

A Preliminary Theory of Relational Justice for Volunteer Aid

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Abstract

This paper develops a preliminary theory of relational justice for volunteer, aid, and support relations. Its central question is what can make an aid relation just, rather than merely effective, benevolent in intention, or materially beneficial. The paper treats justice as a typed normative inquiry whose objects include distributions of benefits and burdens, procedures of hearing and revision, recognition and status, epistemic participation, and the organization of standing and dependency within the relation itself. Papers I–V supply the programme’s three-level reality discipline, typed procedures and authorization, third-position standing, recognition histories, subject co-formation, relational positions, and aesthetic manifestation. Paper VI inherits those descriptive structures while preserving a strict separation between historical efficacy and normative validity. The paper also positions its framework alongside relational egalitarianism, recognition theory, procedural and interactive justice, and epistemic-injustice scholarship without presenting any one of those literatures as exhausted by the GR model. The proposed architecture distinguishes justice claims by claimant, affected subject, institutional bearer, object, dimension, normative basis, evidential record, and remedy. It then introduces a non-scalar multidimensional justice profile that coordinates distributive, procedural, recognitional, epistemic, and relational burdens without aggregating them into a single justice score. The current analysis develops standing, voice, distribution, scarcity-constrained priority, procedural contestation, recognition, epistemic justice, and relational equality in dependency and hierarchical aid relations. Later sections extend the framework to representation, indebtedness, justice toward volunteers, institutional gatekeeping, symbolic credit, structural injustice, conflict among justice dimensions, and historical reopening.

Keywords: volunteer aid; relational justice; procedural justice; recognition; epistemic justice

Discussion Note

This paper belongs to the continuing Generative Relational Theory (GR) research programme on volunteer, aid, and support relations. It develops a preliminary normative architecture for justice in those relations. The project is broader than an allocation rule and narrower than a complete moral or political philosophy. Its object is the organization of aid relations across distributions, procedures, recognition, epistemic participation, standing, and historically retained relational structures.

The term *relational justice* is used here as a programme-specific analytical umbrella. It should not be read as a claim to have originated relational or social-equality approaches in political philosophy, nor as a renaming of Emanuela Ceva's theory of *interactive justice*. The manuscript treats relational egalitarianism, recognition theory, procedural justice, interactive justice, and epistemic injustice as adjacent literatures that clarify distinct burdens. The GR contribution lies in integrating those burdens with the programme's typed aid-relation architecture, three-level reality discipline, provenance, subject formation, and historical reopening.

The manuscript distinguishes normative justification from causal efficacy. A recognition rule, allocation practice, or procedure can become historically stabilized and relationally powerful while remaining unjust. Conversely, a defensible justice principle can have little causal force in a particular aid system. Historical formation, institutional uptake, social power, legal validity, ethical permissibility, and justice therefore remain distinct analytical questions unless an argument explicitly connects them.

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Notices

Status. This discussion paper is a working manuscript in the GR volunteer-relations programme. The current checkpoint contains the opening twelve sections of a planned 25-section manuscript. The justice architecture is preliminary and requires further normative argument, historical interpretation, qualitative inquiry, and where appropriate empirical testing. Circulation at this stage does not constitute a complete theory of justice, a legal opinion, an empirical generalization about volunteer organizations, or a claim that the proposed dimensions exhaust the possible sites of injustice.

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Statement on the use of language models. The exploratory discussions and preparation of this paper involved OpenAI’s ChatGPT. ChatGPT supported exploratory dialogue, formal reconstruction, argumentative criticism, drafting in $\text{\LaTeX}$, source-verification workflow, and compilation and consistency checks. External scholarly references inserted into the manuscript were verified from online bibliographic or publisher records before citation and recorded in the project verification ledger. The author selected the research questions, directed and approved the theoretical commitments and epistemic status of the claims, and bears sole responsibility for the manuscript, including its definitions, formal constructions, arguments, conclusions, and errors. Authorship credit remains with the human author.

1 Introduction

Volunteer aid is commonly evaluated through questions of effectiveness, generosity, competence, and good intention. These questions are important, yet none is sufficient to establish justice. An intervention can deliver material benefit while allocating voice unequally, exposing a recipient to stigma, making refusal practically costly, discounting testimony, assigning symbolic credit asymmetrically, or stabilizing a relation of dependency that the affected subject cannot meaningfully contest. Conversely, a procedurally careful relation can remain distributively inadequate when basic needs go unmet. Paper VI therefore treats justice as a distinct normative object whose assessment requires typed relations among outcomes, procedures, recognition, epistemic standing, dependency, and institutional position.

The paper’s central question is: *what makes an aid relation just rather than merely effective or benevolent?* The proposed answer is plural and relational. Justice can concern what is distributed; how decisions are made; whose status is affirmed or subordinated; whose testimony and interpretive resources enter the procedure; and whether the relation organizes its participants as subjects with adequate standing, contestability, and revisability. These dimensions interact, but they need not move together. The present framework therefore resists aggregation into a single justice score.

This orientation has important precedents. Anderson’s democratic-equality argument places social relations of equality, rather than distribution alone, at the center of egalitarian concern [1]. Fraser’s status model treats recognition as a question of whether persons can participate as peers and explicitly analyzes recognition and distribution as distinct but intertwined dimensions of justice [3]. Fricker develops epistemic injustice as a wrong that can occur within practices of knowing, including credibility and interpretive relations [4]. Ceva’s theory of *interactive justice* asks what makes interaction among parties to value conflict morally acceptable and grounds its procedural account in fair hearing and procedural equality [2]. Tyler’s empirical work on legal authority likewise shows that judgments of procedural fairness can matter independently of favorable outcomes [5]. Paper VI uses these literatures as adjacent normative and empirical resources while retaining a distinct research object: volunteer and aid relations represented through the existing GR programme.

The phrase *relational justice* in this paper is consequently programmatic rather than proprietary. It does not rename relational egalitarianism, recognition theory, interactive justice, procedural-justice re-

search, or epistemic-injustice theory. It names the task of evaluating a historically situated aid relation through a typed set of justice burdens while preserving the specific contribution and limits of each adjacent literature. The framework is designed to accommodate cases in which the relevant claimant is the recipient, the volunteer, a third party, a group, or several subjects at once.

Papers I–V already provide much of the descriptive architecture needed for this task. Paper I represents aid as an ordered procedure with authorization, refusal, feedback, and revision rather than as a single transfer. Paper II adds third positions, standing, mediation, accountability, coalition, exclusion, and publicness. Paper III shows how recognition, standing, role, and practical horizons can become historically constitutive. Paper IV distinguishes relational position from psychoanalytic attribution and highlights interpretive authority. Paper V shows how the manifestation of support can distribute exposure, tact, dignity-related form, visibility, and public salience. None of these structures is self-justifying. Paper VI introduces the independent normative criteria needed to evaluate them.

The paper makes four preliminary contributions. First, it constructs a typed justice-claim architecture that separates claimant, affected subject, responsive bearer, object, justice dimension, normative basis, evidence, proposed remedy, and current claim status. Second, it introduces a non-scalar multi-dimensional justice profile for an aid relation. Third, it distinguishes formal standing from exercisable participation by combining inherited procedure and standing records with access, refusal, exit, review, and revision conditions. Fourth, it treats justice as historical: earlier allocation, classification, recognition, and procedural decisions can sediment into later standing and opportunity, while later correction can reopen some retained effects without erasing provenance.

The argument remains preliminary in three senses. It does not claim that the five dimensions developed here exhaust justice. It does not derive normative validity from GR formalism or historical persistence. It does not assume that one abstract ordering of justice dimensions is suitable for every aid setting. The purpose is to make normative disagreements more explicit, structurally comparable, and empirically accountable while preserving their philosophical remainder.

2 Analytical Scope of Justice in Volunteer Aid

This section defines the object and boundaries of Paper VI. Its role is to prevent three recurrent substitutions: effectiveness for justice, benevolent intention for justice, and the historical stability of an aid arrangement for its normative validity. The paper analyzes justice claims about volunteer and aid relations at a declared resolution, across distributive, procedural, recognitional, epistemic, and relational dimensions. The method is normative and reconstructive, informed by the descriptive structures established in Papers I–V.

2.1 Justice as a Distinct Evaluative Question

Effectiveness concerns whether an intervention realizes a specified practical objective under an adopted measure. Benevolence concerns, among other possible meanings, favorable intention or orientation toward another's good. Justice concerns whether benefits, burdens, standing, procedures, recognition, epistemic participation, and relational positions are organized in a normatively defensible way. One event can therefore receive different evaluations across these predicates.

A highly effective emergency intervention can be distributively defensible and procedurally thin because time does not permit extended deliberation. The same procedural thinness can become objectionable when retained after the emergency has ended. A benevolent volunteer can participate in an institution whose eligibility rules stigmatize recipients. A respectful hearing can coexist with inadequate resource allocation. A materially equal distribution can coexist with hierarchy, humiliation, or systematic discounting of testimony. Paper VI treats such divergence as ordinary rather than anomalous.

The framework also keeps justice distinct from ethics of individual action. Paper VII will ask what a volunteer ought to do under uncertainty, limited competence, and revisable judgment. Paper VI asks whether the organization of a relation or procedure satisfies specified justice burdens. The same action

can be ethically excusable under emergency conditions while participating in an unjust structure, and a just institutional rule can still be applied negligently by an individual actor. The two analyses therefore require interfaces rather than identity.

2.2 Three-Level Treatment of Justice Objects

Paper VI retains the programme's three-level reality discipline while recognizing that normative validity is an argumentative status rather than a fourth ontological layer.

At *ontological reality*, the ultimate ontology of justice, equality, dignity, or moral status remains suspended. The formalism does not establish what justice ultimately is by representing procedures, claims, or distributions.

At *relational reality*, the analysis can represent historically stabilized allocations, standing relations, dependency structures, recognition rules, credibility patterns, review routes, and institutional classifications. These structures can be causally and generatively efficacious regardless of whether they are justified.

At *manifestation reality*, justice-relevant organization becomes accessible through concrete allocations, waiting lists, eligibility forms, speaking turns, explanations, refusals, labels, public presentations, interfaces, appeal notices, translation practices, and other context-dependent manifestations. A manifestation can provide evidence for a justice claim without exhausting the relational structure that produced it.

Normative warrant crosses these levels through argument. A justice judgment must state which norm, principle, value, or standard is being invoked; why it applies to the focal relation; which facts support the application; how uncertainty affects the conclusion; and what remedy or revision follows if the claim is sustained. Historical persistence can increase the practical importance of a justice problem while contributing no automatic normative validation.

2.3 Five Initial Justice Dimensions

Paper VI begins with five dimensions because they identify recurrently distinct burdens in aid relations. *Distributive justice* concerns the allocation of benefits, burdens, risks, opportunities, attention, and other justice-relevant goods or disadvantages. *Procedural justice* concerns how decisions are made, heard, revised, explained, and contested. *Recognitional justice* concerns status, social standing, visibility, classification, and participation as a peer. *Epistemic justice* concerns credibility, interpretive resources, epistemic access, and the ability to contribute knowledge to decisions affecting the relation. *Relational justice* in the narrower dimension-specific sense concerns the organization of hierarchy, dependency, subordination, contestability, and standing within the relation itself.

The paper uses *relational justice* in two scopes that must remain distinguishable. In the title and programme architecture, it is the umbrella for the integrated justice analysis of the aid relation. Inside the five-dimensional profile, the relational dimension identifies justice claims specifically about the form of social relation, including equality of standing, domination, subordination, dependency, and the practical organization of interaction. Context will make the scope explicit.

The five dimensions are analytically separable but structurally coupled. Fraser's account is particularly useful here because it treats distribution and recognition as analytically distinct dimensions whose mechanisms can nevertheless reinforce each other [3]. Paper VI generalizes the methodological lesson: separability is needed for diagnosis, while causal and normative interaction must be examined rather than assumed.

2.4 Subjects, Claimants, and Sites of Justice

Justice claims in aid need not run only from recipient B against volunteer A. A volunteer can bear unjust risk or unpaid burden. A translator or mediator C can be excluded from decisions while being held responsible for their consequences. A recipient group can be allocated resources through a category that

some members contest. An institution can owe reasons to all affected parties. One subject can also advance a claim on behalf of another when representation is warranted, while the represented subject contests the content or authority of that representation.

Paper VI therefore distinguishes the *claimant*, the *affected subject*, the *responsive bearer* of the alleged justice burden, and the *institutional site* through which the claim is processed. These roles can coincide, but the formalism does not assume that they do. Section 4 makes this distinction explicit.

2.5 Scope Boundaries and Deferred Questions

The present paper does not attempt a complete account of distributive justice, democratic legitimacy, legal rights, humanitarian law, or professional ethics. It also does not infer injustice directly from asymmetry, dependency, psychic investment, aesthetically awkward manifestation, or power. Those structures can become evidence within a justice argument when an independent normative bridge is supplied.

Several questions are deliberately deferred. Paper VII develops intervention ethics and responsibility. Paper VIII analyzes power and political economy. Paper IX develops wider historical system formation. Later papers address suffering recognition, heterogeneous subjects, humanitarian protection, jurisprudence, adjudication, and governance. Paper VI supplies a justice architecture that those inquiries can reuse selectively while retaining their own normative and empirical burdens.

3 Inherited Relational, Procedural, Recognition, and Historical Architecture

Paper VI does not rebuild the descriptive ontology of volunteer relations. Its role is to identify which earlier objects can be inherited exactly, which require justice-specific interpretation, and where a normative claim adds a new burden. The method is a dependency audit across Papers I–V.

3.1 Procedure, Authorization, and Action Provenance from Paper I

Paper I represents an aid relation through a historically ordered procedure record containing requests, offers, clarification, negotiation, authorization, refusal, execution, monitoring, feedback, correction, withdrawal, handover, and termination. Paper VI inherits that typed procedure architecture exactly where the application uses the same procedural resolution. This matters because procedural justice attaches to the organization of a history, not merely to a final outcome.

Paper I also distinguishes manifested authorization from stronger judgments about normative validity. Its authorization records retain scope, duration, withdrawal, information, dependency, refusal capacity, exit capacity, and revision conditions. Paper VI uses these descriptive objects as inputs. A justice judgment must still establish why a given form of participation, refusal, or authorization is adequate under the relevant normative standard.

Action provenance is likewise inherited as a descriptive relation. A successful material outcome can have distributed provenance across requester, interpreter, authorizer, executor, institution, donor, or later reviewer. Justice questions can concern that distribution of contribution and burden without converting provenance itself into desert or entitlement.

3.2 Third Positions, Standing, and Accountability from Paper II

Paper II is the principal structural bridge into justice analysis. It distinguishes epistemic access from authority; witness status from review standing; standing from authorization; brokerage from gatekeeping; coalition from alignment; publicity from visibility; and exclusion from simple absence. Paper VI inherits these distinctions because justice questions often arise precisely when a formally available route and a substantively exercisable route diverge.

Paper II's justice interface already identifies a core problem: B can possess nominal standing to challenge A before C while lacking practical access to the procedure. C can possess review standing whose legitimacy is disputed. A coalition can reorganize B's access to deliberation or appeal. Paper VI adds the normative criteria required to decide when such structures are unjust.

The inherited standing family is especially important. Claim, witness, review, authorization, enforcement, and appeal standing are different procedural positions. Justice analysis must ask whether the relevant standing exists, whether it is appropriately allocated, whether the subject can practically exercise it, whether the decision-maker recognizes it, and whether consequences follow when it is used.

3.3 Recognition, Subject Formation, and Retained Effects from Paper III

Paper III supplies recognition, reputation, standing, role, practical-horizon, and self-reconstruction histories. These objects allow Paper VI to evaluate justice where a classification or standing decision changes more than one episode. A recipient label can alter future eligibility; a volunteer reputation can create new obligations or authority; a denied appeal can narrow later practical horizons; repeated public attribution can stabilize a role that the focal subject contests.

Paper III also supplies a crucial methodological warning. Constitutive efficacy and descriptive accuracy are distinct. A false or contested classification can reorganize later opportunities if institutions act on it. Justice analysis must therefore ask both whether the classification is warranted and whether its retained effects are normatively acceptable.

Historical path dependence and reopening are inherited at the level of evidential burden, not assumed by terminology. A justice claim about historical lock-in requires a defensible comparison across alternative histories and evidence connecting intermediate organization to later justice-relevant conditions. A claim of realized reopening requires evidence that later events alter the retained efficacy of an earlier unjust or contested structure.

3.4 Relational Positions and Interpretive Authority from Paper IV

Paper IV contributes a distinction between role occupancy and stronger hypotheses about subjective investment, together with a careful treatment of interpretive authority. Paper VI can use the lower-grade relational-position architecture without inheriting psychoanalytic conclusions. This is relevant when one party has greater institutional authority to define another's resistance, need, gratitude, dependency, or competence.

Interpretive asymmetry can become a justice issue when an institution grants one subject's account procedural force while another's competing account lacks equivalent standing, credibility, or route to correction. The injustice, if established, follows from the relevant normative standard governing standing, recognition, epistemic participation, or review; it does not follow merely from the presence of interpretation.

3.5 Manifestation, Exposure, and Public Form from Paper V

Paper V shows that support is manifested through timing, distance, gesture, tone, publicity, presentation, audience, and closure. Paper VI can treat those manifestations as evidence when they affect dignity-related standing, exposure, accessibility, or participation. The aesthetic evaluation itself remains separate from the justice evaluation.

This distinction matters in public aid. A highly visible distribution event can be aesthetically coherent and materially effective while imposing stigmatizing exposure. A discreet procedure can protect privacy while making eligibility criteria difficult to scrutinize. Paper VI therefore inherits manifestation records as justice-relevant evidence without deriving justice from aesthetic fittingness.

3.6 Normative Independence of the Justice Layer

The inherited architecture provides objects, histories, and comparisons. It does not provide a justice verdict. Typed asymmetry does not by itself establish inequality of moral standing. Dependency does not by itself establish domination. Recognition does not by itself establish deserved recognition. Standing does not by itself establish adequate standing. Procedure does not by itself establish fair procedure. Historical stability does not by itself establish legitimacy.

Paper VI therefore adds a normative layer whose units are explicit justice claims with declared grounds and evidence. This preserves the programme’s central separation between relational formation and normative validity while allowing the formal foundation to carry enough structure for substantive justice analysis.

4 Typed Justice Claims and Normative Burdens

This section defines the basic normative unit of Paper VI. Its objective is to prevent a statement such as “the relation is unjust” from functioning as an untyped global verdict. A justice claim should identify who raises or bears the claim, who is affected, what object is being evaluated, which justice dimension is invoked, what normative basis supports the claim, what evidence is available, and what kind of remedy or revision is at issue.

4.1 Justice-Claim Record

Let α index a justice claim at stage t and resolution κ . The claim record is defined in Equation 1.

$$\mathfrak{C}_{\alpha,t}^{\text{jus},\kappa} := (c_\alpha, i_\alpha, b_\alpha, o_\alpha, d_\alpha, \nu_\alpha, E_\alpha, \rho_\alpha, \sigma_\alpha). \quad (1)$$

In Equation 1, c_α is the claimant or claim-advancing position; i_α is the subject or group whose justice-relevant condition is at issue; b_α is the responsive bearer or institutional position to which the claim is addressed; o_α is the object of assessment; d_α is the justice dimension; ν_α is the stated normative basis; E_α is the retained evidential record; ρ_α is the proposed remedy or revision family; and σ_α records the current epistemic or adjudicative status of the claim. The tuple is an analytical record. It does not make the claim true by formal definition.

The claimant and affected subject are separate because representation is common in aid settings. A parent, advocate, volunteer, organization, clinician, translator, or review body may advance a claim concerning another subject. Representation can be appropriate, contested, partial, or institutionally imposed. Section 13 will examine that problem directly.

The responsive bearer is also typed. An injustice concerning allocation may be addressed to the organization controlling resources; an injustice concerning public representation may implicate a communications unit; an epistemic injustice may arise in a review body; a relational injustice can be distributed across several actors and rules. The formalism therefore avoids assigning every injustice to the nearest individual volunteer.

4.2 Dimension Tags and Local Normative Bases

The initial dimension family is $\mathcal{T}_{\text{jus}} = \{\text{dist}, \text{proc}, \text{recg}, \text{epi}, \text{rel}\}$ for distributive, procedural, recognitional, epistemic, and relational claims. The set is open to domain-specific refinement. A later legal analysis may distinguish equality before law, due process, or rights-based dimensions; a humanitarian setting may require protection and vulnerability criteria; a workplace-volunteering case may require labor-justice distinctions.

The normative basis ν_α should be stated rather than inferred from the dimension tag. Two distributive claims can rely on different principles: equal shares, need, priority, sufficiency, contribution, risk, or another criterion. Two procedural claims can disagree about what adequate hearing requires. Two

Table 1: Initial justice dimensions for volunteer aid. Each dimension identifies a distinct diagnostic burden while allowing interaction with the others.

Dimension	Primary object	Illustrative justice question
Distributive	Benefits, burdens, risks, opportunities, attention, time, access	Who receives or bears what, according to which defensible allocation principle?
Procedural	Hearing, explanation, decision route, refusal, review, revision	Who can participate in the decision and obtain reasons, reconsideration, or correction?
Recognitional	Status, classification, visibility, social standing, public uptake	Does the relation constitute participants as peers or stabilize subordinating status relations?
Epistemic	Credibility, testimony, interpretive resources, epistemic routes	Whose knowledge counts, who can make experience intelligible, and whose uncertainty is discounted?
Relational	Hierarchy, dependency, domination, contestability, standing	How does the relation organize subjects' practical standing toward one another and toward institutions?

recognitional claims can invoke different conceptions of status. The dimension organizes the question; the normative basis carries the justificatory argument.

Ceva's *interactive justice* provides a useful adjacent example of this discipline. Her theory gives fair hearing and procedural equality a specific role in morally acceptable interaction under value conflict [2]. Paper VI does not generalize that label to every aid procedure. It instead treats Ceva's account as one articulated procedural theory against which aid-specific claims can be compared when the conditions are relevant.

4.3 Evidence, Normative Argument, and Remedy

The evidence component E_α can include allocation records, procedure histories, testimony, standing rules, recognition records, public manifestations, institutional documents, comparison cases, and longitudinal consequences. Evidence establishes facts or supports interpretations. The normative basis ν_α supplies the reason those facts matter for justice. Keeping the two separate prevents an empirical regularity from becoming a norm by repetition.

The remedy component ρ_α is included because diagnosis and repair can diverge. A recognition injustice may be repaired by changing a classification, a public representation, an eligibility rule, or an institutional role. A distributive injustice may require resources. A procedural injustice may require reopening, explanation, translation, or review. An epistemic injustice may require credibility repair, interpretive support, or changes in who participates in knowledge production. The same diagnosis can admit several remedies whose side effects differ across other justice dimensions.

Table 1 summarizes the initial dimensions and their characteristic questions. The table is a diagnostic map rather than an exhaustive taxonomy.

Fraser's status model is especially relevant to the recognitional row because it treats misrecognition as institutionalized status subordination and links justice to parity of participation [3]. Fricker's epistemic-injustice framework provides a distinct precedent for treating harms in epistemic practice as justice-relevant rather than merely errors in information processing [4]. Anderson's relational egalitarianism supplies an adjacent basis for examining whether hierarchy, oppression, domination, or condescension undermine relations among social equals [1]. Paper VI keeps these literatures distinct while allowing a concrete aid case to engage more than one at once.

4.4 Claim Status and Revisability

The status field σ_α records the current standing of the analysis: proposed, supported, contested, under-determined, provisionally sustained, rejected under the adopted basis, or reopened after new evidence or argument. This field is not a court-like adjudication status unless the application explicitly models a legal or institutional decision.

Revisability is central because justice claims can change when new testimony becomes available, a hidden burden appears, an allocation rule is clarified, an affected subject contests representation, or a later historical comparison reveals retained effects. A justice theory for aid should therefore permit correction without treating earlier decisions as erased from history. The later historical sections will connect this revisability to provenance and reopening.

5 Multidimensional Relational Justice Profiles

This section organizes typed justice claims at the level of an aid relation. Its objective is to support integrated diagnosis without converting heterogeneous justice questions into one scalar. The method is set-valued and profile-based: each dimension retains its own claims, normative bases, evidence, and unresolved disagreements.

5.1 Profile Construction

For a focal aid relation AB at stage t and resolution κ , let $\mathcal{C}_{AB,t}^{d,\kappa}$ denote the family of admissible justice claims whose dimension tag is $d \in \mathcal{T}_{\text{jus}}$. The multidimensional justice profile is defined in Equation 2.

$$\text{JProf}_{AB,t}^\kappa := \left(\mathcal{C}_{AB,t}^{\text{dist},\kappa}, \mathcal{C}_{AB,t}^{\text{proc},\kappa}, \mathcal{C}_{AB,t}^{\text{recg},\kappa}, \mathcal{C}_{AB,t}^{\text{epi},\kappa}, \mathcal{C}_{AB,t}^{\text{rel},\kappa} \right). \quad (2)$$

Equation 2 is deliberately non-scalar. It does not assign a weight to each justice dimension, compute a net justice value, or imply that a severe injustice in one dimension can be compensated automatically by favorable performance in another. Aggregation can be introduced in a specific decision problem only after the application supplies a defensible commensuration rule and explains its normative consequences.

The profile also permits empty and contested components. An application can possess strong distributive evidence and weak epistemic evidence. Several procedural claims can conflict because different participants invoke different normative standards. A recognitional claim can be well supported while the proposed remedy remains disputed. The profile records these states instead of forcing premature closure.

5.2 Cross-Dimensional Coupling

Analytical separation does not imply causal independence. A distribution rule can change recognition by marking some recipients as deserving and others as suspect. Recognition can alter distribution when status controls eligibility. Epistemic exclusion can affect procedure when testimony is discounted. Procedural exclusion can alter distribution when affected parties cannot contest an allocation. Dependency can change the practical meaning of formal consent or refusal.

Fraser’s account of redistribution and recognition provides a direct example of this coupled structure: material and status orders are analytically distinct while often reinforcing one another [3]. Paper VI extends the same discipline to five dimensions. A cross-dimensional explanation must identify the mechanism connecting the dimensions rather than inferring interaction from conceptual proximity.

The profile therefore supports relations among claims. One claim can provide evidence relevant to another; one remedy can relieve one dimension while worsening another; one institutional rule can generate several dimension-specific claims. These relations are recorded at the claim level rather than by collapsing the claims into a global label.

5.3 Justice Conflict and Local Incomparability

Conflict among justice dimensions is expected. A highly transparent public allocation process can improve accountability while increasing stigma or privacy exposure. A rapid emergency procedure can save lives while offering limited hearing. A strong confidentiality rule can protect dignity while making external accountability harder. Equal distribution can conflict with priority to urgent need. Recognition of a vulnerable status can unlock resources while stabilizing a category that some subjects experience as subordinating.

Paper VI does not solve these conflicts by default weighting. A defensible resolution should state which values or principles govern the conflict, what alternatives were feasible, whose burdens are shifted, which uncertainties matter, and whether the chosen arrangement remains revisable. Section 19 will treat these conflicts directly after the individual dimensions have been developed.

5.4 Relation-Level Justice and Relational Equality

The relational component of Equation 2 focuses on how persons and institutions stand toward one another. Anderson's relational egalitarianism is an important adjacent precedent because it directs attention to oppression, domination, hierarchy, and condescension rather than treating equality only as a pattern of distributed goods [1]. Paper VI adopts the methodological significance of that shift without assuming that every volunteer relation should be symmetric.

Aid often begins under real asymmetry. One subject may possess food, information, mobility, institutional access, professional competence, or emergency capacity that another lacks. Justice therefore cannot mean the elimination of every difference. The question is whether asymmetries are organized through defensible standing, appropriate limits on authority, meaningful contestability, revisable dependency, and conditions under which the supported subject remains a participant rather than merely an object of intervention.

Relational equality is consequently different from identical role, identical contribution, or equal material possession. A relation can remain materially asymmetric while avoiding subordination. Conversely, a formally equal procedure can coexist with practical hierarchy when one party controls information, alternatives, interpretation, or exit. Later sections will specify these mechanisms more closely.

5.5 Benevolence and Relational Goods in Justice Assessment

Warmth, care, trust, generosity, gratitude, and long-term relational attachment can make aid valuable. They can also coexist with injustice. A volunteer who is sincerely caring can dominate a decision. A recipient can be grateful within a procedure that offers inadequate appeal. A trusted organization can maintain exclusionary eligibility categories. Justice analysis should therefore preserve the possibility that valuable relational goods coexist with correctable injustice.

The reverse point also matters. Justice does not require emotional closeness. A distant, rule-governed procedure can be just when it reliably protects standing, access, review, distribution, and equal status. Paper VI therefore evaluates justice through typed normative burdens rather than through affective intensity or relational warmth.

6 Standing, Voice, and Participation in Aid Relations

Standing, voice, and participation form the first substantive justice application because they connect inherited procedure to normative evaluation. The objective is to distinguish the formal existence of a procedural position from the practical ability to use it and from the further question of whether its allocation is just. The analysis draws on Paper II's typed standing architecture, Paper I's refusal and exit capacities, and procedural-justice literatures while preserving their different scopes.

6.1 Formal Standing and Exercisable Standing

Paper II distinguishes claim, witness, review, authorization, enforcement, and appeal standing. Paper VI retains those types. A justice assessment adds a further question: can the subject for whom a route exists actually exercise it under the conditions of the relation?

A formally available complaint procedure can require language skills, digital access, documentation, travel, time, confidence, or financial resources that the claimant lacks. A refusal can be formally permitted while dependency makes refusal practically costly. An appeal can exist while the same unit whose conduct is challenged controls access to the appeal. A witness can possess relevant information while institutional rules deny that information procedural uptake.

The justice analysis should therefore record at least four distinct matters: formal standing, access to the route, capacity to use the route, and institutional responsiveness when the route is used. These matters can diverge. Describing the route as “open” is insufficient when the application has evidence of systematic barriers to exercise.

6.2 Voice as Participation with Consequence

Voice in Paper VI means more than an opportunity to speak. A procedure can invite comments while retaining no route by which those comments affect reasons, options, records, or review. Justice-relevant voice requires a declared connection between contribution and the procedure’s decision architecture.

This does not mean that every participant must possess decision authority. Emergency medicine, child protection, translation, professional support, and complex institutional procedures can involve differentiated competence and responsibility. The justice question concerns how those differences are bounded, explained, contestable, and responsive to the subject whose interests and standing are at stake.

Ceva’s interactive-justice account is relevant because it identifies fair hearing and procedural equality as normative conditions on morally acceptable interaction in political value conflict [2]. Paper VI treats this as an adjacent procedural theory, not as a universal template for aid. Volunteer relations can involve vulnerability, urgency, caregiving, incapacity, or asymmetric expertise that alter what adequate participation requires. The local burden is to justify the procedure under the actual conditions rather than to assume that identical speaking roles constitute fairness.

6.3 Procedural Fairness, Outcome Favorability, and Legitimacy

Tyler’s work supplies an empirical reason to keep process distinct from favorable outcome: perceptions of fairness and legitimacy can shape responses to authorities independently of whether the person receives the preferred decision [5]. Paper VI does not transfer findings from legal authority directly to volunteer aid. It uses the distinction to motivate separate measurement of process and outcome where an empirical application is appropriate.

For justice theory, this separation is normative as well as empirical. A recipient can lose a contested allocation under a defensible procedure; another can receive the desired resource through an opaque or discriminatory route. Outcome favorability is therefore weak evidence for procedural justice. Likewise, voluntary compliance can be produced by trust, dependency, habit, resignation, fear of relational loss, or lack of alternatives. Compliance alone does not establish fair process.

6.4 Participation under Dependency

Dependency can change the practical meaning of participation. A subject who relies on one organization for food, shelter, translation, mobility, or institutional access may reasonably fear that disagreement will endanger continued support even when retaliation is formally prohibited. The justice analysis should therefore examine whether participation can occur without disproportionate risk to basic interests.

This requirement does not treat dependency itself as injustice. Some aid relations necessarily involve dependency, especially during crisis, illness, displacement, or temporary incapacity. The relevant

questions concern how dependency is governed: whether alternatives exist, whether refusal is respected, whether retaliation is constrained, whether reasons are given, whether review is independent enough to be meaningful, and whether the dependency can be revised or reduced when circumstances change.

6.5 Recognition and Epistemic Participation within Procedure

Procedural standing can be undermined by recognitional and epistemic conditions. A recipient can possess the right to speak while being treated as unreliable, immature, ungrateful, dependent, or incapable of understanding the situation. A volunteer can be invited to report problems while unpaid status makes the report institutionally peripheral. A translator can be present while the procedure treats translation as mechanically neutral and ignores interpretive disagreement.

Fraser’s status model helps identify the recognitional problem: justice can concern whether institutionalized value patterns permit participation as a peer [3]. Fricker’s framework identifies a distinct epistemic problem: a person can be wronged specifically in the capacity of a knower when credibility or interpretive resources are unjustly structured [4]. Paper VI keeps these routes separate because a remedy for status subordination may differ from a remedy for credibility deficit or interpretive exclusion.

6.6 A Preliminary Participation Criterion

Within the present framework, a procedure has stronger *prima facie* justice credentials when affected subjects possess appropriately allocated standing; accessible routes for expression, refusal, review, and correction; sufficient information for the relevant participation; practicable exercise under dependency conditions; and institutional uptake that gives participation a defined role in the decision or its revision. These conditions remain application-relative and can be limited by justified urgency, competence requirements, confidentiality, or protection of third parties.

This criterion is deliberately defeasible. It does not establish that every decision must be jointly made, that all subjects possess identical authority, or that hearing guarantees a favorable outcome. It identifies a family of procedural burdens that later sections can combine with distribution, recognition, epistemic justice, and relational equality. The next substantive analyses can therefore examine both who receives aid and how the relation makes allocation, refusal, interpretation, and revision possible.

7 Distribution of Benefits, Burdens, Risks, and Attention

This section develops the distributive dimension of the justice profile. Its role is to specify what can be distributed in volunteer aid, whose incidence matters, and how allocation claims should be typed before a normative principle is applied. The objective is diagnostic rather than comprehensive: the analysis identifies distributive objects and burden pathways that later scarcity, gatekeeping, structural-injustice, and trade-off sections can evaluate under declared normative bases.

7.1 Distributive Objects in Aid Relations

Material goods are one important distributive object, yet aid relations distribute much more than material resources. They can allocate time, waiting, attention, information, professional access, translation, mobility, privacy, exposure, uncertainty, administrative effort, opportunity, reputational benefit, physical risk, emotional labor, and responsibility for follow-up. A procedure that distributes food equally can distribute waiting time unequally. A programme that expands access to services can concentrate documentation burdens on people with the least administrative capacity. A highly attentive intervention for one case can reduce attention available to other cases.

The object field o_α in the justice-claim record of Equation 1 therefore requires a sufficiently precise distributive object. Phrases such as “resources were distributed unfairly” are analytically incomplete until the application identifies the relevant resource or burden, the affected population, the temporal window,

and the unit through which incidence is measured. The relevant unit can be an individual, household, volunteer team, locality, institution, or another declared collective when the evidence supports that level.

Distributive incidence also has temporal structure. Immediate receipt and longer-term burden can move in different directions. An aid arrangement can transfer a useful resource now while assigning later maintenance costs, dependency risks, data exposure, or repayment expectations to the recipient. A volunteer programme can reduce recipient waiting while transferring unsustainable workload to a small group of volunteers. Paper VI therefore treats distributive incidence as historical and multi-object rather than as a snapshot of visible transfer.

7.2 Benefits, Burdens, and Risk Allocation

A distributive assessment should record benefits and burdens separately before considering their normative relation. Benefits can include material improvement, access, reduced uncertainty, protection, information, or opportunity. Burdens can include time, effort, exposure, foregone alternatives, administrative work, surveillance, stigma, or responsibility. Risk concerns a distribution of possible adverse consequences whose realization can be uncertain at the time of decision.

The distinction matters because equal expected benefit can coexist with unequal risk. Two recipients may obtain the same immediate service while one must disclose substantially more sensitive information. Two volunteers may perform comparable visible tasks while one bears much greater legal, emotional, or physical exposure. An institution can shift risk outward by maintaining a procedure whose visible benefits remain centralized while downstream uncertainty is borne by recipients or frontline volunteers.

Risk allocation should consequently state the relevant uncertainty and who can influence it. A subject who bears a risk while lacking information, refusal capacity, or revision routes occupies a different justice position from a subject who knowingly accepts a comparable risk with meaningful alternatives. This difference does not settle the distributive verdict by itself; it connects distributive analysis to the procedural and relational dimensions of $JProf_{AB,t}^{\kappa}$ in Equation 2.

7.3 Attention as a Scarce and Structuring Good

Attention deserves explicit treatment because volunteer and support systems frequently ration it before they ration material goods. Case visibility, narrative salience, language fluency, perceived cooperativeness, proximity, institutional familiarity, and public sympathy can affect whose situation receives sustained examination. These mechanisms can alter later resource allocation even when the formal eligibility rule is unchanged.

Attention has at least three distributive forms in the present framework. *Diagnostic attention* concerns whose situation receives sufficient inquiry to become legible. *Procedural attention* concerns whose reasons, objections, and uncertainties receive uptake during decision. *Sustained attention* concerns whose case remains visible after an initial intervention, especially when follow-up is required. A deficit at any of these stages can affect later benefits and burdens.

Attention is also costly. A justice claim concerning insufficient attention to one subject should therefore identify the opportunity costs and competing claims created by reallocation. The objective is not to maximize attention everywhere. It is to make the allocation of a consequential but often hidden resource available for normative scrutiny.

7.4 Normative Bases and Comparison Classes

Distributive justice requires a stated normative basis ν_{α} . Possible bases include equal shares, need, priority, sufficiency, risk reduction, contribution, reciprocity, protection of basic interests, or a domain-specific rule. Paper VI treats these as candidate bases rather than a single ordered list. Their applicability depends on the object being distributed, the institutional purpose, the affected population, and the relation among competing claims.

Comparison classes are equally important. Equal distribution among formally eligible recipients can still be objectionable when the eligibility class was itself constituted through an unjust exclusion. Conversely, unequal distribution within a population can be defensible when the adopted basis gives priority to greater need or urgency. The justice analysis should therefore expose both the allocation rule and the rule that determines who enters the comparison class.

Fraser’s distinction between distribution and recognition is useful here because distributive patterns and institutionalized status can interact without becoming identical [3]. A stigmatizing classification can influence access to material goods; a material deprivation can in turn restrict participation. Paper VI records such coupling while retaining separate claims when the mechanisms and remedies differ.

7.5 Distributive Remedies and Secondary Incidence

A distributive remedy can create secondary incidence. Reallocating volunteer time may improve one group’s access while increasing another group’s waiting. Equalizing a visible benefit may increase hidden administrative burdens. Restricting a risky service may protect some subjects while removing an option valued by others. The remedy field ρ_α should therefore state the proposed redistribution and the foreseeable new burdens it generates.

This requirement makes distributive revision compatible with the paper’s multidimensional architecture. A remedy can improve the distributive dimension while worsening procedural access, epistemic participation, or relational standing. Such cases belong to the cross-dimensional conflict analysis in Section 5 and later Section 19. The present section supplies the distributive inventory needed for that comparison without reducing justice to net benefit.

8 Need, Priority, and Scarcity-Constrained Allocation

This section analyzes allocation when available resources, time, attention, or institutional capacity cannot satisfy every admissible claim at once. Its role is to distinguish evidence of need from normative priority and to separate priority ordering from the procedure used to resolve ties or incomparability. The method is a partial-order representation under a declared normative basis, preserving cases in which several claims remain legitimately incomparable.

8.1 Need as an Evidential and Normative Interface

Need enters aid relations through both evidence and normative argument. Evidence concerns the subject’s condition, available alternatives, expected consequences of non-provision, urgency, duration, and uncertainty. A normative argument explains why those features create or strengthen a claim on the focal resource. Need therefore cannot be read directly from severity language, diagnostic labels, emotional intensity, or institutional categories alone.

Paper I already separates need representation from action authorization. Paper VI adds the justice question of how need should influence allocation among competing subjects. The relevant comparison can involve current deprivation, risk of serious deterioration, time sensitivity, ability to benefit, lack of alternatives, responsibility borne by dependents, or another declared feature. Applications should state which features matter and why.

Need is also object-relative. A person can have greater need for emergency shelter while another has greater need for translation, transportation, or sustained accompaniment. A global ranking of persons therefore carries a stronger burden than a local ranking of claims on a particular resource.

8.2 Priority Relations under Declared Normative Bases

Let $\mathcal{E}_t^\kappa(r)$ denote the set of eligible claims on a scarce resource or service r at stage t and resolution κ . For a declared normative basis ν , Paper VI represents priority through the partial relation in Equation 3.

$$\preceq_t^{\nu, \kappa}(r) \subseteq \mathcal{E}_t^\kappa(r) \times \mathcal{E}_t^\kappa(r), \quad (3)$$

where $\alpha \preceq_t^{\nu, \kappa}(r) \beta$ means that claim β has at least as strong a priority as claim α for r under the stated basis ν . Equation 3 is deliberately partial. Two claims can remain incomparable when the adopted basis supplies no warranted ordering, the evidence is insufficient, or several relevant criteria conflict without an accepted commensuration rule.

The relation should not be interpreted as a ranking of persons' worth. It orders resource-specific claims under an explicitly declared normative basis. A person whose claim has lower priority for one resource can have higher priority for another. The relation can also change when urgency, alternatives, evidence, or the resource itself changes.

8.3 Scarcity, Eligibility, and Endogenous Constraint

Scarcity can be exogenous, endogenous, or mixed. Exogenous scarcity arises when the relevant resource is genuinely limited within the decision horizon. Endogenous scarcity arises when institutional design, budget allocation, staffing rules, documentation demands, scheduling, or eligibility categories restrict supply or access. Mixed cases are common.

This distinction matters for justice because a priority rule can be locally defensible while the scarcity it manages is itself contestable. A volunteer team may reasonably triage limited interpretation hours during one shift while the institution's long-term underinvestment in language access remains a separate justice issue. An emergency shelter can face real bed scarcity tonight while a broader policy determines how many beds exist. Paper VI therefore records allocation justice and scarcity provenance as distinct questions.

Eligibility also precedes priority. A subject excluded from $\mathcal{E}_t^\kappa(r)$ never reaches the priority comparison. Section 16 will examine gatekeeping and classification directly. At the present stage, an application should record whether the focal dispute concerns eligibility, priority among eligible claims, or both.

8.4 Tie-Breaking, Randomization, and Procedural Burden

A partial priority relation can leave multiple claims tied or incomparable. Allocation then requires a second-order procedure. Possible procedures include queues, lotteries, rotation, case review, threshold rules, or another domain-specific mechanism. Paper VI does not assign a universal ordering among these procedures. Their justice depends on the stakes, available information, urgency, gaming risks, administrative burden, and the normative basis of the programme.

The separation between priority and tie-breaking is important. A first-come rule can be a tie-breaker among claims already judged comparable; it can also function as a substantive allocation principle when arrival time itself determines priority. Those uses carry different justificatory burdens. A lottery can protect against discretionary favoritism while ignoring morally relevant differences if used too early in the decision process.

Procedural justice therefore enters scarcity allocation at several points: construction of eligibility, collection of evidence, declaration of the priority basis, treatment of incomparable claims, explanation of decisions, and availability of correction when the underlying facts or classifications are wrong.

8.5 Priority Revision and Temporal Change

Scarcity decisions unfold through time. A claim can become more urgent, an alternative can appear, a resource can expand, or new evidence can change the comparison. Priority should therefore be revisable when the basis or evidence changes. Reassessment also requires attention to waiting burdens: a procedure that repeatedly postpones the same subjects can create a distributive history that is invisible in one-stage comparisons.

The status field σ_α in Equation 1 can record a claim as supported, contested, underdetermined, or reopened after such change. The priority relation in Equation 3 supplies a local allocation structure;

it does not erase the procedural, recognitional, epistemic, or relational conditions through which the ranking was produced.

9 Hearing, Refusal, Contestation, and Procedural Revision

This section deepens the procedural dimension introduced in Section 6. Its role is to specify how hearing, refusal, contestation, and revision can function as distinct justice protections within an aid procedure. The objective is to evaluate procedural responsiveness without presuming identical decision authority among participants. The analysis uses the inherited standing architecture together with the typed justice-claim record.

9.1 Hearing as Structured Uptake

A hearing route has at least three components: an opportunity to present relevant material, a procedure that receives and interprets that material, and a defined relation between the material and the subsequent decision or reasons. Mere presence at a meeting satisfies only the first component. A subject can speak while the procedure supplies no route for the contribution to affect the record, decision, or review.

The justice burden therefore concerns structured uptake. Adequate uptake can include recording disagreement, responding to reasons, correcting factual errors, explaining why a request cannot be accepted, or transmitting the issue to a position with relevant authority. The appropriate form depends on the decision. A low-stakes scheduling choice and a decision concerning shelter, medical access, or public disclosure can require different procedural protections.

Ceva's account of interactive justice is relevant to this emphasis on fair hearing and procedural equality in value conflict [2]. Paper VI applies no automatic transfer from political conflict to volunteer aid. It treats fair hearing as one candidate procedural burden whose concrete form must be justified in relation to urgency, competence, dependency, and third-party interests.

9.2 Refusal as a Typed Procedural Capacity

Refusal can concern an offered intervention, a disclosure request, publicity, a role assignment, continued participation, a proposed representative, or a particular procedure. These refusals need not have the same normative force. An application should state the object of refusal, the subject who possesses the relevant standing, the consequences of refusal, and any justified limits.

Paper I supplies refusal as a typed authorization-related element. Paper VI evaluates whether the practical conditions of refusal are just. A nominal right to refuse carries limited protection when refusal predictably threatens access to unrelated basic support, produces retaliation, or requires information unavailable to the subject. Conversely, a subject's refusal can be constrained when immediate action is justified by a separately defended emergency, incapacity, or protection rule. Such constraints require explicit reasons and an account of who bears responsibility for their use.

Refusal also has temporal consequences. A refusal today can be stored, reinterpreted, withdrawn, or applied too broadly tomorrow. Justice therefore requires attention to the scope and persistence of refusal records, especially when automated or institutional systems retain them beyond the context in which they were expressed.

9.3 Contestation and Reason-Giving

Contestation concerns the capacity to challenge a factual premise, classification, normative basis, allocation decision, representative, or procedural route. It can occur before decision, during implementation, or after consequences become visible. A contestation route is stronger when the challenged issue reaches a position capable of revising the relevant object and when the claimant can obtain reasons responsive to the actual challenge.

Reason-giving serves several functions. It can make the operative criterion visible, reveal factual disagreement, identify whether a priority rule or eligibility rule produced the outcome, and create a record for later review. Reasons can also be perfunctory or inaccessible. A justice assessment should therefore examine their content, comprehensibility, timing, and relation to possible revision.

Tyler's empirical distinction between procedural fairness and favorable outcome reinforces the analytical need to measure process separately from result [5]. In Paper VI, the normative burden remains independent: a clear explanation of an unjust rule does not make the rule just, while an unfavorable decision can still emerge from a defensible process.

9.4 Revision, Review, and Independence

Revision is the capacity of a procedure to alter a decision, classification, record, allocation, or remedy when the relevant grounds are satisfied. Review is one possible route to revision. The two should be distinguished because some systems offer review that can confirm or explain a decision while lacking authority to change it.

The standing types inherited from Paper II permit separate claim, review, authorization, enforcement, and appeal positions. Justice analysis asks whether those positions are allocated and organized defensibly. Review by the same actor can be appropriate for rapid factual correction; higher-stakes or conflict-laden decisions can require a more independent route. Independence is consequently a graded institutional property whose relevance depends on the risk of self-review, retaliation, informational closure, and concentration of authority.

Procedural revision can also be prospective. Recurrent complaints can justify changing a form, translation practice, eligibility rule, or allocation procedure rather than correcting cases one at a time. Such institutional learning links individual claims to later structural justice without assuming that recurrence alone proves systemic injustice.

9.5 Emergency Compression and Later Procedural Recovery

Urgency can compress hearing, explanation, refusal, and review. A time-critical intervention can justifiably rely on a narrower procedure than a routine service. The justice burden then shifts partly to the conditions of compression: the emergency should be adequately specified, the constrained procedure should remain proportionate to the urgency, and later explanation or review should become available when the conditions permit.

This temporal structure prevents emergency procedure from becoming a permanent default. Once urgency decreases, the justification for compressed participation can weaken. The relevant justice question is therefore historical: whether the procedure expands again when the reason for compression no longer applies. Sections 20 and 22 will generalize this pattern through justice trajectories, retained effects, and verification.

10 Recognition, Status, and Relational Standing

This section develops the recognitional dimension of the justice profile. Its role is to distinguish descriptive recognition processes inherited from Papers II–III from normative claims about status subordination, peer standing, and institutional classification. The objective is to identify when recognition becomes justice-relevant and what kinds of remedy follow from different recognitional mechanisms.

10.1 Recognition Records and Justice Claims

Recognition can describe acknowledgment, classification, reputation, role attribution, standing, public visibility, or institutional status. Papers II–III already represent how these records can arise and become historically consequential. Paper VI adds a normative question: does the operative recognition structure organize subjects' standing in a defensible way?

A positive label can still be justice-relevant when it narrows agency. A recipient repeatedly described as “vulnerable” can receive protection while also being excluded from decisions. A volunteer celebrated as exceptionally self-sacrificing can acquire symbolic standing while the institution normalizes unsustainable burdens. A translator can be treated as a neutral conduit even when interpretive judgment is central to the task. The justice analysis therefore examines what the recognition does within the relation, not only whether the label appears favorable or unfavorable.

Fraser’s status model is especially useful because it treats misrecognition as institutionalized status subordination and links recognition to parity of participation [3]. Paper VI uses that insight to ask how classifications and value patterns organize participation in aid while retaining the programme’s own typed records of standing, role, and public recognition.

10.2 Status Subordination and Participation Effects

A recognitional injustice has stronger support when a status pattern affects practical participation, access, credibility, role, or institutional treatment. Hurt feelings can be morally important, but the status analysis developed here focuses on relational and institutional consequences that can be traced through the aid procedure.

Status subordination can appear through infantilization, stigmatizing eligibility categories, assumptions of incompetence, moralized dependency, racialized or gendered role expectations, idealization of self-sacrifice, or classifications that make one subject’s interests appear naturally secondary. The present paper does not infer such patterns from isolated wording. It requires a declared comparison, evidence of uptake or recurrence, and an account of the consequences for standing or participation.

Recognition can also be uneven across contexts. A subject can hold respected standing within one volunteer network while being institutionally discounted in another. A classification can provide access to a service while producing stigma in public manifestation. Recognitional justice therefore remains resolution- and context-sensitive.

10.3 Relational Standing and Peer Participation

Relational standing concerns how participants are positioned toward one another in the justice-relevant interaction. It includes who is treated as capable of giving reasons, raising objections, interpreting experience, revising a record, or participating in decisions that affect them. This standing is related to, but distinct from, the procedural standing types inherited from Paper II. A person can possess formal claim standing while still being socially positioned as someone whose claim is presumptively less serious.

Anderson’s relational egalitarianism provides an adjacent normative orientation because it directs attention to relations free from oppression, domination, hierarchy, and condescension among social equals [1]. Paper VI does not translate this into a requirement of identical roles. Volunteer aid can involve differentiated expertise, responsibility, and material position. The justice burden concerns whether those differences are organized consistently with defensible standing rather than with subordination.

10.4 Recognition, Visibility, and Publicity

Public recognition changes the audience and durability of a status claim. A private classification used for case coordination differs from a public portrayal in fundraising, media, reporting, or institutional celebration. Paper V supplies a manifestation architecture for visibility and exposure; Paper VI evaluates who controls the representation, who receives symbolic credit, whose vulnerability becomes public, and what routes exist for correction or withdrawal.

Publicity can strengthen recognition by making previously ignored subjects or contributions visible. It can also stabilize a narrow identity or allocate symbolic credit away from the subjects whose knowledge and labor made the intervention possible. Section 17 will examine credit and symbolic allocation directly. The present section establishes the recognitional basis for that later analysis.

10.5 Recognitional Repair

Recognitional remedies should target the mechanism that sustains the status problem. A contested label may require correction or withdrawal. A role relation may require redistribution of decision authority. A public portrayal may require consent-sensitive revision. An institutional category may require redesign if it repeatedly subordinates the subjects it organizes. A credibility problem may instead require epistemic repair of the kind developed in Section 11.

Repair can remain incomplete when the original record retains effects. A corrected public classification can continue to shape reputation, searchability, access, or self-reconstruction. Paper VI therefore treats recognitional justice historically: remedy changes the later relation while provenance of the earlier status remains available for accountability and assessment.

11 Epistemic Justice in Testimony, Credibility, and Interpretation

This section develops the epistemic dimension of relational justice. Its role is to evaluate how aid relations distribute credibility, interpretive resources, access to relevant information, and opportunities to contribute knowledge to decisions. The analysis builds on Paper I's subject-relative epistemic architecture and Paper II's route-sensitive reconstruction while using Fricker's framework as an adjacent normative resource.

11.1 Epistemic Access and Epistemic Standing

Epistemic access concerns what information, manifestations, records, or interpretive resources are available to a subject. Epistemic standing concerns whether the subject's contribution is treated as entitled to uptake within a relevant knowledge practice. The two can diverge. A recipient can understand a condition well while lacking an institutional route through which that knowledge affects a decision. A professional can possess formal epistemic authority while lacking local knowledge of the recipient's circumstances.

Justice analysis should also distinguish epistemic standing from procedural standing. A subject may have the right to speak yet be treated as presumptively unreliable. Conversely, a technically respected expert may have high credibility without legitimate authority to determine the recipient's values or acceptable trade-offs. The justice profile therefore retains epistemic and procedural claims separately.

11.2 Testimonial Credibility and Credibility Deficits

Fricker's account of testimonial injustice identifies a wrong in which prejudice causes a speaker to receive an unjust credibility deficit [4]. Aid settings can create analogous burdens when testimony is discounted because a speaker is classified as dependent, distressed, foreign, young, old, cognitively impaired, ungrateful, nonprofessional, or otherwise assigned reduced epistemic standing.

Application requires care. Disagreement with testimony does not itself establish epistemic injustice. Credibility can reasonably vary with evidence, expertise, memory, conflict of interest, or the type of proposition at issue. A justice claim should identify the credibility practice, the suspected distortion, the relevant comparison, and the practical consequence. Recurrent patterns, institutional rules, and route-specific differences can provide stronger evidence than one contested judgment.

Credibility can also be inflated. An institution can give excessive weight to professionals, senior volunteers, donors, or public representatives. Such inflation can redistribute epistemic influence and indirectly produce deficits for others even when it is not classified as testimonial injustice in the strict source-specific sense. Paper VI records that mechanism without broadening Fricker's term beyond its warranted use.

11.3 Interpretive Resources and Hermeneutical Exclusion

Fricker also develops hermeneutical injustice around structural gaps in collective interpretive resources that place some subjects at an unfair disadvantage in making experience intelligible [4]. Volunteer aid can encounter related problems when available categories fail to represent a subject's experience, when an institution recognizes only administratively convenient descriptions, or when translation lacks terms for the relevant social or bodily meaning.

Interpretive exclusion can occur even when a subject is believed. A recipient can be treated as sincere while the available forms offer no category for the actual need. A volunteer can accurately report recurring boundary pressure while the organization lacks a vocabulary for unpaid emotional labor. A translator can perceive ambiguity that the form requires to be rendered as a single categorical answer.

The justice burden is therefore partly infrastructural. Institutions can need mechanisms for revising categories, recording uncertainty, accepting narrative material, consulting affected groups, or preserving alternative interpretations when forced classification would erase relevant differences.

11.4 Translation, Mediation, and Route-Sensitive Knowledge

Paper II shows that knowledge can travel through third positions such as translators, mediators, witnesses, or brokers. Epistemic justice requires attention to those routes. A translated statement can preserve propositional content while changing tone, uncertainty, social meaning, or perceived credibility. A mediator can widen mutual understanding while also filtering which claims reach an institution.

The relevant question is not whether mediation is perfectly neutral. Many epistemic routes involve interpretation. The justice burden concerns transparency about the route, opportunities to correct material distortion, recognition of interpretive labor, and procedures for disagreement when several translations or interpretations remain plausible.

This route-sensitive view also applies to technical systems. Forms, scoring rules, databases, and automated classifications can mediate testimony by determining what can be entered, which uncertainty is retained, and which categories become actionable. Later heterogeneous-subject and governance papers can extend this analysis to AI-assisted interpretation and adjudication.

11.5 Epistemic Repair and Participation in Knowledge Production

Epistemic repair can involve more than increasing a speaker's credibility score. Depending on the mechanism, repair may require translation, access to records, correction rights, participatory category design, interpretive support, independent expertise, uncertainty notation, or changes in who controls the epistemic route. The appropriate remedy should follow the diagnosed mechanism.

A stronger epistemic-justice architecture also asks who participates in producing the knowledge on which aid decisions depend. Recipients and frontline volunteers can possess situated knowledge unavailable to centralized decision makers; institutions can possess comparative and technical knowledge unavailable locally. Justice does not require treating these knowledge forms as interchangeable. It requires a defensible procedure for bringing them into relation, recording disagreement, and assigning appropriate standing to their distinct domains.

12 Relational Equality in Dependency and Hierarchical Aid Relations

This section develops the narrower relational dimension of Paper VI's justice profile. Its role is to evaluate how dependency, hierarchy, authority, expertise, and control of alternatives organize subjects' standing toward one another. The objective is to specify relational equality without equating justice with symmetry, identical role, or equal possession of resources.

12.1 Relational Equality and Differentiated Roles

Aid relations frequently begin from material or functional asymmetry. One subject may possess resources, mobility, institutional access, professional knowledge, language competence, emergency capacity, or legal authority that another currently lacks. These differences can justify differentiated roles in a local procedure. Relational equality concerns the normative organization of those differences rather than their immediate disappearance.

Anderson's relational egalitarianism is an important adjacent precedent because it shifts egalitarian attention toward relations of oppression, domination, hierarchy, and condescension among persons who should stand as social equals [1]. Paper VI adopts this relational orientation while retaining an aid-specific question: which asymmetries are functionally justified, how are they bounded, and what protections preserve the affected subject's standing within them?

Relational equality can therefore coexist with unequal expertise, unequal responsibility, and unequal resource control. The relevant safeguards can include reason-giving, bounded authority, refusal where appropriate, review, access to alternatives, recognition of the subject's own knowledge, and routes for changing the relation as circumstances change.

12.2 Dependency and the Governance of Essential Access

Dependency becomes especially justice-relevant when one position controls access to goods or capacities that another subject cannot readily replace. Food, shelter, translation, mobility, medication, legal information, communication infrastructure, and institutional sponsorship can create such dependence. The existence of dependency does not settle the justice verdict. Its governance does.

A dependency relation warrants closer scrutiny when the dependent subject faces severe costs for disagreement, refusal, exit, or transfer; when the provider can change terms unilaterally; when relevant information is withheld; or when alternatives are formally available but practically inaccessible. These mechanisms connect relational justice to the exercisable-standing analysis of Section 6 and the procedural protections of Section 9.

Dependency can also be reciprocal and domain-specific. A volunteer may control access to a service while depending on the recipient's local knowledge, consent, cooperation, or language. An institution may depend on unpaid volunteers while controlling their credentials and schedules. Relational justice therefore benefits from typed dependency records rather than one global ranking of who depends on whom.

12.3 Hierarchy, Authority, and Contestability

Hierarchy concerns an ordered relation of role, authority, status, or control. Some hierarchical structures can serve legitimate coordination, especially where technical responsibility, safeguarding, or emergency command is required. Justice analysis asks whether the hierarchy's domain is specified, its authority is connected to a defensible basis, and affected subjects possess routes for contestation and correction.

A hierarchy becomes more concerning when authority expands beyond its justified domain. Clinical expertise concerning treatment options does not automatically confer authority over a subject's broader life plan. Organizational responsibility for resource allocation does not automatically confer authority over public representation. Volunteer seniority does not automatically confer interpretive privilege over recipients' experiences. Domain typing therefore protects relational equality by limiting role-based authority to the object for which it is justified.

Contestability is central because hierarchy can remain practically bounded when decisions are reviewable, reasons are available, conflicts of interest can be challenged, and authority can be revised. Contestability does not require continuous adversarial procedure. It requires meaningful routes through which relevant authority can be questioned under appropriate conditions.

12.4 Subordination, Condescension, and Relational Goods

Subordination concerns a relation in which one subject's standing is systematically placed beneath another's in a justice-relevant domain. Condescension can be one manifestation of that structure, especially when help is organized around presumed inferiority. Warmth, generosity, or personal affection can coexist with subordination, just as formal distance can coexist with equal standing.

This distinction matters for volunteer aid because benevolent motivation can obscure relational structure. A helper can sincerely seek another's good while retaining unilateral control over interpretation, publicity, or continuation. The justice claim then concerns the organization of standing and authority rather than the sincerity of care.

Relational goods such as trust, solidarity, gratitude, and mutual recognition can support just relations when they widen participation and sustain reliable cooperation. They can also create pressure when access to support appears conditional on gratitude, loyalty, emotional closeness, or role compliance. Paper VI therefore treats relational goods as valuable but non-dispositive evidence within justice assessment.

12.5 Relational Equality as a Cross-Dimensional Achievement

The relational dimension cannot be evaluated in isolation from the other four dimensions. A materially asymmetric relation can preserve equal standing through strong procedural, recognitional, and epistemic protections. A formally equal procedure can coexist with relational inequality when one party controls essential resources, defines the relevant categories, and determines whose testimony counts. Relational equality is therefore a cross-dimensional achievement whose local diagnosis remains typed rather than scalar.

Within the present framework, stronger relational-equality credentials arise when differentiated roles have a defensible scope; dependency is governed through adequate information, alternatives, and revision routes; authority is bounded and contestable; recognition does not systematically subordinate; and epistemic participation gives affected subjects appropriate standing in knowledge production. These conditions remain defeasible and context-sensitive. They supply a bridge to Sections 13–18, where representation, indebtedness, volunteer burdens, gatekeeping, symbolic allocation, and structural injustice complicate the relation further.

13 Representation, Surrogate Voice, and Decision Authority

This section examines justice claims that arise when one person, group, or institution speaks, decides, interprets, or negotiates on behalf of another. Its role is to distinguish representation as a practical necessity from representation as a transfer of standing. The objective is to identify the conditions under which surrogate voice can widen access while preserving the affected subject's own authority, disagreement, and routes for revision.

13.1 Representation as a Typed Relation

Volunteer aid frequently involves interpreters, family members, advocates, case workers, peer supporters, guardians, clinicians, community leaders, or organizational staff who convey claims across institutional boundaries. The justice-relevant object is therefore a typed relation among at least three positions: the represented subject, the representative, and the decision-bearing audience. The relation also has an object. A person may authorize another to translate a request while retaining direct authority over consent, publicity, treatment preference, or complaint.

The claim record in Equation 1 already separates claimant c_α from affected subject i_α . Section 13 adds a substantive interpretation of that distinction. A representative may advance a claim without becoming the source of the represented subject's normative standing. Justice analysis should therefore specify the domain of representation, its basis, the available evidence of authorization or necessity, and

the routes through which the represented subject can confirm, modify, supplement, or contest the representation.

Representation can be explicit, tacit, emergency-based, role-based, or institutionally assigned. These bases carry different burdens. Explicit authorization can still be narrow or revocable. Emergency representation can be justified by temporary incapacity while creating a later obligation to restore direct participation. Role-based representation can facilitate access while remaining contestable when the role holder's interests diverge from those of the represented subject.

13.2 Surrogate Voice and Epistemic Transformation

Surrogate voice is rarely a transparent transmission channel. Translation, summarization, categorization, form filling, professional vocabulary, and institutional templates can transform what becomes legible to a decision process. A representative can add context, suppress ambiguity, intensify urgency, soften conflict, or recast experience into recognized administrative categories. These transformations may be helpful and still require epistemic accounting.

The relevant justice burden is therefore twofold. First, the represented subject should have appropriate opportunities to affect how their account is conveyed when circumstances permit. Second, the receiving institution should remain alert to the difference between the representative's reconstruction and the represented subject's own testimony. Section 11 supplies the credibility and interpretive-resource analysis; the present section adds the institutional question of who acquires authority to speak across that interface.

A representative can also possess knowledge unavailable to the represented subject, including procedural knowledge, technical vocabulary, or access to records. Justice does not require suppressing that knowledge. It requires keeping the sources and scopes of different epistemic contributions distinguishable so that professional competence does not silently become authority over the subject's values, preferences, or self-description.

13.3 Decision Authority and Domain Boundaries

Speaking for another and deciding for another are distinct relations. An interpreter may convey a preference without deciding its content. An advocate may challenge an allocation without holding allocation authority. A guardian or emergency decision maker may possess legally or institutionally recognized decision authority within a defined domain. Each relation therefore requires its own standing analysis.

Decision authority becomes justice-relevant through scope, basis, duration, reviewability, conflict of interest, and the availability of less restrictive alternatives. Authority can be justified locally while remaining excessive outside the object for which it was granted. The domain-typing principle from Section 12 applies directly: competence or authority in one domain supplies no automatic warrant in another.

The strongest justice concern arises when representation and decision authority accumulate in the same position while the affected subject loses access to independent information, alternative representatives, or review. Such concentration can make errors difficult to detect and disagreement costly to express. Separation of functions, documentation of reasons, periodic review, and accessible replacement routes can therefore serve as institutional safeguards.

13.4 Representation under Limited or Fluctuating Capacity

Some aid relations involve children, persons with fluctuating decisional capacity, acute crisis, severe communication barriers, or other conditions in which direct participation varies over time and across objects. Paper VI treats capacity as task- and context-sensitive unless a governing legal framework specifies otherwise. The justice question concerns how much direct participation is possible for the focal decision, what supports can increase that participation, and how surrogate authority changes as the person's capacities or circumstances change.

Supported decision-making, accessible communication, staged explanation, trusted assistance, and delayed decision where feasible can widen direct participation. Where surrogate decision remains necessary, the represented subject can still possess standing through preferences, prior commitments, affective responses, dissent, or later review. Justice analysis should therefore avoid a binary model in which a subject either possesses full direct authority or disappears from the normative relation.

13.5 Representation as a Revisable Justice Arrangement

Representation is best treated as a revisable arrangement whose legitimacy depends on continued fit between scope, basis, subject participation, and institutional need. A representation that was justified during crisis can become excessive after conditions change. A representative who was initially trusted can later face conflict of interest. A represented subject can acquire new communicative resources or request a different representative.

Accordingly, representation claims should remain visible in the multidimensional profile of Equation 2. They can involve procedural access, recognitional standing, epistemic authority, and relational equality simultaneously. The central justice achievement is therefore neither maximal directness nor maximal delegation. It is a defensible distribution of voice and decision authority that remains responsive to the represented subject's evolving standing.

14 Reciprocity, Gratitude, Debt, and Indebtedness

This section analyzes the justice significance of gratitude and indebtedness in aid relations. Its role is to distinguish valuable relational responses from obligations that become attached to receiving help. The objective is to identify when gratitude, reciprocity, loyalty, repayment, publicity, or continued relational availability acquire coercive or status-shaping force.

14.1 Gratitude as a Relational Response

Gratitude can express acknowledgment, appreciation, recognition of effort, or the value of a relationship. These forms can enrich aid without functioning as payment. Justice analysis therefore begins by separating gratitude from an enforceable debt. A recipient can value assistance deeply while retaining freedom to refuse future contact, criticize the helper, seek another provider, contest publicity, or decline a requested return favor.

The relevant distinction is practical and institutional. Gratitude becomes justice-relevant when access to future support, social standing, credibility, or safety depends on performing the expected appreciative response. The same words or gestures can have different meanings under different dependency structures. A ceremonial thank-you among peers can be benign; an institutionally expected public testimonial can become burdensome when refusal threatens access or marks the recipient as ungrateful.

14.2 Reciprocity and Heterogeneous Return

Reciprocity in volunteer aid rarely requires return in the same currency. Recipients can contribute knowledge, trust, coordination, care for others, community access, feedback, or later support. Volunteers can receive learning, belonging, recognition, experience, or meaning. These heterogeneous returns can make a relation mutually valuable while material flows remain asymmetric.

Justice analysis should specify whether reciprocity is descriptive, aspirational, or obligatory. Descriptive reciprocity records actual mutual contribution. Aspirational reciprocity identifies a valued relational form. Obligatory reciprocity asserts that some return is owed and therefore requires an independent normative basis. Conflating these three senses can convert appreciation into debt or treat dependency as moral deficiency.

The responsive-participation analysis developed in Paper V is relevant here as a descriptive interface. A person can participate meaningfully without matching the helper's material contribution. Paper VI adds the normative point that unequal material exchange does not by itself establish indebtedness.

14.3 Debt, Obligation, and Scope

A debt claim should identify its object, basis, bearer, duration, and discharge conditions. Financial debt, contractual obligation, fiduciary duty, moral gratitude, relational loyalty, and informal expectations belong to different normative categories. Volunteer aid can generate some obligations, such as returning borrowed property or honoring an agreed confidentiality rule, without generating a generalized obligation of obedience or loyalty.

The claim architecture of Equation 1 is useful here because it forces the proposed obligation into a typed object. An assertion that "the recipient owes us" is normatively under-specified until the alleged debt, basis, and remedy are stated. This discipline is especially important when the helper or institution controls scarce resources, public narratives, or future access.

A justice concern becomes stronger when the alleged debt expands across domains. Material assistance can be invoked to demand political support, public testimony, emotional intimacy, volunteer labor, disclosure of personal information, or tolerance of mistreatment. Such cross-domain expansion requires separate justification for each object.

14.4 Indebtedness under Dependency

Indebtedness can arise as a subjective experience even when no formal debt exists. A recipient may feel unable to criticize, leave, or refuse because assistance appears generous, scarce, or personally costly to the helper. The justice relevance of this experience depends on how it interacts with actual institutional conditions. Feelings of indebtedness can remain private; they can also be reinforced through reminders of sacrifice, public praise of benefactors, selective future access, or expectations of loyalty.

Dependency therefore changes the practical meaning of gratitude. Where alternatives are scarce, an ostensibly voluntary return gesture can carry substantial pressure. The relational-equality analysis of Section 12 and the exercisable-standing analysis of Section 6 should be applied together: the question is whether disagreement, refusal, and exit remain meaningfully exercisable in the presence of gratitude expectations.

14.5 Gratitude without Subordination

A just aid relation can make room for gratitude while protecting its non-compulsory character. Institutional safeguards can include separating service access from testimonial participation, avoiding public gratitude requirements, clarifying that complaints do not threaten eligibility, and ensuring that volunteer recognition does not depend on recipients performing appreciation.

This formulation also protects volunteers. A volunteer can value recognition without having to extract gratitude from recipients. Organizations can recognize volunteer labor through transparent internal practices, workload support, supervision, and institutional acknowledgment. Section 15 develops that justice burden directly.

15 Justice toward Volunteers and the Distribution of Support Burdens

This section turns the justice analysis toward volunteers and other support providers. Its role is to prevent the recipient-facing orientation of aid ethics from making volunteer labor, exposure, risk, emotional burden, and institutional dependency analytically invisible. The objective is to treat volunteers as justice-bearing subjects while preserving the distinct vulnerabilities of those receiving support.

15.1 Volunteer Standing within Aid Institutions

Volunteer status does not erase claims to fair procedure, information, safety, recognition, or contestability. Volunteers can occupy a structurally weaker position than paid staff while simultaneously possessing situational authority over recipients. These directions of asymmetry should be analyzed separately. A volunteer can be institutionally subordinate and recipient-facing powerful at the same time.

The multidimensional profile of Equation 2 therefore applies to volunteer-facing arrangements as well. Distributive questions concern workload, time, risk, reimbursement, and access to resources. Procedural questions concern scheduling, supervision, complaints, role changes, and removal. Recognition questions concern status and symbolic credit. Epistemic questions concern whether volunteers' local knowledge is heard. Relational questions concern hierarchy, dependence, and contestability within the organization.

15.2 Unpaid Labor and Burden Distribution

Unpaid contribution can be voluntary and valuable while still generating justice questions about burden distribution. Relevant burdens include travel, preparation, waiting, emotional exposure, physical risk, administrative work, translation, digital availability, training, and opportunity cost. Organizations can also shift tasks from paid staff to volunteers in ways that change labor relations without changing the formal label of the activity.

Paper VI does not presume that unpaid work is unjust. The relevant questions concern authorization, transparency, voluntariness, role scope, access to reimbursement or support, and whether essential organizational functions become dependent on uncompensated labor without corresponding voice or protection. Repeated concentration of difficult or undesirable tasks among particular volunteers can also create distributive histories that are invisible in one-off assignment records.

15.3 Risk, Safety, and Duty of Care

Volunteer roles can involve physical, psychological, reputational, legal, informational, and safeguarding risks. Justice analysis asks who identifies these risks, who bears them, what training and protective resources are available, and whether refusal of unsafe tasks carries penalties. Risk distribution should also include uncertainty: volunteers may enter situations whose demands were poorly specified in advance.

A defensible arrangement therefore connects role assignment to adequate information, competence support, supervision, escalation routes, and the ability to step back when circumstances exceed the agreed scope. These protections serve both volunteers and recipients because unsupported volunteers can inadvertently transfer unmanaged risks into the aid relation.

15.4 Emotional Labor, Availability, and Boundary Costs

Support work often requires listening, patience, emotional regulation, responsiveness, and management of one's own reactions. These demands can be meaningful parts of volunteering. They become justice-relevant when organizations treat indefinite emotional availability as costless, distribute difficult cases without support, or interpret boundary setting as moral failure.

The psychoanalytic position analysis of Paper IV helps distinguish subjective investment from institutional burden. A volunteer's strong identification with helping can increase willingness to accept excessive demands; institutional justice still requires independent attention to workload, supervision, and exit. Conversely, a volunteer who requests limits need not be interpreted as less caring or less committed.

15.5 Voice, Recognition, and Volunteer Exit

Volunteer recognition should extend beyond ceremonial appreciation. Meaningful standing can include access to information, routes for raising concerns, participation in relevant role design, explanation of

decisions, and protection against retaliation. Recognition through awards or public praise can coexist with weak procedural standing; the dimensions should therefore remain distinct.

Exit is especially important because volunteer roles are often described as freely chosen. Formal freedom to leave can obscure costs created by guilt, team dependency, reputational pressure, credential expectations, or lack of replacement. A just volunteer system should make role modification, temporary withdrawal, and exit practically available while documenting the institutional consequences of repeated understaffing and addressing those consequences at the organizational level.

Justice toward volunteers therefore belongs inside the same relational field as justice toward recipients. The two sets of claims can conflict, and Section 19 will address such conflicts explicitly. Their coexistence prevents the framework from treating either side as an inexhaustible resource for the other.

16 Third Positions, Gatekeeping, Eligibility, and Institutional Classification

This section examines justice at institutional entry points. Its role is to distinguish the construction of eligibility from the later ordering of already eligible claims. The objective is to analyze how third positions, classification systems, documentation requirements, referral channels, and screening practices determine who becomes legible to aid in the first place.

16.1 Eligibility before Priority

Section 8 defines a partial priority relation over the eligible claim set $\mathcal{E}_t^k(r)$. The construction of that set is itself a justice problem. A priority system can be internally fair among admitted claims while excluding relevant subjects through eligibility rules that are poorly justified, inaccessible, or epistemically distorted.

Eligibility criteria can refer to residence, diagnosis, age, income, legal status, referral source, documentation, risk category, programme fit, or another institutional condition. Each criterion therefore needs a stated relation to the purpose and resource of the programme. Administrative convenience can be relevant, yet convenience alone does not settle the justice of exclusion when the excluded subjects bear serious unmet needs.

16.2 Gatekeepers and Third Positions

Gatekeeping is performed through persons, offices, algorithms, forms, databases, referral networks, and professional roles. Paper II's third-position architecture is useful because access can be altered by actors who are neither the immediate helper nor the prospective recipient. These positions can authenticate claims, translate categories, sponsor applications, delay entry, or determine which cases receive human review.

Justice analysis should therefore identify the gatekeeping function, the authority supporting it, the evidence it uses, its error-correction route, and its practical accessibility. A gatekeeper can protect scarce resources and safeguard vulnerable persons. The same position can also become an opaque bottleneck when criteria are hidden, discretionary, inconsistently applied, or difficult to appeal.

16.3 Classification and Administrative Legibility

Institutional aid requires categories. Categories coordinate resources, define programme boundaries, aggregate information, and support accountability. Classification becomes justice-relevant when the category determines access, status, credibility, publicity, or future opportunity. The central question is therefore how administrative legibility is produced and what forms of experience become difficult to express within the available categories.

A person can meet the substantive purpose of a programme while failing a documentary proxy. Another can satisfy the formal category while facing circumstances the category does not capture. These

mismatches connect gatekeeping to epistemic justice because classification systems define which evidence counts and which narratives remain intelligible.

Categories can also acquire recognitional consequences. Labels such as “vulnerable,” “high risk,” “non-compliant,” “independent,” or “priority case” can affect status beyond the immediate allocation decision. Justice analysis should therefore trace category use across distribution, procedure, recognition, and later institutional records.

16.4 Error, Appeal, and Reclassification

Eligibility systems require error-sensitive procedures because mistakes can occur through incomplete data, outdated records, language barriers, technical failure, or contested interpretation. A defensible system therefore benefits from understandable criteria, notice of exclusion, routes for submitting additional evidence, correction of records, and review by a position capable of revising the original decision.

Reclassification should respond to temporal change. Eligibility conditions can shift, and categories can become obsolete as programmes evolve. Historical records remain important because repeated exclusion can accumulate burdens even after a later reclassification corrects the current status.

16.5 Eligibility Justice and Scarcity Governance

Eligibility and priority interact but should remain analytically separate. Eligibility determines which claims enter the comparison field. Priority orders some of those claims under a declared basis. Tie-breaking resolves some cases that remain equal or incomparable. Combining these stages into one opaque score makes it difficult to identify whether exclusion arose from programme scope, evidential failure, normative priority, or procedural tie-breaking.

The typed architecture of Paper VI therefore favors staged diagnosis. A subject can possess a strong justice claim concerning eligibility even when the eventual priority of the claim remains uncertain. Conversely, widening eligibility without addressing scarcity can create long waiting lists and new distributive burdens. Institutional justice requires attention to both boundaries and downstream capacity.

17 Publicity, Credit, and Symbolic Allocation

This section examines the distribution of visibility, narrative ownership, attribution, prestige, gratitude, and reputational benefit generated by aid. Its role is to treat symbolic outcomes as justice-relevant without collapsing them into material distribution or aesthetic presentation. The objective is to identify who becomes visible, who receives credit, who bears exposure, and who controls the public account of the relation.

17.1 Symbolic Goods and Burdens

Aid can generate symbolic goods for volunteers, organizations, donors, professionals, and recipients. These include recognition, prestige, legitimacy, institutional reputation, narrative centrality, credentials, and public trust. Publicity can also impose burdens through stigma, privacy loss, simplification, unwanted gratitude expectations, or durable digital exposure.

These goods and burdens have distributive dimensions because they are unevenly allocated. They also interact with recognitional and relational dimensions because visibility can define status and authority. Paper V supplies a descriptive analysis of publicity and presentation form; Paper VI asks which allocations of visibility and narrative control are normatively defensible.

17.2 Credit for Collective Support

Volunteer aid is often produced through distributed contribution. A visible helper can depend on translators, coordinators, recipient knowledge, family care, institutional infrastructure, donors, and prior com-

munity work. Credit allocation therefore requires attention to provenance. Concentrating symbolic credit on the most visible actor can obscure less visible labor and reproduce hierarchy inside the support system.

Justice does not require equal publicity for every contributor. Different contributions can justify different forms of acknowledgment, and some participants may prefer anonymity. The burden is to explain how credit is allocated, whose preferences matter, and whether symbolic recognition tracks contribution, responsibility, authorship, or another declared basis.

17.3 Recipient Visibility and Narrative Authority

Recipients can be invited to appear in reports, fundraising materials, media, ceremonies, research outputs, or volunteer recognition events. Such visibility can support advocacy, accountability, and public understanding. It can also transform personal experience into organizational evidence or reputational capital.

A justice-sensitive publicity practice therefore distinguishes consent to receive support from consent to publicity, and consent to one use from consent to indefinite reuse. It also considers whether refusal affects future access, whether the person understands the likely audience, whether identifying details can be reduced, and whether the subject has meaningful influence over the narrative in which they appear.

Narrative authority can remain distributed. An organization may accurately report its actions while the recipient retains authority over personal experience and self-description. When relevant, disagreement between these accounts should remain visible, with unilateral institutional authorship treated as one contestable account among the available records.

17.4 Public Recognition, Gratitude, and Institutional Legitimacy

Public gratitude can increase volunteer morale and institutional legitimacy. It can also create asymmetry when organizations repeatedly appear as benefactors while recipients appear primarily through need. Section 14 established that gratitude should remain distinct from debt. The present section adds a public dimension: gratitude performances can become part of an institution's symbolic economy.

Justice analysis therefore asks whether recipients can decline participation, whether credit narratives acknowledge collective and recipient contribution, and whether publicity hides contested aspects of the programme. Institutional legitimacy gained through selected success stories carries a stronger burden when adverse outcomes, complaints, or excluded groups remain systematically invisible.

17.5 Symbolic Allocation as a Cross-Dimensional Problem

Symbolic allocation links several justice dimensions at once. Public exposure can create a distributive burden, a recognitional status, an epistemic narrative, and a relational hierarchy. Credit can affect access to funding, career opportunity, institutional authority, and whose account is believed in later disputes. The justice profile in Equation 2 therefore permits one publicity practice to generate several typed claims without forcing them into a single symbolic-justice score.

The relevant remedy can also differ by dimension. Privacy protection, shared authorship, corrected attribution, explicit consent, anonymization, right of reply, or more balanced institutional reporting address different problems. A justice analysis should identify the specific object before selecting the remedy.

18 Local Aid within Structural Injustice

This section places dyadic and organizational aid within wider social structures. Its role is to prevent a locally well-governed relation from becoming the endpoint of justice analysis when recurring need is produced by institutions, markets, law, public policy, discrimination, conflict, or other durable arrangements. The objective is to connect local justice claims to structural conditions while preserving the distinct responsibilities and capacities of local actors.

18.1 Local Repair and Structural Production of Need

Volunteer aid often responds to conditions that local participants did not create: poverty, displacement, inaccessible services, language exclusion, discrimination, disaster, conflict, disability barriers, bureaucratic failure, or gaps in public provision. Local assistance can reduce suffering and widen agency while leaving the mechanisms that reproduce need largely unchanged.

Justice analysis therefore distinguishes relief of a local deprivation from transformation of the structure producing repeated deprivation. Both can be valuable. Their normative burdens differ. A volunteer may have strong reason to provide immediate help without possessing the authority or capacity to redesign the surrounding institution. Structural analysis enters when patterns across cases reveal recurrent mechanisms that shape who needs aid, who receives it, and which burdens are repeatedly externalized.

18.2 Compensation, Substitution, and Institutional Dependency on Aid

Volunteer systems can compensate for gaps in formal institutions. This can improve access and responsiveness. It can also create substitution effects when organizations or public systems begin to rely on volunteer labor for functions that would otherwise require stable staffing, public expenditure, or professional responsibility.

The justice question concerns how the local support arrangement interacts with the wider allocation of responsibility. A programme can be valuable at the interactional level while contributing to an institutional equilibrium in which unmet public obligations remain less visible. Conversely, insisting on structural reform while withholding available local assistance can shift immediate costs onto persons with the least capacity to bear them.

Paper VI therefore avoids a simple opposition between charity and justice. The relevant diagnosis asks what the local intervention repairs, what structural mechanisms remain active, whether the intervention changes incentives or visibility, and which actors possess realistic capacity to address the wider mechanism.

18.3 Structural Position and Unequal Exposure

Structural injustice can shape aid relations before any local decision occurs. Subjects enter with unequal access to documentation, language, mobility, legal status, income, social networks, digital infrastructure, and institutional familiarity. These conditions influence eligibility, evidence, priority, credibility, and exit. A formally identical rule can therefore produce systematically different practical burdens across structural positions.

This observation does not settle which structural theory should govern the analysis. It identifies an evidential requirement: when disparities recur across a class of cases, the analyst should test whether common upstream mechanisms help explain the pattern. Individualized explanations remain available where supported, while repeated patterned disadvantage raises the burden for treating each case as independent.

18.4 Responsibility across Levels

Structural conditions distribute responsibility across many actors. Volunteers, local organizations, municipalities, employers, service systems, national governments, international institutions, and private firms can possess different forms of causal contribution, authority, knowledge, and remedial capacity. Paper VI therefore separates identification of injustice from allocation of responsibility for repair.

A local volunteer can have a limited remedial role even when the relevant injustice is structurally produced. An organization can possess responsibility to document recurring barriers, redesign its own gatekeeping, share evidence with appropriate institutions, or avoid practices that intensify the structural burden. A public authority can possess broader responsibilities grounded in mandate, resources, or law. Later papers on ethics, power, governance, and jurisprudence will develop these responsibility relations more fully.

18.5 Structural Critique and the Justice Profile

Structural critique enters the multidimensional justice profile by changing the interpretation of local claims. A recurring waiting burden can indicate a distributive pattern; repeated inability to appeal can reveal procedural exclusion; category-based stigma can indicate recognitional subordination; systematic credibility deficits can indicate epistemic injustice; dependence on one gatekeeper can reveal relational inequality. Structural analysis connects these local claims through a shared generating mechanism without erasing their dimension-specific content.

The historical perspective also matters. A local reform can improve current procedure while earlier exclusion retains effects through lost opportunities, mistrust, depleted resources, or institutional records. Section 20 will therefore extend the justice analysis through sedimentation and reopening. Before that historical step, Section 19 examines conflicts and trade-offs among the justice dimensions themselves.

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