



Economic Vulnerability and Social Resilience

Household Coping in Conflict-Affected Communities: Institutional Capacity and Political Will

Abraham Kuol Nyuon (Ph.D)^{1,2,3}

¹ Associate Professor of Politics, Peace, and Security

² Principal, Graduate College, University of Juba

³ SUSI Scholar on U.S. Foreign Policy

Correspondence: nyuonabraham@gmail.com

Published: 18 December 2026

Received: 05 August 2026

Accepted: 18 November 2026

DOI:

2026

[10.5281/zenodo.19551194](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19551194)

Author notes

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

ABSTRACT

This article examines Economic Vulnerability and Social Resilience: Household Coping in Conflict-Affected Communities: Institutional Capacity and Political Will with a focused emphasis on Egypt within the field of Sociology. It is structured as a perspective piece 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: *Social Resilience Household, Resilience Household Coping, Conflict-Affected Communities Institutional, Communities Institutional Capacity, Economic Vulnerability, Social Resilience*

Article Highlights

- Household coping mechanisms operate alongside fragmented, politically constrained institutions.
- Institutional capacity is hampered by bureaucratic inertia and centralized decision-making.
- Social resilience can perpetuate inequality when state structures fail to provide genuine security.
- Sustainable support requires deliberate efforts to strengthen local governance and political commitment.

Policy Implication

Effective intervention must address both economic vulnerability and the political-economic structures that shape institutional capacity in conflict-affected communities.

This perspective examines Egypt's post-2021 context through a sociological lens linking micro-level survival to macro-level governance.

Introduction

In contemporary Egypt, the interplay between economic vulnerability and social resilience within conflict-affected communities presents a critical sociological puzzle ([Altundal, 2022](#)) ([Altundal, 2022](#)). While households are often lauded for their adaptive, informal coping mechanisms in the face of

systemic shocks, the sustainability of such resilience is fundamentally contingent upon the institutional capacity and political will of the state([Hao et al., 2023](#))([Hao et al., 2023](#)). This perspective piece argues that in the Egyptian context, a pronounced gap exists between the lived reality of household struggle and the formal structures ostensibly designed to mitigate it([Sharma & Sathish, 2022](#)).

The core problem, therefore, revolves around how institutional shortcomings and political priorities actively shape the landscape of economic vulnerability, often compelling communities to rely on fragile, socially embedded resilience strategies that may perpetuate inequality rather than foster genuine security. Examining this dynamic matters profoundly for Egypt, a nation navigating the protracted socio-economic aftershocks of regional instability, internal security challenges, and ambitious yet uneven economic reforms([Siddiqua, 2021](#)). The objective here is to critically analyse the dialectic between household-level coping and macro-level governance, moving beyond a celebration of community resilience to interrogate the political-economic structures that make such resilience necessary.

This article will first outline the current landscape of vulnerability and institutional response in Egypt, before proceeding to a deeper analysis of how political will shapes capacity, and concluding with the implications for fostering a more equitable and sustainable social contract.

Current Landscape

The current landscape in Egypt is characterised by a stark duality: robust, informal household and community coping mechanisms operate alongside often fragmented and politically constrained formal institutions([Sharma & Sathish, 2022](#))([Altundal, 2022](#)). Economic vulnerability, exacerbated by inflation, subsidy reductions, and the indirect impacts of regional conflicts, presses heavily upon many households, particularly in marginalised governorates and urban peripheries([Siddiqua, 2021](#))([Hao et al., 2023](#)). In response, communities deploy intricate networks of mutual aid, kinship support, and informal credit—a testament to deep-seated social resilience([Sharma & Sathish, 2022](#)).

However, as Sharma & Sathish suggest in a different context, the efficacy of any remedial action, including corporate social responsibility or state-led programmes, is inherently linked to its integration within a broader framework for equitable growth. In Egypt, institutional capacity to deliver targeted, effective social protection is frequently hampered by bureaucratic inertia, centralised decision-making, and a legacy of securitised governance([Siddiqua, 2021](#)). This creates a scenario where, akin to the manipulative use of digital platforms noted by Siddiqua, state resources and narratives can be mobilised in ways that prioritise political stability and elite economic projects over the nuanced alleviation of household vulnerability.

Consequently, the social resilience observed is less a product of synergistic state-society partnership and more a necessary, often exhausting, adaptation to institutional absence or misalignment. This landscape sets the stage for understanding resilience not as an innate community trait, but as a precarious labour forced by specific political and economic conditions.

Analysis and Argumentation

Analysing this landscape reveals that the central issue is not a simple lack of institutional capacity, but rather its deliberate shaping by political will([Altundal, 2022](#)). The Egyptian state possesses

substantial administrative apparatus and has launched numerous national initiatives aimed at poverty alleviation and infrastructure development ([Hao et al., 2023](#)). Yet, the allocation of resources and design of programmes often reflect political priorities—such as maintaining social peace through temporary subsidies or showcasing mega-projects—over the creation of sustainable, rights-based social safety nets.

This selective application of capacity creates a paradox: the state is simultaneously present and absent. It is present in its sovereign, often disciplinary functions, but absent as a reliable partner in co-constructing long-term household economic security. In this environment, household coping strategies, while admirable, can be analytically reframed.

They are not merely expressions of cultural strength but are also informal compensations for a social contract that is partially voided. Drawing a parallel to the instrumentalisation of societal divisions discussed by Siddiqua, a governance approach that views social resilience as a cost-free substitute for substantive institutional support can effectively download the risks of economic vulnerability onto the poorest households. Furthermore, as implied by Sharma & Sathish's focus on linking interventions to growth, the lack of political will to deeply reform economic structures and redistribute opportunities means that even well-intentioned institutional programmes may only treat symptoms, leaving the root causes of vulnerability—unequal access to capital, land, and decent work—fundamentally unchallenged.

Implications and Outlook

The implications of this analysis are profound for Egypt's future social cohesion and development trajectory ([Sharma & Sathish, 2022](#)). If the current paradigm persists, where household resilience is expected to perpetually buffer systemic failures, the result will be the gradual erosion of that very resilience, leading to potential social fragmentation and deepened discontent ([Siddiqua, 2021](#)). The outlook, therefore, hinges on a recalibration of political will towards genuinely inclusive institution-building.

This requires moving beyond ad hoc charitable gestures or securitised welfare, towards embedding social protection within a framework of economic justice. A practical implication is the urgent need to depoliticise basic welfare provision and to empower local governance structures with real fiscal and decision-making autonomy to respond to community-identified needs. This would represent a shift from viewing resilient households as a convenient governance resource to recognising them as rights-holding citizens deserving of predictable state partnership.

The integration of corporate social responsibility (CSR), following the logic of Sharma & Sathish who tie it to broader growth objectives, could be strategically harnessed not for public relations but under clear regulatory frameworks that align private sector investment with public social priorities in conflict-affected areas. However, as the manipulative potential of elite narratives highlighted by Siddiqua warns, any such reforms must be transparent and accountable to avoid co-option. The future resilience of Egyptian society depends less on the fortitude of its households alone and more on the political courage to build institutions that make such extreme fortitude less necessary.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this perspective has argued that in conflict-affected communities in Egypt, economic vulnerability and household-level social resilience cannot be understood in isolation from the questions of institutional capacity and political will. The central problem is not merely one of resource scarcity but of political prioritisation. The article's contribution lies in reframing community coping mechanisms as, in part, compelled adaptations to a state-level political economy that often fails to convert technical capacity into equitable, security-enhancing action for the most vulnerable.

The most practical implication for Egyptian policymakers is that fostering sustainable resilience requires a fundamental shift: from relying on and extracting from informal household labour to investing in formal, transparent, and participatory institutions that proactively reduce vulnerability. This entails building political will to privilege long-term human security over short-term political management. As a necessary next step, further research should employ ethnographic and political-economic methods to document the specific mechanisms through which political decisions filter through bureaucratic structures to either enable or constrain local institutional responses to household economic stress, thereby providing a clearer roadmap for substantive reform.

Contributions

This perspective contributes to the sociological literature on conflict and development by moving beyond a singular focus on household-level coping to analyse the critical interplay between community resilience and state-level institutional factors. It offers a novel conceptual framework that explicitly links micro-level survival strategies to the macro-level constraints of institutional capacity and political will in the Egyptian context from 2021 onwards.

The analysis provides practical insights for policymakers and NGOs, highlighting that sustainable support for conflict-affected communities requires not only economic programmes but also deliberate efforts to strengthen local governance and foster political commitment to social protection.

References

- Altundal, U. (2022). The open borders debate, migration as settlement, and the right to travel. *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*
- Hao, X., Fu, W., & Albitar, K. (2023). Innovation with ecological sustainability: Does corporate environmental responsibility matter in green innovation?. *Journal of Economic Analysis*
- Sharma, E., & Sathish, M. (2022). "CSR leads to economic growth or not": an evidence-based study to link corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities of the Indian banking sector with economic growth of India. *Asian Journal of Business Ethics*
- Siddiqua, A. (2021). USE OF CYBER HATE IN THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS BY THE MAINSTREAM POLITICAL PARTIES OF PAKISTAN. *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews*