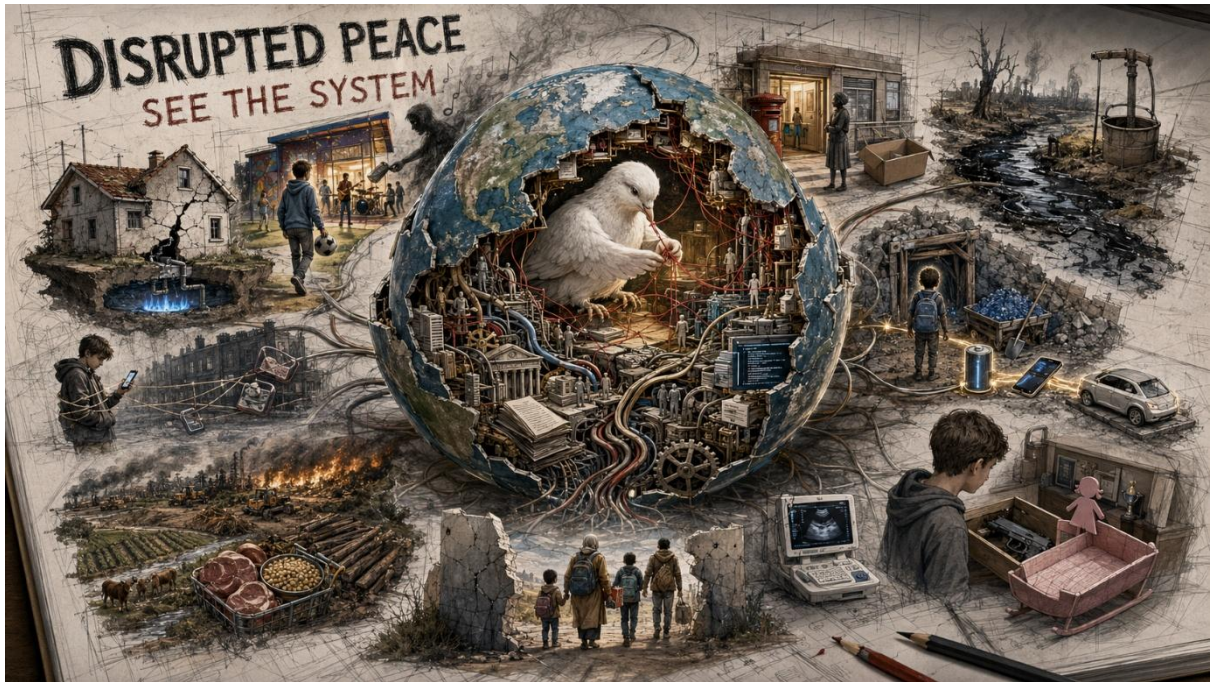




Global Case Bank of Disrupted Peace





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North America

1. The United States: The Oxford High School Shooting, Michigan



On 30 November 2021, a 15-year-old student used a handgun to kill four students and injure seven people at Oxford High School. The shooting was the final visible act, but the conditions that made it possible had developed earlier. His parents had purchased the firearm only days before and taken him to a shooting range. On the morning of the attack, school staff met with the student and his parents after discovering a disturbing drawing involving a gun and a wounded person. The parents did not disclose that he had access to a recently purchased weapon, and he was not removed from school. The gun consequently remained accessible to him.



The student bore direct criminal responsibility for firing the weapon and later pleaded guilty. However, the case became historically significant because the legal inquiry did not stop at the trigger. Separate juries convicted both parents of four counts of involuntary manslaughter, finding that their gross negligence helped create the conditions through which the shooting became possible. In April 2024, each parent received a sentence of 10–15 years in prison, making them the first US parents held criminally responsible for their role in a mass school shooting committed by their child. [Oakland County Prosecutor](#)

The case exposes responsibility at several connected levels:

The trigger: The adolescent made the immediate decision to shoot.

The unlocked access: The firearm was made accessible despite warning signs.

The adult purchaser: The parents introduced the weapon into the adolescent's environment.

The institution: The school identified disturbing behaviour but did not know—or establish—that he possessed the weapon.

The law: Michigan did not yet have the safe-storage requirements it later enacted.

The wider culture: A lethal weapon was treated as an ordinary family possession rather than a risk requiring exceptional control.

Following the Oxford and Michigan State University shootings, Michigan enacted universal background-check and safe-storage laws in 2023, followed by extreme-risk protection orders. These measures recognised that prevention must begin before a weapon reaches a moment of crisis. [Michigan Government](#)



RIQ:

Responsibility begins with the person who pulls the trigger, but it does not necessarily end there. It may extend backwards through the adults who supplied access, the institutions that encountered warnings, the storage practices that removed barriers and the laws that determined what precautions were compulsory.

2. The United States: Larry Nassar and the Architecture of Institutional Sexual Abuse



The disruption: The abuse committed by former USA Gymnastics doctor Larry Nassar was not only a series of individual crimes. It exposed how prestige, professional authority,



institutional reputation, disbelief of young complainants and fragmented reporting systems could protect an offender while isolating survivors.

The hidden system: Young athletes operated within a steep power hierarchy. The adult accused of harming them possessed medical authority, while institutions controlled training opportunities and Olympic ambitions. When an institution fears reputational damage, a complaint may be treated as a threat to the organisation rather than as evidence of danger to a child. Silence then becomes an institutional practice rather than a personal choice.

Repercussions for peace: Sexual abuse destroys bodily safety, trust in adults and faith in institutions. Survivors may experience long-term psychological, relational and educational consequences. Wider communities also learn a disturbing lesson: achievement and institutional prestige may be valued more highly than a child's testimony.

Policy or action: The **Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport**

Authorization Act of 2017 strengthened mandatory reporting and established the US Center for SafeSport's authority within the Olympic and Paralympic movement. SafeSport subsequently introduced common rules, training, reporting procedures and restrictions on one-to-one adult-minor interactions. [US Center for SafeSport](#)

RIQ:

How does an institution designed to develop young talent become a system that trains children to distrust their own discomfort?



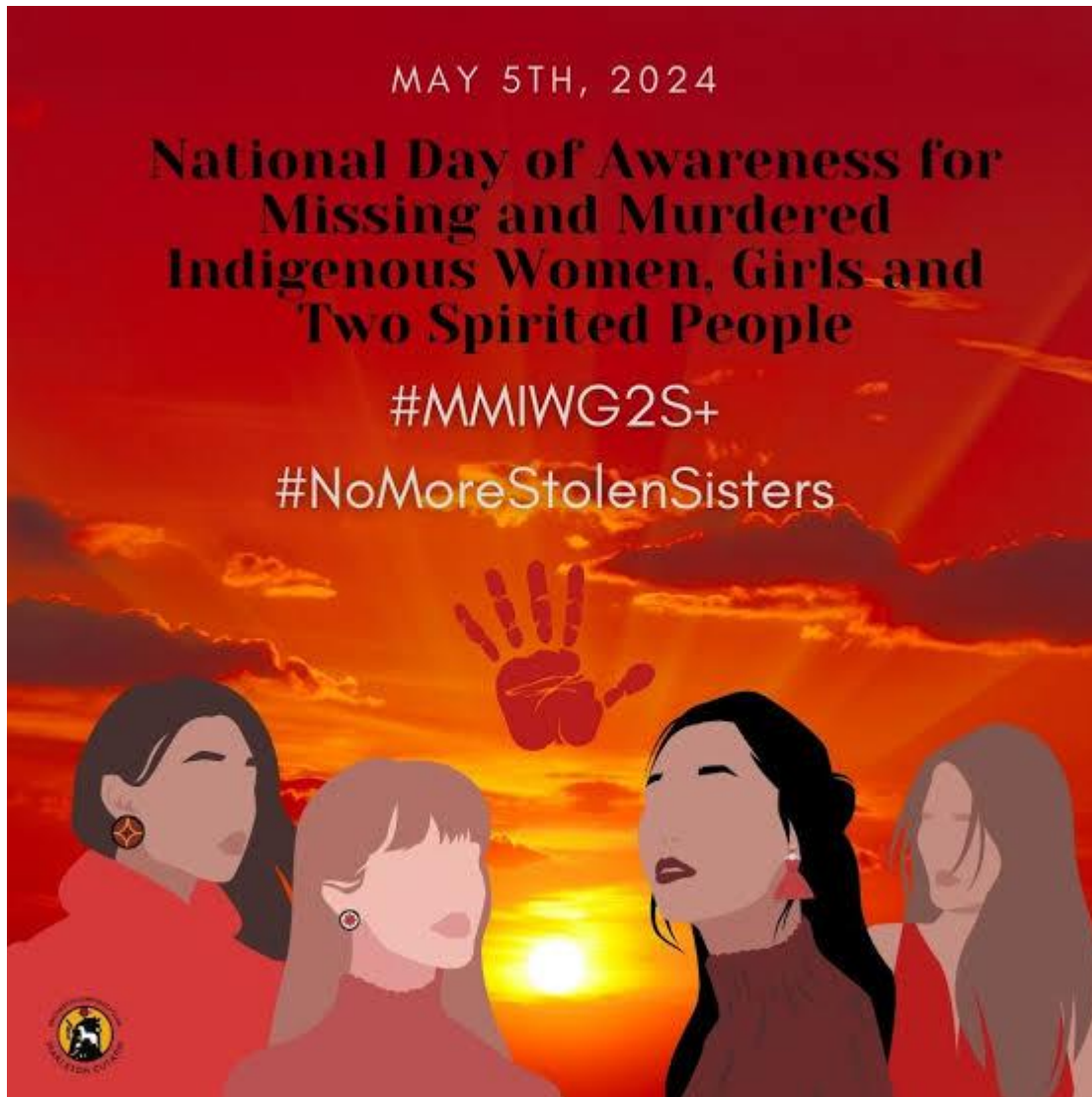
3. Canada: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

CANADA

Missing and murdered women and girls

Advocates say more than 50 women and girls have gone missing or been murdered on or near Highway 16. An RCMP task force lists 18 cases. This is where the women and girls on that list were last seen alive.





The disruption: The disappearance and killing of Indigenous women and girls in Canada cannot be understood solely as unrelated crimes committed by isolated offenders. The national inquiry connected the violence with colonial dispossession, residential schools, forced family separation, racism, policing failures, poverty, unsafe transport and the social marginalisation of Indigenous communities.

The hidden system: Risk accumulates. A woman may face discrimination in employment and housing, live far from essential services, lack safe transport and encounter indifference



when her family reports her missing. Historical violence therefore continues through contemporary institutions even when openly colonial policies have formally ended.

Repercussions for peace: Families live with unresolved grief, communities lose trust in policing and justice systems, and Indigenous women receive the message that their disappearance may not generate the same urgency as the disappearance of others. Peace is disrupted because the protection of life is not distributed equally.

Policy or action: Canada established a National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, followed by a **National Action Plan** involving governments and Indigenous partners. The continuing question is whether recognition and recommendations have produced measurable changes in safety, policing, housing, transport and accountability.

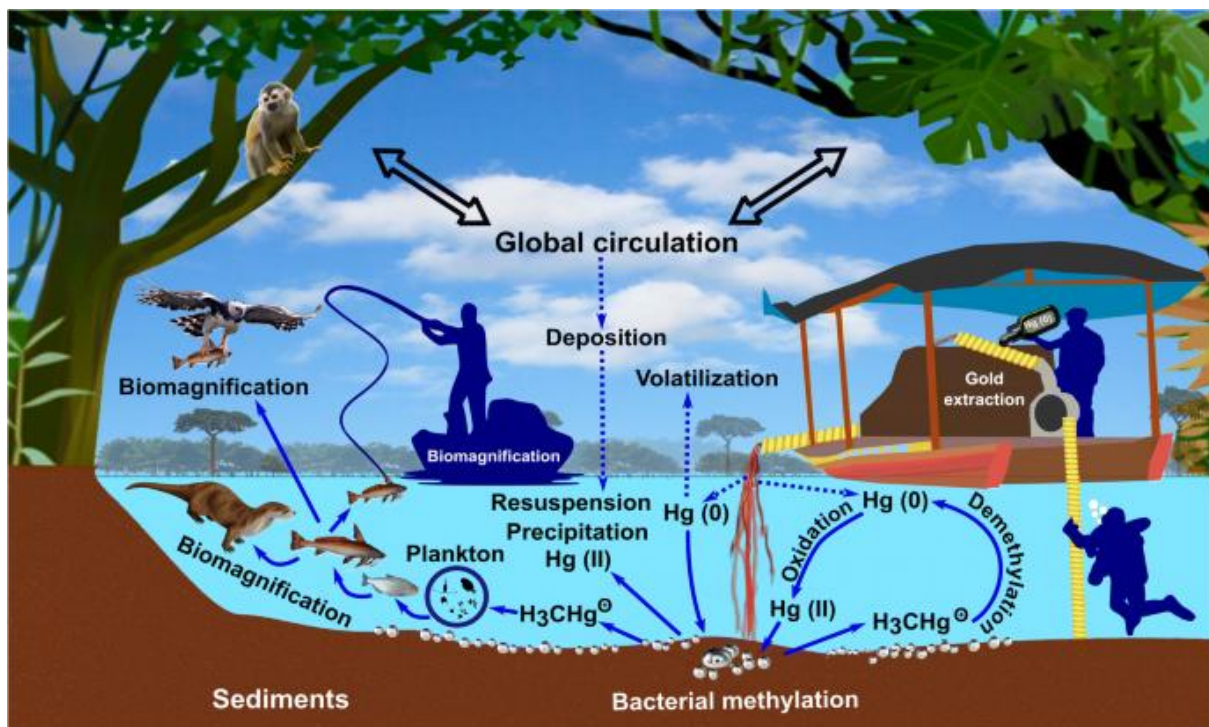
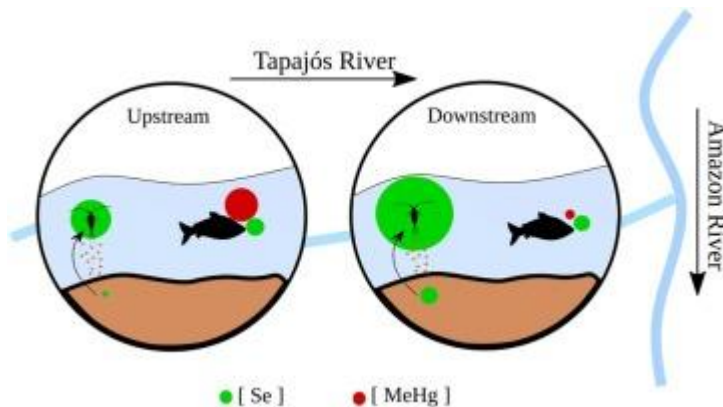
RIQ:

When a person disappears, how does the speed of society's response reveal whose life it has already learned to value?



B. Latin America and the Caribbean

4. Brazil: The Amazon as a Victim of Slow Violence



The disruption: In the Brazilian state of Pará, particularly around the BR-163 highway, Novo Progresso, Altamira and São Félix do Xingu, forest destruction often develops through a recognisable sequence. A road first opens access to previously protected forest; valuable trees are selectively removed; the remaining vegetation is burned; and the cleared land is converted into cattle pasture, soybean production or a speculative property claim. The



immediate results are fragmented habitats, smoke-filled air, exposed soil, carbon emissions and reduced forest evapotranspiration—the recycling of water from trees into the atmosphere that helps generate regional rainfall. In the nearby Tapajós basin, illegal gold mining adds another layer of harm by releasing mercury into rivers. Mercury enters fish and then the bodies of Munduruku and other river-dependent communities, turning environmental destruction into neurological, nutritional and intergenerational harm. UN reporting records that illegal mining affects dozens of Munduruku villages and deposits millions of tonnes of mining waste into the Tapajós system each year. [UN Sustainable Development platform](#)

This is slow violence because the Amazon is rarely destroyed in one spectacular moment. It is dismantled tree by tree, road by road, fire by fire and poisoned river by poisoned river. The most visible actor may be the person holding a chainsaw, setting a fire or operating mining equipment, but the wider system includes land-grabbers, cattle and soybean supply chains, mining financiers, weak enforcement, political protection, global commodity demand and consumers living thousands of kilometres away. The final disappearance of the forest is therefore only the visible output of a much longer system that has gradually transferred profit outward while concentrating pollution, displacement, illness and ecological risk within Indigenous and forest communities. Research using Brazil's official PRODES data identifies the BR-163 corridor and municipalities such as Novo Progresso, Altamira and São Félix do Xingu as critical areas of forest loss. [IPAM technical analysis](#)

The hidden system: The chainsaw, forest fire or mining machine is only the visible event. Beneath it lies a connected system: the **BR-163 highway provides access; loggers remove valuable timber; land-grabbers clear and burn the remaining forest to establish control; cattle ranching and soybean cultivation make cleared land profitable; illegal gold mining contaminates the Tapajós River with mercury; and global demand for beef, soy,**



timber, gold and minerals keeps these activities economically attractive. Weak land registration, inconsistent enforcement, political protection and complex supply chains allow commodities produced through destruction to enter distant markets. The person cutting the tree may therefore be the final visible actor, while investors, traders, companies and consumers who benefit from the system may never enter the forest or witness its consequences.

Repercussions for peace: The destruction disrupts peace by damaging the conditions on which safe life depends. Deforestation and mining threaten **Munduruku and other forest and river communities** by contaminating fish and water, weakening food security, destroying livelihoods and increasing pressure on Indigenous territory. Competition over land and minerals can produce intimidation, forced displacement, attacks on Indigenous leaders and environmental defenders, and distrust of government institutions. The effects also extend beyond Pará: forest loss releases stored carbon and reduces evapotranspiration, weakening the Amazon's ability to recycle moisture and support rainfall across Brazil and neighbouring regions. What appears to be a local act of extraction can therefore become a regional disruption of climate, agriculture, water security and human survival.

