Tipping the Scales

TOWARDS A PEOPLE-CENTERED JUSTICE APPROACH TO RESILIENCE IN FRAGILE CONTEXTS

Jonathan Papoulidis
Swati Mehta
Nate Edwards

PATHFINDERS

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About this Publication

Acknowledgments

About the Authors

Jonathan Papoulidis is Vice-President of Food for the Hungry, where he provides leadership on the Agency's global policy engagements, convenings and partnerships with the public and private sector. He previously served with the United Nations (UN), including in Indonesia as UN Coordinator and Special Advisor for Aceh and Nias and UN Security Coordinator for Sumatra. From 2004 to 2006, he served in the UN peacekeeping mission in post-war Liberia as an advisor to the UN Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Governance and Recovery. Before that, he was the senior UN OCHA representative in Turkey, preparing for the 2003 Iraq humanitarian response. Prior to these postings, Papoulidis served at UN headquarters in New York, focusing on the protection of civilians, conflict prevention, private sector partnerships, and post-crisis transitional planning. He serves on advisory boards for the Global Resilience Partnership and Global Alliance for a Sustainable Planet. He has been a World Projects Fellow at Columbia University and a Visiting Scholar at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Stanford University, and the Center for Refugee Studies at York University. He has written for the Brookings Institution, World Bank, OECD, Harvard International Review, Yale Journal of International Affairs, and Cambridge Review of International Affairs. He has a graduate degree in international relations from the University of Cambridge.

Swati Mehta is a Senior Fellow at the NYU Center on International Cooperation (CIC) and former Program Director of the Justice for All initiative at Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies. Starting her career by providing legal aid for women, she soon moved on to systemic reform, focusing on police, prisons, and the justice sector. More recently, her work has focused on legal empowerment as well as decentralization and democratization of justice, with people at the center of justice programming. Working with the UN Development Programme (UNDP), civil society organizations, programs, academic institutions, and think tanks, Swati has designed, managed, and led several justice programs over the last 23 years. She has written, edited, and reviewed many papers on legal empowerment, policing, prisons, legal aid, and customary and informal justice systems. A Chevening Scholar, Swati holds an LLM degree in International Criminal Law, Criminology, and Criminal Justice from King's College London. She loves to engage with young people, artists, and musicians on justice.

Nate Edwards is a Program Officer at the Center on International Cooperation at New York University with the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies team. Nate primarily supports the Justice for All program, focusing on leveraging justice as a tool to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He oversees initiatives on access to justice for displaced populations and advocacy for people-centered justice. Additionally, he contributes to Pathfinders' justice in conflict-affected settings portfolio. Previously, he worked with CIC's Humanitarian Crises program, supporting efforts related to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, migration and refugees, and financing for humanitarian and development projects. Nate holds a Master of International Affairs degree from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) and a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Anthropology from Carleton College.

About the Pathfinders Grand Challenge on Justice

With 5.1 billion people—two-thirds of the global population—lacking meaningful access to justice, it is imperative to achieve SDG 16+ and ensure equal access to justice for all by 2030. We must put people at the center of justice systems and move from words and planning to action and implementation.

The Pathfinders Grand Challenge on Justice serves as an impact hub where countries, civil society, and multilateral and regional organizations converge to bridge the justice gap by expediting action on people-centered justice. The Grand Challenge provides a platform for the exchange of innovative practices in data collection, evidence-based policymaking, and effective use of resources. The aim is to overcome fragmentation and transform justice systems to prevent and address the most prevalent justice issues that people face.

Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies is a cross-regional impact hub of 46 United Nations (UN) Member States, alongside partners from international organizations, civil society, and the private sector. They are committed to advancing the Sustainable Development Goal targets of peace, justice, inclusion, and equality (SDG16+). Pathfinders is hosted by the Center on International Cooperation at New York University.

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Executive Summary

Once synonymous with food security, resilience has undergone a quiet revolution over the last decade, shifting from a sector silo to an emerging paradigm of engagement for donors and multilateral institutions. This paper traces the evolution and importance of this emerging resilience paradigm and the simultaneous rise of people-centered approaches to justice (PCJ). It argues that PCJ is a vital but missing element of the new resilience paradigm and key to its success. The paper proposes a conceptual framework for a PCJ approach to resilience and offers a few illustrative examples of how the framework might be applied to fragile contexts and beyond. The examples used are not prescriptive, but rather intend to offer grounding to what is otherwise a largely conceptual framework. The application of the framework will require additional resources, on-the-ground research, and comprehensive analysis. Ultimately, the paper argues that humanitarians, peacebuilders, resilience experts, and justice actors must work together to tip the scales of justice in favor of people's resilience in fragile contexts.

Introduction

Once synonymous with food security, resilience has undergone a quiet revolution over the last decade, shifting from a sector silo to an emerging paradigm of engagement for donors and multilateral institutions working in fragile contexts and beyond. A nascent "fragility to resilience" paradigm has come to assert that strengthening the resilience of institutions, societies, and markets to address complex risks, crises, and their political, social, and economic root causes is the pathway to helping countries escape from fragility.[1] While promising, this new paradigm still lacks globally recognized, shared, and strategic frameworks and approaches to guide national reformers and international partners to build resilience in an age of crises.

Recent global shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, global economic disruptions, rising conflicts and worsening climate change, disasters, and food crises have all underscored the urgent need for a new approach to humanitarian, peace, and development work. Needs-based approaches have, for too long, dominated the assistance landscape without paying proper attention to converging risks and compounding crises.[2] What is now needed are resilience approaches that are responsive to needs but that equally foster a wide range of institutional, economic, and societal capacities to deal with risks, vulnerabilities, crises, and root causes.

This paper argues that people-centered justice (PCJ) is a vital but missing element of this emerging resilience paradigm and key to its success. The reason for this is simple: achieving more inclusive public investments in resilience and greater access to resilience resources for the most vulnerable people are not simply technical or financial exercises. These objectives often require confronting patterns of exclusion, injustice, and marginalization.

When political settlements are exclusionary in nature, they deny people access to resources such as basic services, social protection, and job opportunities, making them vulnerable to shocks and stress. Exclusionary settlements also foreclose on resilience investments in services, infrastructure, and open markets since public resources are captured by elites or diverted through clientelist networks to the few.

Building people's resilience in the face of crises requires assistance to empower them to address the patterns of exclusion that deny them access to resources and support.

Justice systems are meant to address these patterns of exclusion and inequality by preventing and resolving people's grievances and rights violations. However, many formal justice systems fail to do this effectively, and most people around the world do not use formal systems because of a lack of legitimacy, capacity, and/or accessibility. They instead rely on customary and informal systems of justice, which often have greater familiarity, credibility, accessibility, and efficiency. Notably, both formal and informal justice systems can end up further marginalizing groups and undermining rights without proper safeguards and accountabilities in place.

The role of PCJ is to put people at the center of formal and non-formal justice systems to transform these systems and support the best existing solutions to understand, prevent, or resolve people's justice problems. As a result, PCJ offers an emerging, pragmatic, and essential approach to strengthening people's resilience by unlocking their access to public resources and raising their voices among decision-makers for responsive action to address their vulnerabilities, priorities, and rights in the face of looming risks and complex crises.

The paper argues that PCJ, as an indispensable element of the new resilience paradigm, requires significant investments from the aid community to tip the scales of justice in favor of resilience for those people in the hardest places. Ultimately, linking justice and resilience frameworks supports the achievement of their mutually reinforcing goals—closing the global justice gap estimated to encompass 5.1 billion people, supporting societies to better deal with global and localized shocks, and enabling peace and development.[3] By 2030, a staggering 86 percent of the world's extreme poor are estimated to live in fragile contexts, which, by definition, are places with higher risks and insufficient capacities to deal with them.[4] Despite best intentions, international justice, humanitarian, peacebuilding, and development communities have often not worked together to leverage justice solutions to increase people's resilience in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

To make the case for the central role of PCJ in resilience, this paper first outlines the emerging "fragility to resilience" paradigm and evidence on the importance of resilience to peace and development success. It then highlights the gap in this emerging paradigm around justice and makes the case for the indispensable role of PCJ for resilience in fragile and conflict-affected settings—and beyond. Lastly, it proposes a conceptual framework for a PCJ approach to resilience and offers a few illustrative examples of how the framework might be applied to different contexts. Ultimately, this paper argues that humanitarians, peacebuilders, resilience experts, and justice actors must work together to tip the scales of justice in favor of people's resilience in hard places.

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Tipping the Scales: Towards a People-Centered Justice Approach to Resilience in Fragile Contexts

1. The Emerging Fragility to Resilience Paradigm

In 2020, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) recognized the emergence of a new "fragility to resilience" paradigm[5] that was gaining momentum among bilateral donors like the United States and the European Union (EU), as well as multilateral institutions like the World Bank. It emphasizes the need to put people at the center of the fight against fragility as a starting point for action.[6] At the time, the EU's strategic approach to resilience[7] was a hallmark of this new paradigm, representing a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to supporting resilience in fragile settings. The EU's approach underlines the importance of not only assessing vulnerabilities among populations but also recognizing and supporting structural sources of positive resilience, including within justice systems.

Among major bilateral donors, the United Kingdom's strategy for international development[8] makes resilience a core feature in helping countries and societies weather risks and crises and secure justice. Meanwhile, the Kingdom of the Netherlands has a key focus on promoting climate and economic resilience as parts of its foreign trade and development policy,[9] as well as incorporating mental health and psychosocial support to boost the resilience of communities and affected populations during and after crisis.[10] The United States has made resilience a prominent feature in its approach to fragile contexts, notably in its global fragility strategy[11], which notes that resilience is key to escaping fragility. The US Agency for International Development (USAID)'s new resilience policy[12] indicates that resilience will be elevated to a top-level priority within the Agency and apply to every country and sector where it works, including the justice sector.

The World Bank's strategy on fragility, conflict, and violence puts a major focus on resilience and makes justice and the rule of law reform one of its six "special emphasis" priorities.[13] The African Development Bank (ADB)[14] and Asian Development Bank (ADB)[15] similarly focus on resilient transitions in fragile contexts. Beyond the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), other multilateral institutions have elevated their focus on resilience in fragile contexts. The United Nations (UN) recently issued guidance[16] to all UN Resident Coordinators and UN country teams on how to promote resilience within countries across systems, sectors, and institutions to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The OECD reframed its definition of fragility in terms of resilience. Previously, fragility was defined as a government that could not or would not provide for its population, especially the poor. In 2016, the OECD began to define fragility in terms of resilience—as a condition of higher risks and lower coping capacities to deal with those risks within states, systems, and communities.[17] Resilience is increasingly defined as an approach to strengthening the absorptive, adaptive, and transformative capacities of states, systems, and societies to deal with complex risks, crises, and their root causes. The OECD's long-standing fragility framework also changed to show the fragility and resilience dimensions of the fragile contexts named in the framework across six dimensions—political, societal, economic, human, environmental, and security.[18]

The g7+, the only inter-governmental organization comprised solely of countries affected by fragility and conflict, has made resilience central to their mandate, noting that at the "core of its mission (is) the desire to support countries suffering from conflict or crises on their way towards resilience."[19] The g7+ has also played a significant role in advancing PCJ, serving as one of the founding members of the Justice Action Coalition.

A decade ago, resilience was largely synonymous with food security. These examples serve to highlight an increasing paradigm shift among multilateral institutions and major regional and bilateral donors towards resilience as a more comprehensive and central approach to supporting fragile contexts and societies out of their predicament. Many of these partner frameworks and strategies have highlighted the importance of supporting justice systems to support resilience in hard places. Several major donors have also recognized resilience as a guiding framework for partnerships and interventions across the humanitarian, peace, and development nexus, clearing the way for more joined-up approaches to resilience that bring together justice actors with humanitarians, peacebuilders, and development actors.[20]

2. The Importance of Resilience to Development, Peace, and Security

The emerging fragility to resilience paradigm is critical to meet the moment of tackling increasingly complex risks and compounding global crises of climate change, conflict, economic shocks, and future pandemics—what the World Economic Forum (WEF) has referred to as a polycrisis.[21] **However, recent evidence shows how important resilience has always quietly been in supporting development and peace objectives.**

2.1 Resilience for development

World Bank evidence[22] has shown that contrary to common assumptions, long-term growth in today's most peaceful societies and advanced economies—what were "yesterday's fragile states"—was less the product of achieving rapid growth episodes and more a result of resilience ("not shrinking") in the face of economic crises, conflicts, and disasters. Recent evidence has similarly shown the overlooked but indispensable role of resilience in Asian "miracle growth" economies over the last half century.[23]

As many fragile economies grew over the last century, harnessing technological innovations and trade, they invested in resilience capacities, for instance, in climate adaptation, thwarting major crises, reducing loss of life by a factor of ten, and enabling steady growth. Climate adaptation has been called one the great underappreciated success stories of the last century,[24] even as current adaptation efforts have been far outpaced by the rate of climate change and lack of international financing to countries on the frontlines of the climate crisis. Recent evidence has found that resilience investments can save seven dollars for every dollar invested.[25]

Resilience also plays a vital role in sustainable poverty escapes. Examining countries in Asia and Africa, research[26] led by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and USAID found that the main reason for people falling back into poverty was their inability to deal with shocks and crises, underscoring the central role of resilience for long-term poverty escapes. For these reasons, SDG target 1.3 takes on greater significance given its focus on building the resilience of the "poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduc(ing) their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters" as a means of ending poverty.[27]

2.2 Resilience for peace and security

The World Bank's 2011 seminal report on conflict, security and development was best known for its emphasis on promoting justice, citizen security, and jobs to prevent and manage conflicts. Far less recognized was the report's call for a resilience approach to enable reforms for justice, security, and jobs.[28] A resilience approach was deemed essential to effectively manage both short-term and longer-term risks of conflict resurgence and spoilers, as well as shocks and stresses that could contribute to future conflicts, such as economic crises, illicit financial flows, rapid urbanization, and widespread unemployment. The report called for building a "sustained level of resilience" within societies to escape from fragility.

