

Justice in Transition: The Effectiveness of Restorative Justice in Resolving Social Conflicts

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Abstract: *This study analyzes the effectiveness of implementing restorative justice in resolving social conflicts within Indonesian communities as part of the transitional justice process. Using a qualitative approach and a case study method in several regions such as Poso, North Maluku, and West Sumatra this research explores how restorative mechanisms rooted in local wisdom can restore social relations, strengthen community cohesion, and prevent recurring conflicts. The findings reveal that restorative justice approaches are effective in fostering reconciliation at the community level through dialogue, acknowledgment of wrongdoing, and traditional symbolic acts. However, their effectiveness largely depends on institutional support, facilitator capacity, and the alignment of public policies. The integration of local values such as musyawarah (deliberation), pela gandong, and alek nagari emerges as a key factor in sustaining the peacebuilding process. These findings emphasize the importance of strengthening the national legal framework, engaging civil society, and enhancing the capacity of local actors so that restorative justice can function not only as a conflict resolution mechanism but also as a means of achieving long-term social transformation.*

Keywords: *Restorative justice, social conflict, transitional justice, reconciliation, local wisdom*

INTRODUCTION

Justice is the fundamental foundation for the continuity of a peaceful, inclusive, and sustainable society. In communities that have experienced conflict or social violations, the need for a form of justice capable of healing collective wounds becomes crucial. Over the past few decades, the concept of restorative justice has emerged as an alternative to the conventional criminal justice system, which tends to be retributive in nature. This approach seeks not only to punish offenders but also to repair the harm caused, restore social relationships, and strengthen community cohesion. This article critically examines the effectiveness of restorative justice within the context of social transition in post-conflict

societies, both at the micro level (community-based) and the macro level (national context).¹

Transitional justice refers to a range of legal and non-legal mechanisms employed by societies to address past human rights violations, often within the context of regime change or post-conflict recovery. Traditional approaches to transitional justice have typically relied on judicial processes, truth commissions, and victim reparations. However, in practice, these mechanisms often prove insufficient to address the complexity of social conflicts and the multidimensional needs of directly affected communities. Consequently, the emergence of restorative justice as an integral component of transitional mechanisms has become increasingly significant and warrants further exploration².

¹ Polii, J. L. S. S. (2024). Keadilan dalam inklusi menyuarakan hak-hak minoritas di tengah dinamika global. Gema Edukasi Mandiri.

² Taum, Y. Y., Suharyo, P. B., Nugraha, P. E., & Wardana, S. E. (2025). Meraih Cahaya: Memori

In many cases, social conflicts leave not only physical and economic damage but also deep psychological trauma and social fragmentation. Formal judicial systems that merely punish perpetrators without fostering reconciliation between victims and offenders, or without facilitating community recovery, often exacerbate social polarization. Restorative justice, on the other hand, offers a dialogical process that positions victims, offenders, and the community as the primary actors in conflict resolution. It creates space for acknowledgment of wrongdoing, sincere apologies, and the restoration of relationships both between individuals and across social groups³.

The concept of restorative justice itself originates from traditional practices of conflict resolution found across various cultures, emphasizing values of dialogue, peace, and healing. In Indonesia, for instance, local wisdom such as *musyawarah mufakat* (deliberation and consensus), *adat basandi syara'* (customs based on religious principles), and *gugur gunung* (collective community cooperation) within Javanese, Minangkabau, and other communities demonstrates that the restorative approach is not foreign to Indonesian society. The integration between indigenous values and modern restorative justice frameworks presents both a challenge and an opportunity to design a more contextual and effective model for social conflict resolution⁴.

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of restorative justice approaches in resolving social conflicts, particularly within developing countries undergoing political or

social transitions. Through case studies and theoretical analysis, this article examines how restorative justice succeeds or fails in facilitating social recovery, intergroup reconciliation, and the prevention of recurring conflicts. The notion of effectiveness here is measured not only by formal resolutions but also by the long-term impact on social relations, interpersonal trust, and institutional legitimacy⁵.

