

In 2019, attacks against journalists or media vehicles increased significantly.⁴⁶ These attacks were partially motivated and encouraged by the President’s crusade against the media and were further intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic.

HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (16.A.1)

Although Brazil has a Ministry of Human Rights, local human rights organizations have stated that ministry positions were either unfilled or filled by individuals who did not support human rights agendas. Local NGOs in Brazil have also reported that civil society's role in policy discussions had been considerably reduced.⁴⁷ As such, Brazil does not have a registered national human rights institution, according to the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI).

The Chamber of Deputies and the Senate have human rights committees and subcommittees that work in tandem with domestic and international human rights organizations. However, funding and outside political pressure impacts the success and nature of these bodies that protect human rights. No independent national human rights institution exists in Brazil.

Despite the existence of the rule of law and human rights institutions, Brazil is plagued with structural discrimination. This discrimination exposes Brazil's most vulnerable people to violence perpetrated by criminal organizations as well as discrimination from governmental services. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the most vulnerable peoples were overlooked for health services and vaccinations. Discrimination against Brazil's most vulnerable people includes violence against indigenous populations and institutional violence.

The Brazilian security apparatus remains unchecked with high levels of racial profiling, a situation that is not unique to Brazil and is a problem in many other countries looked at in this report. The justice system continues to overlook human rights cases and violations stemming from institutional violence.

GHANA

Ghana is perhaps the most, peaceful, stable, and developed country in West Africa. Ghana has one of the healthiest democracies in Africa, too. Eight free and fair elections have been held in Ghana since 1992.⁴⁸ It is a nation with a history of successful political transitions, freedom of the press, an independent judiciary, a strong civil society, and a determination to ensure government transparency. Nonetheless, Ghana struggles with corruption, a deteriorating security apparatus, and demographic fragmentation between elites and average citizens, as illustrated by their voluntary national review (VNR). Lack of trust in opposition parties and many public institutions is widespread in Ghana, with citizens having more faith in religious organizations and traditional authorities. The poor state of security, increased population density, and the high rate of tension between citizens and migrants around the border has increased crime in the periphery regions. These challenges threaten to stall progress.

INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE (16.1.1)

Although measured by the UNODC, there has been no new intentional homicide data for Ghana since 2017. Despite being ranked as the most peaceful country in Western Africa, Ghana struggles with its increase in localized conflicts. Its strong judicial system has aided in reducing crime in the country but has trouble dealing with the periphery clashes between citizens and migrants. Violent vigilantism and political thuggery threaten Ghana's democratic, electoral, and judicial systems.⁴⁹ Indeed, political violence has decreased youth rates of employment and lowered confidence in politicking.

CONFLICT-RELATED DEATHS (16.1.2)

There has been no new data since 2017. The National Peace Council (NPC) has collaborated with academic and INGOs to address this issue by encouraging the Ghanaian government to pass a bill.

CORRUPTION (16.5.1)

Although released in the Corruption Barometer for Africa 2019, the fieldwork on bribery done by the Center for Democratic Development (CDD) on a sample of 2,400 Ghanaians occurred from September 9 to September 25, 2017. Therefore, data is available, but it does not represent the years following the 2019 SDG audit.

Endemic corruption⁵⁰ threatens human rights, political stability, and development in Ghana. According to the National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (NACAP) Report, the causes of corruption in Ghana include institutional weaknesses, poor ethical standards, skewed incentives structure, and insufficient enforcement of laws within a patrimonial social and political context.⁵¹

In 1998, the government established an anti-corruption institution called the Serious Fraud Office (SFO), mandated to investigate corrupt practices in both public and private institutions. With an independent institution dedicated to combatting corruption, politicians have been arrested and charged with corruption. A code of ethics for government appointees was published in 2013, and in 2016, the Office of the Special Prosecutor was established. Finally, the Right to Information (RTI) Law provides criminal penalties for corruption by government officials. However, implementation remains a large issue. Officials frequently engage in corrupt practices with impunity.⁵² As such, corruption remains present in all branches of government, including security services.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION (16.10.2)

The Public Access to Information indicator of the World Justice Project Rule of Law proxy index for SDG 16.10.2 has data for Ghana from 2019, 2020, and 2022. Ghana, categorized as Sub-Saharan Africa and Lower Middle Income scored 0.38 in 2019, 0.42 in 2020, and 0.41 in 2021. Ghana's 7.89% score increase from 2019 to 2020 shows an upward trend in public access to information in Ghana.

Measures do exist in Ghana to protect public access to information. The 1992 constitution guarantees every citizen the right to access to information and deems it a key component for advancing democracy. The Right to Information (RTI) law was passed in 2019 to promote transparency and accountability in public affairs. The government seems to endorse widespread access to information, too. In March 2022, the Ghanaian Ministry of Information held a two-day workshop titled "Enhancing Citizen Access to Information in Ghana," in which they collaborated with government, media, and citizen stakeholders to improve access to information,⁵³ protect the RTI Law, and support citizen access to information as guaranteed by the Ghanaian constitution. Further, in August 2022, the Ministry of Health became the first public institution to set up a Right to Information Unit to improve access to information and public accountability. The Deputy Minister of Health declared the establishment of the unit a "turning point" to advancing and encouraging access to information and government transparency.

However, problems do exist. There is no clear information on how to request and retrieve information, nor on the different protocols for accessing confidential versus non-confidential information. Even with the RTI law in place, lack of organization and access to information officials makes access difficult.

HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (16.A.1)

Ghana's national human rights institution Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, established by the Ghanaian Constitution in 1992, was last reviewed by the GANHRI in March 2019. It received an "A" rating. The Commission transparently lists the number of cases and continues to actively close cases. The Commission also added a new category of "pending" cases in the report. When comparing cases between 2019 and 2020, 2020 experienced 9.59% fewer cases than in 2019, but also closed 13.51% fewer cases. Ghana's human rights institutions have also received an "A" ranking under Paris Principles too.

Nonetheless, the Amnesty International Report 21/22 showcases hypocrisy at the higher levels of power.⁵⁴ Indeed, the existence of national human rights institutions, however, does not eradicate or prevent incidents of human rights violations. Incidents of excessive use of force by the security forces, forced evictions that leave people homeless, overcrowded prisons, violence against women, and attacks against the LGBTQ community are still reported. Impunity remains a problem (State 2020). In 2021, the Ghanaian parliament attempted to pass a bill criminalizing the LGBTQ community. The Commission suffers from low salaries, poor working conditions, and the loss of staff to other governmental organizations and NGOs.⁵⁵ However, public confidence in the institution is high.

INDONESIA

Indonesia has experienced state fragmenting because of its vast geographical spread and diverse population. It is at risk of democratic backsliding, with conflicts of interest filling the party leaderships, and human rights, the rule of law, and the protector of minorities have weakened in the past decade under the presidency of Joko Widodo. These factors make it difficult for Indonesia to combat nationalism, corruption, and authoritarian tendencies. Although Indonesia has made noted progress across a variety of SDG 16 indicators, little to no progress has been made with others, such as human rights institutions, and government corruption.

INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE (16.1.1)

Although measured by the UNODC, there has been no new intentional homicide data for Indonesia since 2004. The Indonesian police force is one of the least trusted of Indonesia's law enforcement bodies, with public trust in the institution further decreasing after the deadly soccer stampede in October 2022.

CONFLICT-RELATED DEATHS (16.1.2)

The UCDP database has made more 16.1.2 data for Indonesia available since the 2019 audit. From 2019 to 2021, the number of conflict related deaths roughly doubled each year. Starting at the best estimate of fifteen conflict related deaths in 2019, the number rose to twenty-two in 2020 and then fifty-three in 2021. As such, there is a 253.33% change between 2019 and 2021, with an average increase of 93.79% each year.

CORRUPTION (16.5.1)

New data for Indonesian corruption is available thanks to the field work on bribery done by Effience 3/RAD Research from June 15, 2020 to July 24, 2020 on a sample of 1,000 Indonesians. In the report findings, 30% paid a bribe while 70% did not, excluding non-respondents. In the previous 2017 corruption barometer for Asia, surveyors of 1,000 Indonesians between April 26, 2016 and June 27, 2016 found a 24% corruption rate, excluding non-respondents. This data shows that bribery increased in Indonesia.

To make matters worse, President Widodo, in 2019, created a law to curb the powers of the Corruption Eradication Commission, pursued anti-government protestors, and intensified internet censorship under the guise of maintaining social stability. He appointed a former general accused of human rights abuses as his defense minister, a stark contrast to his campaign promises of defending democracy and human rights.

Furthermore, the Corruption Eradication Commission, national police, the armed forces' Special Economics Crime Unit, and the Attorney General's Office may all investigate and prosecute corruption cases.⁵⁶ However, the Corruption Eradication Commission does not have the authority to investigate members of the military or to investigate cases where state losses are valued at less than one billion local currency, which equates to approximately \$64.21 U.S. Dollars. The commission's supervisory body is handpicked by the president and is part of Indonesia's executive branch. Investigators, therefore, have been harassed, intimidated, and/or attacked because of their work and their level in government.

The Anti-Corruption Behavior Index (IPAK) was developed to measure the level of extortion and nepotism in the country. The data consists of public opinion on everyday practices of authorities and experiences related to public service. Higher scores signify a higher intolerance towards corrupt practices. Since 2015, IPAK scoring has shown an increase some years and decrease some years.

A Transparency International study and the World Justice Project both done in 2020 confirmed the decrease of the state's capacity globally to prevent and address corruption. The COVID-19 pandemic hindered reliable reporting, making Indonesia vulnerable to further corruption. Corruption continues to prevent Indonesia from achieving their development goals, including economic growth.⁵⁷

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION (16.10.2)

The Public Access to Information indicator of the World Justice Project Rule of Law proxy index for SDG 16.10.2 increased in Indonesian data availability for 2019, 2020, and 2022. Indonesia, categorized as Asia and Pacific and Lower Middle Income scored 0.54 in 2019, then inched to 0.55 in 2020, only to fall back to 0.54 in 2021. As such, Indonesia has made no progress since 2019. However, Indonesia went from being ranked 9th out of 15 measured states in the region in 2019 and 2020 to 8th in 2021. This shows that public access to information in other regional states have diminished, while Indonesia has stayed consistent.

Access to information is in Indonesian law. The Indonesian Press Law recognizes the right of the press and the public to obtain information. It stipulates that the domestic press has the right to seek, acquire, and disseminate ideas and information, and must fulfill the public's right to know.⁵⁸ Constitutional amendments in 2000 incorporated the right to information into the Indonesian Constitution.

Despite these strengths, the Public Information Disclosure Act states that only Indonesian citizens and/or Indonesian corporations have the right to request information. Foreigners cannot access information, even if they live in Indonesia. Additionally, many Indonesians fear that requesting information will be perceived as challenging authority and will be met with consequences. Finally, inefficient information management systems and a lack of capacity and skills in public bodies means that information is not sufficiently available.

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in 2017 found an increase in barriers for press freedom implementation in Indonesia: pressure from the press company owners to the editorial board including in determining the media's political direction, local government intervention in numerous news outlets, and violence against journalists.

HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (16.A.1)

Indonesia's national human rights institution the National Commission on Human Rights was last reviewed by the GANHRI in March 2017 and received an "A" ranking. Complaint cases received by the Commission dropped by close to half, from roughly 4,309 in 2019 to 2,568 in 2020, according to the annual report. The number of cases received continues to marginally drop, with 2,499 received in 2021. However, the Commission's annual report changed the data metric in February 2019 from cases filed to cases received. Thus, the exact number of cases received in 2019 cannot be confirmed. Still, from 2019 to 2021, cases received decreased by 42.01%.

Indonesia received a top rating for the Paris Principles, with the National Commission for Human Rights (Komnas HAM) as the country's overarching human rights organization. It is an independent institution whose position is at the same level as other state institution whose function is to carry out studies, research, counseling, monitoring, and mediation of human rights.

However, the Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) notes that freedom of opinion and expression in Indonesia has declined because of a lack of punishment enforcement. In 2021, there were numerous human rights violations. Despite endeavors to promote and protect human rights, Indonesia continues to have discriminatory local regulations that predominantly harm Indonesian women.

LOOKING AHEAD

Brazil faces growing violence and systematic violations of rights. The negative impacts from the Bolsonaro administration on the protection of human rights and promotion of sustainable development reversed years of progress. Some government decisions contradict principles outlined in the Brazilian constitution and in international agreements. Polarization in Brazil poses a risk to the country's democracy and its capacity to address pressing issues.

With President Lula returning to lead Brazil, the country has a chance to not only make significant progress towards the targets outlined by SDG 16 but also progress towards the other SDGs. From 2003 to 2011, Lula presided over a Brazil on the rise. During this time, through well-funded social programs and economic stewardship, over twenty million people were lifted out of poverty. Lula has pledged to refocus government attention on empowering state-run companies, ensuring transparent, by-the-book processes for change, and strengthening institutions. A major challenge for the new administration will be repairing trust in democratic processes and institutions and enforcing the anti-corruption measures.

As for Ghana, corruption and the deteriorating security apparatus pose threats to any progress towards SDG 16. Fighting continues between tribal leaders, and wealth inequality remains visible at a community level. As of 2022, Ghana is not on track to achieve most of the SDGs, including SDG 16. Access to accurate information has impeded effective tracking of the progress and inadequate funding has resulted in slow implementation of the goals.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted progress of the goals and increased domestic violence in Ghana. The consequences of the pandemic caused a shift in resources away from critical SDG actions to address the immediate concerns. Since before the pandemic, Ghana has decentralized governmental structure to promote localization of the SDGs. Although the pandemic derailed some of the progress, measures have already been in place to ensure coordinated efforts at the local, national, and international level of governance.

Finally, Indonesia has layers of development inequality that directly impact the progress of SDG 16. The cause of such inequalities, as outlined by Indonesia's VNR, include lack of access, unresponsive services, and identity-based discrimination. While the government took steps to investigate and prosecute some officials who committed human rights abuses and corruption, impunity for historic and recent serious human rights abuses remains a significant concern, especially as some of those implicated in past abuses were given public awards and honors, received promotions, and occupied senior official positions.⁵⁹

Discussions within Indonesia surrounding amending the constitution to extend the presidential term limit could set a precedent for other constitutional changes. Changes that would benefit certain groups and political parties and would further cause backsliding of key democratic structures. Since President Widodo won the presidential election in 2014, he has been a self-proclaimed democratic reformer. However, under his presidency, democracy has been undermined, insider politics have been growing, and human rights have been curtailed.

PART IV: CONFLICT-PRONE COUNTRIES

INTRODUCTION

Following the 2016 peace agreements with The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), Colombia made notable strides towards hitting the targets identified in SDG 16. Recently, however, the peace process has rapidly deteriorated as combatants regained arms and criminal activities picked up. Consequently, government corruption and intentional homicides have increased. Much of the progress achieved since 2016 has regressed and Colombia is no longer on track to achieve the goals laid out in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

Many pressing issues face India, including unreported violence against women, climate change-related natural disasters, and widespread corruption, all underscored by a democratic backslide under the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Journalists, political opponents, women, and religious minorities are among the targets who are presently suffering from state persecution. Due to these shortcomings, India struggles to fulfill its SDG 16 goals. It needs to address these issues to see notable progress.

Mexico experiences problems with racial identity in the workforce and their judicial system with the incorporation of “mestizaje,” or racial mixing, obscuring systematic discrimination. President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) continues to pursue wasteful, outdated, and misguided state-led capitalism, further corrupting Mexican governance. Violence from cartels, marked corruption, and racial cleavages will continue to prevent Mexico from properly implementing SDG 16.

COLOMBIA

Numerous SDG 16 targets remain distant for Colombia. Colombia's tumultuous history with violence associated with the war on drugs, and the presence of armed guerrilla groups like the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and other criminal networks in the country all hinder SDG 16 within the country. After the peace deal in 2016, priorities from the executive office shifted as the Duque administration pursued a "peace plan" that relied heavily on strategic police and military intervention in zones with high levels of violence to dismantle drug trafficking networks, which resulted in former guerrillas returning to picking up arms.⁶⁰ Due to occasional violence, Colombia still faces challenges regarding its SDG 16 goals. FARC, the National Liberation Army (ELN), and several other criminal networks still have a presence in Colombia, and their operations continue to have an impact on the country's efforts towards implementing SDG 16.

INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE (16.1.1)

Intentional homicide is a substantial social issue within Colombia. The country has seen progress over the past three decades, but the 2020 total rate of intentional homicide was 22.64 per 100,000 people, a far cry from their goal of 0.3 per 100,000 people. Intentional homicide rates in certain departments are alarming, especially in places where armed militant groups and cartels still have a visible presence, like Arauca, Cauca, Valle de Cauca, and Putumayo. As Colombia welcomes their new President Gustavo Petro in 2022, citizens hope their new leader will reach a definitive peace,⁶¹ which will bring down the intentional homicide rate.

CONFLICT-RELATED DEATHS (16.1.2)

Colombia has addressed conflict-related deaths as part of its peace negotiation. However, even after the agreements and ratifications of the peace negotiation process, armed guerrilla groups still have a presence in Colombia, and combat-related deaths still occur, and have increased as of late, as seen in Figure 2. Indeed, FARC guerrilla fighters, due to the agreement's weak implementation and unkept promises by the Colombian government, rejected the 2016 peace deal and started to rearm in 2019.⁶² The failures of the peace process and the disregard for the agreements from the previous Duque administration constitute a challenge for the next administration. Success now depends on the newly proposed peace negotiations by the Petro administration.⁶³

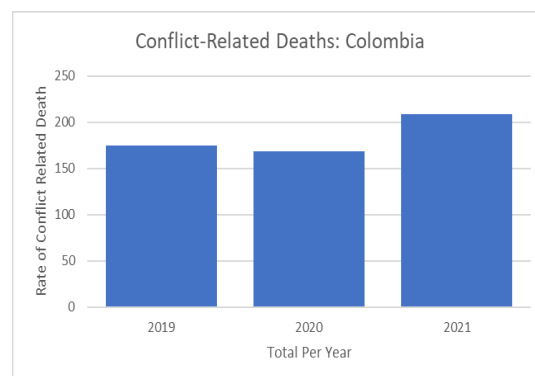


Figure 2

CORRUPTION (16.5.1)

Colombia last reported a value of 39/100 in 2021. Over the past five years, Colombia has seen a rise in public sector corruption. According to Colombia Reports, 44.1% was administrative corruption which includes bribery, influence peddling, and embezzlement, 26.7% political, and 9.8% judicial. The other 19.4% falls within the private sector. Rampant corruption impacts other areas of SDG implementation. According to Gerardo Andrés Hernández Montes, the executive director for Transparency for Colombia: “the consequences of corruption go far beyond economics. In 311 cases, corruption affected children and adolescents, students, and the socioeconomically vulnerable population. In all of them, corruption accentuated inequalities and was an obstacle for vulnerable populations to improve the quality of their lives.”⁶⁴

As such, the root causes of violence in Colombia have never been eradicated, Colombian corruption cuts deep. Urban areas like Medellín, Cali, and Bogotá have better conditions to report cases of corruption compared to more rural areas where resources are limited.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION (16.10.2)

Public access to information in Colombia is legally enshrined in “Law 57 of 1985.” Article 74 of the Constitution guarantees everyone the right of access to public documents, except in cases established by law; these are precisely the cases on which the legal reserve is based. Today, Colombia ranks as the 35th country in the world in terms of “open government,” which includes publicized laws and government data, right to information, civic participation, and complaint mechanisms.

In June 2012, the Colombian Senate approved a draft law on the Transparency and Right to National Public Information, which included a provision that removed information related to defense, national security, public order, and international relations from the public sphere.⁶⁵ Although this happened a decade ago, it set a precedent from which similar laws could arise again. If one gets passed, it will negatively impact Colombia’s 16.10.2 indicator score.

HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (16.A.1)

Colombia does have national human rights institutions that is in compliance with the Paris Principles. Defensoría del Pueblo: Colombia is a human rights institution in charge of defending, promoting, and disseminating the human rights, guarantees and freedoms of the inhabitants of the national territory and Colombians residing abroad, against acts, threats or illegal, unfair, unreasonable, negligent or arbitrary of any authority or individuals.⁶⁶ Defensoría del Pueblo has three categories of strategic objectives: human rights, the sustainable development goals, and peaceful coexistence.

Despite the existence of human rights institutions, Colombia has suffered numerous episodes of human rights abuses in recent years, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Protests erupted when the Duque government introduced new tax reforms that the public viewed as regressive. During these demonstrations, specifically in Cali, there were reports of at least 44 protestors killed, with 28 of those deaths attributed to the police. Human Rights Watch registered hundreds of other human rights violations during these demonstrations, like assaults, sexual violence, and arbitrary detention.⁶⁷ The Colombian government acknowledged the abuses, but referred to the protestors as terrorists, which redirected the responsibility for human rights abuses away from the state police.

INDIA

India faces major challenges to meeting its SDG 16 goals. In recent years, new discriminatory laws and policies against religious minorities have caused tensions to surge.⁶⁸ The current political party in power, Bharatiya Janata, is responsible for the ascent of Hindu nationalism, as party members motivate their supporters to carry out attacks on religious minorities and political opposition. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed many systematic weaknesses in India which has had an impact on successful SDG 16 implementation.

INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE (16.1.1)

India has seen a stagnant rate of 3 homicides per 100,000 people since 2015. On average in 2021, 82 homicides or murders were reported in India every day. “Disputes” are the main cause of homicides, but there was no concrete information about what kind of disputes lead to homicide.⁶⁹ The last time India reported a figure for intentional homicide was in 2020, at 2.95 per 100,000 people.

Although India has shown moderate progress in achieving their goal rate of 0.30 per 100,000 people, the current rise of Hindu nationalism and attacks on religious minorities may cause a backslide in this area. Hindu preachers have held rallies where they have openly called for the mass killing of Muslims, and local officials have called for the destruction of property owned by Muslims.⁷⁰ As nationalism and religious radicalism continues to spread throughout the country, India may see a spike in intentional homicides in the next annual report, setting the country further away from meeting their SDG 16.1.1 goal.

CONFLICT-RELATED DEATHS (16.1.2)

India still struggles with conflict-related deaths as they try to de-escalate the conflicts in Kashmir and Jammu. In 2020, India recorded 523 conflict-related deaths. The conflict in Kashmir hinders progress toward India’s SDG 16.1.2 goal. Indeed, religious differences between India and Pakistan have fueled the conflict to the point that opportunities for a diplomatic resolution appear to be nonexistent. Border tensions with China also influence India’s 16.1.2 score. In February 2021, it was reported that India lost 20 soldiers, noted as the deadliest clash between China and India in more than four decades.⁷¹

CORRUPTION (16.5.1)

Corruption in India has shown stagnant results since 2012. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has not instituted any kind of improvements for corruption in India, despite calling nepotism and corruption two of the biggest problems in India during a speech in August 2021 (HT).⁷² Political corruption has undermined the rule of law. Elected leaders often slip through loopholes and are not effectively punished.⁷³

While India struggles with political corruption, it also faces additional problems related to bribery. In 2020, India scored a 39% bribery rate, which is the worst in Asia.⁷⁴ In a country with such a large, growing population, access to public services is a complicated and bureaucratic process. Many citizens often turn to bribes to speed up the process of accessing basic services. Recovering from the global COVID-19 pandemic, many struggle with health-related and public safety issues. These problems combined with the rise of violence hinders India’s progress on meeting the long-term goal of 88.6.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION (16.10.2)

India passed the Rights to Information Act in 2005. This law aims to provide clarity of information to Indian citizens, contain corruption, and promote accountability in the working of every public authority.⁷⁵ India's growing capacity to provide public access to information exposes a concerning disconnect of the Rights to Information Act's purpose of containing corruption. As India continues to provide further access to information for its citizens, the growing issue of corruption lingers.

Online access to information also remains a challenge. The Ministry of Statistics has published laws, documents, and even dedicated a section of the website to the SDGs. However, with widespread internet infrastructure problems (SDG 9.C), citizens in rural areas who do not have internet cannot access online information.

HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (16.A.1)

As of 2021, independent national human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles exist in India. However, human rights abuses continue throughout the country. Human Rights Watch uncovered Indian reports of deaths from abusive police forces, prisoners dying in captivity, and human rights defenders being jailed for "politically motivated terrorism." The pushback from the state on human rights defenders may affect India's compliance with the Paris Principles in the next couple of years.

Religious violence remains a concerning problem in India, motivated by Hindu nationalists against Muslim minorities. Throughout the country, national and various state governments have begun to tolerate widespread hate and violence.⁷⁶ The Human Rights Commission of India (HRCI) has failed to address and act upon these abuses, which has led to a lack of accountability for both the government and the violent groups that commit or encourage acts of violence. India's failure to address human rights violations against religious minorities may hinder their compliance with the Paris Principles if current conditions regarding religious violence transpires.

MEXICO

Mexico has a history of corruption and violence, especially because of its large cartel presence. Because of cartels, homicide and corruption at every level of government have increased in the past decade. Recently, President AMLO has mobilized the Mexican National Guard to combat the nation's cartels, which could lead to more destructive firefights. As Mexico attempts to reshape its security sector and decrease cartel-related violence, it may hinder progress toward SDG 16.

INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE (16.1.1)

Mexico faces significant challenges with meeting the long-term objective of 0.3 homicides per 100,000 people. Cartel violence has fueled Mexico's high homicide rate of 28.37 per 100,000 people, last measured in 2020. It is important to note that cartel violence does count as intentional homicide, despite the groups' increased militarization. Indeed, this violence is not considered "political in nature," involving state actors against nonstate actors.

However, this criteria for homicide deaths may no longer apply once the Mexican National Guard begins to fight cartels. In fall 2022, the military was put in control of the previously civilian-led National Guard, a measure taken as part of Mexico's effort to expand the role of the military in tackling the country's extreme violence.⁷⁷ This decision will have an influence on the country's homicide rate, but it may also increase human rights violations, conflict related deaths, and the risk of authoritarianism.

Mexico also faces problems with femicide, or the murder of a woman for gender-based reasons. In 2021, Mexico reported 3,750 homicides involving women. More than a quarter of these were classified as femicide.⁷⁸ Femicide in Mexico has shown to be a big issue within the country as violence between criminal networks and the state continues to grow. Gender-based homicide in Mexico is often thrown under the rug at the highest levels of leadership, as Mexico is a country deeply rooted in machismo culture, or the set of ideals and beliefs that support the superiority of men to women. Although Mexico has one of the most progressive constitutions for gender and feminist policies, the rate of femicides is growing rapidly.⁷⁹ At the same time, violence between cartels and the state is also increasing. Noting the history of Mexico regarding machismo-ism, and understanding the gender-based violence dynamic, it is likely femicides in Mexico will grow at an alarming rate.

In Figure 3 below, the total number of intentional homicides between 2019 and 2020 hardly improved. These figures also include the total number of femicides in Mexico for the given years. These figures are expected to increase with further cartel violence.



Figure 3

CONFLICT-RELATED DEATHS (16.1.2)

The relationship between intentional homicide and conflict-related deaths in Mexico is difficult to understand because of the nature of Mexican cartel violence. Seen in Figure 4 below, Mexico's conflict related deaths are on a steady rise. As previously mentioned, Mexico's deaths with the war on drugs is not considered conflict related due to the violence being criminal, not political. In addition, cartel warfare has not met the "intensity threshold," defined as at least 25 deaths between the same two organized groups in one calendar year, or when many of the criminal deaths are impossible to attribute to any identifiable actor. Due to the various cartel and criminal networks in Mexico, criminal violence is coded as non-state conflict.⁸⁰ However, the intensity threshold does bring up the question of measuring conflict-related deaths when death tolls are significantly high. This attempt to combat crime in Mexico brings concerning implications for the security sector as the cartel and the Mexican National Guard will face off with one another. This motion also brings forward human rights and public safety concerns, especially since it is constitutionally illegal to mobilize the National Guard in this way.⁸¹

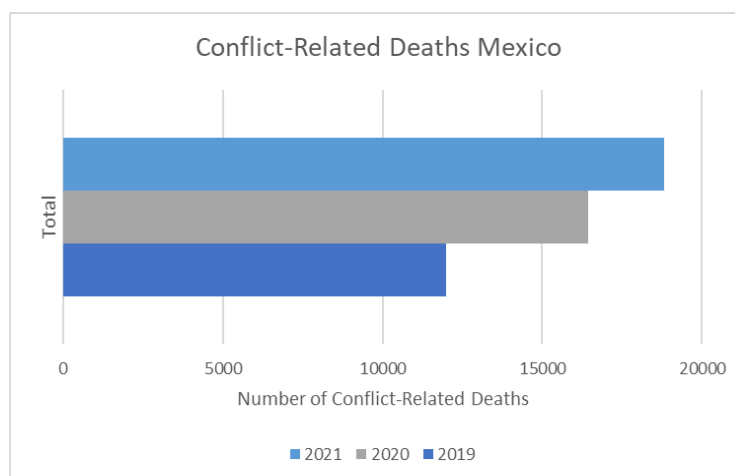


Figure 4

CORRUPTION (16.5.1)

Mexico's long-term objective for corruption is 88.6. In 2021, Mexico scored 31. Mexico has a long history of corruption, as politicians at all levels of government have participated in exchanges with the cartel network, even after the AMLO administration proclaimed that combating corruption was a high priority.⁸² As part of this effort, President AMLO held a referendum in August 2021 that detailed whether past political actors since 1988 should be tried for crimes including election fraud, corruption, and loss of lives to neoliberalism.⁸³ However, with so much historical corruption, such a process would take years to implement, especially as cases of corruption may emerge through the effort itself. Anti-corruption efforts have since stalled. The score has remained stagnant over a two-year period at 31/100. In Mexico's fragile environment, elected leaders will continue to use corruption to obtain financial and political power, keeping the country away from their goal of 88.6.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION (16.10.2)

Mexico possesses an access to information law which was signed into law by President Vicente Fox in 2002.⁸⁴ This law is responsible for the formation of the Federal Institute for Access to Information (*Instituto Federal de Acceso a la Información Pública*), or INAI. This law guarantees Mexican citizens access to information that they requested from any authority at the federal level, autonomous bodies, political parties, trusts, public funds, unions, or any other person that performs acts of authority.⁸⁵

However, in January 2021, President AMLO introduced a proposal that would bring the institutions responsible for providing information to citizens, journalists, and human rights organizations under complete control of the government. The president's fight against INAI has produced over five hundred information requests made to the Office of the President, which has resulted in the President's administration pursuing dozens of lawsuits which challenge the release of public information. This attack is concerning due to Mexico's history of corruption and human rights violations. Mexico needs institutions like INAI to keep these forces at bay.

HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (16.A.1)

Mexico does have independent national human rights organizations that are reported as compliant with the Paris Principles. The National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) is responsible for independently investigating human rights abuses and defending journalists, civil rights defenders, women, children, victims of crimes, people with disabilities, indigenous and Afro-Mexicans, and a host of economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights.

President AMLO has continued to question the value of the independent public agencies like CNDH.⁸⁶ As President AMLO continues to limit the capacity of CNDH by silencing critics and undermining Mexican democracy, the need for human rights organizations and institutions in Mexico becomes more dire. CNDH remains a vital channel from which human rights watchdogs can hold the government accountable for current and future abuses of human rights in Mexico.

LOOKING AHEAD

Corruption and religious violence are the two most visible aggravating factors that can hinder successful SDG 16 implementation. The Indian government does not have the capacity to effectively address these domestic challenges. Global actors also have failed to address India's human rights record. India has moved away from a position of accountability. To date, the European Parliament remains the only EU body that has raised concerns on human rights in India (HRW).

As Mexico's leadership puts forward problematic security sector reform and attacks the autonomy of independent institutions that protect human rights and provide the public with transparent information, there will be continuing challenges that hinder successful SDG 16 implementation. As a political body that rejects democratic norms and policies strengthens, the problems of violence, corruption, and human rights abuses that have left a lasting negative legacy in Mexico will continue, furthering the divide to sustainability.

Across the conflict-prone countries, data availability increased from 2010 to 2020. There were no clear increases or decreases, but rather periods of oscillation, which makes sense as these countries suffer periods of increased instability. India's data looks scant when compared to the robustness and descriptiveness of Mexico and Colombia's data. As such, the latter two's data sets provide more clarity on the significance of this indicator.

There seems to be a mixed to positive reaction from "conflict-prone" states when measuring their progress towards 16.10.2. Colombia's public access to information may have decreased slightly from 2020 to 2021, but this change shows that Colombia's data is more readily available worldwide. However, both Colombia's and Mexico's worldwide comparisons may still be skewed by a lack of data. India's public access to information has shown no major changes since 2019.

The "interstate" violence label is misleading in Mexico and India. In Mexico, the "interstate" violence is gang-related, while in India, "interstate" refers to violence between Muslims and Hindu. This misleading reporting creates a blurry gray area when determining a conflict related death or homicide, specifically in countries where many factions' conflicts with each other, or against the state. For reference, the charts 0.0 and 0.1 below highlight the conflict related deaths and intentional homicides in Mexico. With already high rates in Mexico, and the national guard facing off with cartels, these numbers will become harder to interpret, creating a challenge for reporting for both indicators.

These countries, or others with similar contexts of violence, whether that be vast criminal networks, cartels, or violence based on nationalism will continue to be dragged further away from their SDG 16 goals. These countries are continuously pulled into or engaged in domestic conflicts that often include guerilla groups, groups based in nationalism or religious extremism, and cartels. In Colombia, FARC, ELN, and Clan del Golfo are all currently active, but have shown recent support to negotiate peace. In Mexico, there are various cartel groups engaged in constant violence and corruption in all sectors of the country. In India, the current rhetoric calling for religious violence coming from the highest power in the country contributes to the divide. These countries will continue to struggle with implementing SDG 16 unless the issues of human rights, death related to violence, and corruption are addressed.

PART V: CONFLICT-AFFECTED COUNTRIES

INTRODUCTION

Haiti is the most fragile country in the western hemisphere, suffering from pervasive economic and political instability. The country has experienced multiple coups, leading to social unrest, a lack of access to clean water, and food insecurity, therefore eliminating the necessary foundation for a sustainable peace. Across all chosen indicators, Haiti struggles to make any notable progress, further confounded by its inability to measure improvements due to lacking infrastructure and extreme violence.

Libya descended into conflict following the Arab Spring in 2011, sparked by the assassination of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi and two civil wars that followed. A ceasefire was agreed upon in 2020 between Libya's two opposing governing bodies, and in 2022, Fathi Bashagha was appointed the prime minister of Libya. However, the previous government refused to transfer power, which brought conflict once again. Ongoing military conflict, the lack of an established central government, and the inability of the transitional government to maintain their assets has made it difficult to implement any of SDG 16's provisions across most indicators.

Finally, following Myanmar's coup in 2021, the country has experienced an increase in human rights violations and violent conflict. Armed conflict has displaced over one million people, both internally and externally, and civilians experience indiscriminate attacks from the military. Citizens in areas affected by conflict lack access to basic services as well as humanitarian aid, which prevents full and successful implementation of SDG 16.

HAITI

In Haiti, past exploitation from foreign powers has resulted in modern-day extreme poverty and rampant conflict. The French slave system exhausted Haitian soil, and, after gaining independence in 1804, Haiti was forced to pay France \$22 billion in reparations. The American occupation from 1915 to 1934 created a precedent of corruption and human rights violations perpetrated by the country's leadership,⁸⁷ instilled a hatred of foreign influence, and instituted the use of violence to overthrow the democratically elected leadership. A lack of resources, corrupt leadership, violent protests, and frequent natural disasters that exacerbate poverty has created conditions that fully impede the successful implementation of SDG 16 programs.

INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE (16.1.1)

The UNODC has measured Haiti's intentional homicide statistics before, but they have reported no new intentional homicide data for Haiti since 2018. However, intentional homicide has increased significantly since 2020, and has worsened in 2022. From January to the end of June 2022, there were approximately 934 killings. Later, from July 8-12, 234 noncombatants died in gang-related violence,⁸⁸ some of them children suspected of being informants for rival gangs. Assassinations of prominent officials occur, too, like Yvon Buissereth, a former senator who worked for the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, who was murdered on August 5, along with his nephew.⁸⁹

CONFLICT-RELATED DEATHS (16.1.2)

Despite the decline in conflict related deaths as reported by the UCDP seen in Figure 5, the turmoil that Haiti has suffered this year has already caused this year's number of conflict related deaths to surpass that of 2021's. Gangs like 400 Mawozo have strengthened, and they have begun wars of territorial expansion that have led to direct clashes with members of the powerful G9 Federation. The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) reported more violent events in two northern settlements in Port-au-Prince, Croix-des-Banquets, and Tabarre, in the first half of 2022 than in any other full year since 2018. These "violent events" have resulted in increased conflict deaths. In mid-July 2022, two hundred gang members died in a firefight in Port-au-Prince's Cité Soleil neighborhood.⁹⁰

Those killed during episodes of Haitian gang violence fall under conflict-related deaths rather than intentional homicide because the government officials support certain gangs to "suppress protests or to force the people to vote in a certain way." Politicians' use of gangs to advance their interests became common practice during President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's second term, which began in 2001.⁹¹

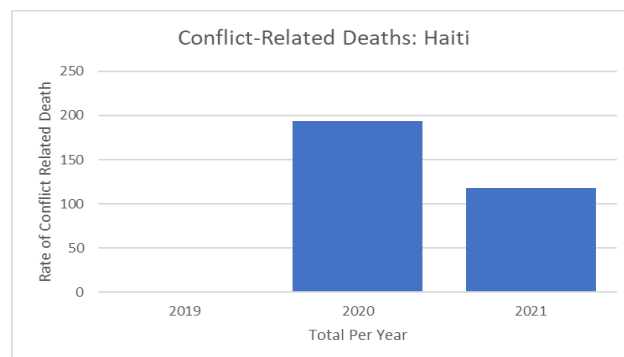


Figure 5

CORRUPTION (16.5.1)

There is no new data for Haiti. Although Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer and UNODC's "Corruption and Economic Crime" report include sections for Latin America and the Caribbean, Haitian statistics are not represented. However, Transparency International ranked it the 16th most corrupt country in the world, with a score of 20/100.

Haitian and Dominican officials continue to collude on illegal cross-border trade "that kills employment, depresses economic growth, and robs government revenues."⁹² Domestically, the sum of alleged acts of embezzlement cost Haiti \$4 million.⁹³ Embezzlement ranges from diverting \$98,000 meant for a handful of projects in the small town of Petit-Goave, to using \$2 billion of PetroCaribe money for other projects in 2019.⁹⁴ Political patronage undermines the legitimacy of Haiti's government as well.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION (16.10.2)

In 2021, Haiti became a new addition to the World Justice Project Rule of Law proxy index for SDG 16.10.2. Haiti, categorized as a low-income country in the Latin American & the Caribbean region scored 0.38 in 2021, ranking 114/139 worldwide, 29/32 regionally, and 11/18 among low-income countries. Haiti's official indicator score for 16.10.2 is 0/1, last measured in 2022.

Despite constitutional protection for press freedom, journalists are not protected in Haiti. Gangs threaten, harass, and kill journalists with impunity. As of November 9, 2022, eight journalists have been killed in Haiti this year. In response to dangerous circumstances, journalists censor themselves,⁹⁵ which disrupts the flow of reliable information. Journalists must also contend with a lack of institutional support, financial resources, and external information, all of which limit organizational effectiveness.⁹⁶

Ordinary Haitians also have trouble accessing external information. Only 41.4% of the population has access to the internet, and 21.1% of the population has social media.⁹⁷ 65.5% of the population have cell phones, but this number does not reflect how some people have multiple phone lines. Gang activity and violent protests often damage cell phone infrastructure,⁹⁸ which further impedes ordinary Haitians' access to information.

HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (16.A.1)

Haiti's Office for the Protection of Citizens is the country's human rights institution. GANHRI last reviewed it in 2019 and received an "A" ranking. However, Haiti's recent violent upheavals undermine the credibility of this potentially outdated grade. Freedom House has given Haiti a score of 1/4 for NGO freedom, a sharp contrast to GANHRI's 2019 review.

By and large, domestic and international human rights groups operate without any official restrictions, and the government cooperates in investigations.⁹⁹ However, human rights organizations are still under threat from gangs and other nongovernmental actors, and impunity makes threats credible. NGOs thus operate in a climate of fear, which hinders operations.¹⁰⁰

LIBYA

Conflict and political instability have characterized Libya ever since the fall of the Gaddafi regime in 2011 and the subsequent civil wars and political split. Two main factions and their backed militias fought against one another during a civil war that lasted from 2014 to 2020: the international-backed Government of National Unity (GNU), now led by Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh, and the Libyan National Army (LNA), led by Khalifa Haftar. The former's government is in Tripoli, and the latter is in Tobruk, with control of major oil fields.¹⁰¹ Despite a ceasefire in 2020, militia groups backed by one side or the other and by foreign powers, have continued to fight. War has destroyed lives, livelihood, and infrastructure, while creating a more restrictive political climate inconducive for SDG progress.

INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE (16.1.1)

The UNODC does not measure Libya so there has been no new intentional homicide data for the country. Human, narcotics, and arms trafficking have all become more common in recent years. Entrenchment of criminal networks have made homicides more frequent. Professor Jazia Shaitar of the University of Benghazi stated that “weapons are in every house and every car... thefts have become armed robbery, and quarrels have come to end with murder or attempted murder.” A lack of reliable data hinders the international community in figuring out in what way intentional homicide and conflict-related deaths intersect, if at all.¹⁰²

CONFLICT-RELATED DEATHS (16.1.2)

As illustrated in Figure 6 the UCDP's information for Libya's conflict-related deaths shows a sharp decrease in conflict-related deaths following 2020's fragile ceasefire. However, the nature of the conflict means that it is difficult to gauge just how many people have died a conflict-related death, especially in remote areas in the deserts to the south and southwest between various tribes. Furthermore, it is unclear whether IDP deaths should count toward this indicator. Because of Libyan media clampdowns, the international community must rely on newspaper articles from foreign news agencies to report battle deaths. For example, Al Jazeera reported that an August firefight in Tripoli between rival groups left thirty-two people dead.¹⁰³ As such, the number of Libyan conflict-related deaths may be higher than reported. The problems with Libya's 16.1.2 indicator data also demonstrates how certain indicators do not adequately measure a state's fragility, as the ceasefire in place could break at any time and return Libya back to 2019 levels of conflict-related death.

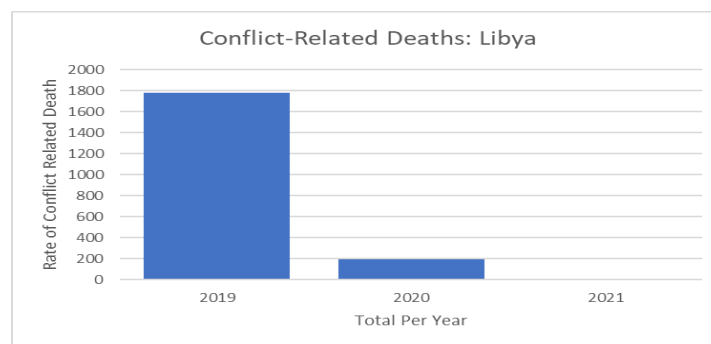


Figure 6

CORRUPTION (16.5.1)

There is no new data for Libya. Although Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer and UNODC's "Corruption and Economic Crime" report include sections for Latin America and the Caribbean, Haitian statistics are not represented.

Nonetheless, GNU Prime Minister Dbeibah and his officials have been accused of various kinds of corruption: embezzlement of state funds, vote bribery, and nepotism. Officials demand irregular payments "connected to exports and imports," and public funds are often diverted to state-owned companies.¹⁰⁴ The absence of adequate mechanisms to check state corruption means that officials can act with impunity.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION (16.10.2)

The Public Access to Information indicator of the World Justice Project for Libya is unavailable, so data was taken from the Freedom House website. Libya is currently ranked 9/100 on Freedom House's Global Freedom Scale.

In Libya, foreign and domestic journalists have a difficult time reaching remote areas of the country where tribal conflict rages. As such, journalists cannot report on and establish narratives that undermine official government narratives that are often one-sided and paint "a distorted picture of reality."¹⁰⁵ In areas of their operation, journalists face "harassment, threats, abductions, violence, and killings" which has led to self-censorship. International news organizations have also reported trouble obtaining journalist visas.¹⁰⁶ All of this hinders reliable access to information.

Internet access and Internet speed are slowly improving in Libya,¹⁰⁷ but militia groups hinder the transmission of reliable data on websites and social media. They are known to mass report accounts to close them down, spread disinformation, and monitor private conversations,¹⁰⁸ which could disrupt the circulation of reliable information from external sources.

HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (16.A.1)

Libya's National Council for Civil Liberties and Human Rights is the country's human rights institution, but Libya has struggled to publish an annual review since October 2018. The lack of availability for internet-based resources makes it difficult to monitor the country's status with 16.a.1.

Organizations face "physical attacks, detention, threats, harassment, and disappearances" from armed groups. Further, government authorities and security officials view CSOs as traitors, working with respective regimes rather than with them. The Foreign Media Department and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs actively restrict human rights organizations by delaying or denying new or renewed CSO registration.¹⁰⁹ This clampdown on human rights institutions comes at a time when Libyans depend on them most in the absence of a unified national government.¹¹⁰

MYANMAR

On February 1, 2021, Myanmar's military staged a coup and overthrew the democratic regime after the National League for Democracy (NLD) party won in a second consecutive landslide.¹¹¹ The coup sparked protests that the junta violently put down. A year and a half later, Myanmar now suffers from a countrywide civil war, fought between state forces and Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs), who fight and support armed citizens in People's Defense Forces (PDFs). The conflict is characterized by indiscriminate military attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, and harsh restrictions on information and expression which have resulted in sharp decreases in Myanmar's SDG 16 indicator scores.

INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE (16.1.1)

The UNODC has intentional homicide data in Myanmar for 2019 and 2020, which includes a categorization of incidents. In 2019, there were 169 cases total cases of firearm or explosive usage reported. In 2020, 30 incidents were caused by an intimate partner, 5 incidents by a family member, and 15 incidents by either an intimate partner or family members. Other acquaintances of the victim perpetrated 148 other incidents, bringing the total number of incidents to 198 reported in 2020. This constitutes an alarming 17% increase in just one year. Since the data related to intimate partners and family members were missing in 2019, and that related to firearm and explosive usage were missing in 2020, it is difficult to compare the two categories over two separate years.

This data needs updating considering the country's current civil war. The military junta uses force against whole villages suspected of collaborating with the PDF, which includes the murder of unarmed men, women, and children.¹¹² The junta has perpetrated mass executions of civilians, used live sniper fire to quell protestors,¹¹³ and tortured and killed detainees.¹¹⁴ Human rights groups have estimated that 2,388 civilians have been killed since the coup. Further, reports have come that the war has diverted the attention of security forces away from domestic crime, which has led to an uptick in violent crime, including intentional homicide.¹¹⁵

CONFLICT-RELATED DEATHS (16.1.2)

Conflict in Myanmar has escalated into a full civil war since the first months of 2021, which accounts for the 251.09% increase in conflict-related deaths between 2020 and 2021, according to the UCDP database (see Figure 7 below). Since the war started, the PDF has become more organized and better armed. Instances of "remote violence" like bombings, use of explosive devices, and landmines, have increased,¹¹⁶ which kills soldiers and civilians alike. Government forces have shelled towns.

Conflict deaths are intertwined with intentional homicide in Myanmar because much of the violence takes place in civilian areas. For example, on October 23, 2022, two military fighter jets bombed a crowd at a concert in Kachin State, killing between sixty and eighty people and injuring hundreds more.¹¹⁷ Civilians and members of the PDF died in the attack. In these cases, it remains unclear which deaths should count towards 16.1.1 and 16.1.2.

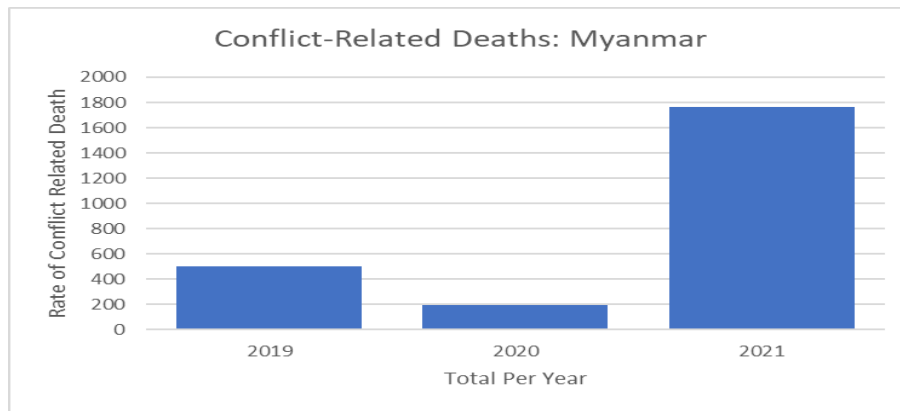


Figure 7

CORRUPTION (16.5.1)

New data for Myanmar corruption is available on Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer, whose data comes from a sample of 1000 Myanmar citizens taken from June 18th to July 18th, 2020. In the report findings, between 20% (200 citizens) of those surveyed paid a bribe while 80% (800 citizens) did not.

Despite these relatively low numbers, political corruption remains rampant in Myanmar. Low-income or second-class individuals pay bribes to receive social services, and businesses to get around “excessive red tape.” Bribery reaches into the judiciary, too, influencing the actions of lawyers and facilitating “pre-defined settlement[s]” in the courtroom. Legal bribery ensures impunity for military officials, which encourages violent acts. The junta has also worked with sympathetic militias to sell narcotics as part of cease-fire agreements. Illicit financial flows have sharply increased in recent years.¹¹⁸ On October 24, 2022, international watchdog Financial Action Task Force (FATF) added Myanmar to their blacklist for “money laundering and terrorist financing,” where they join North Korea and Iran.¹¹⁹

Myanmar's lucrative natural resource sectors are also vulnerable to corruption. High-ranking officials in the military take bribes so that companies can mine jade illegally, or even own their own mining companies. Revenue gets funneled to fighting forces or smuggled into China. The entity responsible for jade regulation, the Myanmar Gems Enterprise (MGE) is dominated by former military members.¹²⁰ Workers and their families do not benefit from mining work, which increases resentment and conflict. Corruption extends to other industries besides jade: oil/gas, forestry, and fisheries.¹²¹

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION (16.10.2)

The Public Access to Information indicator of the World Justice Project Rule of Law proxy index has measured SDG 16.10.2 data for Myanmar in 2019, 2020, and 2021. Categorized as East Asia & Pacific state with a lower middle income, Myanmar scored 0.35 in 2019, 0.40 in 2020, and 0.40 in 2021. However, Myanmar's region score increased from 13/15 to 12/15 from 2020 to 2021 and decreased from 19/30 to 22/30. This means that public access to information in East Asia & Pacific was decreasing while states included in Lower Middle income were increasing in public access to information, unlike Myanmar.

To maintain power, the junta has implemented restrictions on public access to reliable information, which could explain these low scores. Over half of the country's “journalists, editors, and media,” about 1,000

people, left the country when the coup began.¹²² More were arrested, including members of the international media.¹²³ Even if released, the military continues to surveil and restrict them. Those responsible for transmitting reliable information cannot do so.

The junta has also closed 71 media outlets, banned satellite dishes to restrict international media and replaced them with three state-owned channels.¹²⁴ The sale of Telenor Myanmar to the Shwe Byain Phyu Group ensures full control of the television waves as long as the junta maintains control, as 80% of the group's stakeholders are linked to the military.¹²⁵

The junta has cracked down hard on free access to the Internet as well. 45.9% of Burmese use the Internet (Datareportal), but to use phones, they must buy SIM cards that require them to provide their name, national registration document, birthday, address, citizenship, and gender. The “Law Protecting the Privacy and Security of the Citizens” authorizes phone searches during unannounced raids and at checkpoints. Freedom House gave Myanmar a 14-point decline in internet freedom scores, the largest drop in the history of the organization.¹²⁶ Wi-Fi, the Internet, and phone networks have consistent service cut-offs.¹²⁷ This climate of fear, along with official restrictions, hinders the flow of information.

HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (16.A.1)

Myanmar's National Human Rights Commission is the country's human rights institution. However, its last review was in 2015, and there has been no annual report since 2018. Myanmar's lack of updates makes it hard to gauge the country's SDG 16.a.1 status.

Human rights groups are no longer permitted to enter the country, including international organizations,¹²⁸ and human rights organizations within the country are subject to “harassment, monitoring... and arbitrary detention,” which limits their ability to function properly. The junta has also raided NGO offices. Domestic activists have been arrested, and short-term visas constrain the work of international activists. It is also reported that the junta restricts the passage of aid into conflict hotspots, which limits the reach of aid and worsens the situation. Without viable human rights institutions, many types of violations continue inside the country, including killings, torture, abductions, detention, and restrictions on freedoms.¹²⁹

LOOKING AHEAD

The situation in Haiti deteriorates by the day, and with it, the country's indicator scores. Huge protests have rocked the country since September. The price of fuel has risen from \$2.00 to \$4.78 as of September 29, and kerosene from \$3.00 per gallon to \$5.60.¹³⁰ 60% of the population makes less than \$2.00 per day.¹³¹ Poverty has worsened because of high inflation in Haiti's two main trading partners, the US and the Dominican Republic. Ordinary Haitians also suffer from mudslides and flooding that strike Haiti at twice the rate as it does their neighbor, the Dominican Republic.¹³² Extreme weather events destroy already substandard infrastructure and bring disease.

Haiti's government has also lost its legitimacy and ability to enact legislation to improve the situation. Protestors view Prime Minister Ariel Henry as a puppet of the US and have called for his removal. The Haitian Senate is now a third of its original size, and cannot reach a quorum to deliberate and vote on any new laws.¹³³ The Supreme Court lost its quorum in June 2021.¹³⁴ There are only 12,800 active officers in a country of eleven million people.¹³⁵

As for Libya, until the country can consolidate into one government with one system of passing legislation, SDG 16 implementation will prove nearly impossible. The modern Libyan political system suffers from redundant, bulky government branches. Some government branches have up to thirty-two ministries, filled with unqualified officials. This undermines the implementation of the law.¹³⁶ An overly strong executive branch and inadequate capacity building have resulted in a shortage of qualified staff.¹³⁷ Finally, the bulk of state-sponsored reporting comes from Tripoli. Their reporting does not include the rest of the country. It does not reflect reality. Libya needs to reunite politically and militarily to fix this problem.

Foreign intervention in the conflict will prolong this unstable period in Libyan history. The face-off between Turkey and Russia is the clearest example of two powerful countries using proxy war in Libya to pursue their own interests. Turkey has supported the GNU with "hardware, reconnaissance and intelligence, and troops,"¹³⁸ with supporting Haftar's LNA with air defense systems, mercenaries, and even fighter jets.¹³⁹ Turkey and Russia have turned Libya into a proxy war for control of the country's oil and gas and for Libya's future government.¹⁴⁰ Other international actors who have a hand in Libya include Egypt, France, and the United Arab Emirates on the side of the LNA.¹⁴¹

Finally, SDG 16 implementation in Myanmar depends on the status of the country's civil war. Because the junta controls the flow of data, both people from Myanmar and the international community cannot effectively find solutions to the crisis. Destruction and displacement from the conflict itself have caused a societal collapse in a variety of sectors. The economy shrank almost 20% in 2021,¹⁴² and the war has doubled the number of people in poverty.¹⁴³ The healthcare system has buckled under the weight of the COVID-19 pandemic and the intentional destruction of healthcare infrastructure by the junta.¹⁴⁴ Finally, conflict has escalated in the northwest of the country, places isolated from international assistance.¹⁴⁵ These factors make SDG 16 implementation impossible in Myanmar's current state.

All three of these countries need dramatic structural changes to reverse SDG 16 indicator, but a lack of reliable information makes it difficult for policymakers to gauge the best course of action to achieve this. For Haiti, Libya, Myanmar, and countries in similar situations, the international community should focus

on finding ways to end violence, provide basic necessities, improve the transmission of information, and empower sustainable, homegrown methods of societal improvement.

PART VI: POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

FROM MDGS TO SDGS AND BEYOND

The UN adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in September 2000.¹⁴⁶ The MDGs aimed to achieve eight broad goals:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
2. Achieve universal primary education;
3. Promote gender equality and empower women;
4. Reduce child mortality;
5. Improve maternal health;
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases;
7. Ensure environmental sustainability; and,
8. Create a global partnership for development.¹⁴⁷

While the MDGs had some successes, such as cutting the number of people who suffer from hunger by 50%, most MDGs did not reach their 2015 targets.¹⁴⁸ Upon their expiration at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), representatives agreed to adopt the SDGs.¹⁴⁹ The SDG format attempted to amalgamate some criteria into more organized and specific categories. Whereas the MDGs had 8 goals, 18 targets, and 48 indicators, the SDGs expanded to 16 goals, 169 targets, and 231 indicators.¹⁵⁰ The SDGs are also more flexible than the MDGs, as new targets can be proposed if deemed necessary. For example, it was only in 2019 that an indicator to measure the total number of displaced persons per country or territory of origin was introduced, in accordance with the “leave no one behind” theme of the 2030 summit.¹⁵¹

REMAINING CHALLENGES

Although there has been steady improvement and development in most of the SDGs, none of the SDG targets have been met, and none are currently on track to reach established goals ahead of the 2030 deadline.¹⁵² A significant challenge that became evident throughout this project was the impacts of conflict and the often related lack of capacity to address a multitude of new targets and indicators.

Aggravating this problem is the largely Western, top-down design of the SDG 16 2030 goals. Countries that face a plethora of handicaps, such as funding, institutional capability, or conflict do not have the ability to report findings or even collect data on specific indicators.¹⁵³ The establishment of the SDG 2030 agenda was more collaborative than the formulation of the MDGs, to be sure. But the expansion of 8 goals, 18 targets, and 48 indicators into 16 goals, 169 targets, and 232 indicators has pushed struggling countries to meet extra demands on top of existing challenges.¹⁵⁴

In recent years, there has been discussions around finding alternative means for countries to fund the SDG related projects and programs, which intend to achieve local ownership and independence of aid. Some nations have pursued a more self-sustainable approach by establishing their own development finance models which aim to fund their national projects through economic growth.¹⁵⁵ However, issues remain with this line of thinking as countries such as Haiti and Libya, that are beneficiaries of international aid, lack oversight over funds, or lack the institutional ability to generate and invest such resources.¹⁵⁶ Additionally, traditional aid routes largely remain a top-down system in which projects are funded that meet the donors’ demands, and too often do not meet the needs of the people on the ground.

With these challenges, as well as the other issues underscored throughout this project, the recommendations listed hereafter are designed to push SDG 16 toward new, revitalized directions. Many of these recommendations aim to direct SDG 16 funding and efforts to capacity building to address data gaps within the chosen indicators. Additionally, many of the recommendations address the indicators and measurements themselves. Specifically, the recommendations challenge their relevance in analyzing and understanding conflict and peace within societies. This is particularly true of the indicators for NHRI and conflict-related deaths. Overall, the recommendations offered aim to both rethink the existing frameworks of SDG 16 indicators and push for more peacebuilding projects designed to make progress toward the SDG 16 2030 goals.

INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE (16.1.1)

Policy Recommendation #1: The international community should encourage countries to adopt the UNODC’s definition and data collection methods for intentional homicide.

The lack of a universal definition and data collection methodology for “intentional homicide” hinders the ability of domestic legal entities to accurately measure cases of homicide. This obstacle results in inconsistent reporting which impacts the accuracy of the collective data, which leads to an incomplete assessment of internal security and each government’s ability to address domestic crime.¹⁵⁷ Any attempts to address “intentional homicide” through policy recommendations can be misguided by these data inconsistencies.¹⁵⁸

Members of the international community must integrate the standards of intentional homicide set by UNODC into their respective legal frameworks and national development plans. This goal can be met through some of the following actions:

1. Passing of a General Assembly resolution encouraging the adoption of UNODC’s “intentional homicide” definition and methodology by Member States¹⁵⁹
2. Creating a program within the United Nations Economic and Social Affairs Statistics Division under the Global UN Secretariat which fosters partnerships between domestic statistical offices, each country’s legal apparatuses, and the UN network,¹⁶⁰
3. Utilizing the subregional bodies of the UN geoscheme to cooperate with Member States for the verification of “intentional homicide” data

Policy Recommendation #2: The UN should distinguish between intentional homicide and conflict-related deaths by adopting the intensity threshold as defined by the UCDP.

Intentional homicide can be difficult to attribute in instances of intense conflict. Thus, UCDP created the intensity threshold to distinguish between intentional homicide and conflict-related deaths. The intensity threshold designates that an individual’s death is “conflict-related” when their death results from activities between two organized groups within one calendar year.¹⁶¹ If the individual’s fatality cannot be characterized as “conflict-related” under said circumstances, especially in periods of intense conflict, then it may be categorized as another form of death, such as intentional homicide. This is exemplified in Mexico and India, where instances of death have not been characterized as conflict-related and has resulted in an increased use of the intentional homicide classification (See [Appendix A](#)). Adopting such an initiative will allow for a more accurate representation of conflict measurement within SDG-16.

The UNODC should adopt the definition of the intensity threshold as described by the UCDP. Additionally, it should engage with the countries respective statistical recording and reporting offices to distinguish between “intentional homicides” and “conflict-related” deaths.

Policy Recommendation #3: Relevant actors must engage in capacity-building within states where criminal justice systems are incapable of recording and reporting “intentional homicides” or where relevant judicial frameworks are nonexistent.

“Conflict-affected” countries are largely unable to procure and report “intentional homicide” data as their criminal justice apparatuses. As such, in these countries, viable criminal justice systems do not exist (See [Appendix A](#)). The lack of capacity results in incomplete data, inaccurate or simply no data reported at all (See [Appendix A](#)). Any interpretations derived from such data sets, such as perceptions of security or confidence in the government to address severe crime, are skewed or misrepresented. Additionally, a shortage of data hinders efforts to address “intentional homicide” in “conflict-affected” states. Thus, capacity-building at the local level is essential to record and report “intentional homicides” where viable criminal justice systems do not exist.

Local actors, such as law enforcement and other legal authorities, must be involved in capacity building projects. These projects can include, but are not limited to:

1. Strengthening bottom-up progress reporting
2. Establishing and/or rebuilding relationships between community members and local law enforcement entities
3. Empowering individuals to serve as oversight institutions for their communities¹⁶²
4. Promoting the adoption of the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS) framework by national criminal justice systems to refine intentional homicide demographic statistics¹⁶³

The UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) must be a primary actor in guiding these efforts. Other International Non-Governmental Organizations must partner with CCPCJ, and participating countries, to facilitate these capacity-building initiatives.

CONFLICT-RELATED DEATHS (16.1.2)

Policy Recommendation #1: Universalize the standards for reporting combat deaths, thereby creating a more comprehensive reporting system for actors on the ground.

Right now, the methodologies through which combatant deaths are recorded and then reported vary from country to country. Colombia, Libya, Indonesia, and others do not adhere to the international standard for combatant death measurement (See [Appendix B](#)). In conflict-ridden countries, shortcomings in data collection exist due to a myriad of participants engaged in combat within a country. Combat situations remain confusing and dangerous, [making them] inconducive to data collection from actors on the ground, who serve as the primary source of information.¹⁶⁴

New reporting protocols with a more comprehensive list of defining features will improve reporters' abilities to report combatant deaths.¹⁶⁵ These protocols should include features like time of death, means of death, location of the death, and a description of the deceased combatant that includes approximate age.

Space should be left within the reporting protocol for additional information, such as occupation, military status, familial relations, and other information reporters can gather via house-to-house surveys, news reporting, and other field research methods. The UNHRC should define a universalized standard for combatant death measurement and develop a new system of data aggregation and reporting.

Policy Recommendation #2: The UN and other international aid organizations must engage in capacity-building medical infrastructure within “conflict-prone” and “conflict-affected” countries to increase the accessibility and reliability of combatant death data.

While less fragile country groupings are more likely to have more institutionalized means to measure and report combatant deaths, more fragile countries are less likely to adhere to such means, like Colombia and Myanmar (See [Appendix B](#)). As a result, the numbers recorded and then reported as “combatant deaths per 100,000 people” may be inaccurate and misleading. Underreporting occurs due to a lack of public data sources and government reporting, as well as the fact that data is derived from a variety of other sources.¹⁶⁶

Assisting healthcare workers in “conflict-prone” and “conflict-affected” countries with capacity-building and bolstering of medical infrastructure would ensure that reliable data collection and verification are done by these individuals. Such international capacity-building aid would entail measures such as, but not limited to:

1. Providing medical training and verification
2. Supplementing medical supplies and resources
3. Negotiating with the affected state to allow for international medical personnel clearance into the country, such as Doctors Without Borders (MSF), the Red Cross, and UNICEF
4. Allocation of monetary resources necessary for the implementation of the aforementioned measures

Policy Recommendation #3: Synchronize the mandates of NHRIs, civil society organizations, government offices, and other international organizations to the OHCHR mandate for data verification on combatant and conflict-related deaths.

Accessing quality data remains a substantial challenge for tracking the progress of the conflict-related death indicator, which affects the availability of data for other related targets. To address accessibility issues in data collection, disaggregation, and monitoring and reporting, it is critical to increase the capacity of NHRIs, civil society organizations, government offices, and other international organizations. However, it is also important to accurately identify and synchronize the roles, responsibilities, and mandates of these actors to promote coherence, coordination, and collaboration. OHCHR, as a leading and globally mandated UN body, should take charge of those synchronization processes. Bridging the gap with non-official data providers results in the easy validation of conflict-related data. This reduces the strain on officially recognized statistical offices, which saves resources and empowers local and regional bodies.

OHCHR should work with countries’ governments to link reporting and review mechanisms, frameworks, and mandates of the OHCHR with those of NHRIs, civil society organizations, national statistical offices, and other INGOs through inclusive, transparent, and multi-stakeholder processes. Increased collaboration efforts will involve advancing efforts to mainstream the SDG-16 agenda into National Development Plans (NDP), Official Development Assistance (ODA) projects, and the programming priorities of humanitarian and development agencies at local, regional, and global levels. Such programs should contribute direction and guidance on how to best support conflict-related death data generation and verification at national and

subnational levels through the sharing of good practices and principles. To support quality control of verified data and ensure necessary assistance is provided to implementing actors, OHCHR should prioritize synchronization through programs and trainings in peer learning and review, performance audits, budget allocation, accountability frameworks, and long-term strategic planning processes. Moreover, OHCHR should work with other UN custodian agencies for SDG 16 indicators in responding to the demands of specific countries regarding conflict-related death data gathering and reporting.

Policy Recommendation #4: Expand on 16.1.2 by adding an additional data set that estimates civilian casualties resulting from conflict.

Measuring conflict-related deaths under indicator 16.1.2 currently places civilian casualties and combatant deaths into one data set. Isolating the two can create a more holistic analysis on the nature and impact of conflict. While measuring combatant deaths provides peacebuilders with information regarding ongoing conflict between sets of recognized combatants, the inclusion of civilian casualties in this data set obscures inferences of the most vulnerable population during armed struggle.¹⁶⁷ By separating indicator 16.1.2 to include an individual measurement on civilian deaths that occurred during combat, stakeholders utilizing this information will:

1. Have a better understanding of the kinds of impacts conflict has on everyday life
2. Better comprehend the impact of conflict on demographics
3. Design peace negotiations better situated for protecting civilians

Moreover, a large criticism of SDG 16 demonstrated here is its focus on maintaining a negative peace, or the absence of direct, physical suffering without addressing the underlying issues that caused that suffering in the first place.¹⁶⁸ By separating the civilian casualty's measurement from that of combatant deaths, SDG 16 can adopt a more progressive approach to positive peace. Not only would it seek to eliminate civilian deaths during combat, but it would also utilize the collected information to target other instances of systemic and structural violence.¹⁶⁹ Finally, such a change in measuring peace within the SDGs can pressure organizations to strengthen international humanitarian law regarding protecting civilians during warfare and preventing the instigation of conflict.¹⁷⁰

The United Nations must work with UCDP to create additional data sets relative to conflict-related deaths that separate civilian casualties from combatant and military deaths. Additionally, as stated in the implementation of recommendation #2 under “Conflict-Related Deaths,” strengthening local resilience in medical and healthcare facilities would allow for the better reporting of this data.¹⁷¹

Policy Recommendation #5: Encourage countries in the “incipient conflict” grouping to report conflict-related death information to the General Assembly First’s record-keeping apparatus to ensure enhanced analysis of conflict and to serve as a model for other countries.

Countries falling under the “incipient conflict” grouping either have outdated information or none at all, despite having the services and infrastructure to do so. The international community should encourage countries to collect and report such information. Countries like France, the UK, and the US can provide the international community with a better analysis of conflict-related deaths during periods of external or internal conflict.¹⁷² Moreover, by providing this information, “incipient conflict” countries can serve as models to which other countries in the “fragile” and “conflict-prone” grouping may build and resource their own collection and reporting services.

Relevant actors in the international community, such as regional bodies like the Organization of American States (OAS), international organizations, and NGOs focused on information transparency must partner with participating countries to create programs that promote information sharing. By making information-sharing easier and more streamlined governments will be incentivized to share more freely.

CORRUPTION (16.5.1)

Policy Recommendation #1: Encourage countries in the “incipient conflict” grouping that do not report corruption data to cooperate with the UNODC statistical office to proliferate corruption statistics to ensure up-to-date and accurate reporting.

Many countries categorized under the “incipient conflict” grouping do not report any corruption data. Indeed, the US and the UK have not reported any corruption data for years (See [Appendix C2](#)). Countries with the capacity to collect and report data should participate in record-sharing to further transparency and good governance.

Relevant actors in the international community can work with internal entities, such as the media, private sector, and civil society organizations, within non-compliant countries to encourage record-sharing with UNODC.¹⁷³ The means of encouragement include, but are not limited to:

1. Utilizing media outlets within each country to disseminate information on anticorruption programs, initiative, and services
2. Internalizing zero-tolerance anti-corruption measures within the private sector to prevent further instances of bribery
3. Raising public awareness about the inefficacy of bribery to obtain public services via civil society organizational outreach, the production of oversight entities, and mechanisms to redress communal grievances.¹⁷⁴

Policy Recommendation #2A: Establish case-flagging systems in “fragile and “conflict-prone” countries where essential services that currently require a bribe to be accessed can be reported to the proper channels in a uniform manner.

Countries who have high reports of corruption amongst citizens, mostly in the “fragile” and “conflict-prone” country groupings, often lack the adequate resources or finances to pursue anticorruption efforts.¹⁷⁵ Additionally, the appropriate channels for cases of corruption should be reported are often inefficient, obsolete, or non-existent. As such, a large quantity of cases in these countries go either unreported or lack a resolution.

International financial investments in anticorruption should adopt a two-pronged approach to tackling bribes as a form of access to services. Such a model can be found in institutions such as the World Bank. First, these aid donors should work with governments to create anticorruption initiatives, such as in Brazil.¹⁷⁶ These include measures such as accessible reporting services and corruption tracking mechanisms within law enforcement. Second, they should fund the establishment of local and national flagging services that can lead to the identification of high-risk incidents of corruption and help focus efforts where services are inaccessible to people.

Policy Recommendation #2B: Ensuring said established case-flagging systems can accurately and consistently report cases of corruption.

Beyond ensuring case-flagging systems are established in “conflict-prone” and “fragile” countries, it is vital to ensure these new systems flag and report instances of corruption consistently. A responsive system would fully address and process a submitted case within an appropriate time window. Supporting the responsiveness of case-flagging systems will prevent backlogging and promote swift resolution to cases of corruption (such as bribery) within a state.

Case-flagging systems must be monitored to identify shortcomings that hinder the responsiveness of said systems. The UNODC should establish an ad-hoc committee to conduct an annual review of case-flagging systems in participating member states to ensure their systems are accurately and efficiently identifying cases of corruption, such as bribery, between citizens and government officials. Following reviews, the ad-hoc committee would work with the appropriate agencies to design, create, and implement programs dedicated to improving the efficiency of a member state’s case-flagging system. The ad-hoc committees will be re-evaluated at the end of a five-year period.

Policy Recommendation #3: The relevant actors of the international community should engage in capacity building within “conflict-affected” countries to support anticorruption institutions and initiatives in the creation of a post-conflict governmental structure.

Countries in the “conflict-affected” grouping currently do not contain the services or capacity to collect or report corruption statistics for the measurement of SDG 16. Moreover, such anticorruption data collection efforts cannot be undertaken in situations where the government prevents civil society and other systematic actors from engaging in such initiatives and projects. Thus, the international community can work with conflicting parties to negotiate potential resolutions and create room in the negotiation process for the adoption of anti-corruption measures in the post-conflict governmental system.

Relevant actors, such as regional governmental bodies, the UN, and INGOs, should devise programs that bring conflicting parties to the negotiation table and provide key stakeholders during the negotiation itself. Doing so will allow these actors to help design and implement capacity building projects focused on preventing corruption while also allowing them to encourage the conflicting parties to adopt anticorruption mechanisms within the post-conflict governmental structure. These programs must be designed to ensure anonymity of case-filers to prevent retribution. Such anticorruption initiatives may look like:

1. Supporting the investment of state and international funds into government anticorruption services
2. Training local civil society actors in communal anticorruption initiatives such as trust-building between civilians and law enforcement
3. Hosting of educational and outreach events that teach community members how to recognize, record, and report instances of corruption such as bribery

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION (16.10.2)

Policy Recommendation 1: Utilize regional actors to improve the capacity of governments to fulfill requests for information in a consistent, transparent, and timely manner.

In many fragile countries, there is a lack of capacity to fulfill requests made by citizens to access relevant government documentation. The ability of governments to fulfill requests for information must be addressed prior to questions of restriction and/or classification. Regional actors, in conjunction with the UN and other international organizations, are best suited to work with participating states to build capacity. For example, it is crucial for ASEAN to work with international community to deliver aid to those in need in Myanmar through ASEAN Coordinating Center for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA).¹⁷⁷

Regional actors should support “conflict-affected” and “conflict-prone” countries to build capacity through the mobilization of resources, the creation of “operation commissions,” and training programs for government officials.¹⁷⁸ The regional actors should partner with the UN to strengthen the political and legal frameworks that support the ease-of-access to information within “conflict-affected” and “conflict-prone” states. Regional actors must reinforce the role of legislative bodies in the process of nationalizing regional and international legal frameworks for the advancement of access to information and entrust them with the development and adoption of national legislation to complement and support global and regional actions to achieve SDG 16.1.2.

Policy Recommendation 2: Encourage countries experiencing a backslide in public access to information to adopt a holistic and transparent data accessibility framework.

Data shows that “fragile” and “incipient conflict” countries have either stalled or regressed in their public access to information scores since the 2019 audit of SDG 16. For example, Mexico has abolished agencies responsible for holding the government accountable for data protection and access (See [Appendix D](#)).

Factors that hinder public access to information in these country groupings include:

1. Repressive or undemocratic regimes¹⁷⁹
2. The arrest, torture, and deaths of journalists creating a climate of fear in which journalists cannot work effectively¹⁸⁰
3. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the government’s capacity to measure data in healthcare settings¹⁸¹
4. Lack of oversight on public media, especially regarding misinformation and disinformation.¹⁸²

Establishing the following framework will ensure that “fragile” and “incipient conflict” countries improve public access to information through increasing transparency, government accountability, and data availability.

The framework should be implemented with the aid of regional actors as laid out in Policy Recommendation 1 in Public Access to Information. The framework would be modeled after OECD guidance on promoting transparency and accountability for the MENA region.¹⁸³ These frameworks should:

1. Establish legal and regulatory frameworks within each state
2. Build capacity within public administration at the local and national level
3. Disseminate accurate information to the public through government agencies

4. Support independent civil society organizations to collect, analyze, and verify information as reported by the state

At their core, these frameworks must empower the public to hold institutions accountable and strengthen the universal human right to freedom of information.

Policy Recommendation #3: Encourage limitations on state document classification at mid and local levels of government.

The increasing trends in the classification of state documents prohibit public access to information. Such is the case in Brazil, where the relaxation of classification limitations has constrained the flow of information to civic groups, the public, media, and journalists.¹⁸⁴ Not only does this negatively impact the comprehensiveness and quality of available information, but it also harms freedom of expression, education, and power balances.¹⁸⁵ While certain subjects are pertinent to state security and must undergo a rigorous classification process, other data, such as election information, budget spending, rule of law violations, and more, should not be subject to public restriction of access.

National governments should be encouraged by regional and international partners to prohibit the free use of document classification at the mid and local levels of government. Transparency International should be responsible for establishing a standard for what states can and cannot classify to ensure information deemed necessary for public consumption is freely available to the public. Working with relevant bodies, both regional and international, Transparency International will advocate for Member State adherence to the published standard. Adherence to said standard will be measured by an annual review of participating Member States' classification practices.

Recommendation #4: The international community should encourage the establishment and support of autonomous government agencies whose primary mission is to protect public access to information.

The additional establishment of autonomous agencies responsible for checking government-reported information will increase the verifiability and accessibility of information. This is particularly true in countries where the capacity exists to provide the public with information, but where accessibility is challenged through remaining challenges as outlined in Policy Recommendation #2 for Public Access to Information. Such is the case in Mexico, where independent organizations responsible for fact-checking and dispersing that information were liquidated.¹⁸⁶ Thus, in countries where the capacity exists to provide services essential to ensuring public access of information, the international community should encourage the creation of independent and autonomous agencies whose primary purpose is to ensure accountability, accessibility, and accuracy.

Relevant UN bodies, such as the General Assembly, must pass a resolution(s) encouraging the establishment of autonomous agencies in participating member states' governments aimed at proliferating information. Member states with previously existing information-sharing bodies should be encouraged to provide access to information appropriate for public consumption.

Recommendation #5: National governments must empower independent information dissemination agencies by creating a safer environment for the free flow of information.

To further support public access to information, the establishment of safeguards/protections by the national government promoting media accessibility will encourage local participation in data procurement,

verification, and reporting. Doing so will allow more stakeholders to be brought into the process. As a result, a greater check-and-balance system is created in which journalism, civil society, and grassroots organizations can participate in SDG 16 implementation.¹⁸⁷ This recommendation will be particularly effective in countries that enjoy sufficient capacity to collect, verify, and provide information to the public but face other challenges.

Governments should recognize and empower independent information dissemination agencies, support grassroots-level local journalism initiatives and create a safe environment for stakeholders working in the field. This will help civil society to grow and strengthen in serving as watchdogs to processes that affect the accountability, transparency, inclusiveness, and reliability of the media. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) can serve as a guiding body responsible for setting standards, aiding in resource proliferation, and expanding stakeholder involvement for participating countries.¹⁸⁸

NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS

(16.A.1)

Policy Recommendation #1A: Changing the current system used to measure NHRI adherence to the Paris Principles to a hybrid model that measures the strength of NHRI activities within a state through surveys and data collection/analysis.

OHCHR manages the measurement of the accreditation of human rights institutions.¹⁸⁹ The office receives an application from each country, done in the form of a survey, and then grants the application a grade of A (consistent with the Paris Principles), B (partial compliance with the Paris Principles), or C (non-compliant).¹⁹⁰ This system contains a variety of problems:

1. The survey's design does not accurately reflect the strength of institutions, just the existence of them
2. The grade-based scale does not accurately convey the level at which NHRIs comply with the Paris Principles
3. The UN's self-reported survey lacks a means of verification due to an absence of oversight
4. The survey's utilization of "yes" or "no" responses produces little qualitative data with little to no nuance

As a result of these issues: there is potential for corruption and misinformation.¹⁹¹ "Grades" may be falsely accredited, and therefore inaccurate. Countries that do not abide by the Paris Protocols, yet have NHRIs, are excluded from the indicator.

The indicator should shift its measurement of "the existence of independent national human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles" to "strength of rights available to common citizens." The Human Rights Measurement Initiative (HRMI) would measure indicator data, and instead of a survey-based approach, the model should opt for a hybrid qualitative and quantitative approach that better estimates the strength of a country's NHRIs. While this approach still utilizes the self-reported survey responses, the survey must adopt a process similar to the methodology utilized by HMRI for data verification.

Policy Recommendation #1B: The Indicator measuring NHRI strength and relevancy should also include non-abiding countries in its analysis and reporting.

The current indicator utilizes data that is self-reported from countries who willingly share that information and abide by the Paris Principles.¹⁹² This system results in a lack of global data availability. For example, countries such as the US, who do not abide by such principles but have the capacity to measure NHRI compliance and strength, are not included in such reporting. Thus, by changing the indicator to measure not only the existence of NHRIs, but also the strength of them through holistic and independent analysis, a more complete and relevant data set would be created.

The indicator should, as outlined in recommendation #1A under “National Human Rights Institutions,” adopt the methodology and approach used by the Human Rights Measurement Initiative (HRMI). As noted previously, HRMI measures the strength and presence of NHRIs within a country. Therefore, adjusting the indicator's data source will allow for a more accurate and holistic measure of the strength and relevancy of NHRIs in both abiding and non-abiding countries.

Policy Recommendation #2A: International aid organizations participating in SDG 16 implementation must support data collection and methodological procedures of those involved in ground-level data procurement.

Those involved in data collection for HRMI face various capacity constraints which prevent accurate assessments of NHRIs. Those involved in data collection for HRMI include:

1. Journalists
2. HRMI staff
3. Human rights experts
4. NGOs that are not sponsored by state governments¹⁹³

Countries like the US who currently do not abide to the Paris Principles do not share information with HRMI and other relevant bodies.¹⁹⁴ Additionally, in “fragile”¹⁹⁵ and “conflict-prone” countries, data collection is sometimes inaccurate due to said capacity issues.¹⁹⁶ In “conflict-affected” countries, data accessibility is impacted by ongoing extreme violence.¹⁹⁷

International organizations must play an expanded role in ensuring that individuals participating in data collection are safeguarded and supplemented so that data procurement is reliable and accurate. International organizations must:

1. Protect individuals involved in data collection from extrajudicial punishment and external pressures from hostile actors;
2. Provide logical support for individuals as outlined by the framework in Recommendation #1A under “National Human Rights Institutions.” Support would include offering international monitoring assistance, sanctuary for those seeking refuge, and monetary assistance;
3. Encourage state governments to pursue additional programs that strengthen human rights progress as measured by HRMI.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SDG 16

Policy Recommendation #1A: Establish a new indicator that measures countries' Refugee and Asylum institutional accountability within SDG 16.

While SDG 10.7 measures the total number of displaced persons by country or territory of origin, an additional or supplementary indicator under SDG 16 would assist in promoting inclusive and accountable humanitarian institutions.¹⁹⁸ It would establish consistent standards, measurement of those standards, and delegate responsibility for the data collection of country institutions in processing refugee and asylum applicants.

The UN should create an additional indicator within SDG-16 that measures institutional accountability to receive and adjudicate on refugee and asylum applications. The indicator should measure the total number of applications for refugee and asylum status per country. Each country should have an office to which this responsibility is assigned. This indicator should require a mandatory reporting system to UNHCR in which these offices report on application statuses.

Policy Recommendation #1B: Create an indicator that measures the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) within a country.

IDPs remain the most vulnerable and inaccessible population to humanitarian assistance, and therefore some of the least likely people to benefit from any SDG 16 program.¹⁹⁹ Measuring the IDP population within a country can provide international organizations with critical information on population trends and the impacts of conflict on displaced civilians. The collection and reporting of such data can create a sense of accountability and refocus collective international humanitarian efforts toward these populations. Moreover, simply recognizing IDPs within the broader SDG 16 targets creates a newfound sense of urgency to reach these vulnerable groups as the 2030 benchmark draws nearer. However, international guidance on the production of quality IDP official statistics is limited. Most of the data is drawn from operational data produced by humanitarian assistance programs. Due to the challenges in collecting official statistics at the initial stage of displacement for IDPs, it is important to recognize and adjust operational data collected by humanitarian projects.

An indicator within SDG 16 should be created that specifically measures IDP statistics. This will help improve the quality of IDP data to meet the globally recognized standards for official statistics and increase their reliability. UNHCR should collaborate with UNFPOS (United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics) and other relevant actors to execute the following steps:

1. Develop national and international IDP-specific data collection methods and ensure that IDP statistics are embedded and reported by countries through those mechanisms within a timely manner
2. Recognize pertinent operational data from NGOs, particularly humanitarian agencies, to complement official statistics
3. Facilitate agreements for data sharing, privacy and confidentiality, coherence, joint data production, and contribution of good practices and resources between the statistical offices and participating humanitarian organizations
4. Provide guidance, policy, and frameworks on data collection, processing, dissemination, and verification

5. Promote the accessibility and the user-friendliness of published statistical data through application of data visualization tools and techniques
6. Prioritize the privacy and confidentiality of data related to IDPs through the establishment and enforcement of data-protection legislation and encourage participating agencies to comply
7. Include considerations of “do-no-harm” principles in conflict situations for both vulnerable IDP population and for actors who work in the field.²⁰⁰

Policy Recommendation #2: Utilize incentives to encourage participating member states to contribute relevant data to assist with indicator measurement(s).

Member states are more likely to attempt full implementation of SDG 16 targets should relevant organizations, such as the UN, incentivize participation. Incentives should be positive rather than negative, as countries like Haiti would suffer deeply should punishments be incurred for not meeting SDG 16 targets.²⁰¹

Regional bodies must create incentive programs for participating countries to:

1. Identify the baseline of each country regarding SDG 16 implementation
2. Establish targets for realistic progress that can be achieved annually by each specific country leading up to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda
3. Commit “rewards” for meeting established benchmarks each year, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Proliferation of monetary resources through redirection of organizational funds
 - b. Channeling personnel from participating regional bodies to increase capacity within local communities to support SDG 16 related initiative

Relevant regional bodies should conduct an annual review of progress made within each country to adjust benchmarks and expectations as the program matures.

Policy Recommendation #3: Donors and the international community should prioritize funding SDG 16 projects aimed at improving data gathering methods for relative indicators and operational procedures that coincide with the 2030 goals.

A large issue across all discoveries made throughout this paper has been the lack of support and funding for both SDG 16 indicator research and projects.²⁰² Without such contributions and backing from donors, projects designed for capacity building in “conflict-affected” countries or data collection efforts in “conflict-prone” societies dissipate or stall. Such has been the case in Haiti, where the lack of financial and physical support has aided in the degradation of the ongoing crisis.²⁰³ For SDG 16 to enhance its indicator methods and 2030 project goals, donors within the international community need to collectively increase the amount of funding and financial support.

Funding for SDG-16 indicator tracking and related projects can be enhanced through two tracks. First, the UN should revitalize or create an alternative to the now-defunct SDG Fund.²⁰⁴ Second, by revamping and bringing back such a program, the international community can establish additional financing programs for stakeholders beyond international partners and the private sector. By increasing the number of funding opportunities and stakeholders, the UN can expand the range of its SDG flagship programs which are designed to integrate the projects into the current international monetary system.²⁰⁵

Policy Recommendation #4: Develop a comprehensive and synchronous approach that aims to achieve sustainable peace by strengthening the coherence of SDG 16 goals across humanitarian, development, and peace efforts.

1. Develop a shared understanding of the risks, needs, and vulnerabilities of affected populations and create conflict-sensitive programming that encompasses humanitarian, development and peace building efforts based on that understanding;
2. Support that approach through relevant and effective financing to ensure that the right resources are offered in the appropriate setting;
3. Execute conflict analyses and integrate conflict-sensitive approaches into project designs across all pillars;
4. Engage in reflective practices of the potential impact and contribution of said projects on ongoing or potential conflict
5. Promote understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities, capabilities, mandates, activities, and sharing of expertise between actors involved at all levels

Policy Recommendation #5: Filling data gaps and procuring available data through the application of fair and effective data innovation strategies.

Critical data required for policy making is still lacking, particularly in underdeveloped and marginalized populations. To progress toward SDG 16's 2030 targets, it is important to fill existing data gaps and disparities in those societies. Fortunately, data is becoming more accessible due to the increase in social connectivity. The internet, mobile phones, social media, and global platforms make it possible to collect data in such marginalized and impacted communities.²⁰⁶ If applied responsibly, "big data" (high-volume data sets that transcend traditional data-collection methods) can offer insights that complement survey data and traditional statistics to better inform evidence-based decision-making and policy recommendations. The use of big data can also assist in identifying and developing proxy indicators.²⁰⁷ For example, social media analysis can inform real-time reports of violence and terror attacks, police activity, and the use of force, which can better inform indicators related to intentional homicide.

These newer, global sources of data, such as satellite information and social media data, can improve the measurement of an indicator's progress. However, the usage of big data to track indicator progress requires collaboration across various levels of government, the private sector, and other actors. Therefore, the UN, INGOs, and other international actors in the private sector should assist governments that are struggling with the capacity to adopt data innovation techniques, safety standards, and do-no-harm principles. This can be accomplished by, though not limited to:

1. Leading R&D (research and development);
2. Mobilizing resources;
3. Enforcing proper analysis and oversight of the techniques; and,
4. Providing guidelines.

Governments should also work with local and national data centers to promote data transparency, accuracy, and meaningful data analysis. National and international organizations should also adopt innovative technologies in their statistical systems to collect quality data for SDG-16 monitoring.

PART VII: FINAL THOUGHTS

EXPERTS SECTION

In interviews with topic experts, there appeared to be a consensus that not much progress has been made globally in achieving SDG 16. Many identified funding as a major roadblock to SDG 16 implementation. Issues with funding tie back to larger bureaucratic challenges that hinder progress, which cause problems with the quality, organization, reporting, and even trust in the data. In addition, experts have identified how difficult SDG 16 implementation is in many countries due to the presence of ongoing conflict, the very issue that the goal itself is trying to alleviate.

Despite these hardships, experts suggested a myriad of general and specific recommendations for improving SDG 16. Many experts note the need for context. SDG 16 implementation must be improved by assessing the situation on the ground and identifying communities' specific needs and thereby facilitate the goal's implementation at the local level. This includes involving youth in peacebuilding, another recommendation from experts. Others point to the need for cooperation between international actors, the state itself, and actors within the state. Experts cite this cooperation as crucial to the improved implementation of SDG 16 objectives. Data has also been cited as an area for potential improvement, specifically when it comes to more accurate reporting.

During one interview, it was suggested that setting realistic timeframes and benchmarks as a strategy will help the 2030 timeline become more achievable. The same expert expressed the concern of some member states in measurement and public reporting to bilateral donors. National reporting is largely identified by many experts as a massive issue due to the lack of harmony in gathering data. Certain countries in the Global South could also view SDG 16 as a western-dominated vision for peace and stability. Experts also identified the redirection of resources by several external factors like the Ukraine crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic, affecting the cumulative impact of SDG 16 implementation. On the other hand, there is a recognition of the same factors, especially COVID 19, highlighting the need for state institutions to be strong, agile, and flexible.

The other challenges that were noted were: the coordination among stakeholders, inclusion of women, youth, and persons with disabilities in planning and implementation; barriers that inhibit reporting countries from being open and frank about challenges they are facing and advocating for participation and partnerships by local and international actors.

There were suggestions to focus more on the operational level, provide the right political environment by creating incentives that will help shift mindsets and galvanize populations, involve civil society, utilize the leverage of youth-led networks, provide aid to where it can best be used on a local level, raise awareness about the consequences when governments do not invest in SDG 16 indicators, and develop macro-level institutions to help connect strategies on the ground with global strategies and objectives.

When asked whether SDG 16 is possible and if it is a valuable measurement of sustainable development, one expert noted "It is a question of political will" and many other experts unanimously claimed that SDG 16 is a crucial element and a prerequisite for making progress on the entire agenda. An expert reminded the group that whether SDG 16 is reachable or not should not be a concern since it is a development goal that can always be adjusted and that any measure of development needs to be holistic. What is most important is "we continue working towards the goals that we aim to achieve."

CONCLUSION

As this report has shown, there are disparities in the measurement and progress of SDG 16 across the four country groupings. The data and analyses for the incipient country grouping – which included France, the UK, and the US – depict how even nations with the capacity to allocate resources to achieve the SDGs struggle to make sufficient progress. Societal division and political systems that fail to ensure equality and inclusive societies create roadblocks to progress. The capacity for progress toward the selected indicators of intentional homicide, conflict-related deaths, government corruption, public access to information, and national human rights institutions is there, but the support and implementation of policies are lacking.

The fragile country grouping—consisting of Brazil, Ghana, and Indonesia—has seen slight improvements before the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, inaccurate reporting of data, lack of trust in government institutions, and irresponsible services, especially in managing the public health crisis, have set back the progress these countries have made toward the targets outlined by SDG 16.

In the conflict-prone grouping—Colombia, India, and Mexico—the lack of government effort in addressing the topics discussed in the report has allowed for nationalism, criminal networks, and violence to thrive. Increasing interstate violence and attacks on various freedoms threaten the successful progress and implementation of SDG 16. Ultimately, this ends up pulling these countries and those experiencing similar events further away from successful SDG implementation and sustainable peace.

Finally, across the three conflict-affected countries—Haiti, Libya, and Myanmar—extreme violence has exacerbated poverty and legitimized corruption, making both SDG 16 measurement and implementation impossible. Foreign intervention and lack of trust in governmental institutions have made these fragile states even more fragile, as is the case in other countries not examined in this report with similar fragility levels. These countries need effective plans that facilitate sustainable peace and structural change before any recommendations mentioned in this report can be implemented.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A – INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE

Country	Year	Count	Rate Per 100,000	Description	Sub-Description	Source
France	2020	879	1.346641192	Total	N/A	UNODC
France	2020	218	0.333979272	Total	Intimate partner or family member	UNODC
France	2020	134	0.205290011	Total	Intimate partner or family member: Intimate partner	UNODC
France	2020	84	0.128689261	Total	Intimate partner or family member: Family member	UNODC
France	2020	661	1.01266192	Total	Relationship to perpetrator is not known	UNODC
France	2020	88	0.134817321	Total	Organized criminal groups or gangs	UNODC
France	2020	27	0.041364405	Total	Other criminal activities	UNODC
France	2020	7	0.010724105	Total	Socio-political homicide - terrorist offences	UNODC
France	2020	757	1.15973536095315	Total	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
France	2020	7	0.010724105	1st largest city (Paris)	N/A	UNODC
France	2020	24	0.0367683601887393	2nd largest city (Marseille)	N/A	UNODC
France	2020	26	0.03983239	3rd largest city (Lyon)	N/A	UNODC
France	2020	240	0.712497748	Female	Total	UNODC
France	2020	148	0.439373611	Female	Intimate partner or family member	UNODC

France	2020	104	0.308749024	Female	Intimate partner or family member: Intimate partner	UNODC
France	2020	44	0.130624587	Female	Intimate partner or family member: Family member	UNODC
France	2020	92	0.273124137	Female	Relationship to perpetrator is not known	UNODC
France	2020	3	0.008906222	Female	Organized criminal groups or gangs	UNODC
France	2020	8	0.023749925	Female	Other criminal activities	UNODC
France	2020	2	0.005937481	Female	Socio-political homicide - terrorist offences	UNODC
France	2020	227	0.67390412	Female	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
France	2020	14	N/A	Female	Age – 0-9	UNODC
France	2020	4	N/A	Female	Age – 10-14	UNODC
France	2020	2	N/A	Female	Age – 15-17	UNODC
France	2020	4	N/A	Female	Age – 18-19	UNODC
France	2020	11	N/A	Female	Age – 20-24	UNODC
France	2020	15	N/A	Female	Age – 25-29	UNODC
France	2020	51	N/A	Female	Age – 30-44	UNODC
France	2020	61	N/A	Female	Age – 45-59	UNODC
France	2020	74	N/A	Female	Age – 60 and older	UNODC
France	2020	4	0.011874962	Female	Unknown sex	UNODC
France	2020	209	N/A	Female	National Citizens	UNODC
France	2020	26	N/A	Female	Foreign Citizens	UNODC
France	2020	617	1.953199504	Male	Total	UNODC
France	2020	69	0.218429118	Male	Intimate partner or family member	UNODC
France	2020	29	0.091803542	Male	Intimate partner or	UNODC

					family member: Intimate partner	
France	2020	40	0.126625576	Male	Intimate partner or family member: Family member	UNODC
France	2020	548	1.734770386	Male	Relationship to perpetrator is not known	UNODC
France	2020	84	0.265913709	Male	Organized criminal groups or gangs	UNODC
France	2020	18	0.056981509025475 3	Male	Other criminal activities	UNODC
France	2020	5	0.015828197	Male	Socio-political homicide - terrorist offences	UNODC
France	2020	510	1.614476089	Male	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
France	2020	14	N/A	Male	Age – 0-9	UNODC
France	2020	12	N/A	Male	Age – 10-14	UNODC
France	2020	16	N/A	Male	Age – 15-17	UNODC
France	2020	27	N/A	Male	Age – 18-19	UNODC
France	2020	79	N/A	Male	Age – 20-24	UNODC
France	2020	76	N/A	Male	Age – 25-29	UNODC
France	2020	170	N/A	Male	Age – 30-44	UNODC
France	2020	120	N/A	Male	Age – 45-59	UNODC
France	2020	76	N/A	Male	Age – 60 and older	UNODC
France	2020	27	0.085472264	Male	Unknown sex	UNODC
France	2020	474	N/A	Male	National Citizens	UNODC
France	2020	119	N/A	Male	Foreign Citizens	UNODC
France	2019	861	1.321976902	Total	N/A	UNODC
France	2019	215	0.330110376	Total	Intimate partner or family member	UNODC
France	2019	132	0.202672417	Total	Intimate partner or family member:	UNODC

					Intimate partner	
France	2019	83	0.127437959171058	Total	Intimate partner or family member: Family member	UNODC
France	2019	646	0.991866526	Total	Relationship to perpetrator is not known	UNODC
France	2019	76	0.116690179	Total	Organized criminal groups or gangs	UNODC
France	2019	26	0.039920325	Total	Other criminal activities	UNODC
France	2019	4	0.006141588	Total	Socio-political homicide - terrorist offences	UNODC
France	2019	755	1.159224809	Total	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
France	2019	5	0.00767698549223242	1st largest city (Paris)	N/A	UNODC
France	2019	39	0.059880487	2nd largest city (Marseille)	N/A	UNODC
France	2019	23	0.035314133	3rd largest city (Lyon)	N/A	UNODC
France	2019	285	0.848082101013006	Female	Total	UNODC
France	2019	146	0.434456094	Female	Intimate partner or family member	UNODC
France	2019	111	0.33030566	Female	Intimate partner or family member: Intimate partner	UNODC
France	2019	35	0.413626007	Female	Intimate partner or family member: Family member	UNODC
France	2019	139	0.413626007160729	Female	Relationship to perpetrator is not known	UNODC
France	2019	2	0.005951453	Female	Organized criminal groups or gangs	UNODC

France	2019	9	0.026781540031989 7	Female	Other criminal activities	UNODC
France	2019	1	0.002975726670221 07	Female	Socio-political homicide - terrorist offences	UNODC
France	2019	273	0.812373381	Female	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
France	2019	6	0.01785436	Female	Unknown sex	UNODC
France	2019	617	1.74467510882173	Male	Total	UNODC
France	2019	69	0.218877423	Male	Intimate partner or family member	UNODC
France	2019	21	0.066614868	Male	Intimate partner or family member: Intimate partner	UNODC
France	2019	48	0.152262554951715	Male	Intimate partner or family member: Family member	UNODC
France	2019	481	1.525797686	Male	Relationship to perpetrator is not known	UNODC
France	2019	69	0.21887742274309	Male	Organized criminal groups or gangs	UNODC
France	2019	16	0.050754184983904 9	Male	Other criminal activities	UNODC
France	2019	3	0.00951641	Male	Socio-political homicide - terrorist offences	UNODC
France	2019	462	1.46552709141025	Male	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
France	2019	19	0.060270595	Male	Unknown sex	UNODC
UK	2020	164	N/A	N/A	Intimate partner or family member	UNODC
UK	2020	20 (data only available for Scotland)	N/A	N/A	Intimate partner	UNODC

UK	2020	72 (data only available for Scotland and England + Wales)	N/A	N/A	Family member	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	Relationship to perpetrator is not known	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	Organized criminal groups or gangs	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	Other criminal activities	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	Socio-political homicide - terrorist offences	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	1st largest city	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	2nd largest city	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	3rd largest city	UNODC
UK	2020	196	N/A	Female Total	Total	UNODC
UK	2020	100	N/A	N/A	Intimate partner or family member	UNODC
UK	2020	60 (data only available for Scotland and England + Wales)	N/A	Female	Intimate partner	UNODC
UK	2020	2 (data only available for Scotland)	N/A	Female	Family member	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Female	Relationship to perpetrator is not known	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Female	Organized criminal groups or gangs	UNODC

UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Female	Other criminal activities	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Female	Socio-political homicide - terrorist offences	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Female	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 0-9	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 10-14	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 15-17	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 18-19	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 20-24	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 25-29	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 30-44	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 45-59	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 60 and older	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Female	Unknown sex	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Female	National Citizens	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Female	Foreign Citizens	UNODC
UK	2020	477	N/A	Male Total	Total	UNODC
UK	2020	64	N/A	Male	Intimate partner or family member	UNODC
UK	2020	12 (data only available for Scotland and England + Wales)	N/A	Male	Intimate partner	UNODC
UK	2020	8 (data only available for Scotland)	N/A	Male	Family member	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Male	Relationship to perpetrator is not known	UNODC

UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Male	Organized criminal groups or gangs	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Male	Other criminal activities	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Male	Socio-political homicide - terrorist offences	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Male	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 0-9	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 10-14	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 15-17	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 18-19	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 20-24	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 25-29	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 30-44	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 45-59	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 60 and older	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Male	Unknown sex	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Male	National Citizens	UNODC
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	Male	Foreign Citizens	UNODC
UK	2019	760	N/A	N/A	Total	UNODC
UK	2019	155	N/A	N/A	Intimate partner or family member	UNODC
UK	2019	83 (data only available for Scotland and England + Wales)	N/A	N/A	Intimate partner	UNODC
UK	2019	4 (data only available for Scotland)	N/A	N/A	Family member	UNODC

UK	2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	Relationship to perpetrator is not known	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	Organized criminal groups or gangs	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	Other criminal activities	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	Socio-political homicide - terrorist offences	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	1st largest city	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	2nd largest city	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	3rd largest city	UNODC
UK	2019	200	N/A	Female Total	Female Total	UNODC
UK	2019	102	N/A	Female	Intimate partner or family member	UNODC
UK	2019	71 (data only available for Scotland and England + Wales)	N/A	Female	Intimate partner	UNODC
UK	2019	3 (data only available for Scotland)	N/A	Female	Family member	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Female	Relationship to perpetrator is not known	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Female	Organized criminal groups or gangs	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Female	Other criminal activities	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Female	Socio-political homicide - terrorist offences	UNODC

UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Female	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 0-9	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 10-14	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 15-17	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 18-19	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 20-24	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 25-29	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 30-44	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 45-59	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Female	Age – 60 and older	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Female	Unknown sex	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Female	National Citizens	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Female	Foreign Citizens	UNODC
UK	2019	559	N/A	Male Total	Male Total	UNODC
UK	2019	53	N/A	Male	Intimate partner or family member	UNODC
UK	2019	12 (data only available for Scotland and England + Wales)	N/A	Male	Intimate partner	UNODC
UK	2019	1 (data only available for Scotland)	N/A	Male	Family member	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Male	Relationship to perpetrator is not known	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Male	Organized criminal groups or gangs	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Male	Other criminal activities	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Male	Socio-political homicide -	UNODC

					terrorist offences	
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Male	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 0-9	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 10-14	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 15-17	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 18-19	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 20-24	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 25-29	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 30-44	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 45-59	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Male	Age – 60 and older	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Male	Unknown sex	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Male	National Citizens	UNODC
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	Male	Foreign Citizens	UNODC
US	2020	21570	6.5165642	Total	Victims of Intentional Homicide	UNODC
US	2020	4349.55	2.601144	Female Total	Victims of Intentional Homicide	UNODC
US	2020	17220.4538	10.5139951	Male Total	Victims of Intentional Homicide	UNODC
US	2020	35	0.05372864	Unknown Total	Victims of Intentional Homicide	UNODC
US	2020	1344	0.40603905	Total	Intimate Partner Violence	UNODC
US	2020	1363	0.41177918	Total	Family Member Violence	UNODC
US	2020	1770	0.53473893	Total	Perpetrator Unknown	UNODC
US	2020	3931	1.1876038	Total	Other perpetrator known to the victim	UNODC
US	2020	9346	2.82354237	Total	Relationship to the perpetrator is not known	UNODC

US	2020	771	N/A	First Largest City	N/A	UNODC
US	2020	468	N/A	Second Largest City	N/A	UNODC
US	2020	351	N/A	Third Largest City	N/A	UNODC
US	2020	2707	0.81781823	Total	Intimate partner or family member	UNODC
US	2020	1420	0.84919783	Female Total	Intimate partner or family member	UNODC
US	2020	901	0.27220326	Total	Organized Crime groups or gangs	UNODC
US	2020	359	0.04126384	Female Total	Organized Crime groups or gangs	UNODC
US	2020	4371	1.32053325	Total	Interpersonal Homicide	UNODC
US	2020	1144	0.68414248	Female Total	Interpersonal Homicide	UNODC
US	2020	29	0.00876126	Total	Sociopolitical Homicide	UNODC
US	2020	1	0.00059803	Female Total	Sociopolitical Homicide	UNODC
US	2020	20457	3.15918924	Total	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
US	2020	2000	1.19605328	Female Total	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
US	2020	877	0.53545475	Male	Intimate Partner or Family member	UNODC
US	2020	832	0.50797988	Male	Organized Crime groups or gangs	UNODC
US	2020	3222	1.96720091	Male	Interpersonal Homicide	UNODC
US	2020	28	0.01709548	Male	Sociopolitical Homicide	UNODC
US	2020	8429	5.146349	Male	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
US	2019	16669	5.06556583	Total	Total	UNODC
US	2019	3587.09109	2.1577965	Female	Total	UNODC

US	2019	13081.9089	8.03427272	Male	Total	UNODC
US	2019	49	N/A	Unknown Total	Total	UNODC
US	2019	179	0.05439656	N/A	Death due to intentional homicide in prison	UNODC
US	2019	1259	N/A	Total	Intimate Partner Violence	UNODC
US	2019	1243	N/A	Total	Family Member Violence	UNODC
US	2019	1372	0.416939	Total	Perpetrator Unknown	UNODC
US	2019	3245	0.9861276	Total	Perpetrator Known to Victim	UNODC
US	2019	6808	2.0688926	Total	Relationship to Perpetrator is not known	UNODC
US	2019	492	N/A	First Largest City	N/A	UNODC
US	2019	319	N/A	Second Largest City	N/A	UNODC
US	2019	258	N/A	Third Largest City	N/A	UNODC
US	2019	2502	0.7603363	Total	Intimate Partner or Family Violence	UNODC
US	2019	1351	0.81268722	Female	Intimate Partner or Family Violence	UNODC
US	2019	566	0.17200254	Total	Organized crime groups or gangs	UNODC
US	2019	44	0.0264679	Female	Organized crime groups or gangs	UNODC
US	2019	3721	1.13077992	Total	Interpersonal Homicide	UNODC
US	2019	1019	0.6129743	Female	Interpersonal Homicide	UNODC
US	2019	31	0.00942063	Total	Socio-political homicide	UNODC
US	2019	1	0.00060154	Female	Socio-political homicide	UNODC

US	2019	7456	0.26581432	Total	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
US	2019	1516	0.91194213	Female	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
US	2019	824	0.050606076	Male	Intimate Partner or Family Violence	UNODC
US	2019	522	0.32058703	Male	Organized crime groups or gangs	UNODC
US	2019	2701	1.65882292	Male	Interpersonal Homicide	UNODC
US	2019	28	0.01719624	Male	Socio-political homicide	UNODC
US	2019	5917	3.63393383	Male	Unknown types of homicide	UNODC
Brazil	2020	354	0.166541675	1 st Largest City (São Paulo)	N/A	UNODC
Brazil	2020	708	0.333083349888313	2 nd Largest City (Rio de Janeiro)	N/A	UNODC
Brazil	2020	954	0.448815700273235	3 rd Largest City (Brasília)	N/A	UNODC
Brazil	2020	43780	41.9204976899536	Total	Male	UNODC
Brazil	2020	3826	3.53854207590115	Total	Female	UNODC
Brazil	2020	47722	22.4511350612572	Total	N/A	UNODC
Brazil	2019	382	0.181000176	1 st Largest City (São Paulo)	N/A	UNODC
Brazil	2019	653	0.309406059	2 nd Largest City (Rio de Janeiro)	N/A	UNODC
Brazil	2019	1134	0.537314657	3 rd Largest City (Brasília)	N/A	UNODC
Brazil	2019	40268	38.81883093	Total	Male	UNODC
Brazil	2019	3731	3.476636773	Total	Female	UNODC
Brazil	2019	44073	20.8827768	Total	N/A	UNODC
Colombia	2020	12080	23.9970871	Total	By Relationship to perpetrator	UNODC
Colombia	2020	1045	4.07784986	Female Total	N/A	UNODC
Colombia	2020	11,035	44.6522633	Male	N/A	UNODC
Colombia	2019	11,035	44.65	Male Total	N/A	UNODC
Colombia	2019	1,045	4.077849861	Female Total	N/A	UNODC
Colombia	2019	12,080	24	Total	N/A	UNODC
India	2020	24,268	3.38	Male Total	N/A	UNODC

India	2020	16,383	2.47	Female Total	N/A	UNODC
India	2020	40,651	2.95	Total	N/A	UNODC
India	2019	23,241	3.27	Male Total	N/A	UNODC
India	2019	17,238	2.63	Female Total	N/A	UNODC
India	2019	40,479	2.96	Total	N/A	UNODC
Mexico	2020	32,336	51.27	Male Total	N/A	UNODC
Mexico	2020	3,957	6.01	Female Total	N/A	UNODC
Mexico	2020	36,579	28.37	Total	N/A	UNODC
Mexico	2019	32,530	52.13	Male Total	N/A	UNODC
Mexico	2019	3,893	5.97	Female Total	N/A	UNODC
Mexico	2019	36,661	28.74	Total	N/A	UNODC
Haiti	2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Haiti	2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Libya	2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Libya	2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Myanmar	2020	198	0.373094594	Total	Total	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	4	0.014189628	Female Total	Total	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	3	0.0106422211535856	Female	Intimate partner or family member	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	2	0.007094814	Female	Intimate partner	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	1	0.003547407	Female	Family Member	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	1	N/A	Female	Age 15-17	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	2	N/A	Female	Age 25-29	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	3	N/A	Female	Age 30-44	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	3	N/A	Female	Age 45-59	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	3	N/A	Female	Intimate partner or family member	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	30	N/A	Female	Intimate partner	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	5	N/A	Female	Family member	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	148	0.010642221	Female	Other Perpetrator known to the victim	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	9	N/A	Female	National Citizens	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	13	N/A	Male Total	Total	UNODC

Myanmar	2020	12	0.045766259	Male	Intimate partner or family member:	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	28	0.106787937	Male	Intimate partner	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	4	0.01525542	Male	Family Member	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	145	0.55300896	Male	Other Perpetrator known to the victim	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	3	N/A	Male	Age 10-14	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	7	N/A	Male	Age 15-17	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	14	N/A	Male	Age 18-19	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	15	N/A	Male	Age 10-24	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	17	N/A	Male	Age 25-29	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	45	N/A	Male	Age 30-44	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	75	N/A	Male	Age 45-59	UNODC
Myanmar	2020	13	N/A	Male	Age 60 and older	UNODC
Myanmar	2019	169	0.31269994	Total	Firearms or explosives	UNODC

APPENDIX B – CONFLICT-RELATED DEATHS

Country	Year	Extrasytemic Entries	Intrastate Entries	Interstate Entries	Total Deaths (Best Estimate)	Source
France	2021	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	N/A
France	2020	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	N/A
France	2019	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	N/A
UK	2021	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	UCDP
UK	2020	1	No Data	No Data	1	UCDP
UK	2019	3	No Data	No Data	4	UCDP
US	2021	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	N/A
US	2020	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	N/A
US	2019	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	N/A
Brazil	2021	0	0	487	2230	UCDP
Brazil	2020	0	0	360	2216	UCDP
Brazil	2019	1	0	268	1309	UCDP
Ghana	2021	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	N/A
Ghana	2020	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	N/A
Ghana	2019	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	N/A
Indonesia	2021	32	1	0	53	UCDP
Indonesia	2020	11	3	0	22	UCDP
Indonesia	2019	9	0	0	15	UCDP
Colombia	2021	41	48	N/A	209	UCDP
Colombia	2020	26	89	N/A	168	UCDP
Colombia	2019	54	31	N/A	175	UCDP
India	2021	224	54	N/A	523	UCDP

India	2020	266	81	41	754	UCDP
India	2019	248	106	N/A	732	UCDP
Mexico	2021	N/A	5	3745	18811	UCDP
Mexico	2020	N/A	5	2053	16441	UCDP
Mexico	2019	N/A	3	1011	11998	UCDP
Haiti	2021	13	No Data	No Data	118	UCDP
Haiti	2020	35	No Data	No Data	194	UCDP
Haiti	2019	No Data	No Data	1	1	UCDP
Libya	2021	7	No Data	No Data	12	UCDP
Libya	2020	131	No Data	No Data	194	UCDP
Libya	2019	No Data	No Data	185	1782	UCDP
Myanmar	2021	847	No Data	No Data	1766	UCDP
Myanmar	2020	70	No Data	No Data	196	UCDP
Myanmar	2019	No Data	No Data	117	503	UCDP

APPENDIX C1 – GOVERNMENT CORRUPTION

(SOURCE IS UNODC)

Country	Year	Count	Bribery	Other Acts of Corruption	Rate Per 100,000	Bribery Rate Per 100,000	Other Acts Rate Per 100,000
France	2020	2315	171	2144	3.546614743	0.261974566	3.284640177
France	2019	2307	183	2124	3.542161106	0.280977669	3.261183437
UK	2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
UK	2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
US	2020	9,393	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
US	2019	13,497	4.1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Colombia	2020	12,407	668	11,739	24.38	1.31	23.07
Colombia	2019	15,436	979	14457	30.66	1.94	28.72
India	2020	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data
India	2019	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data
Mexico	2020	24,627	2965	21,641	19.1	2.3	16.79
Mexico	2019	26,391	3,546	22,845	20.69	2.78	17.91
Haiti	2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Haiti	2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Libya	2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Libya	2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Myanmar	2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Myanmar	2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

APPENDIX C2 – GOVERNMENT CORRUPTION

(SOURCE IS TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL)

Country	Field Work Year	Sample Size	Didn't Pay a Bribe (Excluding No Contact)	Paid A Bribe (Excluding No Contact)	Didn't Pay a Bribe	Paid A Bribe	No Contact	Margin Of Error	Surveying Org.
France	2020	3,600	95%	5%	80%	4%	17%	+/- 1.63 percentage points	Leaderfield
UK	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	N/A
UK	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	N/A
US	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	N/A
Brazil	2019	1,000	89%	11%	69%	8%	22%	+/- 2.8 percentage points at a 95 per cent confidence level	IPSOS Peru
Ghana	2017	2,400	67%	33%	50%	24%	26%	+/- 2.8 percentage points at a 95 per cent confidence level	Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana)
Indonesia	2020	1,000	70%	30%	70%	30%	0%	+/- 3.1 percentage points at 95 per cent confidence level	Effience 3/RAD Research
Colombia	2019	1101	80%	20%	56%	14%	30%	+/- 2.8 percentage	IPSOS

APPENDIX D – PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Country	Year	Subfactor 3.2 Score	World Ranking	Regional Ranking	Income Ranking	Source
France	2021	0.69	18/139	13/31	17/46	WJP Rule of Law Index
France	2020	0.73	14/128	9/24	13/37	WJP Rule of Law Index
France	2019	0.73	11/126	6/24	10/38	WJP Rule of Law Index
UK	2021	N/A	12/139	10/31	12/46	WJP Rule of Law Index
UK	2020	N/A	11/128	9/24	11/37	WJP Rule of Law Index
UK	2019	N/A	10/126	8/24	10/38	WJP Rule of Law Index
US	2021	N/A	27/139	20/31	27/48	WJP Rule of Law Index
US	2020	N/A	21/128	15/24	21/37	WJP Rule of Law Index
US	2019	N/A	14/126	14/24	20/38	WJP Rule of Law Index
Brazil	2021	0.61	32/139	4/32	3/40	WJP Rule of Law Index
Brazil	2020	0.61	28/128	4/30	3/42	WJP Rule of Law Index
Brazil	2019	0.62	29/126	6/30	3/38	WJP Rule of Law Index
Ghana	2021	0.41	100/139	16/33	19/35	WJP Rule of Law Index
Ghana	2020	0.42	94/128	17/31	16/27	WJP Rule of Law Index
Ghana	2019	0.38	106/126	22/30	22/30	WJP Rule of Law Index
Indonesia	2021	0.54	53/139	8/15	12/40	WJP Rule of Law Index
Indonesia	2020	0.55	45/128	19/15	4/30	WJP Rule of Law Index
Indonesia	2019	0.54	50/126	9/15	7/30	WJP Rule of Law Index
Colombia	2021	N/A	43/139	8/32	6/40	WJP Rule of Law Index
Colombia	2020	N/A	36/128	7/30	6/42	WJP Rule of Law Index

Colombia	2019	N/A	38/126	9/30	5/38	WJP Rule of Law Index
India	2021	N/A	79/139	3/6	9/35	WJP Rule of Law Index
India	2020	N/A	69/128	3/6	6/30	WJP Rule of Law Index
India	2019	N/A	68/126	3/6	7/30	WJP Rule of Law Index
Mexico	2021	N/A	38/139	6/32	4/40	WJP Rule of Law Index
Mexico	2020	N/A	39/128	9/30	7/42	WJP Rule of Law Index
Mexico	2019	N/A	31/126	7/30	4/38	WJP Rule of Law Index
Haiti	2021	N/A	114/139	29/32	10/18/	WJP Rule of Law Index
Haiti	2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	WJP Rule of Law Index
Haiti	2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	WJP Rule of Law Index
Libya	2021	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	WJP Rule of Law Index
Libya	2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	WJP Rule of Law Index
Libya	2019	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	WJP Rule of Law Index
Myanmar	2021	N/A	126/139	14/15	29/35	WJP Rule of Law Index
Myanmar	2020	N/A	109/128	14/15	23/30	WJP Rule of Law Index
Myanmar	2019	N/A	114/126	14/15	24/30	WJP Rule of Law Index

APPENDIX E – NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS

Country	Year	Exist? Y/N	Rank	Data?	Source
France	2020	Y	N/A	N/A	GANHRI
France	2019	Y	N/A	N/A	GANHRI
UK	2020	Y	A		GANHRI
UK	2019	Y	A		GANHRI
US	2020	N	N/A	N/A	N/A
US	2019	N	N/A	N/A	N/A
Brazil	2020	N	N/A	N/A	N/A
Brazil	2019	N	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ghana	2020	Y	A	See Appendix E1	GANHRI
Ghana	2019	Y	A	See Appendix E1	GANHRI
Indonesia	2020	Y	A	See Appendix E2	GANHRI
Indonesia	2019	Y	A	See Appendix E2	GANHRI
Colombia	2020	Y	A	N/A	GANHRI
Colombia	2019	Y	A	N/A	GANHRI
India	2020	Y	A	See Appendix E3	GANHRI
India	2019	Y	A	See Appendix E3	GANHRI
Mexico	2020	Y	A	See Appendix E4	GANHRI
Mexico	2019	Y	A	See Appendix E4	GANHRI
Haiti	2020	N/A	A	N/A	GANHRI
Haiti	2019	N/A	A	N/A	GANHRI
Libya	2020	N/A	B	N/A	GANHRI
Libya	2019	N/A	B	N/A	GANHRI
Myanmar	2020	N/A	B	N/A	GANHRI
Myanmar	2019	N/A	B	N/A	GANHRI

APPENDIX E1 – NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS

(GHANA)

Year	Cases Received	Cases Concluded	Cases Pending	Cases Closed
2020	8009	7655	2109	N/A
2019	8859	N/A	N/A	8851

APPENDIX E2 – NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS
(INDONESIA)

Year	Complaint Cases Received	Received By Head Office	Received By Representative Office	Complaints Filed
2021	2499	2258	241	N/A
2020	2738	2480	258	N/A
2019	4309	2301	318	413

APPENDIX E3 – NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS

(INDIA)

Year	Month	Cases Registered	Cases Disposed	Cases Pending
2019	January	8823	10541	20421
	February	7169	7783	20203
	March	5722	5720	20118
	April	5497	5689	19797
	May	5776	5767	20652
	June	4997	5347	19550
	July	7868	7068	19352
	August	5578	5192	20683
	September	6059	5611	21382
	October	5820	4187	22800
	November	6800	6672	22043
	December	6476	6070	19703
2020	January	7718	7616	21298
	February	5714	5938	20109
	March	8325	4525	23559
	April	2583	399	22722
	May	3998	5433	20184
	June	6668	6097	20662
	July	6670	7421	18589
	August	5934	6171	18509
	September	7024	6913	17601
	October	7145	6925	18027
	November	No Data	No Data	No Data
	December	6763	4973	18637
2021	January	7947	10357	15084
	February	7212	9032	13829
	March	6502	7711	12489
	April	7649	7633	12033
	May	6373	6743	11097
	June	7692	5665	12709
	July	9615	6531	13442
	August	11235	7588	18695
	September	10627	8736	20806

	October	10979	6647	23895
	November	9847	12937	21182
	December	10334	6677	25427

APPENDIX E4 – NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS

(MEXICO)

Year	Recommendations	Recommendations For Serious Violations	General Recommendations	Recommendations Of the National Mechanism for The Prevention of Torture	Action Report of Unconstitutionality	Pronouncements, Studies and Special Reports
2022	191	21	2	None since 2016	135	6
2021	146	7	2	None since 2016	128 Pending, 2 resolved, 2 dismissed	20
2020	90	42	2	None since 2016	21 pending, 103 resolved, 11 dismissed	8

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