Policy or action: Brazil introduced the **Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Deforestation in the Legal Amazon (PPCDAm)**, combining satellite detection, environmental enforcement, protected areas, land-use regulation and support for sustainable economic alternatives. Monitoring systems such as **PRODES and DETER**, operated by Brazil's National Institute for Space Research, allow authorities to identify forest loss and issue rapid alerts. The **Amazon Fund** finances territorial protection, sustainable livelihoods, forest monitoring and environmental governance. Yet these measures succeed only when satellite alerts lead to investigation, penalties are enforced, illegal land claims are rejected,



supply chains are traced and Indigenous communities possess real authority over their territories. A policy may detect the missing tree; systemic action must also remove the incentives that make cutting it profitable.

RIQ:

How do global supermarket supply chains for beef and soy connect consumer demand with deforestation, land conflict and Indigenous insecurity along Brazil's Amazonian transport corridors?

5. Mexico: Ciudad Juárez and Femicide as a System, Not a Sequence of Murders



The disruption: Beginning in the 1990s, Ciudad Juárez—a rapidly industrialising border city in the Mexican state of Chihuahua—became internationally associated with repeated disappearances and killings of women and girls. Many victims were young, came from economically vulnerable families and worked or studied away from home. Some disappeared while travelling between factories, schools, bus stops and poorly serviced neighbourhoods. Their vulnerability was produced not simply by being female, but by the interaction of



gender, poverty, unsafe public transport, insecure employment, rapid urban expansion, organised crime and weak institutional protection.

The defining example is the **Campo Algodonero, or “Cotton Field,” case**. In November 2001, the bodies of eight women and girls were discovered in a cotton field in Ciudad Juárez. The case brought particular attention to three victims: **Claudia Ivette González, Esmeralda Herrera Monreal and Laura Berenice Ramos Monárrez**. Their families had reported them missing, but authorities failed to begin sufficiently urgent and effective searches. Officials sometimes relied on gender stereotypes, suggesting that missing young women had left voluntarily, behaved irresponsibly or led “double lives.” These assumptions diverted attention away from possible danger during the critical first hours and days.

The failure continued after the bodies were discovered. Investigations were affected by poorly protected crime scenes, mishandled evidence, irregularities in identifying bodies, inadequate coordination and insufficient investigation of possible connections among the disappearances. Families seeking answers encountered delay, indifference and, in some instances, hostility. Institutional failure therefore did not merely follow the crimes; it helped create an environment of **impunity**, in which violence against women could continue because perpetrators had reason to believe that disappearances might not be investigated promptly or competently.

This is why the killings are examined through the concept of **femicide** rather than described only as homicides whose victims happened to be female. Femicide refers to the gender-related killing of women or girls: the victim may be targeted because she is female, the killing may involve sexual or gendered violence, or it may occur within a wider social system that treats women’s bodies as controllable and their disappearances as less urgent. Not every killing of a woman is automatically femicide; investigators must establish the gender-related



circumstances, motives or pattern. In Ciudad Juárez, however, repeated disappearances, sexual violence, misogynistic stereotypes, victim-blaming and defective investigations revealed a broader structure of gender discrimination.

In **2009**, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights held Mexico internationally responsible in the *González et al. ("Cotton Field") v. Mexico* case. The Court did not rule that the state itself had committed the murders. It found that, despite knowing about an established pattern of violence against women in Ciudad Juárez, the state had failed to exercise adequate care in preventing foreseeable harm, searching for the missing victims and investigating their deaths without discrimination. It ordered measures including renewed investigation, improved search and investigative protocols, accountability for officials, training, public recognition of responsibility and a memorial to the victims. [Inter-American Court judgment](#)

The case therefore reveals three connected levels of violence:

- **Direct violence:** the abduction, assault and killing of women and girls.
- **Structural violence:** unsafe transport, economic vulnerability, gender inequality and unequal access to protection.
- **Institutional violence:** delayed searches, victim-blaming, investigative failures and the additional suffering imposed on families seeking justice.

The deeper peace disruption is therefore not limited to those who were killed. When women must calculate whether they can travel safely to work, when families must search for missing daughters without urgent state support, and when perpetrators expect weak investigation, fear begins to govern an entire city.



The women disappeared once from the streets; institutional indifference risked making them disappear again from evidence, justice and public memory.

The hidden system: Rapid industrialisation drew many young women into low-paid factory employment, often involving unsafe transport and travel at irregular hours. Gender discrimination, organised crime, victim-blaming, inadequate investigation and impunity increased vulnerability. When authorities repeatedly fail to investigate disappearances, the failure itself changes the environment: potential offenders learn that violence may carry little consequence.

Repercussions for peace: Women restrict their movement, families become investigators, communities lose confidence in police and justice systems, and fear reshapes education and employment decisions. The violence therefore controls not only those who are killed but also those who remain alive.

Policy or action: Mexico enacted the **General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence** and developed Gender Violence Alerts intended to trigger coordinated government intervention. Femicide was incorporated into criminal law. The critical inquiry is whether legal recognition has been matched by investigation, prosecution, prevention and protection.

RIQ:

When repeated murders remain unresolved, does impunity merely follow violence—or does it become one of violence's causes?



6. Brazil: Naming Femicide Changes What the Law Can See-

Specific Case: The Killing of Tatiane Spitzner



The disruption: On 22 July 2018, Tatiane Spitzner, a 29-year-old lawyer, died at the apartment building where she lived with her husband, Luís Felipe Manvailer, in Guarapuava, Paraná. Manvailer initially maintained that she had taken her own life by jumping from their fourth-floor apartment. However, security-camera recordings showed him assaulting Tatiane in the car park, lift and corridors shortly before her death. The evidence also showed him retrieving her body, taking it back into the apartment and cleaning traces from the lift before leaving the area. Forensic findings contradicted the suicide account and concluded that Tatiane had died from mechanical asphyxiation before falling from the balcony.

This evidence transformed what might initially have been recorded as an unexplained fall or ordinary homicide into the final stage of gendered domestic violence.

The hidden system: Tatiane's death was not produced by one isolated moment of anger.

Evidence presented during the case indicated that she had been living within an abusive



relationship marked by domination, fear and unequal power. The building's cameras made visible the process that many domestic-violence cases leave hidden: aggression began in the car park, continued inside the lift and corridor, followed her into the apartment and ended in death. The violence travelled with her through spaces in which she repeatedly tried to escape.

The case therefore exposes a coercive system:

Control → intimidation → isolation → repeated assault → attempted concealment → denial of responsibility

Domestic femicide often appears publicly only at its final stage. Earlier threats, monitoring, humiliation, financial control and physical assaults may remain confined inside the relationship or be dismissed as “private marital problems.” By the time the justice system sees a dead body, the system of control may have been operating for months or years.

Why the legal category mattered: Brazil's 2015 femicide law allowed the prosecution to present Tatiane's killing not merely as the death of one person caused by another, but as a killing connected to domestic violence and gendered power. Femicide did not replace the charge of homicide; it operated as a legally recognised aggravating circumstance within qualified homicide. This required the court to examine the relationship, the domestic setting, the prior violence and the victim's position within an unequal structure of control.

In May 2021, a jury found Manvailer guilty of qualified homicide with the aggravating circumstances of femicide, futile motive, asphyxiation and cruel means, as well as procedural fraud connected with attempts to conceal evidence. He was initially sentenced to more than 31 years' imprisonment. [Court of Justice of Paraná](#)

Repercussions for peace: Tatiane's case demonstrates how peace can be absent inside a home even when no public conflict is visible outside it. Domestic violence forces women to



reorganise speech, movement, friendships and behaviour around the possibility of punishment. It also teaches children and communities that intimacy can operate through possession and fear. When warning signs are normalised as jealousy, passion or a private disagreement, society helps coercive control remain invisible until it becomes lethal.

Policy and action: Brazil's Law No. 13,104 of 2015 amended the Penal Code to recognise femicide when a woman is killed in circumstances involving domestic or family violence, or contempt for and discrimination against women. This built upon the Maria da Penha Law of 2006, which created protective measures and institutional responses to domestic violence. The legal naming matters because it allows investigators, courts and national statistics to connect deaths that might otherwise appear unrelated and identify a recurring gendered pattern. [UN Women on Brazil's femicide law](#)

Yet naming is only the beginning. A femicide conviction punishes violence after death; prevention requires threats to be recognised, survivors to be believed, protective orders to be enforced and coercive control to be interrupted while the woman is still alive.

RIQ

How did surveillance evidence and Brazil's legal recognition of femicide transform Tatiane Spitzner's death from an alleged suicide into evidence of a longer system of domestic coercion, gendered violence and attempted concealment? If the camera had not recorded the violence preceding Tatiane Spitzner's death, which story would the law have believed—and how many femicides disappear inside the word “suicide”?



C. Europe

7. The United Kingdom: “County Lines” and Children Coerced into Drug Networks-**Specific Case: “Jay”—From College Student to Controlled Drug Runner**



The disruption: “Jay”—a pseudonym used to protect his identity—was a college student when he began drinking alcohol and using cannabis. An older person approached him and encouraged him to sell cannabis, presenting the work as easy money with little risk. What began as an apparently voluntary decision gradually escalated. Gang members offered him approximately £600 a week to sell crack cocaine and heroin, drawing him deeper into a county-lines network.

This is the first important stage of grooming: exploitation rarely introduces itself as exploitation. It may initially appear as friendship, opportunity, protection, status or belonging.

The hidden system: Once Jay was embedded in the network, the apparent opportunity became control. He was required to work continuously and was monitored by telephone. If he



paused, gang members contacted him immediately, making it clear that they knew where he was and expected him to continue selling. When the money returned by people working beneath him was said to be short, the deficit became his responsibility. The promised income was therefore replaced by manufactured debt—a powerful method of keeping exploited young people trapped.

The process followed a recognisable pattern:

Friendly approach → small request → attractive payment → increased criminality → surveillance → invented debt → threats → dependence

Jay was no longer operating as an independent adolescent making one freely chosen decision. Gang members controlled his time, movement and safety. Guns were pointed at him, and people around him were stabbed. By this stage, refusing to continue was not a simple act of willpower; leaving carried a credible threat of violence.

Why the case could be misunderstood: If police encountered Jay carrying drugs or money, the most immediately visible evidence would identify him as a lawbreaker. The grooming, surveillance, fear and debt operating behind that act might remain invisible. He could therefore be recorded as an offender before anyone investigated whether he was also a victim of child criminal exploitation.

The case does not mean that an exploited child's actions have no consequences for others. Drugs sold through county lines can seriously harm individuals and communities. It means that responsibility must be examined at different levels. Jay carried out the visible act, but older organisers created the conditions, controlled the supply, collected the profit and used threats to prevent his exit.



The turning point: After Jay's home life broke down, he moved into hostel accommodation and was assigned a social worker. One day, she stopped when she saw him outside and invited him into her car. That small act communicated that an adult was interested in his safety rather than merely his offences. Plain-clothes police officers later offered protection in exchange for information, and arrangements were made for the Salvation Army to relocate him away from the network. Jay believed that without this intervention he would probably have been killed or imprisoned as the situation continued to worsen. [Jay's documented account](#)

Repercussions for peace: Jay's case shows how county lines removes peace from several connected spaces. The child loses personal freedom and educational continuity; the family may face intimidation; other vulnerable young people become runners beneath the first child; and communities experience drug dependency, weapons and retaliatory violence. Criminal networks may also take control of a vulnerable person's home—a practice known as cuckooing—turning a private residence into a base for criminal activity.

Punishing Jay without dismantling the network would have removed one visible runner while leaving the organisers, communication system, supply chain and recruitment method intact. Another vulnerable child could simply have replaced him.

Policy or action: The UK's County Lines Programme combines action against organised networks with safeguarding and specialist support for children attempting to escape. Government guidance defines child criminal exploitation through the imbalance of power used to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child; it also recognises that exploitation may exist even when the activity appears consensual. The proposed child-criminal-exploitation offence shifts legal attention towards adults who use children to commit crimes. [UK County Lines Programme](#) and [UK guidance on child criminal exploitation](#)



RIQ

How did the progression from promised income to surveillance, manufactured debt and threats transform Jay's apparent decision to sell drugs into child criminal exploitation? When Jay was found carrying drugs, was the evidence identifying the criminal—or revealing the child whom the criminals were carrying through their system?

8. The Netherlands: Groningen—The 2012 Huizinge Earthquake Exposed the Human Cost of Gas



The specific disruption: On 16 August 2012, a magnitude 3.6 earthquake struck near the village of Huizinge in Groningen. It was the strongest earthquake then recorded above the



Groningen gas field and was not a natural geological event: decades of extracting gas had reduced pressure inside the underground sandstone reservoir, causing the rock to compact and existing faults to move. The earthquake damaged buildings and forced authorities to confront the possibility that future extraction-induced earthquakes could be stronger than previously assumed. [KNMI investigation of the Huizinge earthquake](#)

The hidden system: The Groningen field had supplied Dutch households and industries since the 1960s and generated approximately €363 billion for the state. Extraction was conducted by Nederlandse Aardolie Maatschappij (NAM), a company jointly owned by Shell and ExxonMobil. This created a striking geographical imbalance: the Netherlands received reliable energy and public revenue, while communities living above the reservoir absorbed cracked walls, weakened foundations, declining property confidence and the continuing possibility of another earthquake. Residents then had to navigate separate technical inspections, damage claims and building-strengthening procedures. The system therefore distributed its benefits nationally but concentrated its dangers locally.

The institutional failure: Huizinge was not simply an unforeseen accident. Earthquakes connected to gas extraction had been recorded in Groningen for years, but their significance was repeatedly approached as a technical and economic problem rather than an urgent question of human security. Decisions involved the Ministry of Economic Affairs, NAM, Shell, ExxonMobil, regulators and organisations responsible for compensation and reinforcement. Because responsibility was divided among numerous institutions, residents could be required to prove that individual cracks had been caused by extraction, wait through repeated assessments or receive compensation without knowing when their homes would be structurally strengthened. In 2023, the Dutch Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry concluded



that the interests and safety of Groningen residents had been structurally neglected during gas-extraction decision-making. [Dutch House of Representatives inquiry](#)

A concrete household consequence: Imagine a family whose brick house develops widening cracks after repeated tremors. An inspector may decide that some damage is extraction-related while questioning other cracks. The family can receive money for cosmetic repairs, yet remain uncertain about the building's structural safety. Another earthquake may reopen repaired cracks before a reinforcement decision is completed. The house is still legally occupied and may not have collapsed, but doors that no longer close, recurring inspection visits and the sound of each tremor can make its occupants feel that their home is no longer dependable. This shows why security cannot be measured only by deaths or collapsed buildings: prolonged uncertainty and the repeated need to prove one's suffering are also forms of harm.

Repercussions for peace: Groningen demonstrates how an energy policy can disturb peace without warfare. Repeated tremors disrupted physical safety, while slow and complicated procedures produced psychological distress, anger and distrust. Neighbours with apparently similar damage could receive different assessments or remedies, creating perceptions of unfairness within communities. Children could grow up watching their parents repeatedly negotiate with institutions that appeared unwilling to accept responsibility. The deeper disruption was therefore not only cracked masonry but a damaged relationship between citizens and the state.

Policy and action: Normal gas production ended in October 2023. Legislation subsequently provided for the field's permanent closure, ending production completely in 2024 despite concerns about national and European gas supplies. Damage compensation continues through the Institute for Mining Damage Groningen, while the National Coordinator Groningen



manages the strengthening of buildings considered unsafe. The government also introduced the *Nij Begun* response, combining damage repair, reinforcement, social and mental-health measures and long-term economic investment. These measures acknowledge that closing the wells does not automatically repair homes, restore health or rebuild trust.

RIQ

How did the Dutch state's dependence on Groningen gas revenue, NAM's commercial role and fragmented compensation procedures allow national energy security to be maintained by transferring physical, psychological and financial insecurity to residents after the 2012 Huizinge earthquake?

Key insight: Groningen asks learners to examine *whose security counts*. If gas heated millions of homes while making the homes above the gas field unsafe, the system did not create equal security—it relocated insecurity to a community with less influence over the decisions producing it.

9. Iceland: Reykjavík—Replacing the Drinking Group Before Punishing the Drinker

The specific disruption: During the late 1990s, Iceland had some of Europe's highest reported levels of adolescent drinking and smoking. In 1998, approximately **42% of Icelandic 15- and 16-year-olds reported having been drunk during the previous month, while 23% reported smoking every day.** The problem was therefore not a few



“undisciplined” adolescents; harmful substance use had become embedded within adolescent social life, particularly during unsupervised evenings and parties.

The hidden system: Researchers did not ask only, “Why are teenagers drinking?” They examined the environments in which drinking became socially rewarding. Regular surveys of 14- to 16-year-olds gathered local information about alcohol and tobacco use, time spent with parents, participation in organised activities, school connection, unsupervised evenings and peer behaviour. The findings revealed that substance use was connected to clusters of risk: limited parental monitoring, large amounts of unstructured time, weak participation in organised activities and friendships in which drinking or smoking had become normal. The substance could therefore function as an entrance ticket into a peer group—offering excitement, recognition or belonging before producing dependence or harm. [Development and principles of the Icelandic Prevention Model](#)

A concrete adolescent connection: Consider a 15-year-old in Reykjavík whose friends regularly gather without adults on Friday evenings. If joining the group requires drinking, refusing alcohol may also mean refusing companionship, status and protection from exclusion. A classroom warning about liver damage does not remove that immediate social cost. Iceland’s approach attempted to change the choice surrounding the adolescent: parents coordinated supervision and time at home; schools, sports clubs and youth organisations created structured after-school communities; and public support helped young people participate in sports, music, drama and other activities. The adolescent was no longer being asked merely to reject one source of belonging—the peer drinking group—but was being offered credible alternative places in which belonging could be gained without substance use.

How the intervention worked locally: Survey findings were rapidly returned to individual municipalities and schools rather than remaining inside national reports. If one community’s



data showed high levels of unsupervised evening activity, weak parental contact or limited participation in recreation, local researchers, teachers, parents, municipal officials and youth workers could design a response around that particular pattern. Parents were encouraged to agree on shared boundaries so that one adolescent could not easily argue that “everyone else is allowed out.” Icelandic child-protection rules also established outdoor hours for unaccompanied children and adolescents. These boundaries were reinforced by expanding accessible, supervised activities—not treated as punishment alone.

Removing the economic barrier: Reykjavík introduced a Recreation Card through which children and adolescents aged 6–18 receive a public subsidy for recognised sports, arts and leisure programmes. The purpose is significant: recommending football, dance or music is not meaningful if only affluent families can pay for them. The subsidy attempts to make supervised activity, friendship, adult mentorship and achievement available across social groups. Reykjavík currently describes the card as a tool for increasing equality as well as participation. [City of Reykjavík Recreation Card](#)

Repercussions for peace: Adolescent substance harm disrupts peace inside the spaces closest to a young person. It can weaken health, learning, family trust and personal agency; expose adolescents to violence, unsafe sex, accidents or criminal networks; and make schools and neighbourhoods less secure. A purely punitive response can deepen shame and exclusion—the very conditions that may make a risky peer group more attractive. Environmental prevention instead treats connection, supervised freedom and meaningful participation as elements of community peace.

Policy and evidence: The Icelandic Prevention Model united researchers, schools, parents, municipalities, policymakers and youth organisations around repeated local evidence.

Reported national trends were striking: between 1998 and 2018, the proportion of 15- and 16-



year-olds reporting drunkenness during the previous month fell from about 42% to 5%, while daily smoking declined from approximately 23% to 3%. Research also recorded increases in parental monitoring and organised participation alongside reductions in unsupervised time and parties. However, the surveys were largely repeated cross-sectional studies, so the decline cannot be attributed to one measure alone. The strength of the case lies in the coordinated redesign of several interacting conditions—not in claiming that a curfew, sports programme or survey independently “solved” addiction. [University of Iceland research summary and Planet Youth research](#)

RIQ

When alcohol provides a 15-year-old with belonging, status and companionship, can society reasonably demand that the adolescent “just say no” without first creating another place in which saying no does not mean standing alone?

Key insight: Iceland did not merely try to remove the bottle from the adolescent. It attempted to remove the loneliness, idle time, unequal access and social pressure that made the bottle valuable.



D. Africa

10. South Africa: Uyinene Mrwetyana—When an Ordinary Errand Became Evidence of a National Peace Crisis



The specific disruption: On 24 August 2019, 19-year-old University of Cape Town student Uyinene Mrwetyana went to the Clareinch Post Office in Cape Town to collect a parcel. A male postal employee deliberately arranged for her to return after the branch had closed. He raped and murdered her inside the government building. In November 2019, the Western Cape High Court sentenced him to three terms of life imprisonment for her rape and murder. [South African Government statement on the sentencing](#)

Why this case revealed more than one offender: The murderer was individually responsible for his crimes, but Uyinene's death exposed a wider system of gendered insecurity. She was not undertaking a dangerous activity or entering a recognised danger zone; she was completing an ordinary errand inside a public institution. The case therefore



destroyed the assumption that women can guarantee their safety simply by dressing differently, travelling carefully or avoiding particular places. When a post office—an institution expected to serve and protect the public—becomes the location of gender-based violence, the question extends beyond one perpetrator to the safety systems, workplace accountability, social attitudes and institutional responsibilities surrounding him.

The hidden system: Femicide is usually the final and most visible point in a longer system that normalises male entitlement, coercive control, sexual harassment and violence against women. Before a killing occurs, that system may already be operating through the policing of women's clothing and movement, the silencing of survivors, victim-blaming, economic dependence, ineffective workplace safeguards and distrust of police or courts. Repeated failures to protect survivors can communicate a dangerous social lesson: women must constantly manage male violence, while institutions respond mainly after irreversible harm has occurred. Uyinene's case made this contradiction impossible to ignore—the state could severely punish her murderer, but it could not return the safety that had failed before the crime.

The public response: Uyinene's death generated national grief, demonstrations and the question **#AmINext?** Women used the phrase to reveal that her experience was not perceived as an isolated exception. It expressed the fear that any woman collecting a parcel, attending university, travelling home or reporting for work could become the next victim. The movement shifted attention from asking what Uyinene had done to asking why ordinary environments remained unsafe for women and why responsibility for preventing violence was repeatedly placed on potential victims.

Repercussions for peace: The case demonstrates that peace cannot be measured only by the absence of armed conflict. When women must share live locations, modify clothing, avoid



studying or working after dark, calculate transport routes and treat unfamiliar men as possible threats, their freedom is already restricted. Families experience grief and fear; students lose confidence in campuses and public facilities; and girls learn that independence may increase their exposure to danger. This is a form of unequal peace: men and women may inhabit the same city while possessing radically different freedom to move through it.

Policy and action: Public outrage following Uyinene's murder intensified pressure on the government during an already developing national response to gender-based violence. On 18 September 2019, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced an **Emergency Response Action Plan**, supported by R1.6 billion and directed towards access to justice, prevention, institutional accountability and women's economic opportunities. [Emergency Response Action Plan](#) In 2020, South Africa adopted the **National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide 2020–2030**. Its six pillars address accountability and leadership; prevention and social cohesion; justice, safety and protection; survivor care and healing; women's economic power; and research and information management. This structure recognises that punishment after a murder is necessary but insufficient: prevention must also change the institutions, relationships, economic inequalities and social norms that make violence possible. [South African Presidency: National Strategic Plan](#)

The policy test: The existence of a national plan does not itself establish that women have become safe. Its success must be examined through implementation: Are reports handled seriously? Are protection orders enforced? Do investigations and prosecutions progress without unreasonable delay? Can survivors access shelters, health care and legal assistance? Are workplaces and public institutions screening, supervising and holding employees accountable? Are women economically able to leave abusive relationships? A plan becomes



peace architecture only when its promises alter women's everyday experience of power and safety.

RIQ

How did the rape and murder of Uyinene Mrwetyana inside a public post office expose the distance between South Africa's promise of equal citizenship and women's actual freedom to use ordinary public spaces without calculating the possibility of male violence?

Key insight: Uyinene's case asks learners to reverse the usual question. Instead of asking, "What could she have done to remain safe?", they ask, "What should institutions, workplaces, communities and men have already done so that collecting a parcel required no strategy for survival?"



11. Nigeria: Ogoniland—Oil Wealth, Poisoned Land and Environmental Distrust-**When a Community's Drinking Water Contained the Oil Beneath It**



The specific disruption: In 2011, the United Nations Environment Programme published an extensive assessment of oil pollution in Ogoniland, Rivers State, after examining more than 200 locations and analysing thousands of soil and water samples. One of its most alarming findings came from Nsisioken Ogale in Eleme Local Government Area. UNEP detected benzene in well water at more than 900 times the World Health Organization guideline. Benzene is a toxic, cancer-causing component of crude oil. Families were therefore drawing water from wells that appeared to provide an ordinary necessity but carried an invisible industrial danger.

Why this was not simply one oil spill: Oil production began in Ogoniland in the late 1950s, and the region became part of the petroleum system generating national income and export revenue. Commercial extraction in Ogoniland stopped in 1993, but wells, pipelines and



contaminated sites remained. Pollution accumulated through multiple pathways, including leaking or ageing infrastructure, operational failures, spills, illegal refining, theft and sabotage. Responsibility for particular spills has often been disputed, but disagreement about who caused each incident does not alter the measured reality that hydrocarbons entered farmland, creeks, groundwater and drinking-water sources.

The hidden system: The visible oil floating on water was only the surface of a much larger system. Crude oil travelled away from the Niger Delta through pipelines and markets, while much of its ecological cost remained where it was extracted. The government depended heavily on petroleum revenue; companies controlled technical information and infrastructure; regulators faced limitations in independence, capacity, and enforcement; and many residents depended on fishing and farming in the same environment being contaminated. Poverty and unemployment could also push some people towards illegal refining, which created further spills, fires and pollution. Environmental destruction therefore reproduced the conditions that made additional environmental destruction more likely.

A concrete household connection: Consider a family in Nsisioken Ogale using a local well for drinking, cooking and washing. The water may look sufficiently clear, yet contain benzene that cannot reliably be identified through sight or taste. The family cannot solve the problem by “making a better personal choice” if safe water is unavailable or unaffordable. A fisher whose creek has been polluted may lose both food and income; a farmer whose soil no longer produces a dependable harvest may be forced to borrow, migrate or abandon inherited land. The oil industry’s environmental footprint thus enters the household through the cup, the cooking pot, the fishing net and the family income.

Repercussions for peace: Ogoniland demonstrates how environmental damage becomes a peace crisis. Contaminated water threatens health; polluted creeks remove fishing



livelihoods; damaged soil weakens farming; and unemployment increases economic insecurity. Communities may disagree over compensation, contracts, clean-up employment or responsibility for spills. Frustration can become protest, and protest can encounter repression. Trust deteriorates when residents believe that government and industry can transport oil quickly but cannot deliver safe water or repair contaminated land with the same urgency. The conflict is therefore not only over petroleum—it is over whose health, land and future the state is organised to protect.

Policy and action: UNEP concluded that restoring Ogoniland would require one of the world's most extensive oil-remediation operations. It recommended emergency access to safe drinking water, contaminated-soil treatment, groundwater monitoring, restoration of mangroves, public-health measures, institutional reform and an initial US\$1 billion restoration fund covering the first five years. It warned that full ecological recovery could take 25 to 30 years, meaning that remediation must continue across governments and generations. [UNEP on the Ogoniland restoration programme](#)

From recommendation to implementation: Nigeria formally launched the Ogoniland clean-up in 2016, and the Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project—HYPREP began coordinating implementation under the Federal Ministry of Environment. Its mandate includes soil and groundwater remediation, shoreline and mangrove restoration, potable-water provision, public-health intervention and alternative livelihoods. Water schemes have since been commissioned in affected communities, while remediation and mangrove work continue.

[HYPREP's mandate](#) However, installing a water facility or declaring a site remediated does not by itself prove restoration. Learners must examine whether water remains safe over time, whether contamination has been removed rather than relocated, whether restored ecosystems



support fishing and farming again, and whether communities can independently verify official claims.

The accountability problem: Ogoniland cannot be understood through the convenient claim that either corporations caused everything or communities caused their own pollution through sabotage. Different incidents may have different immediate causes. A rigorous inquiry must examine maintenance records, spill-investigation reports, independent samples, community testimony and the financial relationships among companies, regulators and government.

Whatever the source of an individual spill, institutions responsible for extracting, transporting, regulating and profiting from petroleum still carry obligations to prevent exposure, respond quickly and restore damaged environments.

RIQ

How did Nigeria's petroleum system allow oil from Ogoniland to become nationally valuable while leaving families in Nsisioken Ogale with benzene-contaminated water—and what evidence would demonstrate that HYPREP has restored not only the land, but health, livelihoods and public trust?

Key insight: Development cannot be measured only by the value of the oil that leaves a region. It must also be measured by the condition of the water, soil, bodies and futures left behind.



12. Democratic Republic of the Congo: Kasulo—The Neighbourhood Beneath the Rechargeable Battery



The specific disruption: In approximately 2014, residents of **Kasulo**, a densely populated neighbourhood in Kolwezi, discovered exceptionally rich cobalt-bearing rock beneath their homes. As global demand and cobalt prices increased, residents and migrant miners began excavating courtyards, floors and surrounding land. Hand-dug shafts extended beneath houses and streets, transforming a residential community into an informal mine. Miners frequently worked without secure tunnel supports, ventilation, masks, gloves or reliable geological information. A material used inside sleek rechargeable batteries was being extracted from unstable holes dug through an inhabited neighbourhood.

A concrete child-labour connection: Research by Amnesty International and the Congolese organisation Afreewatch documented children working in southern DRC's artisanal cobalt



sector. Some children collected, sorted, washed and carried mineral-bearing stones, while others worked around mine sites exposed to dust, heavy loads, injuries and intimidation. Time spent earning money could replace school attendance or leave children too exhausted to learn. This was not evidence that every Congolese cobalt mine employed children; it demonstrated a serious risk within poorly regulated artisanal supply chains. [Amnesty International's cobalt investigation](#)

The hidden supply chain: A child or adult miner could sell cobalt-bearing ore to a local buyer without knowing its final destination. The ore might then pass through traders, buying houses, processors and refiners before being converted into battery-grade chemicals and supplied to component manufacturers. Battery cells could subsequently enter smartphones, laptops, energy-storage systems or electric vehicles sold under globally recognised brands. At each transfer, material from different locations could be mixed. By the time a consumer purchased the finished product, the distance and number of intermediaries made the original worker almost invisible. The OECD has warned that supposedly separate artisanal and industrial mineral chains can intersect, making traceability and due diligence essential. [OECD study of interconnected cobalt supply chains](#)

The hidden economic system: Families did not necessarily send children into mining because they considered mining safe or desirable. Poverty, school costs, food insecurity, unemployment and the absence of dependable adult income could make cobalt one of the few immediately available sources of cash. Traders could determine prices while miners possessed little information about the cobalt content or international value of their ore. A miner therefore carried much of the physical risk but captured only a small part of the mineral's final value. Global demand increased cobalt's strategic importance without automatically increasing the bargaining power, safety or income of the person digging it out.



Why simply banning artisanal cobalt can deepen the harm: A company may protect its reputation by refusing all artisanally mined cobalt. However, if the decision removes a family's income without providing safe employment, education or social protection, children may enter another mine, move into more concealed labour or experience greater hunger. Responsible action must distinguish between **eliminating child labour** and **abandoning mining communities**. The aim should be to formalise appropriate adult work, improve safety and traceability, remove children from hazardous labour, replace lost household income and make sustained school attendance economically possible.

Repercussions for peace: Hazardous cobalt mining can cause tunnel collapses, injuries, toxic exposure and premature death. Child labour removes time from education and reproduces poverty across generations. Competition for mining land can displace residents or create tension among communities, companies, cooperatives and state authorities. Corruption and opaque trading weaken confidence that mineral wealth is being governed for the public good. Although these conditions do not automatically constitute armed conflict, they disrupt positive peace by denying safe work, equal opportunity, accountable institutions and protection from exploitation.

Policy and action: In Kasulo, authorities converted the affected area into a designated artisanal mining zone, while initiatives attempted to register miners, control access, prohibit child labour, monitor production and trace cobalt through authorised channels. Such formalisation can improve oversight, but its success depends on independent evidence: whether tunnels are genuinely safer, children remain in school, adult miners receive fair payment and cobalt is traceable beyond the first buyer. Corporate due diligence must follow the mineral through traders, refiners, battery manufacturers and final brands rather than ending with a supplier's written assurance.



Child-centred intervention: The International Labour Organization and its partners have supported programmes aimed at identifying children involved in cobalt mining, returning them to education, strengthening remediation services and addressing the economic pressures on their families. The ILO’s **GALAB project**, launched in 2024, builds on earlier work by connecting child-labour monitoring with education, livelihoods and institutional enforcement.

[ILO GALAB project](#) This matters because removing a child from one mine is not lasting protection if poverty sends the child—or a sibling—back after the programme ends.

The consumer connection: A person charging a smartphone or driving an electric vehicle may never see Kasulo. Yet purchasing decisions, corporate contracts, battery chemistry, mineral prices and environmental policies connect that consumer to the mining community. The ethical question is not whether consumers are personally responsible for a particular child entering a mine. It is whether companies and governments benefiting from the cobalt economy have built systems capable of identifying, preventing and repairing the labour harms embedded within it.

RIQ

How can cobalt from Kasulo travel through traders, refiners and battery manufacturers until its origin becomes invisible—and what evidence would prove that a “responsibly sourced” battery has replaced child labour with schooling, family income and safe adult work rather than merely pushing exploitation beyond view?

Key insight: A technology does not become clean merely because it produces less carbon where it is used. It becomes just only when the people extracting its materials are made as visible and valuable as the consumers using it.



E. Asia

13. India: Prenatal Sex Selection—Violence Before a Girl Enters

Society



India: Haryana—When the Second Pregnancy Becomes a Test of a Girl’s Social Value

The specific disruption: India’s 2011 Census recorded 919 girls for every 1,000 boys aged 0–6 nationally. In Haryana, the ratio was only 834 girls per 1,000 boys, among the country’s most unequal state-level figures. The imbalance did not prove that every missing girl was the result of prenatal sex selection: the child sex ratio is also affected by birth registration, migration and the unequal nutrition, health care and survival of girls after birth. However, when combined with birth-order studies and other demographic evidence, it indicated a



serious pattern of discrimination before and after birth. [Government of India: 2011 child sex-ratio data](#)

A concrete family connection: Consider a Haryana family whose first child is a girl. During a second pregnancy, the pregnant woman may hear that the family “needs a son” to continue its name, inherit property, support the parents in old age or perform funeral rites. Her in-laws may describe another daughter as a future dowry expense. A prenatal ultrasound is legitimately offered to monitor foetal development, but the family pressures the clinic to disclose the foetus’s sex. If it is female, the woman may be pushed towards an abortion she does not freely want. The final medical procedure may appear to be an individual reproductive decision, while the actual decision-making power is distributed among her husband, in-laws, economic dependence, the clinic and the cultural value assigned to sons.

Why birth order matters: Son preference does not always produce equal pressure during every pregnancy. A family may welcome—or publicly claim to welcome—a first daughter but demand that the next child be male. Pressure can become stronger when previous children are girls and parents intend to have only two children. This creates what might be called a “daughter deficit under the small-family norm”: families want fewer children but still believe that at least one must be a son. Prenatal diagnostic technology then allows them to control not only the number of children but also their sex composition. UNFPA research identifies sex ratio at birth, examined alongside birth order and the sex of previous children, as a more precise indicator of possible gender-biased prenatal selection than the general population ratio alone. [UNFPA: Sex Ratio at Birth in India](#)

The hidden medical chain: The ultrasound machine does not discriminate by itself. Its legitimate purpose is to examine foetal growth, identify medical complications and protect maternal and foetal health. Discrimination enters when a family demands sex information, a



medical professional unlawfully communicates it and social pressure converts that information into a sex-selective decision. The hidden system may involve coded messages, incomplete records, unregistered machines, referrals between clinics and payments made outside formal documentation. A legal clinic can therefore become the point at which an older patriarchal preference acquires modern technological power.

Locating responsibility correctly: It is misleading to place the entire responsibility on the pregnant woman. She may face threats, emotional abuse, financial dependence, abandonment or pressure to continue becoming pregnant until she produces a son. She may formally sign a consent document while lacking meaningful freedom to refuse. It is equally misleading to blame ultrasound technology itself, because the same machine provides essential prenatal care. Responsibility lies in the relationship among son preference, coercive family power, medical complicity, weak enforcement and the unequal social position of daughters and women.

Repercussions for peace: Prenatal sex selection expresses the belief that one sex deserves a greater chance of entering society than another. Its consequences extend beyond the pregnancy. It can reinforce the idea that girls are financial burdens, increase pressure on women to produce sons and expose them to repeated pregnancies or abortions. Severely distorted demographic patterns may also interact with trafficking, coerced marriage and intensified control of women. These consequences are not automatic results of every skewed ratio, but they show how discrimination before birth can reshape safety and equality after birth. A society cannot claim positive peace when a child's anticipated sex affects whether her life is socially welcomed.

Law and policy: India enacted the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, commonly called the PCPNDT Act. It prohibits sex



selection before or after conception, bans communicating the sex of a foetus and regulates clinics, laboratories and ultrasound equipment. The law targets the misuse of diagnostic technology; it does not make all abortion illegal. This distinction is vital because campaigns against prenatal sex selection must not remove women's lawful access to reproductive health care or treat every abortion as evidence of a crime.

The Haryana policy connection: On 22 January 2015, the Government of India launched Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao in Panipat, Haryana—a deliberate choice given the state's deeply unequal child sex ratio. The programme combined enforcement of the PCPNDT Act with public communication, district coordination and efforts supporting the survival, protection and education of girls. Its location communicated that the problem could not be solved only by sealing ultrasound machines: communities also had to change the perceived economic and social value of daughters. [Government of India: ten years of Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao](#)

The policy test: An improved ratio is important, but it is not sufficient proof that girls have gained equal value. Authorities must examine whether clinics comply with the law, women can report coercion safely, daughters receive equal nutrition and schooling, dowry expectations decline, women inherit property and families support daughters beyond campaign slogans. Enforcement without cultural transformation may drive sex disclosure underground; awareness without enforcement may leave profitable medical networks untouched. Effective prevention requires both.



RIQ

How does a legitimate ultrasound during a second pregnancy become an instrument of discrimination when a Haryana family already has a daughter—and where should responsibility be located among the relatives applying pressure, the professional disclosing the foetus's sex, the institutions failing to intervene and the culture that makes a son appear necessary?

14. Bangladesh: Rana Plaza and the True Price of Cheap Clothing



The disruption: The collapse of Rana Plaza in 2013 killed more than 1,100 people and injured thousands, exposing dangerous building conditions and the vulnerability of garment workers within global supply chains.



The hidden system: The disaster was not merely a building failure. Factory pressure, weak inspection, unsafe construction, low wages, purchasing deadlines, subcontracting and global demand for inexpensive fashion interacted. Brands and consumers were geographically separated from workers carrying the physical risk of low-cost production.

Repercussions for peace: Labour insecurity turns employment into a choice between poverty and danger. Death, disability, lost family income and distrust of employers disrupt households and communities. A workplace cannot be considered peaceful merely because violence is not inflicted by a weapon.

Policy or action: The **Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh** created independent inspections, remediation plans, public reporting and worker complaint mechanisms. Its functions later moved into new institutional arrangements, including the Ready-Made Garment Sustainability Council. The case demonstrates that corporate promises become meaningful only when workers can report danger without losing their livelihood.

RIQ:

When a shirt becomes cheaper because its risk has been transferred to an unseen worker, who pays the price that is missing from the label?



15. Japan: Minamata—When Pollution Entered the Human Body



The disruption: Industrial mercury discharged into Minamata Bay accumulated in seafood and entered the bodies of residents who depended on the bay for food and livelihood. People developed severe neurological illness, while recognition and compensation became prolonged sources of conflict.

The hidden system: Industrial production, waste disposal, scientific uncertainty, corporate influence, regulatory delay and the economic dependence of the local community interacted. Pollution moved through an ecological food chain, but responsibility moved slowly through legal and political institutions.

Repercussions for peace: Families experienced illness, disability, stigma, livelihood loss and conflict over who qualified as an officially recognised patient. Environmental violence became bodily, economic and intergenerational.

Policy or action: Japan developed pollution-control laws, patient-certification and compensation mechanisms, although disputes about recognition continued. The global

Minamata Convention on Mercury later carried the name of the disaster into international



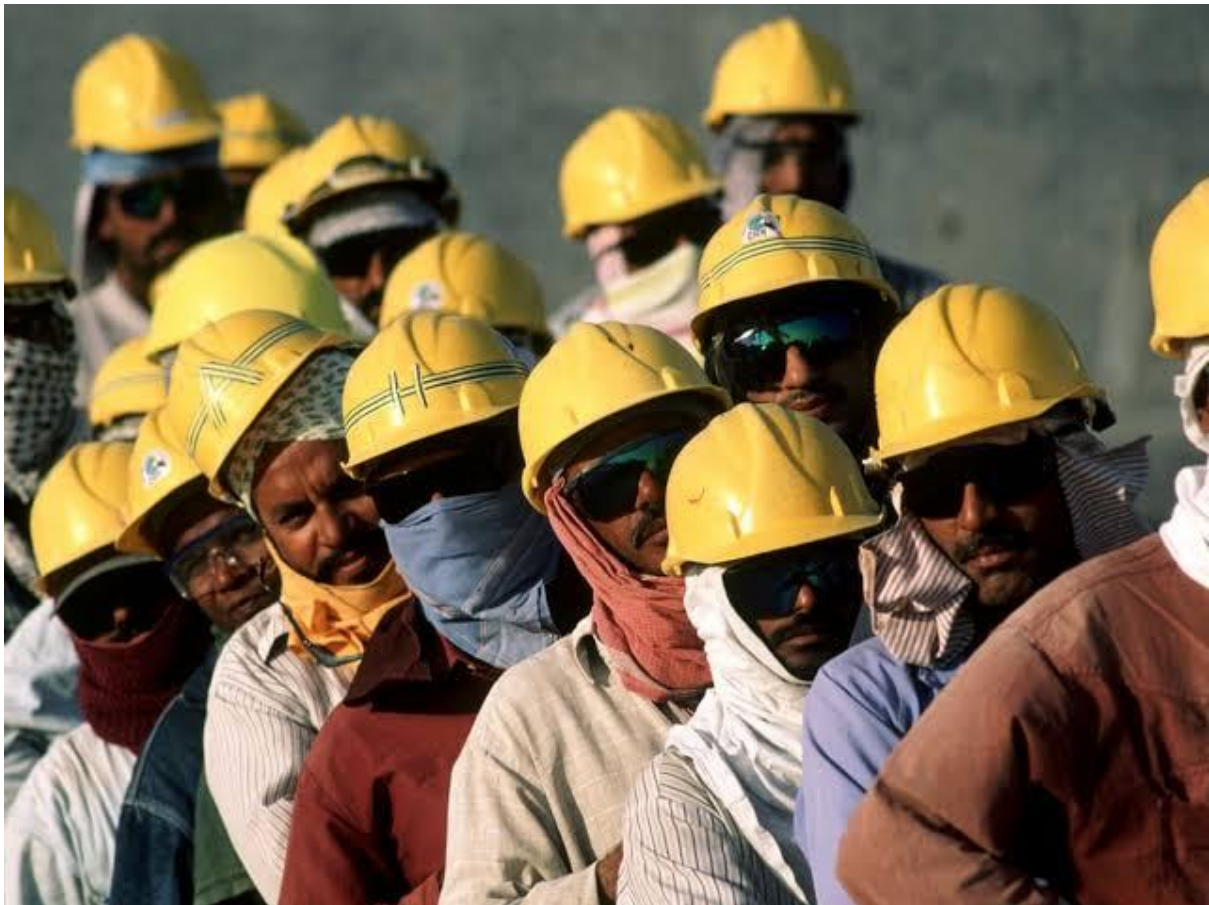
environmental governance. Japan's official framework provides compensation to certified patients under pollution-related health legislation. [Japan's Ministry of the Environment](#)

RIQ:

When poison travels invisibly through water and food, how long can an institution demand certainty before delay itself becomes another form of harm?

F. Middle East and Arab States

16. Qatar: Migrant Labour and the Architecture of Dependency





The disruption: Migrant workers have formed a large part of Qatar's workforce. Under the traditional **kafala** sponsorship system, a worker's legal and employment position could become heavily dependent on an employer, creating conditions in which wage withholding, recruitment debt and restrictions on changing employment increased vulnerability.

The hidden system: Labour abuse is not produced only by one cruel employer. Recruitment agents, debt in the worker's home country, visa sponsorship, subcontracting, passport control, language barriers and fear of deportation can combine to reduce meaningful freedom. A contract may appear voluntary while the surrounding system makes refusal economically impossible.

Repercussions for peace: Workers separated from families may experience debt, unsafe conditions, unpaid wages and limited access to remedy. Inequality becomes spatially visible when those constructing national prosperity possess the least power within it.

Policy or action: Qatar introduced major labour reforms, including a non-discriminatory minimum wage and changes allowing many workers to change jobs without an employer's permission. The ILO has continued cooperating with Qatar on labour mobility, wages, occupational safety and worker representation. [ILO overview of Qatar's reforms](#) and [continuing ILO-Qatar programme](#)

RIQ:

Can labour be called freely chosen when the worker is legally free to leave but economically unable to do so?



17. Yemen: Child Marriage Inside a Larger System of Insecurity



The disruption: Child marriage in Yemen is linked with gender inequality, poverty, interrupted education, family insecurity and the effects of prolonged conflict. Families facing displacement or hunger may perceive marriage as protection or economic survival, even when it transfers severe risks to a girl.

The hidden system: The immediate decision may occur within a family, but the conditions extend beyond it. Poverty, insecurity, absence of schooling, gender norms, limited legal protection and fear of sexual violence interact. Condemning a family without investigating these pressures produces a moral judgement without a systemic explanation.

Repercussions for peace: Early marriage may end education, increase health risks, restrict agency and reproduce economic dependence across generations. The practice weakens positive peace because girls are denied equal control over their bodies and futures.



Policy or action: Yemeni reform efforts and national-dialogue recommendations have included proposals for a minimum marriage age, but conflict and political fragmentation have obstructed consistent national protection. This makes Yemen a valuable case of **policy paralysis**: society may identify a reform while lacking the institutional peace required to implement it.

RIQ:

When a family calls early marriage protection, what larger system has made the loss of a girl's freedom appear safer than preserving it?



18. Jordan: When Water Scarcity Becomes a Human-Security Test



The disruption: Jordan is among the world's most water-scarce countries. Population growth, climate change, ageing infrastructure, groundwater depletion and the needs of refugee and host communities place pressure on limited supplies.

The hidden system: Drought alone does not determine who receives water. Infrastructure, pricing, illegal extraction, urban growth, international finance and political decisions distribute scarcity. An environmental pressure therefore becomes a peace concern when access is unequal or communities believe that others are being protected at their expense.

Repercussions for peace: Water insecurity affects health, farming, employment and relations between communities. It can increase household burdens, particularly for women, and



weaken confidence in public institutions. Scarcity does not automatically cause conflict; governance determines whether scarcity becomes cooperation, inequality or instability.

Policy or action: Jordan has developed long-term water strategies involving conservation, reduced water loss, wastewater reuse, infrastructure development and proposed large-scale supply projects. The case shifts inquiry from “Will water cause war?” to “Which institutions turn shared scarcity into fair cooperation?”

RIQ:

Does scarcity disrupt peace by itself—or does peace fracture when institutions decide whose tap runs first?



G. Oceania and the Pacific

19. Australia: Institutional Child Sexual Abuse and the Cost of Protected Reputations



The disruption: Australia's Royal Commission examined child sexual abuse across religious, educational, sporting, welfare and other institutions. It revealed repeated patterns in which authority, secrecy, institutional loyalty and inadequate reporting systems allowed harm to continue.

The hidden system: Individual offenders operated inside organisations whose cultures could discourage questioning, move alleged perpetrators, minimise disclosures or protect reputations. Children depended on the same adults and institutions responsible for recognising their complaints, creating a profound imbalance of power.



Repercussions for peace: Abuse damaged survivors' health, relationships, education, spirituality and trust across entire lifetimes. Families and communities also experienced betrayal when institutions presented themselves as places of care while concealing harm.

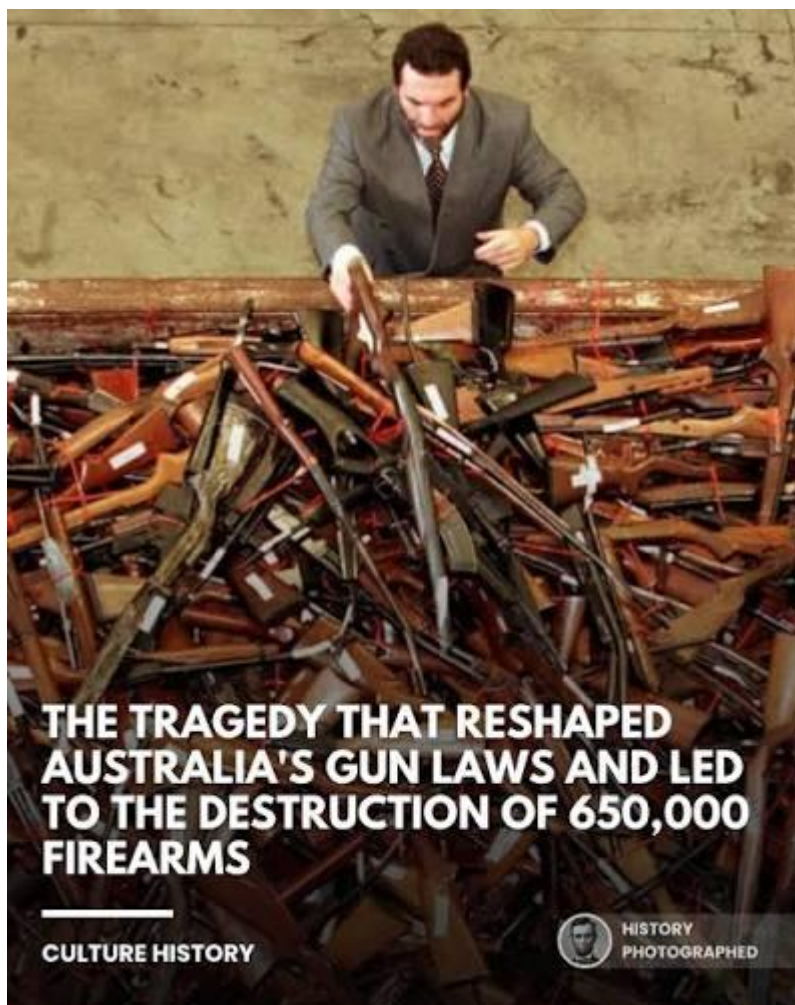
Policy or action: The Royal Commission heard extensive evidence, recorded thousands of survivor narratives and produced **409 recommendations** across child safety, reporting, criminal justice, redress and institutional accountability. Its work contributed to the National Redress Scheme and stronger child-safe standards. [Australian Royal Commission](#) and [Final Report](#)



RIQ:

What happens when the institution trusted to protect a child possesses more power over the truth than the child who experienced it?

20. Australia: Port Arthur and the Redesign of Firearm Access



The disruption: The 1996 Port Arthur massacre demonstrated how one person's access to highly lethal firearms could produce mass public harm.



The hidden system: The event was committed by an individual, but weapon availability, licensing arrangements and regulatory differences among jurisdictions shaped the scale of harm. The case therefore distinguished the attacker's personal responsibility from the state's responsibility to reduce the capacity for future violence.

Repercussions for peace: Mass shootings generate bereavement, fear and lasting collective trauma. They also force societies to decide how individual firearm ownership should be balanced against public safety.

Policy or action: Australian governments adopted the **National Firearms Agreement**, including licensing, registration, restrictions on certain firearms and a large buyback programme. Australia is now developing a National Firearms Register intended to connect information across jurisdictions; it is expected to become operational by mid-2028. [Australian Attorney-General's Department](#)

RIQ:

After mass violence, when does restricting an individual choice become the protection of everyone else's freedom to remain alive?



21. Nauru: Phosphate Mining and a Landscape Consumed from Within



The disruption: Extensive phosphate extraction transformed much of Nauru's interior into severely degraded land. A resource that once produced national income also reduced habitable and cultivable space and created long-term dependence.



The hidden system: Colonial extraction, international demand, national revenue, limited land, governance choices and the physical exhaustion of the resource interacted. Economic prosperity was generated by consuming the ecological foundation on which future prosperity depended.

Repercussions for peace: Land degradation affects food security, settlement, cultural connection to land, economic independence and climate resilience. The case exposes intergenerational violence: one period receives revenue while future generations inherit restricted possibilities.

Policy or action: Nauru established land-rehabilitation efforts and has repeatedly sought international support for restoring mined land. Nauru itself told the UN that much of its mined landscape required rehabilitation to become habitable and arable again. [Nauru statement to the UN General Assembly](#)

RIQ:

Can a nation become wealthy by extracting the ground beneath its future—or is that prosperity borrowing land from generations unable to refuse?