The restorative justice approach is considered particularly advantageous in addressing horizontal conflicts that directly involve civil society groups. In cases such as interethnic, interreligious, or agrarian conflicts, formal mechanisms often prove slow and unresponsive to local dynamics. Restorative justice, on the other hand, provides a space for direct negotiation between the involved parties, with facilitators serving as impartial guardians of a fair and balanced process. This highlights the importance of understanding local socio-cultural contexts in designing effective restorative justice programs⁶.

However, the effectiveness of restorative justice is inseparable from a range of normative and practical challenges. Among these are resistance from formal legal institutions, a lack of adequate training for facilitators, and power imbalances between offenders and victims that may influence the outcomes of dialogue processes. Moreover, in societies that are still traumatized or lack sufficient social capacity, restorative processes risk reopening old wounds without achieving meaningful healing. Therefore, it is essential to establish a framework that ensures restorative justice is

Kolektif Timor-Leste Pascakonflik. Sanata Dharma University Press.

³ Afandi, Y., Haniyah, H., & Hernintyas, T. (2025). Application Of Restorative Justice To Settlement Criminal Acts Of Persecution. *Jurnal Hukum Sehasen*, 11(1), 163-172.

⁴ Karjono, A., Malau, P., & Ciptono, C. (2024). Penerapan Keadilan Restoratif Justice Dalam Hukum Pidana Berbasis Kearifan Lokal. *Jurnal Usm Law Review*, 7(2), 1035-1050.

⁵ Husnayain, N. (2025). POLITIK HUKUM TERHADAP INTEGRASI KEADILAN RESTORATIF DALAM PRAKTIK PENEGAKAN HUKUM DI INDONESIA. *JURNAL ILMIAH ADVOKASI*, 13(3), 1006-1020.

⁶ Prayoga, I., & Kasmanto Rinaldi, S. H. (2023). Restorative Justice di Desa: Transformasi Penyelesaian Konflik Menuju Kekeluargaan. MEGA PRESS NUSANTARA.

implemented in an ethical, inclusive, and sustainable manner.

In the academic discourse, discussions on restorative justice continue to evolve from philosophical reflections to practical implementations. Several theories position restorative justice within the broader paradigm of transformative justice, which focuses not only on conflict resolution but also on changing the underlying social structures that perpetuate injustice. This approach emphasizes the importance of empowering communities, strengthening social solidarity, and creating fairer institutional systems to prevent similar conflicts in the future. Such a perspective is particularly relevant in the complex and tension-filled context of transitional justice⁷.

Studies conducted in various countries have shown mixed results regarding the implementation of restorative justice in the context of social conflict. In Rwanda, for instance, the *gacaca* courts were employed as a restorative mechanism to adjudicate cases related to the genocide. Meanwhile, in South Africa, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission became a global symbol of a dialogical approach to confronting the legacy of apartheid. However, the effectiveness of these mechanisms remains debated, particularly in terms of victim recovery, substantive justice, and the prevention of impunity. Therefore, contextual analysis is essential when assessing the success or shortcomings of each restorative approach.

Indonesia, as a multicultural nation with a complex history of communal conflict, provides a rich social laboratory for evaluating the effectiveness of restorative justice. Cases such as the Poso, Maluku, and Aceh conflicts, as well as agrarian disputes across various regions, illustrate the urgent need for

approaches that address root causes while restoring interpersonal and communal relationships. Several civil society organizations and local institutions have adopted restorative justice principles in their peacebuilding efforts; however, systematic documentation and empirical evaluation of their outcomes remain limited⁸.

The absence of a comprehensive national legal framework explicitly supporting restorative justice remains one of the main obstacles to its systematic implementation. Although several regulations have begun to provide space for its application such as the Indonesian National Police Regulation on restorative justice in criminal cases its enforcement remains partial and has yet to address broader social conflicts. Therefore, it is necessary to integrate restorative justice principles into public policy, legal education, and the institutional design of the state to ensure a more cohesive and sustainable implementation⁹.