Nearly a decade later, the UN and World Bank's *Pathways to Peace* report also affirmed the need for a resilience approach, and this time, to a wider range of shocks and stress mainly induced by climate change, noting how these could exacerbate conflict and violence. The report found resilience is the "best means of prevention."[29]

2.3 Looking forward

Taken together, an emerging body of evidence has begun to reevaluate the importance of resilience in achieving long-term growth, sustainable poverty escapes, and the conditions for peace and security. Despite the increased recognition of its importance, however, frameworks and strategies for advancing societal resilience beyond sector silos have been less forthcoming. This has meant that national reformers and international partners have lacked a guiding global doctrine for resilience—relying on progress through trial and error, false starts, and setbacks without the benefit of an evidence-informed agenda or shared strategic pathway forward. The lack of guiding frameworks has contributed to worrying levels of fragility in a range of some 60 countries designated by the OECD as fragile contexts, as well as in other countries and advanced economies dealing with heightened risks and crises but without clear resilience solutions to meet the SDGs' "last mile" challenge of reaching the most vulnerable communities.[30]

This paper argues the need for more shared and strategic frameworks for resilience among international partners and national reformers. Critically, it calls for making PCJ a central feature of resilience frameworks to ensure vulnerable people and communities are properly supported and empowered to play a key role in building their own resilience and that of their societies.

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3. Mind the Gap: The Rise and Role of People-Centered Justice (PCJ)

3.1 The rise of a PCJ movement

In parallel to an emerging resilience paradigm over the past decade, there has also been a growing global movement to increase people's access to justice.

In 2015, justice was formally recognized as a critical component of achieving sustainable development through the establishment of SDG target 16.3 to ensure equal access to justice for all.[31] In 2019, following a coalitional effort across government and non-government stakeholders, the Task Force on Justice published the Justice for All report, which estimated that 5.1 billion people lack meaningful access to justice around the world, including 1.5 billion people living with problems they cannot resolve and 4.5 billion people facing exclusion from the opportunities the law provides.[32]

Without access to justice, people are left unable to address their everyday risks, needs, and vulnerabilities, access their full rights, and participate effectively in their societies and economies. This report, coupled with years of policy research and intervention sparked a collective movement to close the global justice gap.

3.2 The role of PCJ

The work of the Justice Action Coalition and its partners has succeeded in making the case that justice is not the sole preserve of formal institutions, nor should justice promotion be limited merely to training lawyers and judges, revising laws, building courthouses or introducing technology and digitalization in justice processes.

Rather, justice must be understood much more broadly as the way in which society deals peacefully with problems and grievances at national and local levels to avoid descents into violent conflict. It is the way in which excluded people are empowered to enter the policy arena to voice their development priorities, risks, vulnerabilities, and needs and seek remedies for the daily problems they face. It is also the way in which rights are upheld, and those with power are held to account.[33]

As the name implies, people-centered justice is focused on meeting the justice needs of people. This can involve finding justice solutions through a range of justice actors and pathways, formal or customary and informal. It involves understanding people's lived experience of seeking justice in diverse settings and devising ways to empower them to find solutions to their day-to-day justice needs as well as solutions to more structural and long-standing grievances, including during and after crises and conflicts. Data and evidence-based approaches are critical to PCJ, as is a focus on fair outcomes for people.

Emerging research shows the importance of PCJ approaches in preventing conflicts and constructively addressing societal grievances at both national and local levels in a range of countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.[34] The principles of PCJ, first articulated in the Hague Declaration on Equal Access to Justice,[35] have now been endorsed by over 60 countries and are actively being promoted by the Justice Action Coalition.[36]

Despite this widespread endorsement, justice is consistently underfunded by donors, making up just 1.4 percent of international aid budgets.[37, 38] This reflects a lack of appreciation for the fundamental role of justice in advancing broader humanitarian, development, and peace outcomes. As much as this report is meant to demonstrate the importance of PCJ to international institutions and donors working to advance a new paradigm for resilience, it is also intended to introduce the concept of resilience to justice partners and donors as a novel approach and framework within the PCJ movement to help vulnerable people in fragile settings and beyond. The prospects of closing the global justice gap and increasing societal resilience are mutually reinforcing.

4. PCJ and Resilience

The emerging resilience paradigm asserts that if a fragile context is supported to address major risks, crises, and their root causes, it can, over time, escape fragility. What bears emphasis here is the necessity to address not only risks and crises but their causes. In other words, prevention and societal transformation are key to resilience.

The World Bank's report on governance and the law[39] highlights three power asymmetries within political settlements that disrupt security, justice, and development. These are marginalization, clientelism, and the elite capture of state institutions, policies, and resources. These asymmetries are often the root causes of risks and crises for vulnerable people within a political settlement.

People lack access to social protections, basic services, safety and security, and job opportunities because they are marginalized or because public investments have not been made in the first place for more inclusive infrastructure and social services within society owing to elite capture or the diversion of these resources into clientelist networks.

Strengthening resilience for vulnerable people and communities, particularly those who have been marginalized, will require a PCJ approach that prevents or solves people's grievances over limited access to services, rights violations, and their lack of voice in the policy arena to articulate their risks, needs, and vulnerabilities to threats and crises and shape future policies and investments.

Only through the prevention or handling of these grievances can resources be unlocked for excluded groups and new patterns of inclusion established among marginalized people to strengthen their resilience capacities. Doing so can also increase trust between people, institutions, and the State.

The World Bank's conflict, security and development report recognizes the role of justice in unlocking resources for resilience.[40] It calls for reforms in the justice sector that would help widen access to civilian security and job opportunities to achieve sustained levels of societal resilience. The World Bank's current fragility, conflict, and violence strategy affirms the importance of formal and informal justice systems in resolving grievances to access services and resources. However, both reports mainly focus on formal justice reforms. This fails to take into account the fact that most people globally seek to resolve their justice problems through customary and informal justice (CIJ) actors and mechanisms.[41] For fragile and conflict-affected contexts, approximately 80 to 90 percent of disputes are addressed through CIJ actors and mechanisms.[42] A PCJ approach to resilience must, therefore, strengthen a variety of pathways to support justice solutions for people that in turn will contribute to their resilience capacities in fragile settings.

In the following sections, the key characteristics of resilience and PCJ are highlighted, along with their shared characteristics. From these characteristics, the paper introduces a matrix to show how resilience capacities can be supported through different justice systems and pathways. Based on this, a conceptual framework is proposed for a PCJ approach to resilience to help develop future interventions in this space, followed by a few illustrative examples of how the framework might be applied in different fragile contexts.

5. Key Resilience and PCJ Characteristics

5.1 Applying a PCJ approach to resilience requires understanding key characteristics of each approach

While definitions of resilience vary in the aid community, most multilateral institutions and bilateral donors, including the OECD, UN, World Bank, US government, and EU, have adopted resilience frameworks that affirm three capacities.[43] These are **absorptive capacities, adaptive capacities,** and **transformative capacities.**

Table 1: Resilience capacities

Absorptive capacities	To prevent, mitigate, and withstand shocks and stress.
Adaptive capacities	To diversify the options available to meet development outcomes when a crisis disrupts the main or preferred option.
Transformative capacities	To scale resilience solutions to reach more affected people, markets or institutions; to turn risks into opportunities through innovation; and/or to resolve the root causes of risks and crises within the political settlement.

5.2 PCJ pathways

In an effort to be comprehensive without being reductive, people's justice journeys tend to follow pathways that can broadly be categorized into formal, customary, and informal justice systems, or a combination of these.[44]

Table 2: Pathways to access justice

Formal justice pathways	Constitutional and statutory courts, tribunals, state-supported legal aid, special jurisdiction courts, registers, and other formal institutions addressing grievances and disputes, including formal labor dispute mechanisms, ombudsmen, etc.
Customary and informal justice pathways	Although there are instances of these systems dealing with criminal cases, they more often address the regulation of access to land, water, natural resources, and family relations and "tend to emphasize restorative justice, flexible rules and procedures, and consent-based negotiated solutions that are culturally resonant."[45] **Customary justice** can include customary courts, public hearings, or customary law. **Informal justice** can include community-based/led alternative dispute resolution, mediation, legal advice, community paralegals, and legal empowerment.

5.3 Risks of engaging with CIJ systems[46]

It is important to note that there are well-studied risks of engagement with customary and informal justice systems. Among effectiveness and feasibility, there are also concerns related to human rights: discrimination, denial of human rights, lack of due process or safeguards, prevention of using other justice providers, or failure to be inclusive to the needs of all people. CIJ systems are diverse, and contextual considerations are important when deciding how to engage with them. Notably, however, the risks of engagement with informal justice systems have counterparts in those of the formal system (i.e., corruption, rights abuse, discrimination, denial of human rights, elite capture), and in each case, the role of the state and development assistance is to improve how those systems serve people while upholding rights.

5.4 Resilience capacities and PCJ share three key characteristics that lend themselves to integration

- **The first shared characteristic between PCJ and resilience is diversity.** Resilience calls for diverse capacities to deal with risks and crises. PCJ calls for diverse pathways to justice (formal, customary, and informal) to address people's risks, vulnerabilities, needs, and priorities and improve their experiences of seeking justice. It is not enough to provide services if people are unable to access them because of shocks and disruption or a lack of confidence in existing systems.[47] Both approaches place a premium on empowering people, cultivating diverse capacities and pathways to meet resilience and justice outcomes for vulnerable people.

- **The second shared characteristic is an emphasis on positive coping strategies for people.** For resilience, coping is strengthened through absorptive and adaptive capacities. These include disaster insurance, backup livelihood options, peace committees, disaster-resistant infrastructure, cash transfers and savings groups, and alternate options for education and health services during or after a crisis. For PCJ, coping is supported through a focus on meeting people's most common everyday justice needs, particularly when it comes to civil and administrative justice, around issues such as legal documentation, access to services like healthcare or education, land, labor, and housing rights, or access to financial institutions. It is also important that justice systems "settle disputes in a peaceful manner, ensure accountability of power, promote respect for human rights, combat corruption through the enforceability of contracts and property rights, and ensure checks and balances."[48] Justice must not be seen only as a response to problems but also as a tool for prevention.[49]

- **The third shared characteristic is transformative solutions.** For resilience, transformative capacities focus on scalable solutions such as national safety nets, innovative responses to risks such as converting flood zones into sources of hydroelectric power, and addressing the political, societal, and economic root causes of risks, crises, and vulnerability through peace and reconciliation efforts. For PCJ, transformative solutions are achieved through systemic changes to justice systems, policies, and services, empowering people to prevent and resolve their problems using a range of available formal and informal justice actors that offer fair, inclusive, relevant, and efficient solutions to ensure equal access for all.[50] It can include approaches like transitional justice, community-based mediation, use of community-based paralegals, restorative justice, strategic litigation, innovative use of high and low-end technology, or constitutional/normative reforms, among other routes to address root causes of conflicts, inequality, exclusion, and vulnerability to shocks and stress.

5.5 A PCJ approach to resilience

As the above-shared characteristics show, a PCJ approach to resilience involves identifying and strengthening diverse pathways to justice to prevent or resolve problems and grievances over access to resources, services, rights, and a lack of voice in decision-making—so that people have the capacities and means to better *cope* with adversity and contribute to *transformative* changes within society to strengthen the resilience of communities, institutions, markets, and systems in the face of risks and crises.

5.6 PCJ and resilience matrix

The matrix below illustrates how formal, customary, and informal justice systems and solutions can support access to resilience capacities—absorptive, adaptive, and transformative. Importantly, several of these solutions can support more than one resilience capacity. For instance, legal aid can support all three resilience capacities and work within formal and CIJ pathways, even if not listed as such within the matrix. The matrix is not meant to be exhaustive but to serve as a working example of how justice and resilience actors, working with those across the humanitarian, peace, and development nexus, could use this type of format to identify a range of justice solutions for resilience.

The matrix helps make visible how, depending on the context, different justice pathways—based on their credibility, familiarity, accessibility, and effectiveness—will be best placed to prevent and resolve people's legal problems and disputes over access to resources such as land, alimony, legal documentation, social services, and social protections, all of which can strengthen the capacities of people to better manage periods of heightened risks, crises, and post-crisis situations. In so doing, the matrix demonstrates how a PCJ approach can promote a diversity of justice options and, therefore, be more resilient to changing circumstances and adversity than conventional justice reform approaches focused only on formal institutional arrangements—as the following examples convey.

During the pandemic, many people found the local informal and customary actors faster, more credible, and contextually appropriate than the formal system in solving their immediate needs.[51] Hence, the CIJ system served as an absorptive capacity to help people deal with sudden shocks by enabling access to other resources and services.

Likewise, because PCJ promotes the use of diverse justice pathways based on context, it can help people pivot from one justice pathway to another if one has been disrupted, corrupted, or overwhelmed. For instance, informal alternative dispute resolution might be a better option where a formal or customary hearing showed signs of bias, was overloaded with other cases, or under capacitated due to an active conflict. This demonstrates an adaptive capacity within a PCJ approach to pivot from one pathway to another as necessary, focusing on resolving the problem at hand.

Table 3: PCJ Resilience Matrix

Formal Justice System	
Absorptive	Legal Aid for information and justice services during or after a crisis (e.g., free legal aid in Ukraine). Court systems to settle grievances owing to a shock (civil, criminal, small claims). Community justice centers that provide wraparound services such as legal support, legal information, mental health, and psychosocial support, et al. (e.g., Colombia, Ukraine).
Adaptive	Legal aid can support justice journeys between justice systems as necessary. Special courts, jurisdictions, commissions, and tribunals can be created when the court system lacks the capacity, mandate, or specialization to handle specific disputes or claims (e.g., Register for Damage for Ukraine; International Independent Commission of Inquiry on Syria).
Transformative	Transitional justice through truth commissions, reparations, guarantees of non-recurrence, and reconciliation processes can help transform patterns of exclusion, conflict, and vulnerability (e.g., Commission for Reception, Truth, and Reconciliation in East Timor). Formal justice mechanisms can help provide oversight and standards over CIJ systems, with guarantees of rights and formal appeal processes to prevent and resolve grievances in ways that promote access to resilience resources among traditionally marginalized groups (e.g. Kenya's constitutional reforms and their Alternate Justice Systems Policy, linking formal and informal systems)[52] while preserving the existence of CIJ systems as diverse/resilient pathways to justice, including during crisis. Formal restorative justice mechanisms can help to transform structural/social patterns of exclusion of vulnerable groups after conflict, promoting social protections and inclusive access to services for greater resilience (e.g., Colombia Peace Process). Justice sector reforms and capacity strengthening for greater legitimacy and effectiveness to support people's rights and access to resources for resilience (e.g., Customary Land Rights Act and National Land Commission Act in Sierra Leone empowering communities to uphold land rights amidst industrial development).[53]
Customary and Informal Justice	
Absorptive	Restorative justice approaches can help vulnerable community members affected by crime, conflict, and resource disputes to absorb these shocks and stress (preventing escalation, mitigating damages, restitution, and restoring social relations).
Adaptive	Customary law can adapt rules and processes more quickly than formal system Legal support to pivot between justice systems as necessary (e.g., Madaripur Legal Aid Association and Mediation model in Bangladesh).[54] Alternative dispute resolution to settle disputes more quickly when other systems lack credibility, are overloaded or are compromised due to shocks or other disruptions in infrastructure or staffing (e.g., Women's Peace Huts in Liberia).[55]
Transformative	CIJ mechanisms (e.g., Rwanda's gacca system), can provide more timely and often more credible justice solutions to access services, protections, local land disputes, inheritance, jobs, and loans to repair damages during and after shocks. Customary and informal actors can empower communities to understand and use the law (e.g., Kituo Cha Sheria legal advice on land, labor, and housing issues in Kenya).[56] Integrating informal and customary justice traditions with formal systems can support reconciliation and repair (e.g., the adoption of the Statute of Buena Convivencia in Ecuador,[57] Indigenous Law Research Unit articulating Indigenous law in Canada).[58]

Figure 1: Towards a new PCJ Resilience Framework
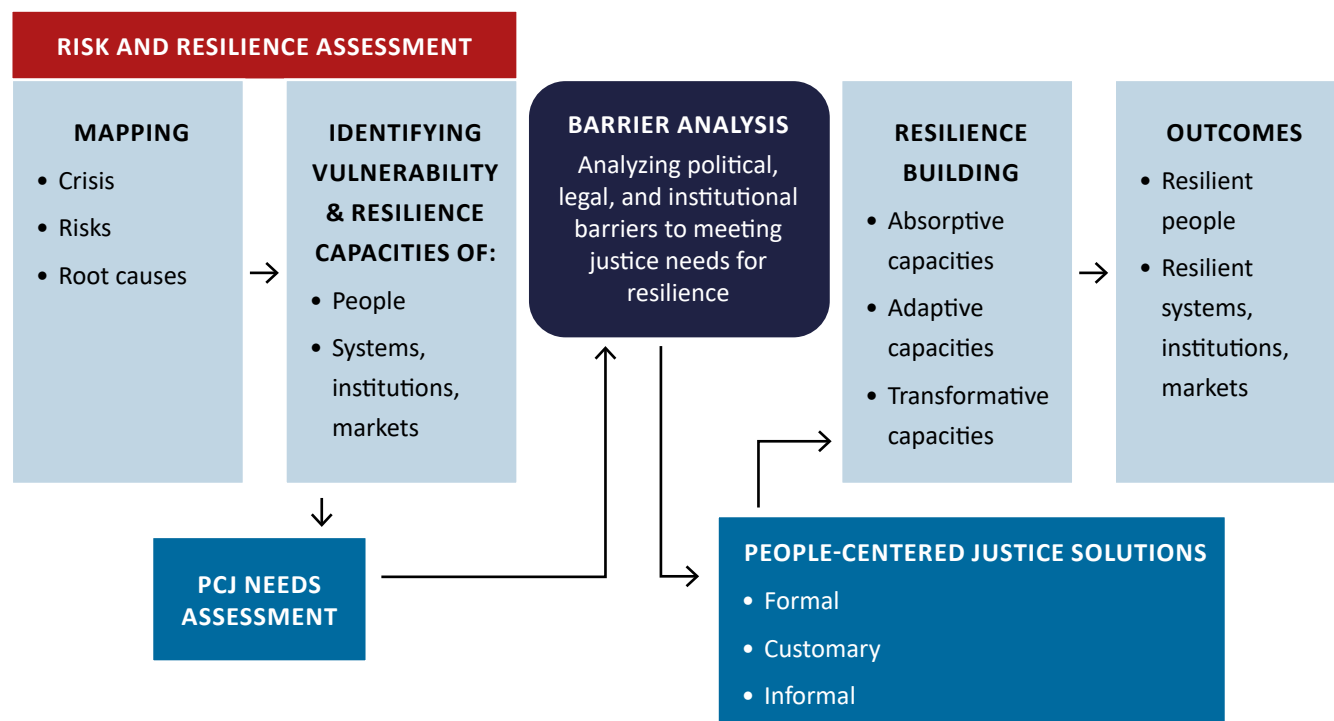
The PCJ Resilience Framework outlines the various factors involved in implementing a PCJ approach to resilience.

It begins with a risk and resilience assessment. This assessment consists of mapping the multiple and overlapping risks and crises in a fragile context, as well as the root causes behind them—stemming from patterns of elite capture, marginalization, and clientelism. The mapping should demonstrate how risks and crises can or are affecting people, geographic areas, systems, institutions, and markets.

The assessment also identifies the specific vulnerabilities as well as existing resilience capacities of people, markets, and systems (including justice systems) exposed to these risks and crises.

A PCJ assessment must be a part of the broader resilience assessment. The PCJ assessment combines legal and justice surveys with relevant data on local justice systems to translate the findings on people's risks, crises, and vulnerabilities into the language of justice needs.

For instance, people who have been forcibly displaced owing to disasters or conflicts may have lost access to identity and land documents, assets and income. This may represent an unresolved justice problem. They might be unaware that the state provides cash transfers and other forms of assistance to displaced populations facing this hardship. A PCJ assessment can help translate a displaced person's loss of resilience capacities (assets and income) into a justice need, the need for justice support, or empowerment to become aware of government entitlements for displaced people and how to access them.

Based on the PCJ assessment and articulation of people's justice needs, a barrier analysis is conducted to determine the types of political, legal, and institutional obstacles people face in accessing resilience resources and capacities.

Justice providers will then work with vulnerable people to identify the justice solutions and pathways (formal, customary, and informal) that could best help them remove barriers to accessing resilience capacities (absorptive, adaptive, and transformative).

Although both resilience and PCJ are focused on people, it is critical to ensure that wider systems, markets, and institutions are made more resilient since most crises in fragile settings will easily overwhelm the coping capacities of individuals and households and require more systemic solutions. This is why working with donors and governments at the forefront of the "fragility to resilience" paradigm, as well as intergovernmental groups like the g7+ and partners across the humanitarian, peace, and development nexus, is critical to the PCJ Resilience Framework—to strengthen the availability and quality of resilience capacities that can be accessed within markets, institutions, systems, and communities.

Overall, the framework promotes resilient people by addressing the justice barriers to accessing resilience resources capacities and ensuring people's voices inform responsive policies in the face of risks and crises. It also promotes close cooperation with other partners to strengthen the technical, financial, and operational capacities of institutions, markets, communities, and people for resilience in ways that are politically informed and adaptive to changing circumstances.

"A PCJ assessment can help translate a displaced person's loss of resilience capacities (assets and income) into a justice need, the need for justice support, or empowerment to become aware of government entitlements for displaced people and how to access them."

Tipping the Scales: Towards a People-Centered Justice Approach to Resilience in Fragile Contexts

6. Applying the Framework to Different Fragile Contexts

The following examples are meant to illustrate how to apply the PCJ Resilience Framework in varying fragile contexts. These examples are not intended to provide a step-by-step guide or nuanced account of the various factors at play in these contexts. They are instead meant to complement what is a largely conceptual paper with some country examples and possible entry points into applying the framework. The framework itself would benefit from applied research and a pilot period.

Although beyond the scope of this paper, the framework will also benefit from the development of a theory of change for how to strengthen and reform various justice systems in complex political economies in the face of the exclusionary factors highlighted in this piece—elite capture, marginalization, and clientelism—that create risks, vulnerabilities, and crises for vulnerable people. PCJ research in Colombia offers potentially rich insights into implementing justice reforms in ways that aim to enlist and bridge elite and community interests, including through government-led, multi-stakeholder justice committees at national and local levels.[59] The transitional justice literature similarly offers a range of insights into addressing the root causes of conflict in fragile settings.[60] Research in other sectors, like anti-corruption, may also have insights to contribute, for instance, on how rule-following and justice institutions can emerge through efforts to align power, capacities, and interests to promote resilience in fragile contexts.[61]

Moreover, it is worth noting that although this piece focuses on fragile contexts, the framework can also apply to advanced economies, such as the United States, The Netherlands, or Denmark. There are already initiatives in these countries that are using PCJ approaches to address people's marginalization and build their resilience in the face of climate change—as part of a just, green transition—that might benefit from the framework's insights on how to mobilize different justice pathways to access core resilience capacities.[62, 63]

The framework can also apply to understanding how non-state armed actors and insurgents, such as the Taliban in Afghanistan, can instrumentalize non-formal justice systems to meet people's justice needs and support their day-to-day struggles for income, land, and services in the face of looming risks and shocks.[64]

Donors and policymakers working on PCJ for resilience can therefore use the framework in their own backyards, as well as assess the potential costs of not sufficiently investing in PCJ support (including for local justice providers as alternatives to insurgent justice mechanisms) in conflict-affected fragile contexts. The lack of PCJ investments in these contexts not only undermines resilience but potentially cedes ground to violent, armed actors who will fill the justice vacuum for their own purposes by supporting local resilience in a bid to garner the acceptance of local groups and communities.

In this piece, three contexts are reviewed: **politically estranged, conflict-affected, and fragility-affected**.

6.1 Politically estranged

Politically estranged contexts are those in which: 1) Ruling authorities hold power through unconstitutional means; 2) States are under international sanctions due to serious human rights abuses, external aggression, or corruption and may be under active UN investigation; 3) States are under transition and national authorities are recognized internationally as being temporary until constitutional order is established or returned to; 4) National elections are contested, and a significant number of donor states do not recognize the governing party or disallow interacting with it.[65]

Political estranged contexts include countries like Afghanistan, Mali, Myanmar, Eritrea, Syria, Haiti, Sudan, the Palestinian Territories, and Venezuela.[66]

Myanmar

Myanmar is classified as a politically estranged context because the ruling government holds power through unconstitutional means, following a coup in 2021 and self-removal of memberships in various *global fora.*[67]

Mapping risks, crises, and root causes

Applying the framework in this context would first require mapping the country's risks, crises, and root causes. Such mapping could include the following factors:

- **Conflict:** A new wave of conflicts between the state and people's defense forces in mainland Myanmar seeking democracy and other ethnic forces in border states seeking autonomy for their respective states.[68]

- **Climate Change:** Alongside this political instability, the country continues to be vulnerable to climate change and major disaster risks of floods, droughts, and cyclones.[69]

- **Violence:** Myanmar has also witnessed an alarming rise in organized violence[70] and sexual and gender-based violence.[71]

- **Hunger:** Nearly half of the country's farmers worry about having enough food to eat.[72]

- **Weak Institutions:** Institutions have been weakened by a closed, militarized political settlement that has marginalized key groups and hollowed out capacities to keep pace with rising shocks and compounding crises.

- **Economics:** The economy is forecast to grow by only 1 percent of GDP, and social spending has plummeted.[73]

Identifying the vulnerabilities and resilience of people, systems, markets, and institutions

Following the mapping of risks, crises, and root causes, a risk and resilience assessment is made of the specific vulnerabilities of people, systems, markets, and institutions that are exposed to risks and crises, and the existing resilience capacities within these systems and communities to deal with adversity. In Myanmar, this assessment should take stock of local welfare and justice systems.

Local welfare systems and justice systems

While state services for populations are limited, there is a culture of non-state welfare at local levels in the country, mobilizing philanthropic, charitable, and social capacities and support in the face of crises and economic stress.[74] Similarly, although the formal justice sector is rarely used by communities, local facilitators[75] attempt to mediate issues and access to services and resources. Township-level administrators used to be available to address disputes using mediation approaches, but since the coup, they no longer remain a trusted actor for most people. While options exist to use diverse pathways to justice, most people tend to use the justice pathway dictated by custom, trust, and their social and economic status. While justice options are hence constrained, the survival of local justice mechanisms in the face of war and disasters has been described as a stable coping structure that could, over time, help to support more transformative reforms in society if other structural, political, and institutional reforms take place.[76] Taken together, the continued function of local-level social welfare support and local justice mechanisms represent important resilience capacities for coping. A full risk and resilience assessment would examine vulnerabilities and resilient capacities across broader systems and sectors, including instances in the country of increased agricultural production, rural employment, and enrollment in higher education—all key resilience capacities.

PCJ assessment and barrier analysis

While the risk and resilience assessment will highlight the vulnerabilities and resilience of various justice systems in the country, the PCJ assessment will translate the risks and vulnerabilities of people into the language of justice needs. The barrier analysis will then determine specific obstacles that prevent people from accessing justice solutions that could unlock resilience resources and empower their voice in decision-making.

Although existing legal needs surveys[77] shed light on the barriers to accessing services, social protections and support, and the effectiveness of various justice pathways—formal, customary, and informal, in the context of Myanmar, new data would be needed to understand the shift in patterns of seeking justice after the military coup.

This data should draw on diverse but credible sources. For instance, multilateral partners, such as the World Bank and World Food Programme,[78] attempt to capture justice issues in their own programs, such as potential discriminatory policies and access issues, and this data can contribute to the barrier analysis.

Resilience building

Based on the barrier analysis and broader PCJ and resilience assessments, the framework can help identify entry points for resilience building. For instance, this brief analysis suggests that most entry points for resilience will need to focus on strengthening local-level coping capacities to help people absorb shocks and adapt to deepening social and economic stressors, including through local justice mechanisms that can widen access to services, resources, and rights.

6.2 Conflict-affected

A conflict-affected setting is one facing "acute insecurity driven by the use of deadly force by a group—including state forces, organized non-state groups, or other irregular entities—with a political purpose or motivation."[79] At present, there are the largest number of conflicts since 1945.[80]

Ukraine

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has caused widespread destruction, loss of life, and forced displacement.

Mapping risks, crises, and root causes

Applying the framework in Ukraine would first require mapping the country's risks, crises, and root causes. While active conflict is the greatest threat to people, conflict dynamics are compounding with other risks and crises that affect food security, infrastructure, energy systems, livelihoods, and health and education systems. Some specific factors include:

- **Climate change:** There exist a range of environmental risks and crises,[81] including climate change, droughts, floods, landslides, and wildfires.

- **Displacement:** By the end of 2023, 3.7 million Ukrainians were internally displaced, and over six million were seeking refugee and asylum protections abroad.[82]

- **Housing:** The war has damaged or destroyed 10 percent of the national housing stock, exacerbating issues of displacement, particularly for Internally displaced people (IDPs).[83]

- **Poverty and job loss:** Job and income loss alongside high inflation and asset loss have led to millions of people pushed into poverty. Employment has fallen by over 15 percent by the end of 2023. This has a direct impact on basic needs like food and utilities.[84]

Alongside identifying the country's complex risks and crises, applying the PCJ Resilience Framework will require an assessment of the underlying political settlement, as well as regional and geopolitics and how these drive future risk scenarios beyond the current conflict with an impact on markets, trade, food systems, and the delivery of social services.

Identifying the vulnerabilities and resilience of people, systems, markets, and institutions

Identifying the vulnerabilities and resilience of people and systems can be challenging amid an active conflict. In the case of Ukraine, a recent rapid needs assessment[85] conducted by bilateral donors, the UN, and the World Bank found over USD 400 billion in damages with continued high risks for key sectors—health, the economy, agriculture, education, transport, and energy, as well as rising cases of sexual and gender-based violence and human trafficking. These disruptions have combined to significantly limit access to key services. Added pressure on existing facilities and staff, limited resources due to inflation, and loss of livelihoods have all impacted access to healthcare.[86] Meanwhile, 13 percent of education infrastructure was destroyed or damaged by December 31, 2023, having a disproportionate impact on girls and those living in rural communities.[87] The government is currently undertaking a strategic prioritization exercise to determine areas for key investments. This follows government investments last year of over seven billion for recovery projects in energy, critical and social infrastructure, housing, humanitarian demining, as well as public sector support—all of which will boost resilience.

PCJ assessment and barrier analysis

Against this backdrop, a PCJ assessment would invariably find that decreased access to justice exacerbates risks and vulnerabilities. While a comprehensive assessment is needed, a few initial findings point to the vulnerabilities of the justice system.

Frontline justice providers have been significantly reduced, and justice budgets have decreased by some twenty percent. Even before 2022, courts were understaffed, with 28 percent of positions in first instance courts left vacant.[88] The war has now increased these vacancies while also destroying 10 percent of court buildings and forcing the jurisdiction to lose more than 100 courts.[89] Tens of thousands of investigations have been opened in absentia.[90]

The government's strategic prioritization exercise is a key moment to undertake a PCJ assessment and barrier analysis to help make visible the justice needs of vulnerable populations and how to overcome legal and justice obstacles to support their resilience.

Justice supply and demand

The international community is increasingly resolved to address the justice demands of affected people in Ukraine. This includes ensuring access to documentation (expired identification, birth, and death certificates), land and housing rights, mental health and psychosocial support, reparations, alimony, basic services, and social protections.[91] Each of these challenges factors into a gap in justice, and their remedy can support resilience capacities.

The Legal Development Network has affirmed that legal issues related to documentation, internal displacement, housing, land, employment, and occupied territories continue to percolate through strained legal support systems. Meanwhile, the USAID Justice for All Activity supported the All-Ukrainian Coalition for the Provision of Legal Aid to complete a legal needs study in 2023.[92] USAID has confirmed the study's findings on the growing demand for legal aid. Receiving social benefits and obtaining public administrative services, as well as compensation for damages caused by military action, were among people's most common justice problems.

Resilience building

From a resilience perspective, access to justice resources are essential for boosting absorptive capacities (to prevent, mitigate, and withstand not only conflict impacts but also those posed by disasters and economic volatility) and adaptive capacities (to diversify coping options, such as acquiring land to move out of harm's way and receiving multiple income sources, like from cash transfers, to smooth out consumption needs, or receiving reparations for loss and damages to support rebuilding). Furthermore, it is important to recognize that people's problems are often multidimensional and may require wraparound services like mental health and psychosocial support alongside legal empowerment and pathways to dispute resolution.

There are several ongoing efforts at the national and international levels that can feed into increased resilience capacities. It is important that any intervention builds upon existing efforts. For example, there are government-run Community Justice Centers, which offer both legal services and psychological support, representing a justice practice that supports absorptive resilience capacities during the war. Another example is an existing disaster law,[93] which includes provisions for crisis early warning, timely assistance, protection of property, emergency food, shelter, water and sanitation services, and damaged housing compensation. This law is an important instrument for justice advocates to use in addressing barriers to accessing resilience capacities during and after crises.

In the longer term, transitional justice interventions offer a means of truth-telling, reparations, and social contract strengthening through public hearings, remuneration, and dialogue. These efforts, in turn, can set out a new vision for the country in the face of enduring and rising threats, risks, and crises. These solutions can result in new laws, policy commitments, and investments that are more people-centric and focused on strengthening transformative capacities for resilience by establishing wide-scale services and adaptive safety nets to address ongoing vulnerabilities among people and places, as well as their underlying causes.

6.3 Fragility-affected

Fragility-affected contexts are those dealing with a range of fragility across their political, societal, human, economic, environmental, and security dimensions.[94] This means there are imbalances between the risks and crises these contexts face and the resilient capacities within institutions, systems, markets, and communities to address these risks, crises, and their root causes. Fragility-affected contexts often include those dealing with conflict and are politically estranged, but they are not reducible to these factors. For instance, among the OECD's list of twenty-seven chronically fragile contexts, nineteen have not experienced a major conflict in over a decade.[95] This paper recognizes fragile contexts where overriding features drive fragility (political estrangement and conflict) in addition to cases where fragility is more broadly distributed across multiple dimensions but without overriding crises like conflict or economic collapse.

Kenya

The OECD reports that Kenya is dealing with high levels of economic, human, and environmental fragility but with lower political fragility and moderate security fragility.[96] The country is, therefore, fragility-affected but not contending with major conflicts or overriding crises.

Mapping risks, crises, and root causes

Mapping the country's key risks, crises, and their root causes would likely capture the following:

- **Climate and displacement:** Nearly 80 percent of Kenya consists of arid or semi-arid land, making it highly vulnerable to climate change and worsening disasters that have over the last few years caused an estimated 3 percent of GDP in damages.[97] This includes droughts, landslides, and floods that recently killed 170 people, displaced over 200,000, and destroyed property, infrastructure and livelihoods.[98]

- **Health:** Along with having to contend with the COVID-19 pandemic, the country also experienced cholera, dengue, and polio outbreaks in recent years and remains vulnerable to future syndemics (combinations of epidemics/pandemics).

- **Economics:** Poverty, unemployment, and the country's vulnerability to economic shocks all remain high. Debt distress has led to recent efforts to raise taxes, sparking protests and violence.[99]

Identifying the vulnerabilities and resilience of people, systems, markets, and institutions

A risk and resilience assessment in Kenya would highlight that despite repeated disasters and the lingering impact of the pandemic, the country's agricultural sector has remained surprisingly resilient, buoying economic growth, which is projected to grow by 5.4 percent on average from 2024–2026.[100] Conversely, other sectors have been more impacted by crises and economic volatility, including services and tourism, contributing to wide youth unemployment. Although resilient, climate change will continue to pose risks for the agricultural sector, including prolonged droughts and frequent floods, increasing the specter of inflation, food insecurity, and displacements.

A resilience assessment will need to capture these risks to the economy and agricultural production, as well as the vulnerability of different groups (youth, women, small-holder farmers) to a changing climate, economic shocks, ongoing poverty, and the potential for violence over living conditions, tax increases, and food insecurity. The assessment must similarly take stock of the Kenyan government's "bottom-up economic model" that prioritizes agriculture, healthcare, affordable housing, micro and small enterprises, and the digital economy.[101] If the government can manage its high debt and fiscal spending, and avoid unequal redistributions of resources, this localized economic model can provide a significant source of resilience to people in the face of overlapping risks and recurring crises.

The country's justice systems have a key role in helping address patterns of exclusion and inequality over economic resources, services, and support. Kenya's judicial system has recently been heralded in the global justice community for its people-centered approach and engagement with CIJ mechanisms. Only some 3 percent of Kenyans engage in the formal justice system for concerns over credibility, cost, efficiency, and corruption.[102] This gives higher prominence to CIJ systems, although they also pose concerns over fairness, marginalization of groups like women and youth, and "state capture" over rulings.[103] However, these systems are far more used and relied upon to support people's access to resources and rights and to prevent and resolve land disputes that might otherwise become violent conflicts.[104]

PCJ assessment and barrier analysis

Over the last decade, various justice assessments have found an increase in Kenyans needing to solve disputes, with crime, land, family disputes, employment, and neighbor disputes among the most prominent areas requiring justice solutions.[105] With recognition of the key role that the country's justice systems play in resilience capacities, a PCJ assessment and barrier analysis in this context would look to further understand how people's justice needs are met and the obstacles in their way. For example, while CIJ systems in Kenya have been recognized for their ability to adapt rulings to changing contexts, crises (like the pandemic and droughts), and cultural and social disputes, there remain barriers of perceived co-optation by elites and corruption, not unlike the formal system. However, the most significant barrier within CIJ is for women, youth, and other marginalized groups. Patriarchal approaches to CIJ in some communities require that men speak for women who cannot be present at hearings, carrying limited consequences for domestic violence and in some cases, ruling that women and girls marry their rapists. Moreover, even though women head an estimated 32 percent of households in Kenya, a mere 1 percent of land titles are held by women alone, and only 5 percent are held by women jointly with men.[106] This severely undermines the rights of women and youth and undermines their resilience.

Resilience building

This brief case on applying the PCJ Resilience Framework in Kenya points to the notion that resilience building in the country will require a close contextual understanding of how complex risks and crises affect different categories of vulnerable people and groups, especially women and children. In developing this contextual understanding, one should take stock of vulnerable groups' existing resilience capacities and the potential of the country's bottom-up economic model to provide services, social protection, and other support, as well as the role of the justice systems to amplify the voice and rights of these people to access these resources. Paradoxically, the closer the customary and informal justice system is to communities, the more effective, expedient, and trusted it is, but also the more vulnerable it might be to state capture through cooptation, annexation, and regulation.[107] The 2010 constitution seeks to target these patterns of injustice and potential state capture, including for women and girls, and through formal appeals processes, training of CIJ officials, and closer oversight of CIJ rulings.[108]

In this context, a PCJ framework can help mobilize national reformers and donors and direct them to entry points for investing in a PCJ approach to resilience—as the only credible way to prevent and resolve grievances that undermine the resilience of vulnerable populations, and which can fuel the types of violent conflict the country has experienced in the past.

All three cases highlight the importance of PCJ for resilience.

The cases of fragile contexts laid out here, politically estranged (Myanmar), conflict-affected (Ukraine), and fragility-affected settings (Kenya), offer a guide to applying the PCJ Resilience Framework. These case studies are not comprehensive nor prescriptive but intend to offer grounding to what is otherwise a largely conceptual framework. The application of the framework requires additional resources, on-the-ground research, and comprehensive analysis. However, what is evident across all three contexts is the opportunity that PCJ affords to strengthen the resilience of these people and systems.

Conclusion

As the "fragility to resilience" paradigm continues to gain momentum, this is a critical moment to adopt more strategic frameworks and intentional investments to promote resilience among people, institutions, systems, and markets in hard places. PCJ is an indispensable approach to promoting resilience and must be incorporated into wider resilience frameworks and donor investments since the people who are often most vulnerable to shocks and stress are those marginalized in fragile political settlements and who require justice solutions to access basic services, social protections, job opportunities, and safety and security. This access will not come about simply through technical or financial interventions from domestic reformers or international partners. Instead, it will require the use and strengthening of diverse pathways to justice—formal, customary, and informal—that can empower people with the means to express their risks, needs, and vulnerabilities in the policy arena and make claims to access the assets, resources, and services necessary to strengthen their own resilience capacities. When practitioners devise resilience strategies, they should think of justice as a critical tool at their disposal and work with a range of justice providers to identify and leverage interlinkages and common goals.

As diverse pathways to justice are strengthened and made more responsive to people's needs and risks, so too is the resilience and inclusivity of societal structures, norms, and systems enhanced—enabling what the World Development Report on conflict, security and development referred to as a "sustained level of resilience" to escape fragility. This recognition calls on justice providers to also think in terms of the resilience paradigm and work across sectors to ensure their interventions have the most impact. Doing so would require leveraging peer-to-peer exchanges with practitioners and policymakers across the humanitarian, development, and peace nexus who understand good practices for supporting people in fragile and conflict-affected settings but who may not be steeped in justice ecosystems. This relationship can and should be symbiotic.

As a still-emerging movement, PCJ continues to require greater data on people's justice needs, evidence of good practices, and investments in justice systems, actors, and networks, including at the local level. These priorities should be incorporated into strategies, approaches, and resource commitments among partners and donors leading within the emerging "fragility to resilience" paradigm. In this way, momentum among partners to strengthen the resilience of those in fragile contexts can benefit PCJ efforts, and PCJ efforts can help significantly shape resilience frameworks for greater impact in the hardest places. The time to act is now.

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