



Designing context-relevant development programmes: a problem-focused political economy analysis tool for aid practitioners

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PEA and the push for context-driven programs



Why hasn't PEA meaningfully informed programming?



"I want you to find a bold and innovative way to do everything exactly the same way it's been done for 25 years."

Why do conflict, security and justice programmes look the same if they're all 'tailored to context'?



Five caveats on PEA

1. To genuinely inform decisions about activities PEA should take place initially early in the programme cycle

(But should also be regularly updated to factor in changes in the context, learning on the part of the programme, etc.)
 2. PEA is a time consuming and difficult process
 3. PEA cannot easily be outsourced to external staff – it should be conducted by program staff who will be implementing and managing
 4. Technical/sectoral knowledge is still important
 5. Recognise the limits of PEA
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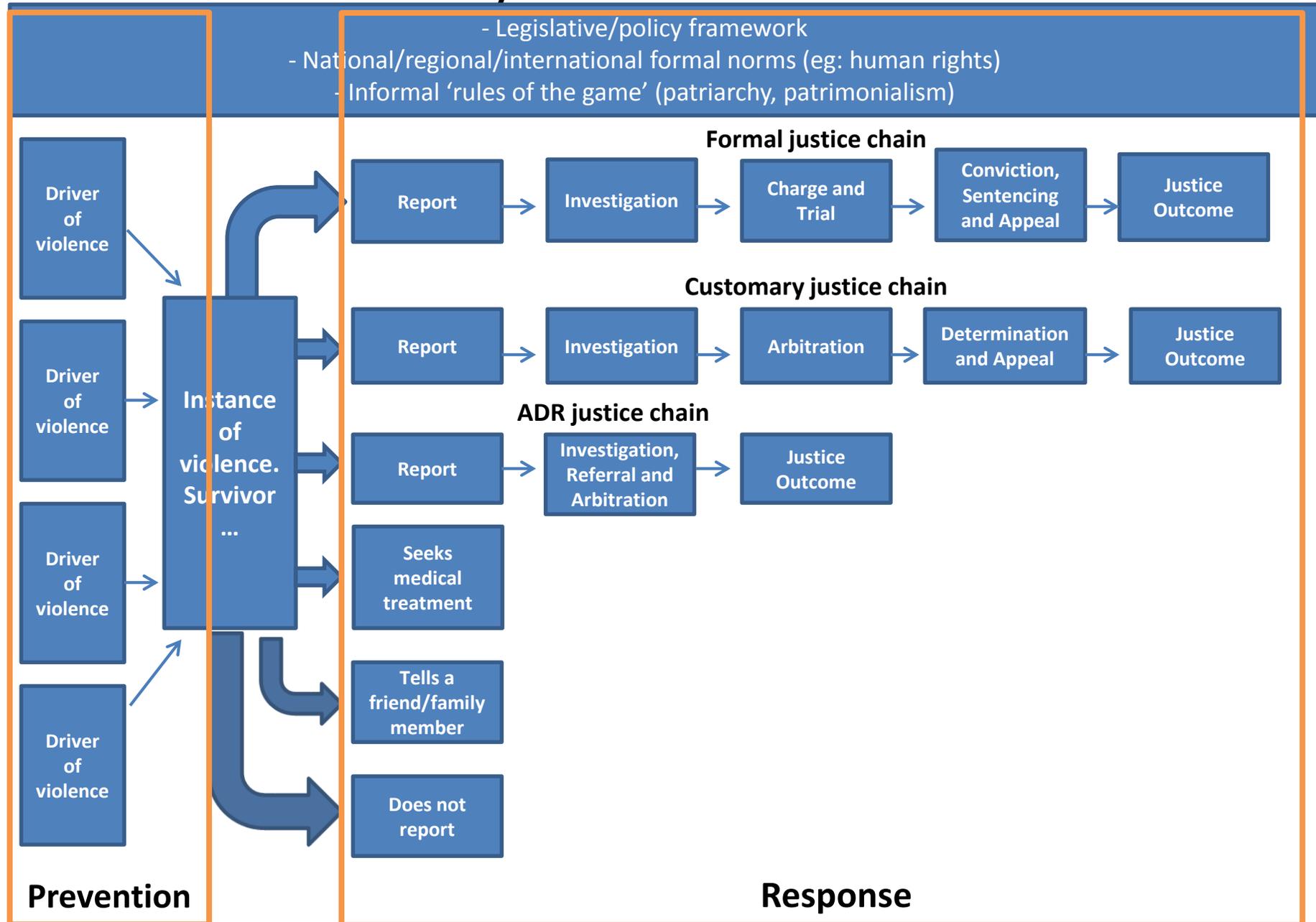


Seven steps to conducting PEA

1. Start by thinking about the problems faced in the context you are working in.

- Getting away from 'solutions': Why focus on problems?
- Whose problems?
- Unpack the stages of the problem: both the drivers and the responses (eg: security and justice chains)

Security and Justice Chains



2. Unpack the PEA of each stage of the chain

- Structure



- Agency

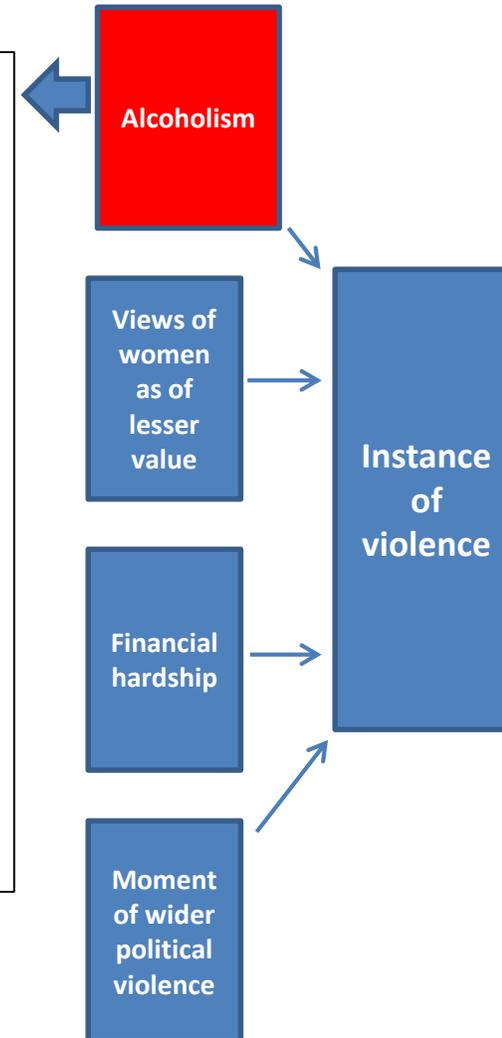


- Dynamism/Interaction

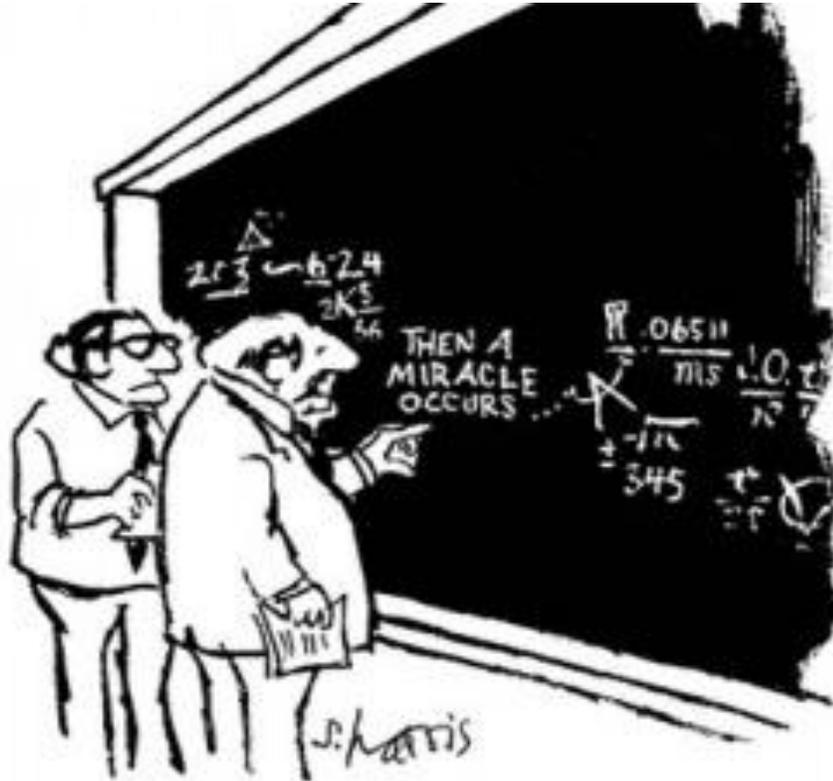


Example of analysing drivers of violence against women...

- What structures, institutions (formal and informal) and behaviours create or sustain the driver?
 - High levels of unemployment
 - Drinking palm wine linked to cultural pastimes
 - Little regulation
 - Illicit brewers make money off it
- Who are relevant actors to potentially engage with on this?
 - Illicit brewers; men (drinkers); women (victims); businesses who could offer employment opportunities; state agencies re: regulation
- Are there any upcoming opportunities or potential moments of change to be aware of?
 - Current police crackdown on illicit alcohol but unlikely to last



3. Consider how change can realistically happen in that context



"I think you should be more explicit here in step two."



4. THEN consider what a development program might do to support

- What are the main drivers of the problem? Can the programme usefully engage with these?
 - What are the underlying beliefs/attitudes/power structures that contribute to the problem? Can the programme usefully engage with them?
 - Who are the relevant actors? Who has power and influence and who does not? Is there a role for the programme to play here?
 - What opportunities are on the horizon that the programme might take advantage of?
 - What does the programme not yet know that it would be useful to understand better?
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5. Evidence base

I trust my gut,
Our project is too complex
for logic and evidence.



6. Local buy in

7. Processes for embedding PEA in life of programme...
