

Provincializing Housing Resilience: Urban Political Ecology, Informality, and the Right to Dwell

Michael Ojo

Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Architecture, Chulalongkorn University

Michaelojo1010@gmail.com

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Abstract

Housing resilience has become a central concern of urban climate governance, yet its dominant framing remains technocratic, focusing on upgrading structures, optimizing infrastructure, and engineering adaptive capacity. This paper argues that such framings systematically depoliticize resilience by obscuring the property relations, exclusionary planning, and uneven infrastructures that determine who can secure safe dwelling. Through a critical narrative review spanning urban political ecology (UPE), housing studies, infrastructure studies, and climate justice scholarship, the paper develops a provincialized UPE framework that re-centers analysis on the Global South, where informality is constitutive of urbanization rather than a deviation from it. The framework advances three interconnected analytics, “CEE”. *Capture* traces how resilience is financialized and commodified, transforming safety into an investable frontier that deepens housing inequality. *Enclosure* diagnoses how resilience planning produces fortified enclaves for elites alongside sacrifice zones of normalized risk. *Endurance* foregrounds the everyday repair, improvisation, and insurgent dwelling through which marginalized communities assemble habitability where formal systems fail. These analytics converge on a political horizon of radical housing resilience, demanding redistribution, recognition, and the right to dwell. Abuja, Nigeria, a master-planned capital where formal order and informal life collide, serves as one illustrative thread among several Southern cities. The paper’s contribution lies less in the now-established claim that informality is constitutive of urbanization than in integrating these dispersed critical strands into a single diagnostic framework calibrated to housing resilience, reframing it as a political struggle over dwelling rather than a technical property of buildings.

Keywords: urban political ecology, housing resilience, informality, planned capital, assemblage, Global South

Introduction

As climate hazards intensify, housing has emerged as a primary site through which urban vulnerability is produced, experienced, and politically negotiated, prompting the question of who gets to live safely in a warming city (Ajibade & McBean, 2014; Edwards & Bulkeley, 2017; García-Lamarca, 2025). Yet the dominant grammar of urban resilience routinely backgrounds the political economy of land, property, and exclusion that determines who secures safe dwelling and who does not (Davoudi et al., 2012; Meerow et al., 2016; Vale, 2014). Resilience, in its prevailing technocratic register, is a promise of universal protection delivered selectively. Adaptation is not a series of incremental technological fixes, but a contested socio-political process shaped by competing interests, values, and power asymmetries (Granberg & Glover, 2026). When adaptation is framed as apolitical, it functions as what Scoville-Simonds et al. (2020) term an anti-politics machine, obscuring who is protected and who is rendered expendable. Urban Political Ecology (UPE) offers a forceful counterpoint. By insisting that cities are socio-natural formations structured through power, UPE's metabolic tradition has shown how flows of water, energy, waste, and labour are infrastructurally mediated and unequally distributed (Heynen et al., 2006; Kaika & Swyngedouw, 2000; Swyngedouw & Heynen, 2003). Applied to housing, this means vulnerability is not an environmental given but a political product, manufactured through land regimes, tenure systems, and the selective extension or withdrawal of infrastructure (Edwards & Bulkeley, 2017; Gandy, 2004). When resilience is narrated through a systems-governance lens alone, however, it can reproduce the universalism UPE originally sought to dismantle, recoding political conflict into technical efficiency (Kaika, 2017; Swyngedouw, 2010).

This paper intervenes by provincializing housing resilience (see also Lawhon et al., 2014). Provincializing does not mean rejecting UPE's metabolic insights but re-situating them within Southern urban conditions where informality is constitutive of urbanization, where infrastructures are routinely partial and contested, and where housing is assembled incrementally through practices illegible to technocratic planning (McFarlane, 2011; Myers, 2020; Nagendra et al., 2018). Hence, a situated UPE begins with the everyday material practices through which households build habitability amid infrastructural unreliability and political marginality, treating Southern cities not as empirical add-ons to Northern theory but as epistemic starting points compelling conceptual revision. Simone's (2004, 2021) formulation of people as infrastructure foregrounds how social collaboration and improvisation become infrastructural capacities when formal systems are absent. Silver's (2014) account of incremental infrastructures in Accra demonstrates how material improvisation functions as the everyday substrate of urban life. These are not residual practices awaiting formalization; they are constitutive of how cities work and how resilience is actually produced. Therefore, provincializing resilience requires a deliberate analytic shift from metabolism to assemblage. Metabolic approaches illuminate patterned circulations and structural inequalities, but they can privilege coherent systems and stabilized networks, precisely the forms of infrastructural completeness that technocratic resilience assumes (McFarlane, 2011; Müller, 2015). Assemblage

thinking foregrounds heterogeneity, contingency, and socio-material composition, the ways dwellings congeal through shifting relations among materials, legalities, infrastructures, knowledges, markets, and everyday labour. As Harris and Barkdull (2016) argue, the severity of foreseeable climate impacts demands transformation rather than managerial approaches to adaptation. Moreover, as De Jesus and Cucca (2026) demonstrate, even ostensibly critical scholarship on urban sustainability often remains insufficiently attentive to the colonial foundations and global dependencies shaping climate interventions, a limitation this paper addresses by centering the Global South.

The paper develops three interconnected analytics. *Capture* traces how resilience is financialized and commodified, transforming safety into an investable frontier that deepens housing inequality (Rice et al., 2020; Taylor & Aalbers, 2022). *Enclosure* diagnoses how resilience planning produces fortified enclaves for elites alongside sacrifice zones of normalized risk (Anguelovski et al., 2016; Graham, 2011). *Endurance* foregrounds the everyday repair, improvisation, and insurgent dwelling through which marginalized communities assemble habitability where formal systems fail (Holston, 2009; Simone, 2004). These analytics converge on a political horizon of radical housing resilience, demanding redistribution, recognition, and the enforceable right to dwell (Fainstein, 2010; Harvey, 2003; Ranganathan & Bratman, 2021).

Abuja, Nigeria, a master-planned capital, anchors the discussion as the framework's primary site of future testing rather than a delivered case study. Like Brasilia and Cairo's New Administrative Capital (Elnady, 2023), Abuja stages the violence through which planned-city imaginaries are secured against informal life. The governance of informal settlements, including Mpape, has been shaped by planning enforcement, displacement threats, and residents' insurgent place-making (Ebofin, 2025; Ismail et al., 2024). The planned city does not eliminate informality; it metabolizes it through exclusionary land regimes and selective infrastructural provision, producing a formation in which informal settlements are simultaneously necessary to urban functioning yet cast as outside the city's legitimate future. Against this backdrop, we therefore ask: *How can UPE reshape understandings of housing resilience so that resilience becomes answerable to justice rather than to indicators, markets, or master plans?*

Method

This paper employs a critical narrative review (Grant & Booth, 2009; Greenhalgh et al., 2018), an interpretive synthesis suited to conceptual development where the objective is analytical reframing rather than exhaustive coverage. The paper's transdisciplinary scope, spanning human geography, urban political ecology, postcolonial urbanism, housing studies, infrastructure studies, and climate justice, means no single database or search protocol could adequately capture the terrain. Literature was identified through two complementary strategies, structured searches across Scopus and Google Scholar using combinations of terms including "urban political ecology" AND "housing," "housing resilience" AND "Global South," "informal settlement" AND

“climate adaptation,” “assemblage” AND “urban infrastructure,” and “repair” AND “urban political ecology,” first conducted in November 2024 and updated in March 2025 and again in March 2026; citation chaining from anchor texts, notably Lawhon et al. (2014), García-Lamarca (2025), Heynen et al. (2006), McFarlane (2011), and Graham and Thrift (2007); and sustained engagement with scholarship on planned cities, informal settlement governance, and climate adaptation in West Africa. Selection was guided by relevance to the intersection of UPE, housing, and climate resilience; capacity to illustrate or challenge the analytics under development; and geographical diversity with deliberate attention to scholarship from and about the Global South. The three analytics emerged iteratively through sustained engagement with the literature, refined from recurring tensions between metabolism and assemblage, between technocratic and situated understandings of resilience, and between accumulation and justice. Abuja operates throughout not as a case study generating primary data but as an illustrative anchor rendering the framework’s claims concrete and testable for future empirical research. Because the review prioritized conceptual relevance over recency, no restriction was placed on publication year; several cited works carry 2026 cover dates as advance online (version-of-record) publications retrieved during the March 2026 update, a practice consistent with established guidance treating narrative reviews as interpretive rather than exhaustive syntheses (Baumeister & Leary, 1997; Grant & Booth, 2009).

Conceptual Foundations

1. Housing as socio-natural process

UPE deconstructs the urban–nature binary, positing that urban nature is produced through historically contingent power relations, political economy, and governance (Cornea et al., 2017; Gandy, 2022). Central to this critique is urban metabolism, tracing how essential flows, water, energy, waste, and labour are organized through infrastructures and unevenly distributed across social groups (Heynen et al., 2006; Swyngedouw & Heynen, 2003). Recent scholarship extends the metabolic lens to housing, where dwellings are not passive containers but active socio-natural nodes where material flows intersect with property relations, tenure regimes, and governance (Holifield, 2009; McFarlane, 2011; Shafique, 2022). A political ecology of housing recognizes the home as a site where socio-natural relations are stabilized or contested, and where protection from environmental risk is mediated by land markets and state regulation (Edwards & Bulkeley, 2017; García-Lamarca, 2025). Under conditions of infrastructural unreliability, dwelling becomes a metabolic accomplishment; residents actively assemble coping strategies linking the home to broader socio-ecological circuits (Goh, 2020; Khan et al., 2024).

2. From systems to assemblages in the urban South

Situating housing within uneven geographies of climate risk requires shifting from technical to political definitions of resilience. Climate impacts are mediated through settlement location and building materials, dictated by political-economic arrangements determining who secures safe space (Cutter, 2016; Vale, 2014).

Scoville-Simonds et al. (2020) identify three political dimensions inherent to the adaptation problem: differentiated responsibility for causing climate change, the uneven production of vulnerability through multi-scalar processes, and unequal representation in adaptation decision-making. Granberg and Glover (2026) extend this by demonstrating that politics is not merely a contextual variable but constitutes an adaptive response in its own right. Their synthesis of political economy, environmental justice, political ecology, and institutional politics reveals how these forces combine to produce exclusion, path-dependence, and maladaptation that remain invisible when any single lens is applied alone.

A Global South orientation further de-centers Euro-American norms of consolidated governance, highlighting that informality and hybrid infrastructures are constitutive of socio-ecological governance rather than aberrations from it (Ibrahim & Kepe, 2026; Lawhon et al., 2014). De Jesus and Cucca's (2026) scoping review of green city critiques reinforces the need for this re-centering, demonstrating that even critical scholarship on urban sustainability in the Global North fails to interrogate the colonial foundations and contemporary dependencies shaping green transitions. Their finding that green city interventions generate exclusion, displacement, and financialization across multiple spatial scales carries direct implications for housing resilience. Hence, a provincialized UPE must build this scalar consciousness into its foundations.

This paper adopts a cross-cutting situated UPE lens that provincializes canonical UPE's tendency for concepts forged through Northern urban metabolisms to travel as universally adequate (Cornea et al., 2017; Zimmer, 2015). The term "provincialized UPE" is used here not to invoke a settled framework but to name the analytical approach this paper proposes: a deliberate re-situating of UPE's metabolic insights within Southern urban conditions rather than the application of an existing model. In much Northern resilience discourse, vulnerability is tacitly framed as an engineering deficit, and governance is imagined as a coherent project of formal planning (Schipper & Langston, 2021; White & O'Hare, 2014). The situated lens contests these assumptions by emphasizing that across many Southern cities, environmental governance is enacted through contested, hybrid, and often informal arrangements exceeding state plans (Lawhon et al., 2014; Myers, 2020; Nagendra et al., 2018).

The decisive conceptual move is from metabolism to assemblage. Metabolism remains crucial for revealing patterned circulations and structural inequalities, but assemblage thinking foregrounds how resilience is provisionally composed through heterogeneous relations, more faithful to Southern urbanism, where infrastructure is partial and housing incremental (Adelina & Archer, 2024; Ibrahim & Kepe, 2026; McFarlane, 2011). Resilience becomes an ongoing accomplishment of dwelling, stitched together through informal connections, community networks, and practices of repair frequently illegible within formal plans. Informal dwellers appear not as passive victims but as socio-ecological producers of the city (Rusca & Di Baldassarre, 2019). The empirical significance is clear across Southern cities. In Lagos, low-income communities confronted with recurrent flooding mobilize dense networks, perform informal repairs, and develop collective adaptive

practices operating autonomously from negligent authorities (Ajibade, 2019; Fayombo, 2024). In Abuja, the planned-city imaginary demands informality's erasure even as the city depends on informal labour and settlement to function. In settlements such as Mpape and Mabushi, residents facing recurrent demolition threats sustain place through incremental dwelling improvement, the planting of economic trees, and at times direct physical confrontation with enforcement crews, practices that are simultaneously material adaptation and political claim-making (Carl LeVan & Olubowale, 2014; Ismail et al., 2024). These struggles unfold against a national context in which the 2022 floods, the worst in over a decade, affected millions and displaced more than two million people across most of Nigeria's states (National Bureau of Statistics, National Emergency Management Agency [NEMA], & United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2023), and against documented flood exposure within the Federal Capital Territory, where low-lying and peri-urban districts including Lugbe, Lokogoma, and Gwagwalada experience recurrent inundation, property loss, and displacement (Akande et al., 2023). Mpape's contested existence within a master-planned capital is thus a structural expression of how planned-city governance metabolizes informality through exclusion.

Table 1 Three analytics for a provincialized UPE of housing resilience.

Analytic	Core diagnosis	Key mechanisms	Conceptual resources
Capture	Resilience is financialized,	Climate finance instruments,	Adaptation capitalism,
	transforming safety into an	green/climate gentrification,	financialized resilience
	investable frontier	certification systems, public-private partnerships	assemblages, immunological logic
Enclosure	Resilience planning	Splintered urban metabolism,	Climate apartheid, urban
	produces fortified enclaves	security urbanism, ecological	archipelagos of security,
	co-constituted with sacrifice zones	buffers, displacement through improvement	political technology of uneven urbanization
Endurance	Resilience is assembled	Radical incrementalism,	Situated UPE, people as
	through everyday repair,	infrastructural worlding,	infrastructure, slow violence, ethics of care

Analytic	Core diagnosis	Key mechanisms	Conceptual resources
	improvisation, and insurgent dwelling	maintenance labour, insurgent citizenship	

Source: Developed by the author based on García-Lamarca, 2025; Graham, 2011; Holston, 2009; Lawhon et al., 2014; McFarlane, 2011; Rice et al., 2020; Simone, 2004

Capture: Financialized Resilience and the Production of Expendability

1. Resilience as an accumulation strategy

The first analytic names a decisive reconfiguration in contemporary climate governance: the transformation of resilience from a socio-ecological imperative into a marketable asset and investable frontier. Resilience is reframed as a vehicle for accumulation, organized through climate finance, speculative real estate development, and the commodification of risk mitigation (Bigger & Millington, 2020; Christophers, 2019; Rice et al., 2020). Technical risk models, indicator regimes, and bankable project logics actively produce the conditions under which resilience can be priced, packaged, and circulated as a financial object.

The rise of adaptation capitalism is propelled by an expanding apparatus positioning adaptation as an investment opportunity. Multilateral institutions mobilize private capital through resilience bonds, climate infrastructure funds, and sustainability-linked credit facilities, promising both risk reduction and returns (Estevão et al., 2024; Song & Medda, 2025). These instruments depend on calculative practices, project appraisal, insurance logics, creditworthiness, and property title, which rework housing into de facto investment vehicles. Climate-proof developments and green amenities attract premium valuations, converting the material need for safety into an exchangeable attribute attached to select properties (Fernandez & Aalbers, 2017; Taylor & Aalbers, 2022). The outcome is a differentiated housing landscape where resilience becomes a price signal and sorting mechanism. Green urban initiatives frequently generate exclusion, displacement, and financialization even as they are promoted as responses to environmental crises (Ajibade & McBean, 2014; De Jesus & Cucca, 2026). The emergent object is a financialized resilience assemblage, composed of rating systems, project pipelines, public-private partnerships, and securitized development zones, that reorders which parts of the city become investable and which become disposable.

2. Climate gentrification as a spatial mechanism

A key mechanism is climate or green gentrification. Investments in flood defenses, green infrastructure, and resilience upgrades can trigger rent inflation and displacement of lower-income residents (Camponeschi, 2021; Rice et al., 2020; Shokry et al., 2020). In Miami-Dade County, climate risk perceptions reorganize property markets toward higher-elevation areas, producing new geographies of unequal safety (Keenan et al., 2018; Taylor & Aalbers, 2022). The provincializing intervention insists these dynamics are not confined to Northern contexts. In Lagos, Eko Atlantic illustrates how resilience imaginaries underwrite elite coastal development while reworking vulnerability through speculation (Ajibade, 2017). In Mumbai, slum rehabilitation becomes a vehicle for dispossessing informal residents from high-value land under the idiom of improvement (Doshi, 2019). These outcomes instantiate what Kaika (2017) terms an immunological logic, where resilience becomes a technology of selective protection. Even initiatives framed as public goods operate within this logic when routed through market access or credit-based eligibility, excluding those lacking formal tenure (Collier, 2025; Eakin et al., 2025; Tzaninis et al., 2021). The dynamics of financialized housing resilience are further substantiated by Granberg and Glover (2026), who identify four processes through which adaptation governance produces inequity: enclosure, exclusion, encroachment, and entrenchment.

3. Adaptation capitalism beyond the North

This argument aligns with scholarship on the urbanization of climate finance, emphasizing that adaptation finance is a spatially selective, institutionally mediated process producing uneven urban outcomes (Ciplet et al., 2022; Venner et al., 2024). Scoville-Simonds et al. (2020) sharpen this critique by demonstrating how adaptation mainstreamed into development channels frames vulnerability as produced by climate change itself rather than by the multi-scalar political economic processes that actually generate differential exposure. The political effect is a post-political governance style in which distributive conflicts are recoded into the technical language of investment and risk management (Swyngedouw, 2010). When bankability and legibility become preconditions for resilience investment, vast populations are structurally excluded not by oversight but by design. In Abuja, planned-city ordering combined with uneven protection creates fertile conditions for resilience to be territorialized as premium safety for some and intensified exposure for others. The politicization of informal settlement presence means the governance of dwelling is already a conflict over recognition, a conflict that adaptation capitalism sharpens when resilience becomes tied to land value (Carl LeVan & Olubowale, 2014; Ismail et al., 2024). The commodification of safety is not a secondary distortion of climate action, but a structured tendency of contemporary urban adaptation under capitalist logics, and must be treated as a primary object of UPE analysis.

Enclosure: Resilience Enclaves, Sacrifice Zones, and Climate Apartheid

The enclave as security assemblage

The second analytic isolates an increasingly ordinary outcome of resilience governance: the production of fortified islands of secured habitability for elites, co-constituted with sacrifice zones where exposure is normalized. The paper terms this emergent formation climate apartheid, a bifurcated urban future where safety is allocated by power rather than need (Anguelovski et al., 2016; Long, 2024). Resilience enclaves are not better-designed neighborhoods but assemblages of security urbanism seeking to decouple privileged life from the wider city's vulnerabilities (Graham, 2011); at the urban scale they enact a version of the "private solution trap," in which those with means secure individual protection instead of investing in collective provision (Malthouse et al., 2026). They combine advanced engineering, privatized infrastructure, exclusive service provision, and coercive security architectures. Protection is a legal-financial-infrastructure package reorganizing access, citizenship, and mobility through property regimes. At the level of urban political ecology, the enclave produces a splintered urban metabolism. Rather than reducing city-wide vulnerability, enclave resilience reroutes and intensifies risk flows, protecting prioritized assets while displacing hazards onto less powerful neighborhoods (Heynen et al., 2006; Swyngedouw & Heynen, 2003). Here, metabolism explains the patterned unevenness, while assemblage clarifies how selective resilience is constructed through heterogeneous relations, including private infrastructures, governance instruments, and investment logics. Together, they reveal enclave resilience as a political technology of uneven urbanization.

The enclave is dialectically linked to sacrifice zones, territories, and populations rendered environmentally expendable through historic disinvestment, planning neglect, and containment in hazardous geographies (Adelekan, 2010; Checker, 2020; Kroepsch et al., 2019). The urban poor, renters, and informal dwellers are actively positioned as acceptable losses in an adaptation calculus treating differential survivability as inevitable. State-led adaptation investments frequently bypass these areas or target them for clearance to create ecological buffers securing wealthier districts (Goh, 2019), converting resilience into spatial cleansing under ecological necessity.

The analytics mobilize a deliberately comparative archive. In Lagos, Eko Atlantic exemplifies enclave adaptation, while the forced eviction of Otodo Gbame demonstrates waterfront redevelopment as accumulation-through-enclosure (Ajibade, 2017; Castro, 2023). In Jakarta, megaproject flood defenses protect the metropolitan core while producing eviction pressures for informal coastal communities (Goh, 2019). In Greater Miami, climate risk perceptions recalibrate housing markets toward higher-elevation areas (Keenan et al., 2018; Taylor & Aalbers, 2022). Enclave resilience is not a Northern anomaly with occasional Southern echoes, but a translocal formation consistently reproducing selective protection. Depoliticized resilience planning codifies inequality, generating urban archipelagos of security, islands of privilege surrounded by sanctioned risk (Tzaninis et al., 2021). These dynamics unfold across interconnected scales, from green investments reshaping

neighborhood desirability to citywide governance and global material exchanges (De Jesus & Cucca, 2026). Enclave resilience in Southern cities frequently draws on financial instruments and governance models that circulate translocally, reproducing selective protection through channels that critical green city scholarship has only begun to trace. The analytical demand is to show how enclave resilience is structurally generated when adaptation is routed through securitization and privatization rather than redistributive governance.

Endurance: Everyday Repair and Insurgent Dwelling on the Margins

1. Informality as a mode of production

The third analytic relocates adaptive capacity from projects and indicators to ordinary dwelling practices assembling habitability under precarious tenure and infrastructural abandonment (McFarlane, 2011; Roy, 2005). Informality must be treated as a mode of production rather than a residual sector. Housing in informal settlements is an ongoing socio-material process of radical incrementalism, continuous engagement with materials, space, and risk, folding climatic threats into everyday decision-making about building, maintenance, and repair (Bayat, 2013; Silver, 2014). This incrementalism is an embodied political ecology: the work of adaptation is carried out in routine labour and household economies, each shock interacting with chronic deprivation to demand further improvisation (Doshi, 2017; Truelove, 2019). Resilience here is not located in a coherent infrastructure system but provisionally composed across heterogeneous relations, scavenged materials, informal drainage channels, pirated service connections, community labour, and everyday negotiation with authorities (McFarlane, 2011; Simone, 2004). These practices constitute infrastructural worlding, a vernacular production of habitable socio-natures that proceeds in the interstices of formal system failure. For instance, in Lagos, residents of coastal informal settlements mobilize collective labour to clear drainage, construct elevated walkways, and develop community-based early warning systems (Abubakar et al., 2025; Ajibade & McBean, 2014; Fayombo, 2024). In Bangkok, low-income communities have developed repertoires of improvised flood response grounded in localized knowledge and social solidarity (Du et al., 2022; Marks, 2015; Tuitjer, 2023). In Mumbai, dense social networks activate ahead of monsoons to clear drains, coordinate evacuation, and pool resources (Subramanyam, 2016; Visave & Aldrich, 2025). In Cape Town's Day Zero crisis, informal settlement residents negotiated fraught systems of water sharing and communal storage (Millington & Scheba, 2021; Storey, 2021). These cases expose the political economy of technocratic optimism. Where policy discourse imagines resilience as a deliverable, resilience is often an unevenly imposed burden: the capacity to adapt is manufactured by redistributing labour, time, and risk onto marginalized households. Residents become architects of survival not because of a preference for informality but because protection is withheld or conditional on recognition that many cannot access (Eriksen et al., 2021; Moser & Satterthwaite, 2008). Adaptation governance dominated by technocratic rationality systematically prioritizes high-value economic

assets while marginalizing dwellers whose embodied labour sustains urban habitability (Sovacool & Linnér, 2016).

Everyday resilience becomes insurgent when dwelling is also claim-making. By repairing, adapting, and maintaining socio-ecological worlds, marginalized communities enact insurgent citizenship, asserting a right to the city through material practice (Holston, 2009, 2021; Miraftab, 2009). In Abuja, the place-making practices through which Mpape and Mabushi residents resist displacement incremental building, cultivation of economic trees, and collective confrontation, illustrate how the struggle to dwell is simultaneously a struggle over recognition and the uneven extension of protection (Ismail et al., 2024). The analysis demands a double evaluative stance, where it renders visible the infrastructures of endurance while refusing their ideological capture as proof that abandonment is acceptable. To valorize improvisation uncritically is to risk licensing the very state withdrawal that makes it necessary; recognizing endurance must therefore be coupled with, not substituted for, the redistribution of protection. Everyday resilience is simultaneously evidence of agency and of structural violence, because the necessity of improvisation is produced by uneven development (MacKinnon & Derickson, 2013). A just housing resilience agenda must be built with marginalized residents, recognizing existing practices while transforming the conditions that make endurance necessary.

2. The politics of maintenance and more-than-human care

Where formal provision is absent, the labour of sustaining habitability is unequally distributed, frequently gendered, and routinely exhausting (Fredericks, 2018; Power & Mee, 2020). Repair and maintenance are socio-ecological practices converting decay into livability, exposing what Nixon (2011) calls slow violence: the attritional accumulation of cracked walls, corroded pipes, and flooded floors as chronic conditions demanding constant attention. The home, in this register, is not a sealed interior but a porous ecological field. Its durability and inhabitants' health are co-produced by more-than-human forces, mould, termites, stormwater, vegetation, and heat, acting within the dwelling (de La Bellacasa, 2011; Ranganathan, 2015; Shafique, 2022). Repair becomes a relational practice attending to the agency of materials and ecologies, dissolving the nature–infrastructure binary underwriting managerial resilience narratives.

Southern political ecologies of maintenance validate this claim. In Dakar, Fredericks (2018) shows how waste management and cleaning are vital infrastructures through which citizenship is contested. In Bangalore, storm drains as socio-natural assemblages reveal flood risk as materially and politically produced (Ranganathan, 2015). Just resilience must begin by valuing the maintenance work already sustaining life at the margins. This connects to García-Lamarca's (2025) proposal of radical housing repair, a political project confronting both climate vulnerability and structural inequality. Approaching adaptation as a care-full and just practice reframes maintenance not as a private burden but as a collective ethical and political responsibility (Bond & Barth, 2020), one that treats the home as a permeable body continuous with wider socio-ecological flows (Neimanis, 2016).

Repair is potentially transformative, but only when politicized as redistribution rather than offloaded as privatized endurance.

Radical Housing Resilience: Justice, Research, and Praxis

Across the three analytics, resilience emerges as deeply contested, mobilized to stabilize inequalities or to confront the structural relations producing enduring vulnerability. Socio-ecological resilience becomes meaningful only when tethered to a radical horizon of housing justice: redistribution, recognition, and enforceable rights reordering whose lives and homes are protected (Fainstein, 2010; Harvey, 2003). Mainstream resilience paradigms depoliticize adaptation by treating it as a technical problem, misreading vulnerability as an unfortunate condition rather than a political artefact produced through land regimes, discriminatory planning, and market logics (Bullard & Wright, 2012; Pelling, 2010; Schlosberg, 2007). A justice-centered account shifts attention from coping with hazards to transforming the political economy of risk production (Long & Rice, 2019; Shi et al., 2016). As Harris and Barkdull (2016) argue, when warming exceeds manageable thresholds, the question is no longer about optimizing existing institutions but whether fundamentally different arrangements are required.

Redistribution is the core demand, because resilient housing futures cannot be built on unequal property relations and speculative urbanization. A redistributive resilience agenda decommodifies the determinants of urban security, tenure, safe land, and robust infrastructures, as public goods (Madden & Marcuse, 2016; Satterthwaite et al., 2020). Recognition and procedural justice are equally constitutive, because redistribution without voice reproduces technocratic domination. Residents who live with risk are political subjects and knowledge holders whose practices already sustain urban life (Agyeman et al., 2016; Doshi, 2017). Justice requires institutional forms making participation consequential and protecting collective claims to stay put (Chu, 2016; Holston, 2009).

Drawing on the analytics, three interlinked directions emerge, each answering one of the three diagnostics. First, against Capture, decommodifying protection through massive public investment in climate-adaptive housing accessible regardless of tenure status, coupled with rent controls ensuring resilience investments do not trigger displacement (Cohen et al., 2021; Gourevitch, 2024; Reames, 2016). Second, against Enclosure, democratizing governance by embedding housing resilience in collective decision-making structures in which residents help determine the priorities and spatial distribution of resilience investments, dismantling the institutional logics that produce fortified enclaves alongside sacrifice zones (Cohen, 2017). Third, building on Endurance, recognizing and resourcing the adaptive practices already sustaining life on the margins by creating legal and institutional pathways that support them rather than treating informal adaptation as invisible (García-Lamarca, 2025; Moretti et al., 2024). This symmetry, decommodification answering Capture, democratization answering Enclosure, and recognition answering Endurance, carries the CEE framework through

from diagnosis to prescription. Read together, these directions express a capability-oriented conception of justice in which secure dwelling is treated as a substantive freedom rather than a market outcome (Sen, 1993). Granberg and Glover (2026) translate these political insights into practice guidance, stating that governance designs must embed inclusive mechanisms early in adaptation planning; equity approaches must operationalize justice through ex-ante distributional impact assessments; and institutional change must address path dependency while monitoring for maladaptation. Scoville-Simonds et al. (2020) add that advancing broad social justice at the global scale may have important consequences for local vulnerability reduction, even if not labelled as adaptation. Radical housing resilience cannot be achieved through housing policy alone; it requires confronting structural drivers of vulnerability across scales. Finally, abolitionist climate justice sharpens the horizon: vulnerability is actively produced through racialized, capitalist, and exclusionary systems that cannot be resolved through management alone (Pellow, 2016; Ranganathan & Bratman, 2021). The radical alternative treats resilience as emancipation, evaluated by whether it redistributes life chances, expands rights to dwell, and reconstitutes urban socio-ecologies around care rather than accumulation.

Abuja sharpens these stakes as a site where formal order, exclusionary planning, and contested belonging collide. Mpape suggests informality in a planned capital is not outside the plan but actively produced as a governable problem (Carl LeVan & Olubowale, 2014; Ismail et al., 2024). The three-analytic framework is a research apparatus for investigating how land tenure, flood vulnerability, and everyday repair are co-produced through hybrid governance and infrastructural unevenness. Operationalizing the framework foregrounds linked empirical questions. How do formal and informal tenure arrangements mediate resilience in hazard-prone zones under planned-city governance? How is hydrosocial risk politically assembled through drainage, land-use change, and everyday improvisations? How do embodied practices of maintenance, improvisation, and care sustain habitability, and how are these burdens gendered? Where do resilience investments concentrate protection for some while intensifying exposure for others? How do practices of repair, staying put, and collective dwelling function as claim-making reworking citizenship?

Finally, investigating these dynamics requires methodological pluralism. Longitudinal ethnographies of repair and dwelling can document seasonal repair cycles, maintenance labour, and everyday governance of risk (de La Bellacasa, 2017; Nixon, 2011). Spatial justice analytics, including flood exposure mapping linked to tenure and service geographies, can render visible how selective infrastructures pattern risk. Actor-network and institutional tracing can track hybrid assemblages governing land, services, and settlement legitimacy (Müller, 2015; Rydin, 2010; Wang et al., 2023). Together, these approaches resist the analytical slippage of technocratic resilience where adaptation is reduced to indicators while the political economy of land and the everyday labour of survival are treated as secondary.

Finally, the CEE framework is offered as a set of heuristics rather than a universal grid, and its three analytics travel unevenly across regional and political contexts. Capture presumes relatively developed land,

credit, and insurance markets through which safety can be financialized, and requires adaptation where such markets are thin or state-dominated. Enclosure assumes pronounced spatial segregation between secured and abandoned zones, which is more pronounced in some urban formations than others. Endurance, conversely, risks essentializing informal agency if applied without attention to how improvisation is itself coerced by deprivation. The analytics are therefore best understood as context-calibrated lenses whose relative salience must be established empirically rather than assumed in advance.

Conclusion

This paper has argued that housing is not a downstream sector within climate adaptation but a primary terrain through which vulnerability is produced, contested, and unevenly governed. Against Northern-centric resilience frameworks treating housing resilience as a technical project, the paper advances a provincializing intervention, re-centering UPE in the everyday material practices, informal infrastructures, and hybrid socio-natural arrangements through which Southern cities are made and remade (Cornea et al., 2017; Lawhon et al., 2014; Zimmer, 2015). The situated UPE lens shifts from a metabolic grammar to assemblage-oriented analytics apprehending contested governance, infrastructural incompleteness, and socio-material heterogeneity. Resilience is not a property delivered by policy, engineering, or finance; it is assembled through shifting relations among land regimes, infrastructures, housing materials, everyday labour, and institutional power.

The three analytics provide a diagnostic and generative framework. Capture shows how resilience becomes market-legible and investable, translating safety into premium value while externalizing costs onto those without property or standing. Enclosure clarifies how resilience planning hardens into security urbanism, consolidating fortified enclaves alongside sacrifice zones. Endurance foregrounds how resilience is already produced through informality, radical incrementalism, and infrastructural worlding, sustained through everyday repair, care, and more-than-human entanglements that technocratic frameworks cannot apprehend. These analytics converge on radical housing resilience as a political horizon demanding redistribution, recognition, and the enforceable right to dwell. Durable housing futures in climate-volatile cities are forged through collective struggles that redistribute land and infrastructure, recognize the sustained labour of repair and care, and expand the right to dwell. The framework invites future empirical research, particularly in planned-city contexts like Abuja, that can test and refine these analytics through grounded, multi-method investigation. The challenge ahead is not only analytical but political, to transform the relations that produce vulnerability rather than merely managing the risk that results.

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