The role of local actors and civil society organizations is crucial in initiating and sustaining restorative justice practices. Their capacity to understand local contexts, build trust, and facilitate social mediation processes serves as a vital asset. However, their success also depends on access to adequate resources, training, and policies that enable community participation in conflict resolution. This article employs a qualitative approach combining literature review and case analysis to address the central question: To what extent is restorative justice effective in resolving social conflicts within transitional contexts? In addition, this study identifies both supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of restorative justice and provides policy recommendations to enhance its relevance and effectiveness in Indonesia and other developing

⁷ Ricardo, R. (2024). Penerapan Konsep Restorative Justice Jaksa Sebagai Paradigma Pidana Keadilan (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Islam Sultan Agung Semarang).

⁸ Purba, R. P. (2025). Peran Hukum Humaniter Internasional Dalam Memfasilitasi Rekonsiliasi Pasca-Konflik: Analisis Komparatif

Kasus-Kasus Kontemporer. *Journal Of Law And Nation*, 4(2), 448-458.

⁹ Lestari, S., & Muchamad Iksan, S. H. (2025). Disharmoni Hukum Yang Mengatur Restorative Justice Dan Implementasiannya Dalam Praktik Hukum Indonesia (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta).

countries. Through this discussion, the study seeks to contribute to the broader discourse on restorative justice within the fields of law, sociology, and peace studies. Practically, the article aims to serve as a reference for policymakers, mediation facilitators, and civil society actors in designing more humane, sustainable, and context-sensitive conflict resolution strategies. By strengthening the restorative justice framework, transitional societies can build a more solid foundation for inclusive and meaningful peace. As an initial conclusion, restorative justice offers significant potential for constructive social conflict resolution, yet its success largely depends on contextual factors, institutional design, and the commitment of stakeholders. The transition toward a just society cannot be achieved solely through punishment; it requires a comprehensive and participatory process of social healing. Therefore, evaluating the effectiveness of restorative justice within transitional contexts is not merely an academic necessity but also an ethical imperative in realizing a truly just and peaceful society.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using the case study method to explore in depth the effectiveness of restorative justice in resolving social conflicts within communities undergoing post-conflict social transitions. The research focuses on several regions in Indonesia with a history of horizontal or agrarian conflicts, including North Maluku, Poso (Central Sulawesi), and West Sumatra, which were purposively selected based on the presence of both formal and community-based restorative justice mechanisms grounded in local wisdom. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with key actors (victims, offenders, traditional leaders, facilitators, law enforcement officers, and local government officials), participant observation in reconciliation forums, and document analysis of archives, reports, and relevant policy documents.

Data analysis was conducted using a thematic approach, beginning with coding, categorization of emerging themes, and contextual interpretation referencing theories of restorative and transitional justice. The validity of the data was ensured through source and method triangulation as well as member checking with key informants. Ethical principles were strictly observed by maintaining participant confidentiality, obtaining informed consent, and providing a safe dialogical space during data collection, considering the sensitivity of post-conflict issues. The main limitation of this study lies in its contextual case scope, which restricts broad generalization; however, it provides significant contributions to a deeper understanding of the application of restorative justice within complex socio-cultural contexts.

Results and Discussion

1. Empirical Findings from Case Studies

A. Poso, Central Sulawesi: Reconciliation Based on Religion and Custom

After the sectarian conflict that hit Poso in the late 1990s to early 2000s, the local community experienced deep social disintegration. Trauma, mutual suspicion, and broken relationships between religious groups became major challenges in the recovery process. In this context, the restorative justice approach emerged as one of the main strategies to rebuild broken social bridges¹⁰. Various reconciliation forums were organized by civil society organizations, religious leaders, and traditional leaders who have social authority in the community. These forums bring together victims, perpetrators, and the wider community in an open dialogue space that is facilitated in a participatory and non-discriminatory manner. Interfaith dialogue is an important instrument in breaking down stereotypes and prejudices that developed during the conflict, while also opening up space for perpetrators of violence to openly acknowledge their mistakes and apologize¹¹.

¹⁰ Yakobus, I. K., & Th, S. (2023). Budaya Sintuwu Maroso Dan Rekonsiliasi Konflik Poso. Feniks Muda Sejahtera.

¹¹ Hasibuan, S., Lubis, M. A. A., Al Dino, R., Pasaribu, I. R., & Alaprizky, B. (2024). Institusi Agama Sebagai Penggerak Perdamaian: Studi Kasus

One of the strengths of this approach lies in the integration of local cultural values into the conflict resolution process. In Poso, practices such as communal meals, traditional rituals, and the symbolization of peace through traditional surrender have become means of social recovery with high symbolic power. The public acknowledgment of wrongdoing before the community, accompanied by rituals of apology and reconciliation, is not only a form of moral accountability, but also creates space for the perpetrator to be accepted back into the social structure of the community. These symbolic commitments are often considered more meaningful by the community than formal sanctions through legal channels, which tend to be abstract and distant from the daily lives of citizens¹². However, interviews with a number of victims and community leaders show that the effectiveness of this restorative justice approach is not entirely absolute. Some victims revealed that although a symbolic reconciliation process had been carried out, recovery was not yet fully felt, especially in terms of material reparations and long-term security guarantees. They feel that acknowledgment of wrongdoing without concrete action in the form of compensation or restitution is not enough to heal the wounds and losses they have suffered. In addition, the sense of security that has been built through the reconciliation forum is still considered fragile, mainly because there is no adequate guarantee of protection from the state against the potential for further conflict.

Another limitation that has emerged is the uneven access to the reconciliation process. Not all areas in Poso have had the same opportunity to participate in restorative dialogue forums, either due to limited resources, a lack of trained facilitators, or geographical constraints. This has led to inequalities in social recovery between communities that have been actively involved

in the restorative process and those that remain marginalized. On the other hand, the involvement of youth and the post-conflict generation is still minimal. The lack of educational programs based on values of peace and restoration in schools and social environments raises concerns about the discontinuation of the narrative of reconciliation and the value of coexistence between generations¹³.

Despite facing various challenges, the experience in Poso shows that restorative justice has great potential in promoting social reconciliation and creating a more sustainable foundation for peace. This process proves that conflict resolution does not always have to be carried out through formal retributive mechanisms, but can be achieved through a dialogical approach that prioritizes the restoration of relations between citizens.¹⁴ To ensure the sustainability of the ongoing process, it is necessary to integrate restorative approaches with public policy, local capacity building, and state support in creating a safe and inclusive social ecosystem. In this way, Poso can become a concrete example of how a collective healing process based on restorative justice can overcome the effects of conflict and build a more peaceful future.

B. North Maluku: Revitalization of Local Wisdom as a Restorative Mechanism

In North Maluku, particularly in areas such as Ternate and Halmahera, the resolution of social conflicts following tensions between religious and ethnic groups is carried out through an approach that is deeply rooted in local wisdom. One of the main mechanisms used is the revitalization of the *pela* and *gandong* customary systems, which are symbolic kinship relationships between communities of different religions and ethnic backgrounds that have historically served as social glue in Maluku society. In the post-

Konflik Sosial di Indonesia. Fatih: Journal of Contemporary Research, 1(2), 208-222.

¹² Tojaya, D. H. (2024). Tradisi Posintuwu To Pamona sebagai Model Moderasi Beragama di Desa Lewonu Kabupaten Luwu Timur (Doctoral dissertation, Institut Agama Kristen Negeri (IAKN) Toraja).

¹³ Uksan, A. (2024). *Pendidikan Perdamaian: Confidence Building Measures Dampak Konflik Poso*. CV Jejak (Jejak Publisher).

¹⁴ Sihombing, L. A. (2024). Restorative Justice, Kejahatan, Hukuman, Dan Peradilan Pidana: Sebuah Analisis Kesejarahan, Peluang Dan Tantangan. *UNES Law Review*, 6(3), 8902-8911.

conflict context, these values are not only revived as a form of cultural heritage, but also function as a restorative framework that facilitates reconciliation and the restoration of social relations¹⁵.

This revitalization process involves various local actors, ranging from traditional leaders and religious leaders to customary institutions, with active support from civil society organizations (CSOs) acting as facilitators and mediators. They create forums for inter-community meetings to revive the values of solidarity in *pela* and *gandong*, which are carried out through joint rituals, customary deliberations, and collective work in the construction of public facilities. In some cases, communities that were previously involved in conflict even declared peace agreements through traditional ceremonies as a symbol of the restoration of damaged relationships¹⁶.

The impact of this approach has been quite significant in reducing post-conflict tensions. Based on field observations and interviews with the community, incidents of further violence have decreased dramatically, economic activity between communities has resumed, and there has been an increase in social interaction in public spaces such as markets, places of worship, and schools. Moreover, the community stated that the customary approach felt more personal and relevant than state interventions, which tended to be formal and bureaucratic. This customary process provided space for the community to express their trauma, repair relationships, and restore mutual trust in a context that was in line with local values and social structures.¹⁷ However, there are serious challenges that need to be considered, particularly in terms of the involvement of the younger generation in the

reconciliation process. In many communities, the revitalization of *pela* and *gandong* still relies heavily on traditional leaders who are already elderly. The younger generation, most of whom have been exposed to modernization and have weaker emotional ties to traditional customs, tend to be marginalized in this process. Their lack of participation means that the restorative process is not fully internalized across generations. This poses a risk to the sustainability of reconciliation efforts, as the values of peace and solidarity promoted by traditional mechanisms may be eroded if they are not actively passed on.

On the other hand, there is also the dynamic of inequality in the reinterpretation of *pela* and *gandong* customs. Some communities have begun to question the relevance of traditional practices in a modern context, especially if they are not accompanied by a contextual and inclusive reinterpretation. Therefore, the success of revitalizing restorative mechanisms in North Maluku greatly depends on the ability of traditional leaders and local facilitators to adapt traditional values into a form that is acceptable, understandable, and practicable for the current generation, without losing the essence of peace. Thus, the restorative justice approach based on local wisdom in North Maluku shows that traditional cultural values still have relevant power in resolving contemporary social conflicts.¹⁸ However, in order to ensure its sustainability, there needs to be a systematic strategy to involve the younger generation, develop peaceful cultural education programs, and build bridges between traditional structures and modern legal systems. This approach serves as an important lesson that the process of social recovery does not always have to rely on

¹⁵ Matakana, F., Pariela, T. D., & Darakay, Y. (2024). Kosmologi Negeri dan Resiliensi Sosial Masyarakat Pulau: Upaya Pengelolaan Konflik dan Damai Keberlanjutan. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Humaniora*, 13(1), 191-201.

¹⁶ Krar, B., & Eviany, M. S. (2025). *PERANAN LEMBAGA KAINKAIN KARKARA BYAK DALAM PENYELESAIAN KONFLIK ANTAR KELOMPOK DI KABUPATEN BIAK NUMFOR PROVINSI PAPUA* (Doctoral dissertation, institut pemerintahan dalam negeri).

¹⁷ Muslem, M. (2024). Strategi Kebijakan Pemerintah dalam Menanggulangi Trauma Sosial Pasca-Konflik di Ambon. *Kajian Administrasi Publik dan Ilmu Komunikasi*, 1(4), 184-195.

¹⁸ Rafa, D. A., Chadiatno, A. R., Romadhoni, M., Melani, R. P., Putri, S. D., Iskandar, Z. Z., ... & Rahitya, A. R. (2025). *JEJAK WARNA NUSANTARA: RAGAM CERITA DALAM BINGKAI MULTIKULTURAL*. Cahya Ghani Recovery.

formal state mechanisms, but can be strengthened through the social and cultural resources possessed by the community itself.

C. West Sumatra: Nagari Deliberation and Customary Peace Mechanisms

In West Sumatra, the tradition of deliberative consensus and nagari institutions are the main pillars in resolving various social issues, including agrarian conflicts that often arise between indigenous peoples and plantation or mining companies. The practice of “damai alek nagari,” or traditional meetings involving indigenous leaders, religious leaders, youth, women, and external parties involved in disputes, has become the main forum for collective conflict mediation. These forums are not only spaces for negotiation, but also a means of reconstructing social relationships that have been disrupted by disputes over access to customary land. In this process, local values such as togetherness, mutual respect, and the principle of *basa-basi adat* (traditional pleasantries) are used to reduce escalating tensions and restore community harmony. This approach is considered more effective and socially acceptable because it is inclusive, familiar, and upholds the local social authority that has long been part of the Minangkabau community's way of life.¹⁹

However, the success of this restorative approach is highly dependent on a number of contextual factors, particularly the neutrality of the facilitator and the openness of the company. In some cases, the power imbalance between indigenous peoples and corporations causes the deliberation process to lose its restorative power. When companies have strong influence over local officials or elites, the dialogue process risks becoming a mere formality that actually strengthens the dominant position of the more powerful party. This results in the marginalization of the community's narrative, and the results of the deliberations reflect a one-sided compromise rather than true restoration. In addition, the lack of legal clarity regarding the recognition of customary land rights at the

national level further weakens the bargaining position of communities in these forums. Thus, although the nagari-based approach has great potential as a model of restorative justice in the agrarian context, its implementation requires institutional support, procedural guarantees of justice, and regulations that favor the protection of indigenous peoples' rights.²⁰

2. Thematic Analysis

A. Effectiveness in Restoring Social Relationships

In general, restorative justice has proven effective in restoring social relations, especially in the context of homogeneous communities with strong traditional social structures. The dialogical process involving victims, perpetrators, and community leaders, as well as symbolic rituals such as communal meals, traditional deliberations, or peace ceremonies, can repair relationships between individuals and groups that have been damaged by conflict. This approach emphasizes the acknowledgment of wrongdoing, public apologies, and a shared commitment to repairing social damage, thereby creating meaningful space for reconciliation and rebuilding mutual trust. This success is particularly evident in communities with strong social and cultural ties, where local values that prioritize togetherness and harmony are upheld.

However, the effectiveness of restorative justice tends to decline when the perpetrator of violence comes from outside the community or when there is a significant power imbalance between the victim and the perpetrator. In such circumstances, it is difficult for the dialogue process to proceed on an equal footing due to the dominance of the narrative of the stronger party, which often influences the outcome of reconciliation and reduces substantive justice for the victim. This power imbalance also has the potential to undermine trust in the restorative process, especially if victims feel that their rights are not fully respected or that long-term security guarantees are not achieved. Therefore, the success of

¹⁹ Karliansyah, K. (2023). *Rekonstruksi Regulasi Izin Pengelolaan Perkebunan Kelapa Sawit Yang Berbasis Nilai Keadilan* (Doctoral

dissertation, Universitas Islam Sultan Agung Semarang).

²⁰ Yunus, A. S. (2021). *Restorative justice di Indonesia*. Guepedia.

restorative justice is highly dependent on the social and political context in which the process is carried out, as well as the facilitator's ability to maintain neutrality and ensure fair participation from all parties.²¹

B. The Role of Local Actors and Community Leadership

Local actors such as traditional leaders, religious leaders, and civil society organizations play a crucial role in bridging communication between conflicting parties. They not only serve as facilitators of dialogue, but also as guardians of the social and cultural values that underpin the restorative justice process. The success of the restorative approach depends heavily on the level of trust that the community has in these local leaders, who must be seen as neutral, have integrity, and be able to balance the interests of both victims and perpetrators. Facilitators who are trusted by the community are able to create a safe and inclusive atmosphere for dialogue, so that all parties feel heard and valued. Thus, strong and credible community leadership is an important foundation for achieving sustainable reconciliation.²²

On the other hand, local actors also face various challenges, especially when they have to deal with local political dynamics or pressure from external parties with different interests. Sometimes, the loyalty and closeness of traditional leaders or religious leaders to one of the parties can affect the objectivity of the restorative process. In addition, adequate resources and training for facilitators remain an obstacle in many cases, preventing them from fully managing complex conflicts with layered social and political nuances. Therefore, capacity building and support for local actors are crucial in order to optimize their strategic

role in realizing effective and sustainable restorative justice.²³

C. Institutional and Legal Barriers

Although there are several provisions in regulations, such as the National Police Chief Regulation on the application of Restorative Justice in criminal cases, to date there is no national legal framework that explicitly and comprehensively supports the resolution of social conflicts through a restorative approach. This ambiguity has resulted in a lack of legitimacy for restorative processes in the eyes of formal institutions, including law enforcement agencies and judicial institutions, which tend to prioritize traditional retributive mechanisms. As a result, the practice of restorative justice is often hampered by legal uncertainty and a lack of institutional support, so that its application remains partial and limited to certain cases only.²⁴

Furthermore, institutional barriers also arise from internal resistance within law enforcement agencies that do not fully understand or accept restorative principles as an alternative means of conflict resolution. There is often concern that this approach could weaken institutional authority or create legal uncertainty. In addition, the lack of specific training for officials on the implementation of restorative justice makes it difficult to systematically integrate this process into law enforcement practices. Therefore, the development of a clear and inclusive legal framework, accompanied by capacity building for officials and strengthened inter-agency coordination, is an important step in overcoming these obstacles and making restorative justice an integral part of the social conflict resolution system in Indonesia.

²¹ PUTRI, A. A. (2025). Efektivitas Restorative Justice Dalam Penyelesaian Perkara Pidana Kekerasan Dalam Rumah Tangga Di Wilayah Hukum Polresta Jambi (Doctoral dissertation, UNIVERSITAS BATANGHARI JAMBI).

²² Lisbet, Z. T., Judijanto, L., Ginanjar, R., Adnanti, W. A., Butarbutar, M., & Harto, B. (2024). *Friendly leadership: Membangun koneksi*

dan kolaborasi di tempat kerja. PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia.

²³ Chalik, A. (2017). *Pertarungan elite dalam politik lokal*. Pustaka Pelajar Yogyakarta.

²⁴ PUTRA, S. W. (2025). *Analisis Yuridis Kewenangan Kepolisian Pada Penerapan Penyelesaian Tindak Pidana Kekerasan Dalam Rumah Tangga (Kdr) Melalui Pendekatan Restorative Justice* (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Islam Sultan Agung Semarang).

D. Risk of Revictimization and Collective Trauma

In some cases, particularly when restorative processes are carried out without adequate psychosocial preparation, there is a significant risk that dialogue and meetings between parties will reopen old wounds without producing meaningful recovery. This lack of preparation is often caused by a shortage of facilitators who are trained and sensitive to the dynamics of trauma and violence experienced by both victims and perpetrators. Without a holistic and empathetic approach, the restorative process can become rigid, mechanical, and unresponsive to the emotional needs of the parties, potentially leading to revictimization a situation in which victims feel victimized again because they have to relive traumatic experiences without sufficient psychological support.²⁵

This situation can also trigger rejection or resistance from victims to fully participate in the restorative justice process, even causing distrust of the mechanism. Deep collective trauma at the community level also demands an approach that focuses not only on formal conflict resolution, but also on sustainable psychological and social recovery. Therefore, it is important for restorative justice programs to involve psychosocial experts, provide a safe space for victims, and apply an inclusive approach that is sensitive to the emotional needs of all parties. Only then can the restorative process truly function as a meaningful mechanism for healing and reconciliation.²⁶

3. Theoretical Discussion: Restorative as Transformative

The findings of this study reinforce the idea that restorative justice does not merely serve as an alternative mechanism for conflict resolution, but has the potential to become an

instrument for broader social transformation. A successful restorative process not only ends the dispute between the perpetrator and the victim, but also opens up space for the creation of new social structures that are more inclusive, fair, and sustainable. This approach is in line with the perspective of transformative justice, which views conflict as an important momentum for structural change to address the root causes of injustice, strengthen social solidarity, and eliminate patterns of discrimination and oppression that have long underpinned conflict. Thus, restorative justice has the potential to become a bridge towards a more harmonious and egalitarian society.²⁷

However, without systemic support from the state and capacity building for local communities, restorative approaches risk becoming merely symbolic processes with little real impact in the long term. Integration between public policy, the national legal system, and restorative justice practices based on local wisdom is essential for this approach to be effective and sustainable. Synergy between the state, civil society, and customary institutions is key to designing a restorative justice system that is not only contextually relevant but also capable of accommodating the social and political complexities on the ground. Without this integration, restorative justice will struggle to realize its transformative potential and will only become a minor complementary mechanism in the social transition process.

4. Comparison with the International Context

Compared to the experiences of countries such as Rwanda and South Africa, the restorative justice approach in Indonesia still tends to be micro in nature and lacks strong national institutions or legal frameworks to support its systematic implementation. In Rwanda, for example, the gacaca mechanism, which involves the wider community, has

²⁵ Aliyah, H. (2017). *Upaya pusat pelayanan terpadu pemberdayaan perempuan dan anak dalam mewujudkan keadilan restoratif terhadap rehabilitasi korban tindak kejahatan perkosaan: Studi Kasus di Pusat Pelayanan Terpadu Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Anak (P2TP2A) Kabupaten Malang* (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim).

²⁶ Arief, A., Sagita, R. H. S., & Sartika, D. (2025). Pendekatan Restoratif Dalam Sistem Peradilan Pidana: Tinjauan Sistematis Terhadap Tren Global. *Jurnal Penelitian dan Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 1(1 Februari), 25-35.

²⁷ Irsyad Dahri, S. H. (2020). *Pengantar Restorative Justice*. Guepedia.

become an official instrument in the process of resolving genocide cases, while in South Africa, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has gained national legitimacy as the main forum for post-apartheid reconciliation.²⁸ Both examples show how restorative approaches can be well institutionalized and contribute to broader social transition processes.

On the other hand, Indonesia's strength lies in the richness and diversity of local wisdom that has traditionally applied restorative principles in conflict resolution, such as deliberative consensus, *pela gandong*, and *adat basandi syara'*. These local values can serve as an authentic foundation for contextual and sustainable restorative justice practices. However, this great potential has not been widely developed academically or systematically integrated into public policy and the national legal system. Therefore, strengthening the integration of local values into a modern restorative framework is both a challenge and a strategic opportunity for Indonesia to develop a unique and effective model of conflict resolution, while also making an important contribution to the international discourse on transitional and restorative justice.

CONCLUSIONS

Restorative justice has been proven to contribute significantly to the process of social recovery and post-conflict reconciliation in communities undergoing transition. This approach is effective in reviving locally-based values of peace and creating a space for dialogue that allows victims and perpetrators to understand each other, forgive each other, and rebuild social trust. However, the effectiveness of restorative justice still faces challenges, including weak formal legal support, limited trained human resources, and power imbalances in the mediation process. A more inclusive national policy is needed to integrate restorative principles into the judicial system and social conflict management. In addition, collaboration between the government, customary institutions, civil society organizations, and

academics is essential to create restorative mechanisms that are contextual, sustainable, and capable of promoting social transformation towards a peaceful and just society.

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