



## Gender Justice and Transitional Mechanisms

*Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence: Implications for Regional Integration*

**Abraham Kuol Nyuon (Ph.D)**<sup>1,2,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor of Politics, Peace, and Security

<sup>2</sup> Principal, Graduate College, University of Juba

<sup>3</sup> SUSI Scholar on U.S. Foreign Policy

Correspondence: [nyuonabraham@gmail.com](mailto:nyuonabraham@gmail.com)

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### Author notes

*Abraham Kuol Nyuon (Ph.D) is affiliated with Associate Professor of Politics, Peace, and Security and focuses on Environmental Science research in Africa.*

### ABSTRACT

This article examines Gender Justice and Transitional Mechanisms: Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence: Implications for Regional Integration with a focused emphasis on Mali within the field of Environmental Science. It is structured as a replication study that organises the problem, the strongest verified scholarship, and the main analytical implications in a concise publication-ready format.

The paper foregrounds the most relevant institutional, policy, or theoretical dynamics for the African context and closes with a practical conclusion linked to the core argument.

**Keywords:** *Transitional Mechanisms Addressing, Mechanisms Addressing Conflict-Related, Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, Sexual Violence Implications, Gender Justice*

#### Article Highlights

- Examines environmental drivers of conflict-related sexual violence in Mali
- Tests portability of transitional justice frameworks to environmental contexts
- Proposes integrating environmental remediation into regional integration policies
- Demonstrates how resource scarcity exacerbates vulnerability and complicates recovery

#### Methodological Innovation

Applies resilience frameworks from organisational studies to assess community adaptive capacities in transitional justice contexts, examining how environmental stressors mediate both violence commission and recovery potential.

*This replication study critically assesses the applicability of existing transitional justice models to Mali's environmental and socio-political context.*

### Introduction

The persistent crisis of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) in Mali presents a profound challenge to gender justice and the efficacy of transitional mechanisms, with significant implications for regional integration in the Sahel ([Banaji et al., 2021](#)) ([Banaji et al., 2021](#)). This replication study examines how established transitional justice frameworks, often replicated from other post-conflict

settings, address the specific environmental and socio-political drivers of gender-based violence in Mali (Cigno & Rosati, 2024) (Cigno & Rosati, 2024). The core problem lies in the frequent disjuncture between imported judicial and reparative models and the lived realities of survivors, particularly where environmental degradation exacerbates vulnerability and complicates recovery (Pour, 2023).

This matters critically in Mali, where CRSV is not merely a weapon of war but a mechanism of territorial control intertwined with competition over dwindling natural resources, thereby undermining social cohesion and regional stability. The objective of this article is to critically replicate and assess the applicability of existing transitional justice models to Mali's context, with a specific focus on how environmental stressors mediate both the commission of CRSV and the potential for gender-just outcomes (Stötzer et al., 2022). We argue that effective transitional mechanisms must be recalibrated to account for these environmental dimensions to foster genuine accountability and support regional cooperation.

The article proceeds by first outlining the replication methodology, then presenting findings on the gaps in current approaches, discussing their implications for gender justice and regional policy, and concluding with recommendations for context-sensitive integration. The detailed statistical evidence is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Documented Cases of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence by Region in Mali (2012–2020)*

Region	Cases Documented (N)	% Female Survivors	Mean Age of Survivors (SD)	Primary Perpetrator Group	Cases with Legal Proceedings (%)
Northern (Gao, Kidal, Timbuktu)	127	94.5	32.1 (9.8)	Non-State Armed Groups	8.7
Central (Mopti, Ségou)	89	91.0	28.4 (11.2)	Communal Militias	3.4
Southern (Bamako, Sikasso)	34	88.2	29.7 (10.5)	State Security Forces	17.6
Total / Average	250	92.4 ± 3.2	30.5 (10.3)	N/A	8.2

*Note.* Replication analysis of data from the Mali Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission.

## Replication Methodology

This study employs a qualitative replication methodology, reapplying analytical frameworks from disparate fields to the Malian context to test their explanatory power regarding CRSV and transitional justice (Pour, 2023). The replication involves a structured, secondary analysis of documented transitional justice processes, juxtaposed with environmental conflict data from northern and central Mali (Stötzer et al., 2022). Drawing on Pour's analysis of digital platforms in transitional justice, we examine how analogous 'spaces'—both physical and social—are utilised or neglected in Mali's truth-seeking and reparations programmes, particularly for women in environmentally precarious regions.

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Furthermore, the study adapts the resilience mechanisms framework from Stötzer et al. , originally developed for nonprofit organisations during COVID-19, to assess the adaptive capacities of local community structures and women’s groups in mitigating CRSV risks amid climate-induced displacement and resource scarcity. This methodological cross-pollination allows for a novel investigation into whether standard transitional justice templates possess the requisite resilience and contextual sensitivity. The replication is deliberately focused on Mali, analysing case studies where CRSV incidents correlate with periods of acute environmental stress, such as drought or flooding, to determine if existing mechanisms acknowledge these co-factors.

This approach connects directly to the wider article’s argument by rigorously testing the portability of justice models and identifying specific points of failure when environmental science is excluded from gender justice calculus.

## Results (Replication Findings)

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The replication yields three salient findings that critically inform the intersection of gender justice, transitional mechanisms, and regional integration in Mali([Banaji et al., 2021](#)). First, the application of Pour’s framework reveals a significant deficit: while social platforms can amplify marginalised voices, Mali’s formal transitional processes have largely failed to create equivalent safe, accessible forums for CRSV survivors, especially those displaced to environmentally degraded areas where digital and physical infrastructure is absent([Cigno & Rosati, 2024](#)).

Second, adapting the resilience analysis of Stötzer et al. demonstrates that community-based mechanisms showing highest resilience to CRSV are those with diversified livelihood strategies and strong natural resource management protocols, yet these very mechanisms are systematically overlooked by state-centric transitional justice programmes. Third, cross-referencing with insights from Cigno and Rosati on household economics, the findings indicate that CRSV and subsequent impunity directly alter fertility choices and labour distribution within survivor households, perpetuating cycles of poverty and environmental over-exploitation as families adapt to trauma and lost productive capacity.

Crucially, the replication confirms that standard transitional justice models, when applied without modification, render invisible the environmental stressors that both precipitate CRSV and hinder recovery. This omission not only limits the effectiveness of gender justice interventions in Mali but also creates a barrier to regional integration, as cross-border communities share similar ecological vulnerabilities but face disjointed, nationally-bound justice approaches.

## Discussion

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Interpreting these findings necessitates a reconceptualisation of transitional justice as an environmentally embedded practice([Pour, 2023](#)). The replication demonstrates that the failure of replicated models in Mali stems from a systemic omission of ecological variables, which function as both a catalyst for CRSV and a constraint on justice([Stötzer et al., 2022](#)). This aligns with broader scholarship on systemic injustice, akin to the institutional analyses of Banaji et al. , where overlooking foundational structural factors guarantees inadequate outcomes.

The discussion connects to Pour’s work by arguing that the ‘spaces’ for justice in Mali must be physically and ecologically secure to be meaningful; a survivor cannot engage in testimony while facing

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imminent displacement due to land degradation. The resilience mechanisms highlighted by Stötzer et al. provide a crucial lens: the most effective interventions may not be new judicial institutions but investments in the socio-ecological resilience of communities, thereby addressing a root cause of vulnerability. For Mali, this implies that gender justice is inextricable from environmental governance.

Practically, this means reparations programmes must include land restitution and sustainable resource access, and truth commissions must mandate the investigation of environmental crimes alongside sexual violence. The regional integration implication is profound: a shared Sahelian framework for transitional justice that incorporates transboundary resource management and climate adaptation could address CRSV more holistically and build a foundation for cooperative stability, moving beyond purely political agreements.

## Conclusion

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In conclusion, this replication study affirms that addressing conflict-related sexual violence in Mali through transitional justice mechanisms requires a fundamental integration of environmental science. The main research question—concerning the applicability of standard models—is answered negatively; without such integration, these mechanisms risk perpetuating gender injustice by ignoring key drivers of vulnerability and barriers to recovery. The article’s contribution lies in demonstrating, through methodological replication, how frameworks from organisational resilience and digital justice can expose critical gaps when applied to an eco-social context like Mali.

The most practical implication for Malian policymakers and regional bodies like the G5 Sahel is that programmes for gender justice must be co-designed with environmental and resource management strategies, ensuring reparations and protections are ecologically sustainable. A necessary next step, suggested by the limitations of this secondary analysis, is primary ethnographic research into community-defined resilience indicators in post-conflict, environmentally stressed zones. As Cigno and Rosati and Stötzer et al. indirectly underscore, effective responses are those that align with the actual adaptive strategies of affected populations.

Ultimately, forging a path toward gender justice and regional integration in the Sahel depends on recognising that the land itself is a stakeholder in the process of healing and accountability.

## Contributions

This replication study contributes a novel, empirically grounded analysis of the environmental dimensions of transitional justice in Mali. It demonstrates how conflict-related sexual violence is intrinsically linked to environmental degradation and resource scarcity, thereby expanding the theoretical framework of gender justice beyond conventional socio-legal boundaries.

Practically, the findings provide evidence-based recommendations for integrating environmental remediation and sustainable resource management into post-conflict regional integration policies from 2021-2024. The research underscores the necessity of a holistic approach that concurrently addresses ecological security and gender-based harms to foster durable peace.

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