

LOCAL AND REGIONAL  
GOVERNMENTS' REPORT  
TO THE 2024 HLPF

PAPER 3

# ADVANCING PEACEFUL, JUST & INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES (SDG 16) AT LOCAL & REGIONAL LEVELS

A Government approach



Facilitated by:



#SDG16  
#SDG17  
#HLPF2024  
#Listen2Cities



## 2024 UCLG



Published in July 2024 by United Cities and Local Governments.  
This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 IGO License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/).

United Cities and Local Governments  
Cités et Gouvernements Locaux Unis  
Ciudades y Gobiernos Locales Unidos

Avinyó, 15, 08002 Barcelona

[www.uclg.org](http://www.uclg.org)

### DISCLAIMERS:

The terms used concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, concerning delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries, or regarding its economic system or degree of development do not necessarily reflect the opinion of United Cities and Local Governments. The analysis, conclusions and recommendations of this report do not necessarily reflect the views of all the members of United Cities and Local Governments.

This project is co-funded by the European Union



This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of UCLG and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

Graphic design and lay-out: Kantō Creative. Proofreading: Lisa Taylor

### Editorial board:

Anna Calvete Moreno, Ainara Fernández, Cécile Roth, Damia Tarmoul Oummad

### Policy advisory:

Emilia Saiz, Secretary General, UCLG

### UCLG World Secretariat:

Special thanks to Loane Alonzeau, José Álvarez, Saul Baldeh, Pere Ballesster, Jean-Baptiste Buffet, Xavier Castellanos, Benedetta Cosco, Adrià Duarte, Gloria Escoruela, Fátima Fernández, Pablo Fernández, Amanda Fléty, Viviana Herrera, Sara Hoeflich, Paloma Labbé, Albert Lladó, Marta Llobet, Kader Makhoul, Pablo Mariani, Prachi Metawala, Carole Morillon, Carolina Osorio, Firdaous Oussidhoum, Carolina Osorio, Jordi Pascual, Massimo Perrino, Federico Poitier, Agnès Ruiz, Fernando Santomauro, Maria Alejandra Rico, Mariola Szek, Juan Carlos Uribe, Sarah Vieux and the rest of the UCLG World Secretariat

### Special acknowledgment:

Special acknowledgement is given to the authors that have vastly contributed to paper 2 (Yunus Arian, ICLEI) and paper 3 (David Andersson; Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies at the Center on International Cooperation at New York University; and the Peace in Our Cities Network).

Finally, UCLG would like to thank all the GSDR Independent Group of Scientists, GTF networks, LRGs, LGAs and partners who responded to the GTF/UCLG 2024 Survey, participated in the consultations on the papers and submitted additional information about the state of localization in their territories.

# Table of contents

<b>1. Localization efforts to protect people and the planet, improve government and ensure a sustainable future for all.....</b>	<b>04</b>
<hr/>	
<b>2. Introduction: SDG 16 as a local and global commitment.....</b>	<b>08</b>
2.1. SDG 16: A goal and enabler at local levels.....	08
2.2. A snapshot of the data.....	10
<hr/>	
<b>3. Peace and violence reduction: Local approaches and results.....</b>	<b>11</b>
3.1. Interpersonal violence: A ubiquitous challenge.....	11
3.2. The wide-ranging impacts of urban violence and how LRGs are addressing it.....	12
3.3. Select lessons learned in LRGs reducing and preventing urban violence.....	14
<hr/>	
<b>4. Access to justice: A local issue.....</b>	<b>16</b>
4.1. Local actors, local knowledge.....	16
4.2. Access and inclusion in delivering justice.....	17
<hr/>	
<b>5. Inclusive, transparent and responsive institutions: A local prerogative..</b>	<b>19</b>
5.1. Participatory and open forms of government at the local level.....	19
5.2. Access to information, the digital divide and efforts to combat misinformation and disinformation.....	20
5.3. Addressing inequality and exclusion and responsive governance at the local level.....	21
<hr/>	
<b>6. SDG 16 and LRGs: Looking ahead .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Notes.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<hr/>	



# 1. LOCALIZATION EFFORTS TO PROTECT PEOPLE AND THE PLANET, IMPROVE GOVERNMENT AND ENSURE A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR ALL

**At the halfway point of the 2030 Agenda, our progress as an international community is far off track.**

Despite relatively steady improvement through 2020, the world is now seeing stagnation and even regression on many Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets. Projections show that the world will not achieve the SDGs by 2030. As urbanization continues at an exponential rate and the multilateral system requires increasing recognition and involvement of bottom-up solutions, the 2030 Agenda emerges as both a challenging and indispensable blueprint for humanity.

**Despite pre-pandemic progress, the [2023 Global Sustainable Development Report \(GSDR\)](#) underscores a distressing trend across numerous SDGs from 2020 to 2023.** Recent crises have disrupted progress on ending extreme poverty (indicator 1.1.1), while other targets, such as achieving food security (indicator 2.1.2) and reducing global greenhouse gas emissions (indicator 13.2.2), continue to regress. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic lingers; it has slowed, disrupted or reversed progress across the SDGs; exacerbated existing inequalities; and contributed to the highest level of State-based armed conflicts since 1945.

With 1.2 billion people living in multidimensional poverty in 2022 (including many deprivations linked to housing, sanitation, drinking water, school attendance and child mortality), urgent action is imperative. Indeed, the GSDR signals that up to 205 million individuals face acute food insecurity. Global warming poses an imminent threat, risking destabilization of the climate system. Unprecedented natural disasters have damaged crucial agricultural production areas, fisheries, forests and ecosystems that people across the world rely on. SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) underscores the necessity of fostering peaceful, inclusive societies with access to justice and effective, accountable institutions. Yet, current geopolitical conflicts have put attaining this SDG, which plays an enabling role for achieving other SDGs, at stake. While partnerships, research and capacity building at different levels are being strengthened, foreign aid and other resources are strained and still far from the 0.7% target needed to support investments in longer-term sustainable development.

The global community requires swift and profound transformation as we journey towards 2030. **Local and regional governments (LRGs), whether by explicitly using the SDG framework or not, have exhibited unwavering dedication, ambition and ingenuity in driving this crucial agenda forward.** Their proximity to communities empowers them to customize policies and services according to the unique needs and aspirations of their populations, particularly in vital sectors such as education, health care, housing and food security, which prove instrumental in alleviating poverty (SDG 1: No Poverty and SDG 2: Zero Hunger). By integrating bold climate actions into their policies and planning, LRGs are enhancing resilience and advocating for harmony with nature, alongside efforts to promote social and transboundary justice (SDG 13: Climate Action). Utilizing city diplomacy and localized initiatives, they play a crucial role in advancing peace and curbing urban violence, while also facilitating access to justice. They cultivate robust, accountable and transparent institutions by bolstering egalitarian, inclusive and participatory governance structures; reducing corruption; and ensuring widespread availability of accurate and trustworthy information (SDG 16). Undoubtedly, LRGs execute all these visions and actions by harnessing multilevel and multistakeholder partnerships, aiming to contribute more effectively to shared objectives (SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals).

This paper, together with the other two papers included in the [8th Towards the localization of the SDGs report](#), assesses the SDGs highlighted in this year's High-Level Political Forum (SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17). Drawing from discussions and research findings, which frequently emphasized national and global progress and hurdles, it digs deeper into local-level impacts, localized challenges and opportunities. Moreover, it sheds light on innovative and forward-looking policy and practice shifts and interventions led by LRGs, together with local stakeholders, which have proved to accelerate these transformations from the grassroots level upward. This paper offers multiple policy recommendations to harness local innovations and transform the current negative trajectories, driving us towards the creation of profoundly sustainable, equitable and inclusive cities and territories.

The three papers offer a comprehensive and harmonized perspective on LRGs' approaches to advancing the specific SDGs under assessment, as well as other closely aligned SDGs:

- **Paper 1**, written from a “people” entry point, aims to analyze localization efforts focused on SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger) and, in connection, SDGs 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality) and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).
- **Paper 2**, written from a “planet” entry point, assesses localization efforts focused on SDG 13 (Climate Action) and, in connection, SDGs 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).
- **Paper 3**, written from a “government” entry point, studies localization efforts focused on SDGs 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) and, in connection, SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).

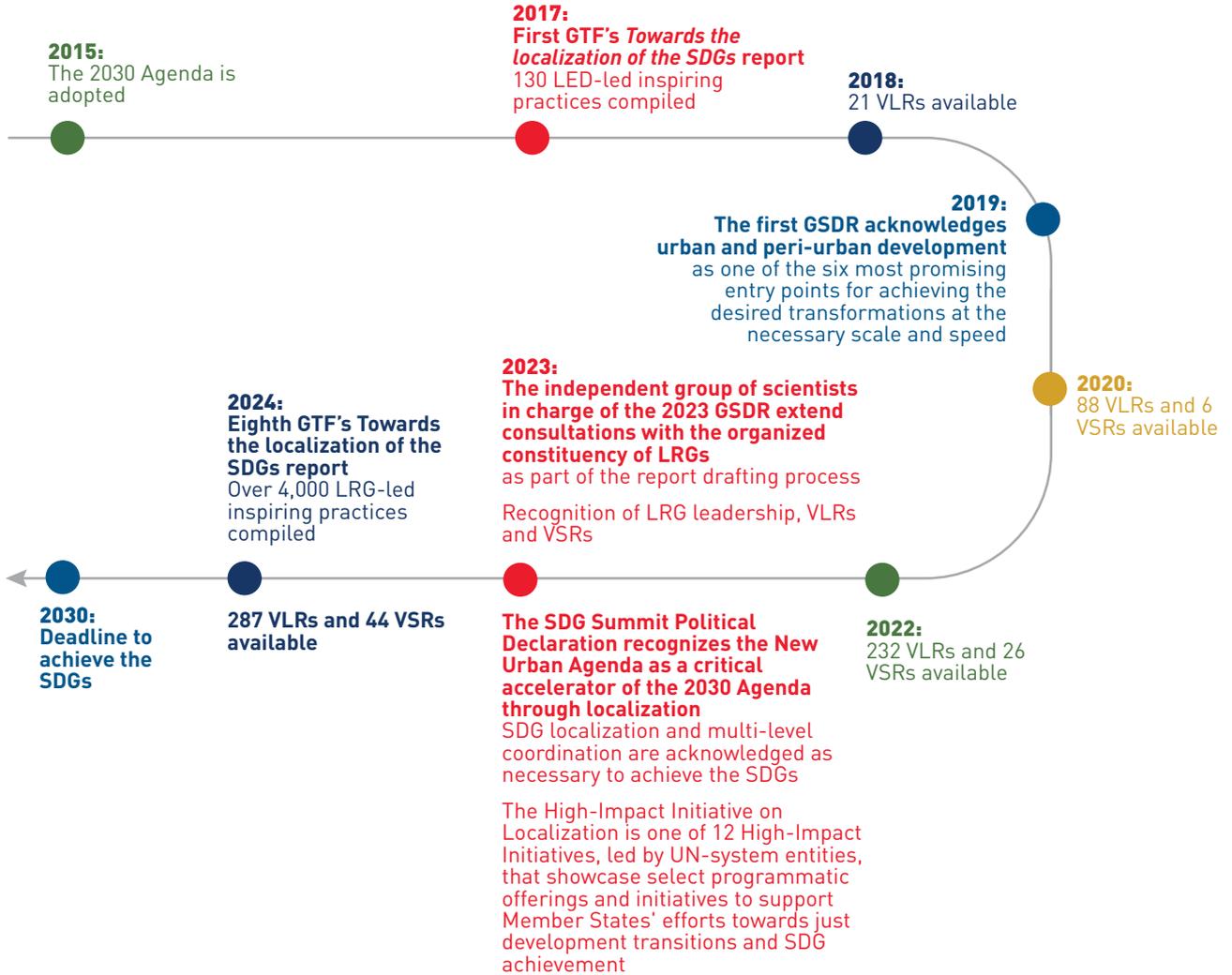
The three papers are rooted in comprehensive secondary research. They leverage strategic partnerships within the Global Taskforce (GTF) and its partners in an effort to strengthen the shared visions upon which the analyses and proposals are based. Coordinated by the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) World Secretariat, Paper 1 has been drafted by this secretariat's research team in collaboration with its other teams. Paper 2 is a collaboration between ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and UCLG, and Paper 3 has been produced in partnership with the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies at the Center on International Cooperation at New York University, and the Peace in Our Cities initiative. The papers leverage insights, experiences and policies gleaned from cities, regions, local government associations, networks within the GTF and collaborative partners, including inputs from a team of researchers commissioned to craft the GSDR. This wealth of knowledge has been garnered from various avenues, mainly the GTF/UCLG 2024 Survey, written consultations and interactive online sessions.



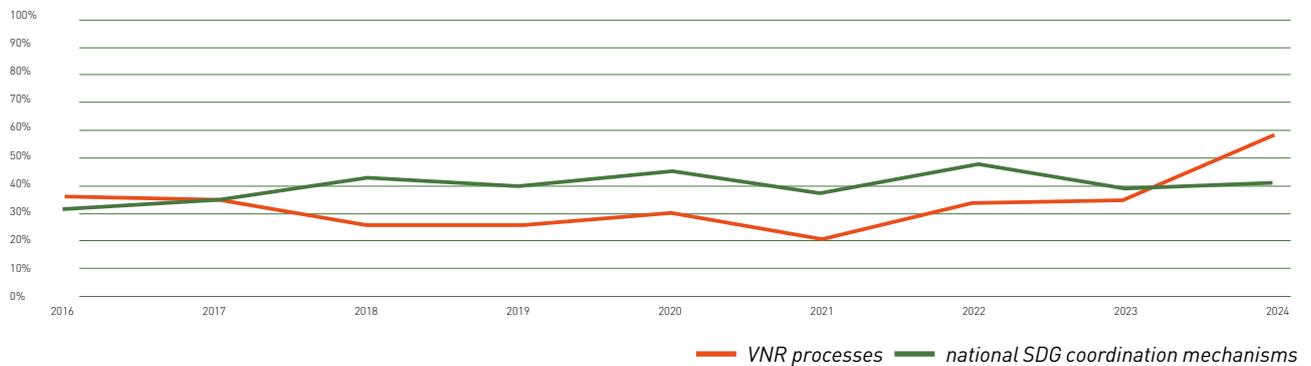
# HIGHLIGHTS

## SDG localization increasingly present in UN-led processes and reporting

1.



## % of countries with LRGs' high and medium participation in VNR processes and in the national SDG coordination mechanisms





## 2. INTRODUCTION: SDG 16 AS A LOCAL AND GLOBAL COMMITMENT

**Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 provides an ambitious set of commitments to build more peaceful, just and inclusive societies for all.** Its targets and indicators, broad in scope, collectively underscore that the pursuit of peace, justice, equality and inclusion is not only a development imperative in and of itself, but also a precondition for realizing broader development (and political) priorities – across the 2030 Agenda. **Yet, despite such importance, progress in its implementation is markedly insufficient and, in some areas, backsliding.**<sup>1</sup>

As policy-makers, practitioners and thought leaders reflect on what it will take to accelerate delivery of SDG 16 and the larger 2030 Agenda during this second, and final, half of the implementation period, focus and investment should be placed on where noticeable progress is being made at all levels of government, including local and regional governments (LRGs), and where additional progress will be most needed.

*“Making progress at the local level has proven instrumental in driving transformation on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development from the ground up. [...] Building peaceful, just and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice, based on respect for human rights, must be at the centre of our roadmap of action. This is critical to deliver better access to basic services, better socio-economic opportunities and improved governance systems. [...] As catalysts of transformative change, local and regional governments are incubating ideas, bringing actors together, drawing on local assets and knowledge and testing solutions on the ground.”*

Deputy Secretary-General  
of the United Nations (UN)  
Amina Mohammed<sup>2</sup>

Urbanization is an inevitable global mega-trend. Two-thirds of the world’s population is likely to live in cities by 2030, with the number of cities in low-income countries projected to grow by 76% between 2020 and 2070.<sup>3</sup> Against a backdrop of proliferating global crises, geopolitical strife, growing inequalities, discrimination and the rising cost of living, empowering LRGs to act and further deliver on more peaceful, just and inclusive societies is critical. LRGs are already the “first responders” to some of our time’s most pressing issues and instrumental to

global efforts to leave no one – and no place – behind. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) estimates that 65% of all 169 SDG targets are not achievable without LRG involvement.<sup>4</sup> Whether linked to economic downturns, organized crime and violence, climate change or public health crises, LRGs are de facto charged with providing the services, support, knowledge and expertise required to effectively respond.

Local and regional actors, strategies and approaches to SDG 16 implementation are a necessity amidst receding public trust in many national governments and components of the multilateral system.<sup>5</sup> As such, **LRGs are critical for accelerating progress on SDG 16 and its interlinkages across the SDGs, as well as rebuilding trust in institutions, bolstering against future crises and fostering peace in the long term.** Mere recognition of LRGs is not sufficient. They must also be equipped with the necessary resources, capacity and authority to help bridge the gap between SDG 16 targets and real progress.

This paper attempts to:

- Unpack the larger state of play of SDG 16’s three pillars – peace, justice and inclusion – and their interlinkages with other SDGs as part of a discussion on the overall enabling environment for LRGs to advance SDG 16 at the local level
- Highlight the work of LRGs to advance SDG 16 with tangible impact for people and communities
- Provide recommendations on how to empower and strengthen LRGs in their work in building more peaceful, just and inclusive societies amidst an evolving global order

### 2.1 SDG 16: A goal and enabler at local levels

**SDG 16 was designed not only as a means of building more peaceful, just and inclusive societies but also as an enabling goal** – correlating to a broader network of interlinked goals and targets across the SDGs (see Box 1). As such, it offers actionable approaches to, and solutions for, progress not only on peace, justice, equality and inclusion but also across the SDGs. It provides means by which to rebuild trust in institutions and governance systems globally. This catalytic and enabling role of SDG 16 applies to both national levels and local and regional levels.

## 2.

## BOX 1

## THE SDG 16+ FRAMEWORK

The catalytic character of SDG 16 is reflected in its reframing as **SDG 16+**. This framing lays out how SDG 16's official goals and targets influence – and are influenced by – other SDGs, as presented in Pathfinders' 2017 *Roadmap for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies*.<sup>6</sup> Updated in 2019, the roadmap provides a plan for delivering more peaceful, just and inclusive societies, including by demonstrating how 24 targets across seven other SDGs directly correlate to aspects of peace, justice and inclusion. Namely, these are SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Consumption) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). This framing illustrates the **enabling** qualities of SDG 16 (or SDG 16+) at all levels. Since the launch of the roadmap, Pathfinders has explored other interlinkages, including with SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 15 (Life on Land).

Additionally, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has undertaken a number of studies looking at empirical evidence on how key tenets of SDG 16, including the quality of governance institutions, link to other SDGs, such as SDGs 1, 10 and 14 (Life Below Water). UNDP is publishing an upcoming report on SDG 13 (Climate Action).<sup>7</sup>

**Leveraging this enabling feature of SDG 16 can help LRGs do more with less, while supporting strategic prioritization vis-à-vis local policy and trade-offs, particularly where national action is absent or challenging.** Failing to account for factors linked to peace, justice and inclusion can similarly generate inverse or regressing SDG outcomes. Further, SDG 16's adoption as part of a universal development framework offers legitimacy, with entry points on politically sensitive issues (e.g. corruption). Meanwhile, monitoring and local and subnational reporting systems, addressed below, offer an opportunity to measure progress and hold authorities to account.

Beyond the overarching value of SDG 16 as a policy framework, this goal's particular relevance for LRGs can be understood through the following prisms:

- **People-centred approaches:** Effective SDG 16 interventions are often people-centred – based on the lived social, economic and political realities and priorities of people and communities. LRGs have underutilized capacity to understand and act upon such approaches, which tend to be

collaborative, bottom-up and attuned to local contexts.

- **Leaving no one, and no place, behind:** LRGs' proximity to local issues and constituencies often means that they, along with others such as civil society and to a lesser extent business, are well-placed to advance SDG 16 based on local contexts and needs, while accounting for underserved districts, territories and marginalized groups. Local and regional multistakeholder partnerships also offer particular advantages, including in data collection and how it informs policy/policy sequencing and the monitoring of progress. For example, cities such as **Mumbai** and **Delhi** (India) and **Kathmandu** (Nepal) have worked with the [Red Dot Foundation](#) and its "crowdsourced data, community engagement and institutional accountability" in the framework of the Safecity platform for reporting gender-based violence (GBV), to inform action in cities and communities.

## BOX 2

## PEACE, PREVENTION AND SOCIAL COHESION IN MERSIN (TÜRKIYE)

In the immediate aftermath of the Syrian refugee crisis, the coastal city of **Mersin** (Türkiye) received large numbers of asylum seekers and migrants – adding to its already diverse and multicultural makeup. Although the city assumed a welcoming stance, this rapid and large-scale migration put pressure on local communities and absorption capacities of local institutions. In response, the Mersin metropolitan municipality established a Social Cohesion Centre together with the International Organization for Migration. The centre's broader aim was to support integration efforts and build bridges between new migrants and their host communities – including through intercultural learning and peace education to promote coexistence and prevent the risk of potential conflicts. To these ends, the Social Cohesion Centre developed programmes facilitating access to services provided by central and local government institutions (and other city actors), as well as counselling services, guidance on judicial matters, health information, education and children's activities. The centre's people-centred, inclusive and peace-oriented approach proved popular and successful. This can in part be attributed to its emphasis on local knowledge, networks and organizations, which also earned Mersin a [finalist position in the 2022 United Cities and Local Governments \(UCLG\) Peace Prize](#).

## 2.

**While LRGs are often at the forefront of innovative solutions to advance SDG 16 in policy and practice, the enabling environment in which they operate is frequently not conducive to supporting, nor scaling, such output.** In addition to increased investment and access to financial resources, public sector capacity building, decentralization, partnerships and a seat at the global table as decision-makers (not only implementers) would improve LRGs' enabling environments and their work to advance SDG 16 and the SDGs overall, as well as the metrics and measurement therein.

### 2.2 A snapshot of the data

As highlighted in the SDG 16 progress report by UNDP, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), across the globe "human rights commitments are not being met, violence is on the rise, inequality continues to hinder inclusive decision making and corruption erodes the social contract."<sup>8</sup> The 2023 Global Sustainable Development Report further emphasizes the gravity of this situation.<sup>9</sup> Women also continue to fare far worse as compared to men across many indicators. In short, none of the targets for SDG 16 on peaceful, just and inclusive societies are on track. Since 2020, most of the latest available data demonstrate that progress previously made has stagnated or regressed.

**While data availability on SDG 16-specific targets has improved at national and global levels, with some data now available for all official indicators, in absolute terms, significant gaps remain. This shortage is often pronounced at subnational and local levels.** The governance focus of SDG 16 also makes it more complex to assess, quantify and measure than other SDGs such as SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), which both have superior data coverage. At national levels, LRGs may lack incentives to be transparent on politically sensitive issues, such as arbitrary detention or discrimination.<sup>10</sup>

While LRGs' capacity, and the enabling environments they operate in, often constrain measurement of SDG 16,<sup>11</sup> **LRGs have important advantages, such as proximity to local communities, as well as processes such as [Voluntary Local Reviews \(VLRs\)](#) and [Voluntary Subnational Reviews \(VSRs\)](#).** VLRs and VSRs can play an important role in supporting LRGs to plan, execute and review SDG 16 implementation – while offering a forum to deliberate on sensitive issues transparently to communicate LRGs' priorities to wider audiences and to find collaborative solutions to implement them.<sup>12</sup> To this end, the UN has recognized VLRs and VSRs as "[an essential tool to show progress and foster exchange on local implementation of the SDGs.](#)"

### BOX 3

#### VLRs AND VSRs AND SDG 16

There is growing collective knowledge on progress and innovation at the local and regional level, alongside improved efforts at monitoring and reporting on progress, including through VLRs and VSRs. Between 2020 and 2023, [147 VLRs were submitted](#) to the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. For the 2020–2022 group of submissions, around 42% reviewed SDG 16.<sup>13</sup> While the focus, structure and coverage (and type of LRG) regarding SDG 16 varies between the submitted reports, certain themes feature more prominently than others. A 2022 UNDP study found, for instance, that the commitment to leave no one behind was increasingly referenced in VLRs, albeit inconsistently and to varying effect.<sup>14</sup>



## 3.

## PEACE AND VIOLENCE REDUCTION: LOCAL APPROACHES AND RESULTS

Across the globe, among all regions and country income levels, and in conflict and non-conflict settings alike, violence remains a persistent and complex challenge. Following an encouraging five-year drop from 2016 to 2021, recent years have seen an increase in global violent deaths, linked to the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, political instability, insecurity and humanitarian emergencies, among other factors.<sup>15</sup> At a local level, cities are often venues for multiple (and interrelated) forms of violence: from conflict-related violence and organized crime to GBV and intentional homicides. **With respect to homicides, the vast majority occurs outside of conflict zones<sup>16</sup> – and mostly in highly populated, urban settings – positioning LRGs to play an important role in violence reduction globally.<sup>17</sup>**

**Cities are also where some of the most innovative and effective efforts for violence prevention and reduction (SDG targets 16.1 and 16.2, principally but not exclusively) are taking place.** LRGs and civil society organizations worldwide are spearheading innovative and important approaches to combat urban violence, demonstrating that this phenomenon is neither given nor inevitable. These initiatives include the [Peace in Our Cities](#) network, as well as the [Strong Cities Network](#), to tackle the most serious forms of urban violence.

### BOX 4

#### GLOBAL PARLIAMENT OF MAYORS AND PEACE IN OUR CITIES

In 2020, the **Global Parliament of Mayors** and **Peace in Our Cities** global networks joined together with 60 city leaders and urban networks representing more than 1,500 cities and metropolitan areas in 33 countries to adopt a [resolution](#) committing to halving urban violence by 2030. The resolution sets out 11 commitments to build more safe and secure cities. It was [welcomed by the UN Secretary-General](#), who noted that cities have “demonstrated that it is possible to act effectively to prevent and address the root cause of violence and insecurity.”<sup>18</sup>

The multilateral system, with the UN at its centre, is increasingly paying notice. A report by the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism makes the case for a greater role for cities in global governance,<sup>19</sup> in line with the Secretary-General’s commitment to inclusive and networked multilateralism. The Secretary-General has also emphasized the promotion of peace and peacebuilding from the territories,<sup>20</sup> further underscoring LRGs’ importance in peacebuilding and violence reduction.

To better contextualize and highlight LRGs’ role, results and challenges in advancing more peaceful societies, the subsection below outlines the nature of urban violence and innovative examples of policies, programmes and learning being spearheaded at local and regional levels to address violence.

#### 3.1 Interpersonal violence: A ubiquitous challenge

Urban violence largely consists of different forms of interpersonal violence: an umbrella term referring to (non-conflict) forms of violence such as intentional homicides, physical assault and sexual and intimate partner violence.<sup>21</sup> **While the drivers of interpersonal violence vary by form and context, they are frequently associated with injustices and unaddressed grievances, economic and social deprivation and rising socio-economic inequalities.<sup>22</sup>** Horizontal or group-based inequalities (and State-led exclusion) generate notably high risks of violence and conflict,<sup>23</sup> including high levels of harassment, hate speech and GBV. Vertical inequalities, which primarily reflect class-based inequalities, are in turn associated with high levels of homicide and criminal violence.

Homicides in particular are one of the most severe forms of interpersonal violence. They are a principal policy challenge for national and local governments alike. In 2021, the global number of homicides hit a two-decade high.<sup>24</sup> It accounted for three times the number of people killed in armed conflict and terrorism and reflected particularly high rates observed in Latin America and the Caribbean and Sub-Saharan Africa (at 19.91 and 14.09 homicides per 100,000 population, respectively, per UNODC data).<sup>25</sup> Homicide levels are also highly territorially contingent,

## 3.

tending to be concentrated in specific geographic locations – down to neighbourhood and street level – and among specific parts of the population.<sup>26</sup>

The full extent of interpersonal violence is unknown,<sup>27</sup> but drivers tend to be magnified in cities, with different “hot spots” therein. Differential or inadequate access to public resources, infrastructure and services, as well as income and wealth disparities, has uniquely urban features and reflects asymmetries of power or exclusionary political processes.<sup>28</sup> This reality, again, highlights LRGs’ importance in addressing such complex challenges, with the examples below capturing the efficacy and innovation of their efforts.

## BOX 5

## PAZOS IN PALMIRA AND UTOPIAS IN IZTAPALAPA

In **Palmira** (Colombia), the mayor’s office founded the [PAZOS project](#) in 2011 to address high levels of gang violence among youth. The project’s comprehensive violence prevention strategy moves away from the more military approaches that are common in Colombia, using psychosocial support and job training to provide youth with skills and job opportunities as well as to promote non-violence. The project also provides a monthly stipend for participants to ensure their continued ability to participate. Arts and sports are used to promote the non-violent use of public spaces, and PAZOS partners with FC Barcelona to support sports programmes that highlight a culture of peace. As of 2022, the city has experienced its lowest rates of violence in 17 years. It received UCLG’s Peace Prize the same year.

The mayor of **Iztapalapa** (a borough of Mexico City often ranked as one of the country’s most dangerous areas) has been working to create “[utopias](#)” (community spaces known as Units of Transformation and Organization for Social Inclusion and Harmony) throughout the city to reduce violence since 2018. These utopias serve each of the territorial directorates in the city and provide communities with services such as athletic facilities, lessons in fine and performing arts, medical attention for people who use drugs and legal and psychological support for survivors of domestic violence. [Twelve utopias have been built](#) to serve the most densely populated borough of Mexico City so far.

## 3.2 The wide-ranging impacts of urban violence and how LRGs are addressing it

Violence not only impacts people’s and communities’ immediate safety but also their livelihoods, economic prospects, political stability, social cohesion and ability to access basic services.<sup>29</sup> Segregation and social and racial discrimination further translate into urban ghettoization.

**These impacts – as well as the positive effects of violence prevention and reduction – call for recognizing the centrality of SDG 16 and its interlinkages across the SDGs.** Beyond its evident link to SDG 11 on sustainable cities, addressing urban violence is tied to other development priorities at local levels, including:

- **The global climate crisis** (SDG 13): The adverse effects of climate change – or, conversely, the positive advantages of adaptation and mitigation efforts – impact inequality and exclusion. Climate-related changes can exacerbate territorial disputes and pressures related to climate vulnerability in urban areas.<sup>30</sup> Additional research highlights the likelihood of links be-



tween intense climate change and an increase in crime in cities, with particular impact on vulnerable neighbourhoods.<sup>31</sup>

- **Community (and individual) health and well-being** (SDG 3): This goal refers to not only physical harm but also trauma, psychological impacts of violence, and harm such as premature mortality from non-communicable diseases. This broad definition of health and well-being points to the need to treat urban violence as a public health challenge as much as a security and criminal justice issue.

- **Gender equality and women's empowerment** (SDG 5): Gender-based inequalities and violence are linked to pressures of urbanization and issues such as access to housing, services and support and the safety of public spaces. About one in three women globally experience some form of GBV – from psychological abuse and sexual assault to femicide.<sup>32</sup>

- **Inclusive and sustainable economic growth** (SDG 8): Increased homicide levels lead to decreased gross domestic product per capita and declining growth rates.<sup>33</sup>

- **Reducing inequalities** (SDG 10): Inequalities are strongly associated with socio-economic disparities and the exclusion they foster. Their impacts, exacerbated by the pandemic, affect all regions and country income levels – including high-income and major emerging economies where income inequality has risen over the past four decades.<sup>34</sup>

These interlinkages demonstrate the importance of an integrated approach to violence reduction (along with other components of SDG 16). Many LRGs have spearheaded such an approach, whether in addressing structural inequalities, health, gender or economic growth. For example, in **Recife** (Brazil) – and in the context of a fragmented institutional landscape, pervasive drug trafficking and violence and poor service delivery – the city established community peace centres, also known as [COMPAZ](#), in 2016. As part of a larger, multilevel public security policy implemented by the Pernambuco state government, Recife now hosts four centres in city neighbourhoods characterized by high levels of social inequality, economic decline and violent crime. The COMPAZ reflect a holistic approach to crime and violence prevention, which includes promoting responsible citizenship, human rights and a culture of peace. In concrete terms, this effort entails educational, cultural, sports and other recreational activities, as well as justice services aimed at providing young people with safe and viable alternatives to organized crime and life on the streets. The programme initially covered 16 of the

city's 94 neighbourhoods. Today, some 40% of the city's 1.5 million inhabitants live within a three-kilometre radius of these centres, improving access to critical services for marginalized and underserved populations. The COMPAZ initiative [won the 2022 UN Public Service Award](#) and was a [finalist of the 2022 UCLG Peace Prize](#).<sup>35</sup>

Similarly, **Medellín** (Colombia), once known as the murder capital of the world, has undergone a dramatic transformation through its three-part approach, which combined social programmes, urban planning and policing. This multipronged strategy has drastically lowered the city's homicide rates.<sup>36</sup> In **Titibirí** (Colombia), since 2023, the [Weaving Citizenship: Training and Social Support for Democracy, Participation and Reconciliation project](#) has sought to overcome decades-old challenges related to drug trafficking and guerrilla violence by strengthening citizen participation in public affairs.

Regarding interlinkages with SDG 5 (Gender Equality), cities such as **New Delhi** (India), **Port Moresby** (Papua New Guinea), **Hawassa** (Ethiopia), **Banja Luka** (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and **Guatemala City** (Guatemala) joined forces with UN Women on the flagship [Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces for Women and Girls](#) initiative. This initiative has identified interventions to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls, develop relevant laws and policies to this end, invest in safety and economic viability of public spaces, and change social norms so that women and girls may enjoy public spaces free from violence.



## 3.

## BOX 6

### URBAN VIOLENCE PREVENTION IN THE USA: LESSONS LEARNED FROM OAKLAND

The city of **Oakland** in California (USA) launched the [Oakland Ceasefire Strategy](#) in 2012 – a partnership between community leaders, social service providers and city law enforcement. Its implementation began following an in-depth analysis of violence and crime in the city, which found that assumptions about the perpetrators, victims and causes of violence were incorrect. Data revealed that the average perpetrator of violence was in their late 20s (not youth), the average victim was male (not female) and causes were often of an interpersonal and group-based nature (not drug-related).<sup>37</sup> These insights allowed leaders to better target their outreach efforts. One such example is the [Oakland Unite programme](#), which provides life coaching to offenders and at-risk individuals, using social services, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), law enforcement, faith-based groups, schools and community members at the neighbourhood level. Ceasefire also focused on building trust and improving relations between police and local communities to increase reporting rates and witness testimony.

From 2012 to 2018, Oakland saw a 50% reduction in both fatal and non-fatal shootings, as well as a 70% reduction in armed robberies. These data were compared to 12 other cities in California and showed that results could be largely attributed to the implementation of Ceasefire.<sup>38</sup> To further these gains, the city established a Department of Violence Prevention in 2017, which focused on community and family trauma and GBV prevention and response. While the city has since seen a stark uptick in violence and crime (notably carjacking), the mayor of Oakland recently attributed the violence in part to Ceasefire becoming defunct in 2020.<sup>39</sup>

#### 3.3 Select lessons learned in LRGs reducing and preventing urban violence

As described above, LRGs are strategically positioned to not only pursue violence reduction but also invest in and advance prevention. This dual opportunity draws on their proximity and accountability to local constituencies, as well as their ability to improve local governance dynamics and accountability, pursue human rights-based approaches, safeguard freedom of information and promote racial and gen-



der equality (with due sensitivity to how these intersect). LRGs and local leaders play a critical role in shaping the attitudes, institutions and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies.<sup>40</sup>

While successful prevention initiatives are highly contextual (and often data-limited), several instructive local lessons and solutions can be drawn upon. A study of municipal offices of violence prevention points to various examples, and it highlights the importance of civilian leadership (i.e. avoiding over-reliance on law enforcement), political and societal buy-in to ensure sustainability, and strategic prioritization, especially where resources are limited. This means focusing on interventions that target high-risk territories, contexts, groups or individuals more likely to suffer from or participate in violence,<sup>41</sup> as well as targeting potential drivers (as linked to drug or alcohol abuse or gun possession).<sup>42</sup> **The latter, reflected in SDG indicator 16.4.2, is also a highly city-specific challenge in that small arms proliferation is intimately linked to high levels of interpersonal violence.**<sup>43</sup>

**In short, to advance sound approaches to violence reduction efforts at local levels, efforts must be interrelated and multifaceted, focused, legitimate and balanced.**<sup>44</sup>

Finally, zooming back out to global support for SDG 16+ at local and regional levels, international initiatives and forums can be particularly useful, in terms of both the visibility they afford and the connections between cities they facilitate. For example, over the past four years, the [UCLG World Forum on Cities and Territories of Peace](#) has highlighted LRGs' role in addressing urban violence and human security. The forum has grown into a space that builds upon LRGs' local peacebuilding initiatives and the interaction between service provision, reduction of inequalities, and peace and security in cities and territories. Another

## 3.

example can be found in Africa. In 2023, through the **International Association of Francophone Mayors** (AIMF), several local mayors and representatives of the Sahel region met in Senegal to discuss the [role of LRGs in security issues](#). They came up with the [Dakar Declaration](#), raising the need for better decentralization schemes, the importance of their involvement in the national coordination of security response, and a city fund to deal with humanitarian responses at local levels.

## BOX 7

## CITY DIPLOMACY, THE GLOBAL MUNICIPAL MOVEMENT AND UCLG

The global municipal movement is built on the transformative and preventive nature of city diplomacy among LRGs. Building bridges for solidarity and dialogue between cities and territories is a means to address current and future conflicts related to natural resources and the climate crisis, and to promote sustainable peace. LRGs also have a history of engaging at the international level and addressing conflict at home. This is the basis for city diplomacy.

LRG networks, and in particular UCLG, have harnessed this understanding of city diplomacy in the form of the [UCLG Municipal Peace Talks](#). These talks have brought LRGs, their associations and civil society representatives together to discuss post-conflict reconstruction and to target advocacy towards national governments in bringing an end to current conflicts. These talks aim to influence the development of the UN Pact for the Future and the multilateral agenda.

Similarly, highlighting LRGs' role in realizing global compacts related to SDG 16 can further legitimize, empower and acknowledge such efforts and action, while **contributing to broadening and strengthening voices from the Global South in the multilateral arena (SDG targets 16.8 and 16.a)**. For example, the [Mayors Mechanism](#) – composed of UCLG, the Mayors Migration Council and the International Organization for Migration with support from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) – aims to bring LRG expertise to State-led discussions, advocate for policy coherence on migration and forced displacement issues and maximize opportunities for innovative, direct partnerships with LRGs.

## BOX 8

## A PARTICULAR CASE: ÅLAND'S DEMILITARIZED ISLANDS OF PEACE

In Finland, national and international law have enshrined **Åland's** special status as an autonomous, demilitarized and neutralized area, leading to it being called the "[Islands of Peace](#)." These three components, together with minority protection, make the "Åland example" useful for international conflict management.



## 4. ACCESS TO JUSTICE: A LOCAL ISSUE

Equal access to justice for all and the rule of law (SDG target 16.3) are foundational to the SDG 16 framework and, as such, all SDGs, underscoring the importance of meeting people's justice needs in an inclusive, fair and timely manner. Yet today, some 5.1 billion people worldwide lack meaningful access to justice.<sup>45</sup> Approximately 1 billion people lack official proof of identity,<sup>46</sup> and a much larger number do not possess a quality identification document (ID) that is verifiable for comprehensive use (SDG target 16.9).

While justice and rule of law often fall under the purview of national institutions, this responsibility is highly dependent on context and the overarching governance structure. For example, if a government is federal, local or provincial governments often lead on access to justice issues, including through local courts, city and county policing, and local mediation and dispute resolution. **LRGs are, therefore, critical to supporting justice for all people and communities and for local buy-in and ownership therein.**

### BOX 9

#### THE RIGHT TO LEGAL IDENTITY: THE MEXICAN STATE OF TLAXCALA

A legal ID is an essential tool for establishing one's legal existence and exercising one's rights, ensuring social protection, gaining lawful employment and accessing public services (including health, education and often justice services), many of which are locally procured. As exclusion from opportunities offered by law disproportionately affects marginalized groups, **legal identification is also an important means to ensure no one is left behind and a prerequisite for enforcing anti-discrimination laws and policies (SDG target 16.b).** Groups with limited access to internet connectivity may face barriers to obtaining a legal ID due to online application requirements; once they obtain an ID, they may face digital skill and access barriers to using it.<sup>47</sup> Some 3.4 billion legal ID holders have limited ability to use it on digital platforms.<sup>48</sup> This situation stresses the important role of LRGs in ensuring equitable and affordable access to digital infrastructure, as well as (digital) partnerships between authorities at all levels.

An instructive example can be found in the Mexican state of **Tlaxcala**. This state made the right to legal identity for foreign-born individuals a matter of policy, and a means to prevent statelessness and secure people's access to other rights and services.<sup>49</sup> Tlaxcala did so by eliminating the requirement to present an apostilled foreign birth certificate to obtain dual nationality.



#### 4.1 Local actors, local knowledge

Specific data on equal access to justice are generally limited but in demand. In 2023, only 50 countries reported data for SDG indicator 16.3.1, which measures the share of victims of violence who reported their victimization to authorities. Even fewer reported data for the indicator measuring incidence of physical, psychological and sexual violence (SDG 16.1.3). This data gap demonstrates the difficulties in grasping the scale and scope of justice challenges and in developing the policies and laws required to address them.<sup>50</sup> It also reinforces the need for complementary indicators and data sources to identify

## 4.

justice priorities and ensure that policies at all levels are evidence-based<sup>51</sup> and draw upon disaggregated data.<sup>52</sup> **LRGs can play an important role not only in collecting data but also in advancing solutions that reach those furthest left behind.** While facing various challenges, LRGs are key for implementing solutions and bridging the gap between the national and local, as well as the formal and informal.

## BOX 10

## IMPROVING ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN LEBANON THROUGH MUKHTARS

Mukhtars (locally elected officials) in Lebanon are neighbourhood- or village-level representatives of the State who are responsible for tasks such as birth and death registration, residency papers and even tax collection. In some cases, they can serve as mediators in domestic and public disputes and will even accompany police when entering a home. In Lebanon, these officials have taken on an even bigger role, serving as liaison between the State and Palestinian refugees struggling to access justice services.

Many Palestinian refugees living in informal settlements often face a precarious loophole: these encampments are not officially recognized by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) nor serviced by the State. These “extra-State areas” do not often have running water, sanitation or other basic services. Mukhtars have been able to guide refugees through complicated legal processes, provide residency papers and even mediate interactions with local service providers to improve living conditions. They continue to work to deliver access to justice through registration and, in 2024, have protested price hikes in registration stamps that would drastically decrease the number of registration applications mukhtars can process.<sup>53</sup>

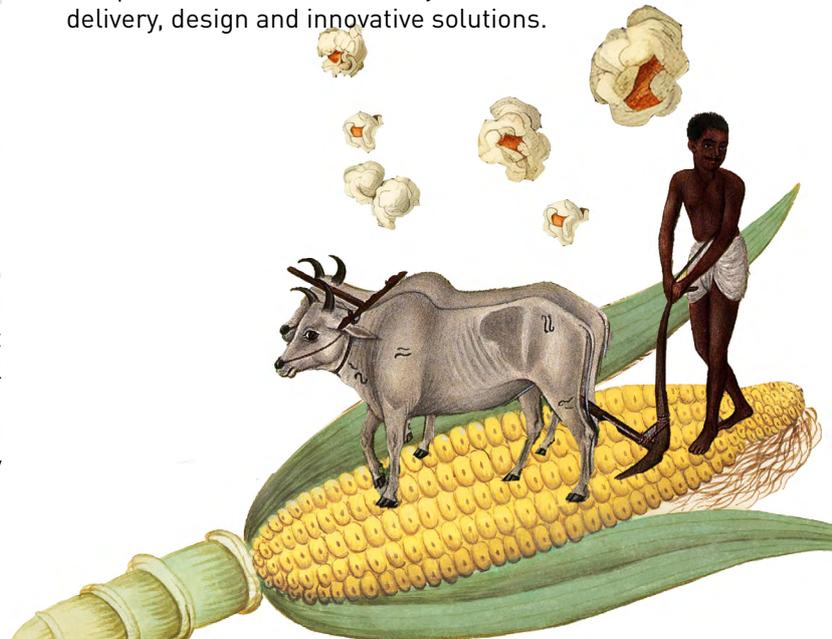
## 4.2 Access and inclusion in delivering justice

The interlinked nature of access to justice often make locally anchored solutions central to addressing the needs of people and communities. For example, the adjudication of contested and scarce arable land, water and other natural resources (SDG 13) can drive economic (SDG 8) and climate-related insecurity and increase risks of violent conflict at the community level.<sup>54</sup> Similarly, limited or unequal access to justice is associated with societal polarization, which itself can be a driver of conflict and violence.<sup>55</sup> **This situation points to justice not only**

**being an access issue (i.e. the availability of judicial institutions such as courts) but also a quality issue** – which is linked to the inclusiveness of legal processes, the fairness of dispute resolution mechanisms and the means by which people can secure and access their human rights on an equal standing, often at the local level.

**LRGs are key in making sure that justice systems are accessible, affordable, timely and people-centred.** In Colombia, the creation of local justice systems (*Sistemas Locales de Justicia*) attests to this ability. These systems, a collaborative process between the State and local actors and governments to better respond to justice needs at the municipal level, aim to identify the legal needs and system weaknesses regarding access to justice in each territory. Their objective is to ensure effective, timely and viable responses for local populations, as well as the resources to carry them out. To date, 141 systems exist in Colombia at the municipal level and six at the departmental level.<sup>56</sup>

Connected to local justice systems are justice houses (*casas de justicia*) – one-stop-shop, multistakeholder venues that provide information on rights, legal advice and conflict resolution services. They aim to facilitate access to formal and non-formal justice services to support peaceful conflict resolution and strengthen community coexistence. Justice houses are physically located primarily in places with high levels of vulnerability, criminality, community conflict and/or social or economic marginalization that have reduced or non-existent physical or institutional justice capacity (including cities of over 100,000 people as well as small towns in conflict-torn territories). While initially a State-conceived programme, the Ministry of Justice in Colombia now only considers opening a local justice house<sup>57</sup> if local governments (large cities) request one. These justice houses operate with both local and national funding, and local governments maintain them in the long run. To date, there are 114 justice houses in 92 municipalities.<sup>58</sup> While access to justice often entails jurisdictional complexities, LRGs are clearly on the front line of delivery, design and innovative solutions.



## 4.

## BOX 11

## BRIDGING FORMAL AND INFORMAL JUSTICE: NAKURU, KAJIADO AND ISIOLO

Local justice actors, including LRGs, often operate within customary and informal justice systems, which can be Indigenous, traditional or religious in nature. Despite often serious shortcomings,<sup>59</sup> these systems are the principal means by which people, especially marginalized and at-risk groups, claim their rights and seek justice globally, as these systems tend to be viewed as legitimate and geographically accessible. They also operate in local languages, on reasonable timeframes and at affordable costs.<sup>60</sup>

In Kenya, the judiciary established the Taskforce on Traditional, Informal and Other Mechanisms

Used to Access Justice in Kenya (known as the AJS Taskforce). A multilevel and multistakeholder group composed of academia representatives, local leaders, NGOs and government agencies, the AJS Taskforce undertook a four-year consultative process to understand the ways in which Kenyans access justice and what role alternative justice systems play at local levels.

Action plans were drafted in collaboration with **county governments** to implement the AJS Taskforce's policy (released in 2020) based on counties' needs and resources, with specific plans drafted with the counties of **Nakuru, Kajiado and Isiolo**, beginning in 2022. The blending of formal and informal justice systems, implemented by local governments, has shown positive results. Over the first three months of implementation, 74 cases were resolved in Nakuru county.<sup>61</sup>



## 5. INCLUSIVE, TRANSPARENT AND RESPONSIVE INSTITUTIONS: A LOCAL PREROGATIVE

**SDG target 16.6 seeks to “develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.”** Indicator 16.6.1 addresses the ability of governments to implement budgets,” with 16.6.2 focuses on the portion of the population satisfied with public services.

**Similarly, SDG target 16.7 seeks to “ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels,”** with indicator 16.7.1 measuring the proportion of positions in local and national institutions compared to national population distributions. As such, both of these SDG 16 targets have clear direct relevance to LRGs’ work. Indeed, LRGs often enjoy higher levels of trust than their national counterparts.<sup>62</sup> A 2023 OECD country survey found that 46.9% of people reported high or moderately high trust in their local government on average, compared to 41.4% for national governments.<sup>63</sup>

**While variations in trust levels may reflect subjective factors, such as critical media or demanding citizenry (not only poorly performing institutions),<sup>64</sup> they also stress the importance of investing in local institutions and ensuring they are inclusive, diverse and representative.** This aim can be pursued through deliberative and participatory processes such as participatory budgeting, planning and social dialogue tools often employed by LRGs. These methods not only ensure that a city or region’s governance reflects the interests and needs of its residents but also ensure that policies are rooted in principles of non-discrimination (SDG target 16.b), inclusion, respect and mutual trust.<sup>65</sup>

### 5.1 Participatory and open forms of government at the local level

LRGs are often at the forefront of advancing participatory and open forms of government, initiating policy-making processes of co-creation, co-planning and participatory budgeting that involve citizens and different stakeholders. Notable examples of participatory budgeting, which aims to foster democratization, inclusion and transparency at the local level, can be seen in the cities of [Nilüfer](#) (Türkiye), [Warsaw](#) (Poland), [Seoul](#) (Republic of Korea) and [Seberang Perai](#) (Malaysia).

**Collaborative policy-making is further illustrated by co-creation and co-planning processes in sever-**

**al cities and neighbourhoods around the world.** In 2022, [Maipú](#) (Chile) developed a [Local Open Government Plan](#) together with its citizens and local stakeholders, with the aim of promoting the municipality’s openness, transparency, accountability, responsiveness and inclusion. Citizens were asked to articulate their priorities, which included creating citizen-led neighbourhood plans; putting adolescents at the centre of local action; and improving the deployment of citizen security, including through technology. Other municipalities in Chile, including [Renca](#) and [Peñalolén](#), have also generated open government plans.

Similarly, [Nilüfer’s](#) (Türkiye) 2020–2024 Strategic Plan, dubbed “[My City, My Future](#)” was premised on active citizen engagement to determine the city’s mission, policy priorities and strategy for execution. Its development included participatory studies, stakeholder perception surveys and neighbourhood workshops that brought together residents and decision-makers across 64 neighbourhoods. The inclusive, participatory nature of this process led to projects that seek to ensure children, young people, women, older people and people with disabilities can participate in the city’s social life through various activities and services. [Neighbourhood networks](#) have also been key in [Santa Fe](#) (Argentina) and in [Ormoc’s](#) (the Philippines) [DAGYAW citizen participation platform](#), demonstrating the universal value of such processes, regardless of location.



## 5.

## BOX 12

## YOUTH EMPOWERMENT, YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND COMPREHENSIVE CARE

The importance of youth empowerment in citizen-led and pro-democracy movements can be seen through examples such as the [LUCHA](#) movement and the [Citizens' University programme](#) in **Goma** (Democratic Republic of the Congo). Against a backdrop of more than two decades of repeated wars, interethnic tensions and a youthful population, both initiatives aim to mobilize citizens to become aware of their power and responsibilities and be agents of positive change.

**Sakarya's** (Türkiye) [Project Workshop with Young Participation](#) and **Mishiha's** (Burundi) [Growing Peace Clubs](#) are designed to work with young people, providing them with various forms of support to enable and empower their active participation in social and community decision-making processes. In **Monterrey** (Mexico), [comprehensive care centres for adolescents](#) help teenagers deal with trauma by offering psychosocial support and socio-productive workshops. They aim to reduce youth recruitment by criminal groups.

As previously noted, the SDG 16 framework offers useful entry points for deliberation and action on contentious policy issues through participatory, deliberative and collaborative processes.<sup>66</sup> **Leveraging open government, for example, and its principles of transparency, accountability and participation at local levels, can help address issues such as corruption (SDG target 16.5)**, as illustrated by Open Government Partnership Local, UNDP and UCLG's [Building Bridges, Empowering Citizens campaign](#).



## BOX 13

## ADDRESSING CORRUPTION: A LOCAL APPROACH IN BARCELONA AND IZTAPALAPA

Effective governance and inclusion are linked to the absence of corruption (SDG target 16.5). Corruption is defined in a myriad of ways (in both the Global North and Global South), including bribery, embezzlement, tax evasion and State capture, which can include the procurement of local contracts and services. While several countries have seen reductions in bribery levels, in part due to the digitalization of public services, some 20% of individuals and 13% of businesses from countries with available data report having paid a bribe to a public official or being asked for a bribe by a public official.<sup>67</sup> The prevalence of bribery largely depends on variations in income levels and the pervasiveness of crime and interpersonal violence, often concentrated in cities.

Yet again, LRGs are playing a critical role in delivering positive change in people's lives. In Spain, the **Barcelona** City Council created an Office of Transparency and Good Practice. This office put in place a Code of Conduct as well as an anti-corruption "[ethical and good governance mailbox](#)," a digital channel for citizens to directly report corruption in the administration of public funds. Similarly, the mayor of **Iztapalapa** in Mexico launched an [anti-corruption drive](#), which replaced private water delivery providers who charged high rates and often demanded bribes. By halting the outsourcing of this essential service, the city government was able to provide free water to those who previously did not have access. The savings involved in this process allowed for increased spending on local infrastructure and recreational spaces.

## 5.2 Access to information, the digital divide and efforts to combat misinformation and disinformation

**Access to information (SDG target 16.10) is impacted by transparency in public policy processes; the independence exercised by media and journalism; and the prevalence of misinformation and disinformation**, including the deliberate spread of conspiracy theories and adversarial narratives.<sup>68</sup> Public access to quality information allows citizens to exercise their rights, hold their governments to account and make more informed decisions about their lives.

Despite the digital divide narrowing significantly over the past two decades, some 2.6 billion people worldwide remained offline in 2023, with clear geographic

## 5.

discrepancies in internet use (urban use being 31% higher globally).<sup>69</sup> This divide reflects access factors, including affordability and availability of relevant content, and impedes equal access to services and inclusive political participation.<sup>70</sup>

While the intersection of these factors can result in pockets of digital exclusion in cities even amidst otherwise high levels of connectivity, LRGs are adopting innovative approaches to reduce the digital divide. In **Cape Town** (South Africa), city authorities launched the [SmartCape Access Project](#) to help close the digital divide and promote digital inclusion and literacy. The project provides free access to computers and the internet in public libraries, and through public Wi-Fi hotspots.

LRGs are also actively working to combat mis/disinformation, despite the regulation of digital platforms and media outlets tending to fall under the purview of national institutions. One such initiative can be found in **Malmö** (Sweden), where authorities, together with a coalition of public and private sector partners, launched the [Safe and Secure Digital City project](#). This pilot initiative tracks expressions of hate across online platforms (including social media), its instigators and intended targets, with the aim of exposing patterns and reducing socially divisive information manipulation. Through the initiative, Malmö has built city-wide partnerships to address hate online, created a digital intervention team and trained municipal staff and social workers in digital de-escalation skills.

The proliferation of mis/disinformation presents a growing threat to the functionality and perceived credibility of LRG institutions and actors.<sup>71</sup> Cities, often at the epicentre of targeted disinformation campaigns, are increasingly compelled to confront an array of disinformation threats, including those related to climate change, gender issues and public health misinformation.<sup>72</sup> **Information manipulation impacts cities' ability to govern and deliver necessary services for their constituents, and it can lead to tensions and public safety concerns as seen during the COVID-19 pandemic.**<sup>73</sup>

### 5.3 Addressing inequality and exclusion and responsive governance at the local level

**Access to information and prevalence of mis/disinformation are important factors in understanding both discontent and trust in public institutions, which are often driven by perceptions of injustice alongside rising income, wealth and group- or identity-based inequalities. They are associated with societal polarization and support for autocratic forms of populism,<sup>74</sup> as well as increased risks of social unrest.<sup>75</sup>**

Today, 71% of the global population lives in countries where inequalities have increased;<sup>76</sup> inequality between countries was dropping but is now stagnating. As inequalities continue to rise, divisive narratives and political strategies increasingly erode social cohesion, democracy and efforts towards building equitable and peaceful societies. According to [V-Dem data](#), almost every region has seen polarization rise since 2005. The 2023 [Edelman Trust Barometer](#) found that over half (62%) of respondents polled in 28 countries believe that the social fabric that once held their country together has grown too weak to serve as a foundation for unity and common purpose. Tackling inequalities and polarization, particularly in an age of polycrisis,<sup>77</sup> is a critical component of responsive governance and key to addressing growing trust deficits in governance globally, including at local levels.<sup>78</sup>

Against a backdrop of rapid urbanization (by 2050, 70% of the world may live in cities),<sup>79</sup> LRGs' critical role in addressing inequalities, protecting human rights and delivering responsive governance is that much more apparent. Many LRGs are addressing inequalities through policies and [concrete measures by mayors across diverse regional contexts](#), from **Utrecht** (the Netherlands) to **Barcelona** (Spain).<sup>80</sup> An additional example is **Rosario** (Argentina), which is addressing its history of urban inequality and the impacts of climate change through its urban agricultural programme. This programme provides "low-income residents access to underutilized and abandoned public and private land to cultivate food."<sup>81</sup> Since its launch, the programme has expanded into neighbouring jurisdictions.

LRGs play an important role in safeguarding and ensuring that institutions are responsive, inclusive, equitable and adaptive. **Local mechanisms implemented to support and measure LRG adherence to the principles and practice of good governance further speak to LRGs' relevance and innovative approaches to SDG 16, as well as the need to support their empowerment and capacity.**



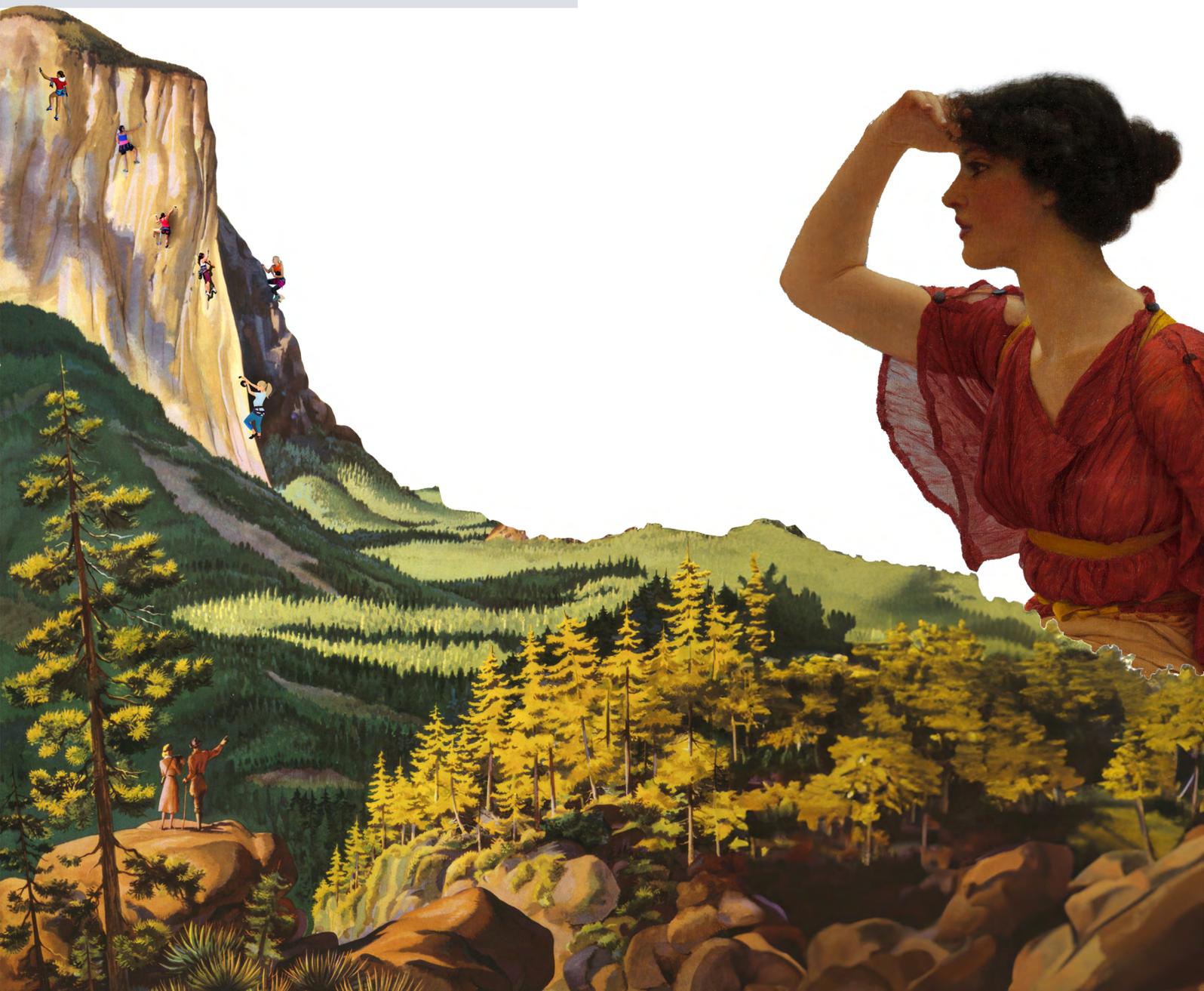
## 5.

## BOX 14

## MONITORING GOOD GOVERNANCE IN SERBIAN TOWNS AND MUNICIPALITIES

In 2018, the **Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities** (SCTM) in Serbia developed the [Good Governance Index](#), a measurement instrument for monitoring the implementation of the principles of good governance at the local level. This tool, developed with support from Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), serves as a barometer on accountability, transparency, participation, efficiency and effectiveness, equality and anti-corruption. It defines objective and measurable indicators for assessing the implementation of public policies, legal rights and obligations, as well as for identifying areas of improvement. These indicators allow local governments to identify areas to focus funding and capacity building.

While political and democratic backsliding is often expressed nationally, it can significantly impact democratic progress at local levels. **LRGs can act as a backstop, further underscoring the importance of institutionalizing local democracy.** While this backstopping ability does not discount the potential for local leaders themselves to be authoritarian or repressive, it does reinforce the importance of having open, transparent, accountable and equitable LRGs. For example, based on an analysis of 184 countries, 113 have regional or local-level provisions for direct democracy (e.g. referendums or citizen initiatives).<sup>82</sup> In these contexts, fostering inclusion is essential to strengthening the social contracts that underpin the relationships between institutions that govern and those who are governed (the former delivering for the latter).<sup>83</sup> To this end, promoting gender equality is essential. Women's representation in institutions tends to be higher at local than national levels. Data from 141 countries show that women account for 35.5% of elected members in local deliberative bodies (with only three countries at 50%).<sup>84</sup>



## 6. SDG 16 AND LRGs: LOOKING AHEAD

**Advancing SDG 16 at all levels is an urgent matter and a policy imperative of utmost importance. This is particularly true at local and regional levels, given urbanization trends, global backsliding or stagnation on SDG 16 and challenges facing national governments to leave no one behind.** LRGs must therefore be empowered to deliver on more peaceful, just and inclusive societies as a means of strengthening social contracts and rebuilding trust, as well as delivering on people's needs and development priorities and securing a better future for all.

**LRGs are not “gap fillers” but essential actors on their own merits and in our global governance structures.** As this paper has conveyed, the drivers and impacts of violence, injustice, inequality and exclusion have important local dimensions – and local solutions and actors must be front and centre in our collective response.

As four billion people go to the polls in 2024, there is a clear, credible case for empowering and investing in LRGs, mechanisms and frameworks. Past the halfway point to 2030, much needs to be done to elevate their status and visibility and foster an enabling environment for LRGs to do their work in our collective efforts to leave no one behind.

Against such a backdrop, this paper makes the following suggestions:

- **Utilize multilateral policy forums and frameworks such as the 2024 High-Level Political Forum to amplify and empower the work of LRGs in advancing SDG 16, while strengthening collaboration with national governments, multilateral and regional organizations, civil society (from grassroots organizations to international NGOs) and other stakeholders.** Doing so would increase the policy footprint of LRGs, raise the profile of local SDG 16 issues and actors and further feed into policy processes.
- **Empower LRGs as partners in delivering on more peaceful, just and inclusive societies through the Summit of the Future** and, amidst the climate emergency, the overarching polycrisis and global urbanization trends, which will continue to place pressures on cities. To this end, it is important to leverage the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Group on Local and Regional Governments<sup>85</sup> to advise on the essential role of LRGs in defining and developing

links between urbanization, violence prevention, peacebuilding, justice, equality and good governance at local and regional levels – as well as offer recommendations for a more enabling environment to make this happen. This would include making recommendations focused on SDG 16 in the lead up to and after the Summit of the Future, a once-in-a-generation opportunity.

- **Prioritize and support LRGs' capacity in collecting and disaggregating local data on SDG 16, while amplifying subnational reporting processes, such as VLRs and VSRs.** LRGs and their civil society partners are important for addressing data gaps at local and regional levels. Such data can help build context-specific evidence on SDG 16 and its interlinkages – important as a means of accounting for at-risk and marginalized populations and the commitment to leave no one and no place behind. To this end, VLRs and VSRs should be adequately resourced.
- **Support people-centred approaches in every aspect of SDG 16 localization, as well as open, non-discriminatory, inclusive and participatory practices.** From policy planning, budgeting and implementation to monitoring and review, it is vital to deliberately put the needs, priorities and perspectives of people and the communities they live in at the core of action. Particularly in settings where institutional capacity or representation is limited, people-centred approaches anchored in empirical realities are important stepping stones to build more peaceful, just and inclusive societies. This effort entails supporting LRGs in their work to include local communities, marginalized groups, civil society actors and other stakeholders in decision-making processes.
- **Improve enabling environments and sufficiently resource, empower and enable LRGs to further act on SDG 16 and its interlinkages.** Support LRG engagement and participation in national policy processes and the role of effective, collaborative and inclusive multilevel governance arrangements to balance bottom-up and top-down approaches and improve collaboration, multidirectional information sharing and decision-making. Deepen decentralization for more supportive legal and policy frameworks. Such work requires improving the visibility of local actors and issues as they relate to SDG 16 implementation (plans, priorities, strategies and

## 6.

budgets), promoting the participatory nature of LRGs, building the capacity of local actors, investing in local data collection and analysis and providing proper resources.

● **Promote and invest in initiatives that build trust between groups and with authorities at the local level.** Against a backdrop of shifts in global order, policies and practices to implement SDG 16 at the local level must be prioritized and account for increasing levels of distrust in governments and polarization in society in order to advance social justice, protect human rights and reduce inequality for all. To achieve this aim, support good governance principles and practices, including fighting corruption and fostering transparent and accountable approaches to policy-making. In policy dimensions where national governments have strong prerogatives – such as ensuring people’s access to justice and legal identification – leverage LRGs’ capabilities to make sure they respond to local populations’ needs as much as possible.



## NOTES

1 UNDP, UNODC, and OHCHR, 'Global Progress Report on Sustainable Development Goal 16 Indicators', 2023, 10–11.

2 Amina J. Mohammed, 'Deputy Secretary-General's Video Message to the Sixth Local and Regional Governments Forum on the 2030 Agenda', 2023, <https://tinyurl.com/4pud6pcs>.

3 UN-Habitat, 'World Cities Report 2022. Envisaging the Future of Cities' (Nairobi, 2022), 50, <https://bit.ly/3o8Me3o>.

4 Fernando Ortiz-Moya, Zhonghan Tan, and Yatsuka Kataoka, 'State of the Voluntary Local Reviews 2023', IGES, 2023, 2, <https://tinyurl.com/mpdctsar>.

5 UNDP, '2024 UNDP Trends Report: The Landscape of Development', 2024, <https://tinyurl.com/mw-d37yef>; High-level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism (HLAB), 'A Breakthrough for People and Planet', 2023, <https://tinyurl.com/462j2s2x>.

6 Pathfinders for Peaceful Just and Inclusive Societies, 'The Roadmap for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies', 2019, <https://tinyurl.com/ytuc57f4>.

7 UNDP and IDOS, 'Connections That Matter: How Does the Quality of Governance Institutions Help Protect Our Oceans?', 2023, <https://tinyurl.com/36unek6t>; German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE) and UNDP, 'Connections That Matter: How the Quality of Governance Institutions May Be the Booster Shot We Need to Reduce Poverty and Inequality', 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/mdz2zwxk>.

8 UNDP, UNODC, and OHCHR, 'Global Progress Report on Sustainable Development Goal 16 Indicators'.

9 Independent Group of Scientists appointed by the Secretary-General, 'Global Sustainable Development Report', UNDESA (New York, 2023).

10 TAP Network, 'Halfway to 2030 Report on SDG 16+, A Civil Society Assessment of Progress Towards Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies', 2023, 19.

11 UNDP, 'Challenges in Reporting Progress on the 2030 Agenda at Local Levels: An Assessment of the 2021 Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs)', 2023, 9.

12 David Andersson, 'A Profile of SDG 16+ Community,

An Independent Study', 2019, 15; UNDP, 'Challenges in Reporting Progress on the 2030 Agenda at Local Levels: An Assessment of the 2021 Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs)'.

13 Ortiz-Moya, Tan, and Kataoka, 'State of the Voluntary Local Reviews 2023', 29.

14 UNDP, 'Challenges in Reporting Progress on the 2030 Agenda at Local Levels: An Assessment of the 2021 Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs)', 9.

15 Gianluca Boo and Gergely Hideg, 'Turning Tides: A New Surge in Global Violent Deaths', Small Arms Survey, 2023, <https://tinyurl.com/4er9yk3v>.

16 Recent years have seen a significant increase in conflict-related deaths (the Institute for Economics & Peace cites a 96% increase in 2022), linked to escalating (major) conflicts across multiple countries. Although this increase might alter the share of conflict-related vs. non-conflict-related deaths (the latter was previously estimated at 80–90%), UNODC still estimates intentional homicide rates to be double the number of conflict-related deaths in 2022. See: Institute for Economics & Peace, 'Global Peace Index', 2023, <https://tinyurl.com/4j8wzyt3>; UNODC, 'Victims of Intentional Homicide', dataUNODC, 2024, <https://tinyurl.com/26jt87tn>.

17 University of San Diego. Kroc School, 'Making the Case for Peace in Our Cities: Halving Urban Violence by 2030', *Evidence Brief*, 2019, 1, <https://tinyurl.com/4zdhuycv>; Pathfinders for Peaceful Just and Inclusive Societies, 'Rising to the Challenge: Building Peaceful, Just, Equal and Inclusive Societies in a Divided World', 2023, 11, <https://tinyurl.com/nhew5ved>.

18 United Nations Secretary-General, 'Message to Global Parliament of Mayors on Peace in Our Cities and Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies Initiative', 2020, <https://tinyurl.com/37kj6r9e>.

19 High-level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism (HLAB), 'A Breakthrough for People and Planet'.

20 United Nations, 'A New Agenda for Peace', *Our Common Agenda Policy Brief 9*, 2023.

21 Pathfinders for Peaceful Just and Inclusive Societies, 'Rising to the Challenge: Building Peaceful, Just, Equal and Inclusive Societies in a

## N.

- Divided World', 1–2, 11.
- 22 Jeni Klugman et al., 'Costing Violence and Returns to Investments in Preventing Interpersonal Violence', *Center on International Cooperation*, 2023, 7.
- 23 Pathfinders for Peaceful Just and Inclusive Societies, 'Rising to the Challenge: Building Peaceful, Just, Equal and Inclusive Societies in a Divided World', 16.
- 24 UNDP, UNODC, and OHCHR, 'Global Progress Report on Sustainable Development Goal 16 Indicators', 10, 13, 24.
- 25 Klugman et al., 'Costing Violence and Returns to Investments in Preventing Interpersonal Violence', 4, 7; UNODC, 'Victims of Intentional Homicide'.
- 26 Hannah Love, 'Want to Reduce Violence? Invest in Place', Brookings Institution Research, 2021.
- 27 Klugman et al., 'Costing Violence and Returns to Investments in Preventing Interpersonal Violence', 7.
- 28 University of San Diego. Kroc School, 'Making the Case for Peace in Our Cities: Halving Urban Violence by 2030', 1, 7.
- 29 Emma Elfversson, Ivan Gusic, and Jonathan Rokem, 'Peace in Cities, Peace through Cities? Theorising and Exploring Geographies of Peace in Violently Contested Cities', *Peacebuilding* 11, no. 4 (2023): 327.
- 30 ICRC, 'When Rain Turns to Dust, Understanding and Responding to the Combined Impact of Armed Conflicts and the Climate and Environment Crisis on People's Lives', 2020, 12–13, 30.
- 31 Robert Muggah, 'Climate Change and Crime in Cities', Igarapé Institute, 2021, 5.
- 32 WHO, 'Violence against Women', Fact Sheets, 2024, <https://tinyurl.com/6yfrwvsp>.
- 33 UNDP, UNODC, and OHCHR, 'Global Progress Report on Sustainable Development Goal 16 Indicators', 12.
- 34 UNDP, '2024 UNDP Trends Report: The Landscape of Development', 11.
- 35 Bill Steiden, 'Governing from a Child's Perspective: Recife Works to Become Family Friendly, 2017–2019', *Innovations for Successful Societies*, Princeton University, 2019, <https://tinyurl.com/45syfemf>.
- 36 Peace in Our Cities, 'Peace in Our Cities Symposium: Innovations in Urban-Violence Reduction', 2023, <https://tinyurl.com/4b9vtm4z>.
- 37 Giffords Law Center, Faith in Action, and Black and Brown Gun Violence Prevention Consortium, 'A Case Study in Hope: Lessons from Oakland's Remarkable Reduction in Gun Violence', 2019, 37.
- 38 Anthony A. Braga et al., 'Oakland Ceasefire Evaluation. Final Report to the City of Oakland', 2019, <https://tinyurl.com/4u66tmfe>.
- 39 Eli Wolfe, 'Why Have Murders and Shootings Risen in Oakland? New Report Points to Ceasefire's Demise', *The Oaklandside*, 2024, <https://tinyurl.com/58puazv9>.
- 40 This aligns with understandings of positive peace, as defined by the Institute for Economics & Peace: <https://tinyurl.com/38cauhwr>.
- 41 Hernán Flom and Alfredo Malaret Baldo, 'Lessons from Effective Offices of Violence Prevention', 2024, 6–8.
- 42 Hernán Flom, 'Guiding Principles and Inspiring Actions. Operationalizing the Resolution to Reduce Urban Violence', 2022, 17.
- 43 Pathfinders for Peaceful Just and Inclusive Societies, 'Rising to the Challenge: Building Peaceful, Just, Equal and Inclusive Societies in a Divided World', 13.
- 44 Jessica Kline, Alfredo Malaret Baldo, and Bojan Francuz, 'Innovations in Urban Violence Reduction: Symposium and Strategy Retreat', 2023.
- 45 Pathfinders for Peaceful Just and Inclusive Societies, 'Justice', 2024, <https://tinyurl.com/2p8kcbmj>.
- 46 World Bank, 'Global Identification Challenge by Numbers', ID4D, 2024, <https://tinyurl.com/4swwkfa6>.
- 47 UNICRI, 'SDG 16 - Through A Digital Lens' (Turin, 2023).
- 48 McKinsey Global Institute, 'Digital Identification: A Key to Inclusive Growth', 2019, 23.
- 49 Mayors Migration Council, 'Localizing the Global Compacts: Second Report on Local Action for Migrants and Refugees', 2023, 27.
- 50 SDG16 Data Initiative, 'A "Bold New Agenda" Is Falling Short: The Perils and Promises of SDG 16', 2023.

N.

- 51 Pathfinders for Peaceful Just and Inclusive Societies, 'The Dawn Is Ours: Moving Forward Together For Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies' (New York, 2021), 5, <https://tinyurl.com/3ud32c7m>.
- 52 SDG16 Data Initiative, 'A "Bold New Agenda" Is Falling Short: The Perils and Promises of SDG 16'.
- 53 Nora Stel, 'Mukhtars in the Middle: Connecting State, Citizens and Refugees', *Jadaliyya*, 2015, <https://tinyurl.com/275eup6t>. See also: Nora Stel, 'Eviction and Migration in an Institutional Vacuum: The Case of a Palestinian Gathering in South Lebanon', *Jadaliyya*, 2013, <https://tinyurl.com/y2phjk6e>; Vanessa Kallas, 'Mukhtars Protest Against Surge in Civil Registration Fees', *This is Beirut*, 2024, <https://tinyurl.com/4ccjasa2>.
- 54 International Development Law Organization, 'Rule of Law Responses to Climate Insecurity', 2022, 7, <https://tinyurl.com/2v9jxsu7>.
- 55 Pathfinders for Peaceful Just and Inclusive Societies, 'Rising to the Challenge: Building Peaceful, Just, Equal and Inclusive Societies in a Divided World', 14.
- 56 Departamento Nacional de Planeación, 'Evaluación Institucional y de Resultados Del Programa Nacional de Casas de Justicia y de Los Centros de Convivencia Ciudadana Con El Fin de Plantear Recomendaciones Para Mejorar El Acceso a Los Servicios de Justicia' (Bogotá, 2020).
- 57 Colombia's Justice Houses Program provides a one-stop shop for access to justice for those most at risk of being left behind, available at: Laura Ospina, 'Colombia's Justice Houses Program Provides a One-Stop Shop for Access to Justice for Those Most at Risk of Being Left Behind', *#InequalitySolutions*, 2023, <https://tinyurl.com/4k5y4m4f>.
- 58 Ospina.
- 59 Lisa Denney and Pilar Domingo, 'Taking People-Centred Justice to Scale: The Role of Customary and Informal Justice in Advancing People-Centred Justice', 2023, 14.
- 60 Working Group on Customary and Informal Justice and SDG16+, 'Diverse Pathways to People-Centred Justice' (Rome, 2023), 14–15; Denney and Domingo, 'Taking People-Centred Justice to Scale: The Role of Customary and Informal Justice in Advancing People-Centred Justice'.
- 61 Pathfinders for Peaceful Just and Inclusive Societies, 'Multiple Doors to Justice in Kenya: Engaging Alternative Justice Systems' (New York, 2023).
- 62 Groupe d'études géopolitiques, 'The Scale of Trust: Local, Regional, National and European Politics in Perspective' (Paris, 2022).
- 63 OECD, 'Government at a Glance' (Paris, 2023), <https://tinyurl.com/muy2er7f>.
- 64 UNDP Oslo Governance Centre, 'Trust in Public Institutions: A Conceptual Framework and Insights for Improved Governance Programming', Policy Brief, 2021.
- 65 UCLG, 'GOLD VI: Pathways to Urban and Territorial Equality', 2022, 376–77, 381, <https://bit.ly/3IN-SuED>.
- 66 UCLG, 'GOLD VI: Pathways to Urban and Territorial Equality. Addressing Inequalities through Local Transformation Strategies' (Barcelona, 2022), 379–81, 395, <https://bit.ly/436ETAq>.
- 67 UNDP, UNODC, and OHCHR, 'Global Progress Report on Sustainable Development Goal 16 Indicators', 16.
- 68 Danny Rogers, 'Disinformation as Adversarial Narrative Conflict', *Global Disinformation Index*, 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/ycxcf2h3>.
- 69 ITU, 'Measuring Digital Development: Facts and Figures 2023', 2023, 1, 5, <https://tinyurl.com/va92yh7z>.
- 70 UNICRI, 'SDG 16 - Through A Digital Lens', 9–13.
- 71 IDEA, 'The Global State of Democracy 2023. The New Checks and Balances', 2023, 13, 18, <https://tinyurl.com/339y23uv>.
- 72 Paul Costello and Ika Trijsburg, 'Combating Disinformation in Cities', *German Marshall Fund*, 2024, <https://tinyurl.com/485c4vk6>.
- 73 Ellen McVeigh, 'The Radicalisation Gateway: How the Town of Bodegraven Became the Unlikely Centre of a Satanic Conspiracy Theory', *Dare to be grey*, 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/y9te5dnk>.
- 74 Zia Qureshi, 'Rising Inequality: A Major Issue of Our Time', *Brookings Institution Research*, 2023, <https://tinyurl.com/dusv7ef9>.
- 75 Christian Houle et al., 'Inequality between Identity Groups and Social Unrest', *Journal of the Royal Society of Interface* 19, no. 188 (2022): 1–17; Philip Barrett and Sophia Chen, 'The Economics of Social Unrest', *IMF Finance and Development*, 2021, <https://tinyurl.com/2v7wfb2u>.
- 76 United Nations, 'Inequality – Bridging the Divide',

N.

2024, <https://tinyurl.com/5n8uf89h>.

77 Pathfinders for Peaceful Just and Inclusive Societies, 'An Age of Crises: Prospects for Inequality and Division', Center on International Cooperation (New York, 2023), <https://tinyurl.com/b5zdnfus>.

78 IOPD, 'Local and Regional Governments Facing the Rise of Distrust, Polarisation and Extremisms', 2023, 7, 9.

79 UNDESA, 'Make Cities and Human Settlements Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable', United Nations Statistics Division, 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/kpjvjmcb>.

80 UN-OHCHR, 'Local Governments Unite to Defend and Promote Human Rights', Governance, 2019, <https://tinyurl.com/ykzz9aes>.

81 Anne Maassen and Madeleine Galvin, 'Rosario, Argentina Uses Urban Farming to Tackle Economic and Climate Crises', World Resources Institute, 2021, <https://tinyurl.com/4tmsz6e2>.

82 UCLG, 'GOLD VI: Pathways to Urban and Territorial Equality. Addressing Inequalities through Local Transformation Strategies', 375–76.

83 United Nations Secretary-General, 'Tackling the Inequality Pandemic: A New Social Contract for a New Era', Sustainable Development Goals, 2020, <https://tinyurl.com/4jxzmxb3>.

84 UN-Women, 'Facts and Figures: Women's Leadership and Political Participation', 2023, <https://tinyurl.com/3dyjhtmn>.

85 IISD, 'Advisory Group to Take Local Action to Rescue SDGs to Global Level', SDG Knowledge Hub, 2023, <https://tinyurl.com/57cjze79>.

Supported by:



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Facilitated by:

