

Strategy

2024-2028



**Eight goals to build
human rights-based
criminal justice**

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Introduction

This Strategy for Penal Reform International (PRI) for 2024–2028 sets out our ambitions for the next five years.

It is the result of a consultative process that began in 2022 and was completed in 2024. Before identifying strategic goals, we went “back to the basics”, by updating our Theory of Change (TOC) to align it with our strategy. The outcome is an integrated TOC and strategy centred around **eight strategic goals**.

Feedback from a wide range of stakeholders and several workshops with PRI’s international staff led us to streamline our ambitions from the previous strategy and focus on **eight strategic goals**.¹ Additionally, the strategy incorporates insights from our newly established global group of Experts by Experience, who bring lived experience of the criminal justice system.

While we have made great effort to identify, pinpoint and thoroughly understand our TOC and related strategy, we believe they are by no means static. We recognise their fluid nature – adaptations will be necessary based on continuous learning within our organisation and external events. We aim to update the TOC as needed and adjust our strategic goals in response to the global context in which we work.

The strategic goals will be monitored and evaluated annually. Within the next year, we will develop the related Monitoring and Evaluating framework.

Published in July 2024.



Penal Reform International today

Penal Reform International (PRI) is an independent international non-governmental organisation that structures its work through a policy programme, regional programmes, and a governance and strategy programme that ensures learning and impact.

Registered in the Netherlands, PRI operates globally with offices in multiple locations. Its Headquarters are in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.

2024 marks 35 years of PRI's existence. In a world where punitiveness, discrimination and criminalisation of some of the most vulnerable people in our societies remain commonplace, the demand for PRI's human rights work has increased, making our efforts more relevant than ever.

The challenges and needs that must be addressed are numerous. Human rights violations resulting from violent conflict, an erosion of the rule of law and the effects of climate change all impact our reform work to build human rights-based criminal justice systems. The systemic discrimination faced by racialised groups² is now abundantly evidenced. Recent setbacks in the fight towards gender equality demonstrate the need to intensify our efforts.

Over-criminalisation, discrimination within the justice system and the overuse of imprisonment and other criminal sanctions are major barriers to creating safer societies. Furthermore, civil society space is shrinking and there is an ongoing lack of transparency, often amid corrupt practices in many justice systems.

Operating in this context, PRI's approach – rooted in constructive dialogue, trust and always context-specific – has shown results over the past 35 years. This sets us in good stead for the coming five years to achieve the outcomes outlined in this Strategy.



Global agenda

Penal Reform International aligns with the following global agendas of the international community.

Our Strategy is underpinned and driven by these agendas, to which we contribute through our global work.

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

With six years remaining until 2030, PRI will continue to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), believing that criminal justice and prison reform are essential to achieving these goals.³

- **SDG 1: Ending Poverty**
People from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to be criminalised and imprisoned, often due to policies that criminalise life-sustaining activities.
- **SDG 2: Ending Hunger and Promoting Sustainable Agriculture**
Inadequate nutrition and food security within prisons violates human rights and negatively impacts health.
- **SDG 3: Ensuring Healthy Lives**
Amid higher prevalence of disease among people in criminal justice systems, the lack of adequate healthcare services necessitates comprehensive health interventions.
- **SDG 4: Ensuring Quality Education**
Access to education and vocational training is critical for reducing recidivism.
- **SDG 5: Achieving Gender Equality**
Women in the criminal justice system face challenges such as discrimination, violence, and the impact of poverty on pathways to offending.
- **SDG 6: Ensuring Water and Sanitation**
Inadequate access to clean water and sanitation facilities in prisons poses significant health risks and often reflects broader inequalities within the system.

▪ **SDG 8: Promoting Economic Growth and Employment**

Economic growth and the ability of people in conflict with the law to access employment opportunities are essential to preventing crime and reoffending.

▪ **SDG 10: Reducing Inequalities**

Inequalities that lead to the overrepresentation of marginalised groups in the criminal justice system are rooted in colonial legacies, racism and discrimination.

▪ **SDG 16: Promoting Peaceful and Inclusive Societies**

This goal is directly related to the need for criminal justice reform. It acknowledges the role of fair, transparent, and inclusive institutions in building trust between communities and the state.

UN Pact for the Future

The Pact for the Future⁴, which was under negotiation when this Strategy was published, will serve as an important instrument for PRI, given our belief in strong and sustained international cooperation and the potential for the multilateral system to address the challenges faced by the world today.

Justice Action Coalition: people-centred justice

In line with the 2021 'Our Common Agenda' report from the UN Secretary-General, which emphasises building a social contract, including trust between communities and institutions, and in line with equal access to justice (SDG16.3), the need to transform justice systems by putting people at the centre has been identified.

Justice is an essential tool in the development 'toolbox' and integrating justice into the work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals - not only SDG 16 but others- will strengthen lives and livelihoods worldwide. To ensure progress towards people-centred justice, a multi-stakeholder alliance of countries and organisations called Justice Action Coalition⁵ (JAC) was established. To measure progress, the JAC agreed on a Joint Action Plan with 10 deliverables. PRI became a partner of the JAC in 2023.

Women, Peace and Security (WPS Agenda)

Formally initiated by the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000,⁶ the Women Peace and Security agenda affirms the role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building initiatives is closely linked to PRI's work.

PRI's work intersects with the WPS agenda through several key areas:

- **Advocacy for Gender-Sensitive Criminal Justice Reform**
PRI advocates for gender-sensitive reforms in the criminal justice system, considering the specific needs and circumstances of women.
- **Addressing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence**
PRI advocates for measures to prevent violence against women in detention and supports survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.
- **Empowering Women in the Criminal Justice Sector**
PRI encourages the participation of women as professionals and decision-makers within the criminal justice sector.
- **Research and Evidence-Based Advocacy**
PRI conducts research and evidence-based advocacy to enhance understanding of the challenges faced by women in the criminal justice system.
- **International Cooperation and Capacity Building**
Through its international presence and collaboration with diverse stakeholders, PRI promotes the exchange of promising practices and builds capacity for gender-sensitive criminal justice reform.

Agendas on climate change and environmental sustainability

The connection between criminal justice reform, climate change, and environmental sustainability has several dimensions:

- **Environmental Impact of Prisons**
Prisons have significant environmental footprints, including energy consumption and waste production.
- **Green Prisons**
“Green prison” initiatives, gaining momentum, need fostering and expansion to mitigate prisons’ environmental footprints. Promoting humane and rehabilitative prison environments can align with efforts for environmental sustainability.
- **Vulnerable Populations**
Climate change disproportionately affects marginalised communities, many of whom are overrepresented in criminal justice systems. Broader implications of climate change and environmental degradation exacerbate social and economic inequalities, contributing to factors that can increase criminalisation and prison populations. For instance, resource scarcity, livelihood loss, and displacement due to environmental factors can heighten tensions and conflicts.
- **Response to natural hazards**
Natural hazards have multifaceted impacts on prisons and other justice institutions. Environmental disasters such as hurricanes, floods, and wildfires pose significant risks to the safety and security of people detained and working in facilities.



Target populations

Over the next five years our target populations encompass three main groups of stakeholders.

1

People in contact with criminal justice systems

They are the focus of our work as rights holders. We collaborate with and assist people who interact with the police or law enforcement, those involved in criminal justice proceedings, people detained pre-trial or post-conviction, and those under other criminal justice measures such as probation and parole. We also provide support to people at risk of coming into contact with the law. Our services are inclusive of people of all ages, genders, ethnicities, and socio-economic backgrounds, regardless of the crime for which a person is arrested, accused or convicted of.

2

Criminal justice practitioners

They are duty bearers, including both high-level management and frontline staff who interact daily with people at police stations or in prisons. Typical institutions involved include prisons, probation services, courts, prosecutors, judges, magistrates, police and law enforcement agencies and lawyers. We also target detention monitoring bodies such as members of National Preventive Mechanisms.

3

Criminal justice influencers

This group encompasses a wide range of institutions and people who influence the criminal justice system. Stakeholders include government ministries such as justice and interior, politicians, lawmakers, civil society organisations, academic institutions, National Human Rights Institutions, intergovernmental bodies such as the United Nations, the African Commission on Human Rights, the European Union, the Council of Europe, as well as funders and philanthropists. Local communities are also a target group who we must build strong and lasting relationships to support reform. At the heart of our efforts are people with lived and direct experience of the criminal justice system, a commitment we uphold through initiatives like PRI's Experts by Experience group.



Theory of change

→ Based on our assessment of the most pressing criminal justice problems today, we have formulated the following issue statement.

Our issue statement

Criminal measures and sanctions are increasingly applied in a discriminatory manner within weak criminal justice systems that fail to uphold the rule of law, resulting in widespread human rights violations.

→ We have determined that our impact statement adopted for our previous strategy remains accurate and relevant.

Our impact statement

Safe societies based on fair and effective criminal justice systems that protect human rights and are non-discriminatory.

→ We will achieve this impact by addressing the specific problems and needs of our **three main stakeholder groups**, each with its own objectives.

Our three objectives

Objective 1

Rehabilitate, reintegrate, and empower people in contact with criminal justice systems.

Objective 2

Criminal justice practitioners apply human rights in their daily work.

Objective 3

Fewer people are criminalised, sanctioned and imprisoned.



➔ To further operationalise the three objectives and enhance focus, we have developed specific goals aligned with each objective.

Our eight goals

Objective 1

Goal 1

Ensure people in contact with criminal justice systems have access to education, life skills, and vocational training.

Objective 2

Goal 2

Justice institutions are people-centred, responsive to the needs and human rights of all, and non-discriminatory towards those in vulnerable contexts.

Goal 3

Safeguard and protect the rights of people in detention and the wider justice system during emergencies and crises.

Goal 4

Enhance oversight of criminal justice systems to increase accountability.

Goal 5

Promote the availability and use of diversion, restorative justice and non-custodial options.

Objective 3

Goal 6

Promote the inclusion of people with lived experience in criminal justice reform efforts.

Goal 7

Decrease the overreliance on criminal justice systems to promote equality, amidst increasing authoritarianism, poverty, and discrimination.

Goal 8

Reduce or eliminate disproportionate and inhumane sentences, as well as the use of pre-trial detention.

➔ The interventions (our activities) to achieve our goals are organised into three strategic pathways, each tailored to one of our **three main stakeholder groups**.

Our three strategic pathways

Pathway 1

Providing support and services for people in contact with criminal justice systems.

Pathway 2

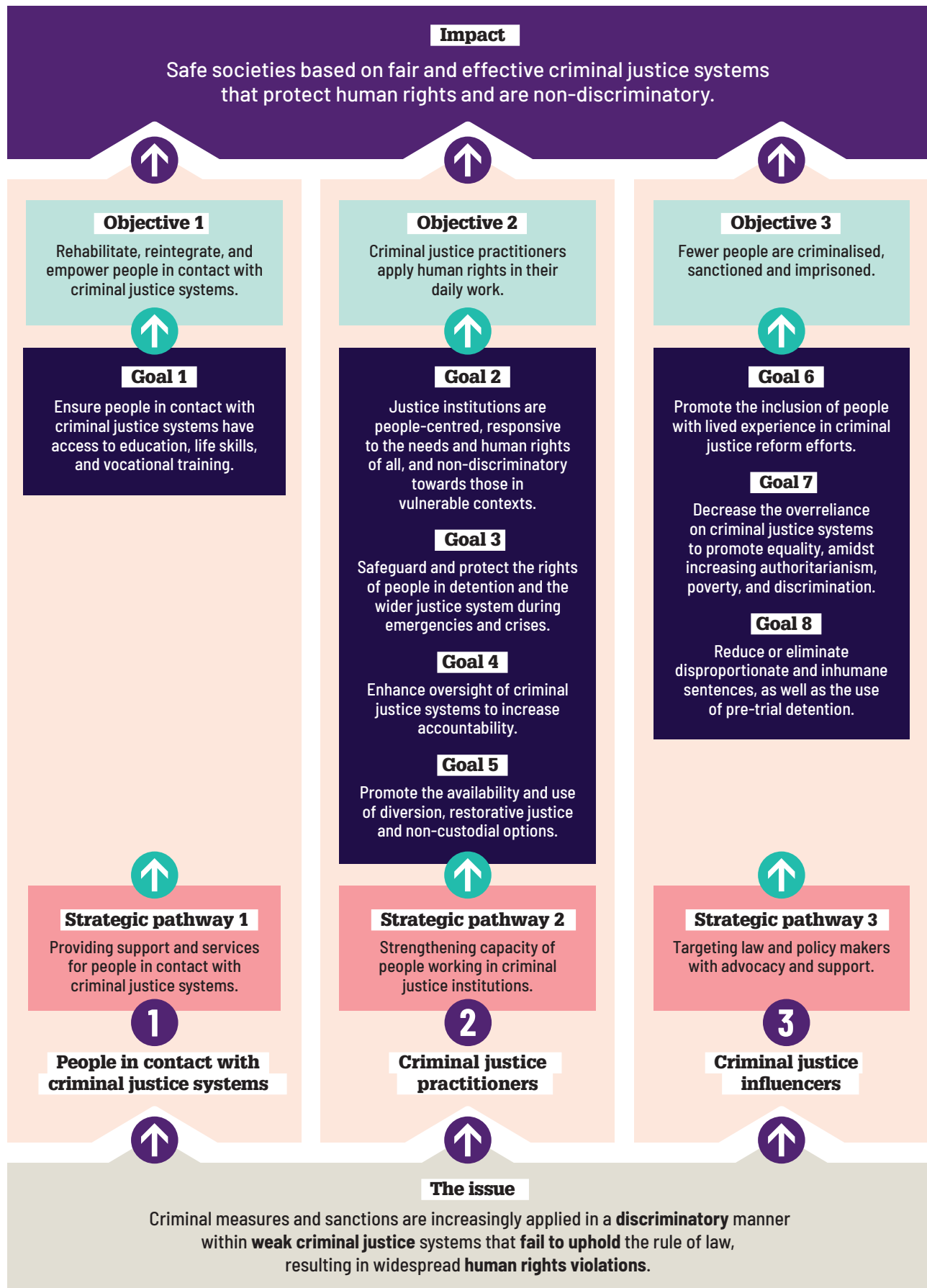
Strengthening capacity of people working in criminal justice institutions.

Pathway 3

Targeting law and policy makers with advocacy and support.



Our Theory of Change (TOC)



Our eight strategic goals

To achieve the three objectives of our Theory of Change (TOC), we have identified eight strategic goals.

These goals have been formulated through evaluating our previous strategy, conducting internal and external consultations, and assessing the global agenda. Each Goal is further operationalised with **specific indicators**.

Prioritisation among these eight goals will be based on the specific needs and opportunities where we operate.

Goal 1

Ensure people in conflict with the law have access to education, life skills, and vocational training.

Indicators:

- Individualised rehabilitation and reintegration services provided to people in criminal justice systems.
- Adoption of non-discriminatory rehabilitative approaches by criminal justice authorities.

Our aim is to offer educational opportunities to people in prison, those who have been released, or are on probation, as a foundational step towards personal development, and a crucial intervention for reducing reoffending rates. Additionally, we strive to enhance the life skills and vocational capabilities of people in detention to facilitate their rehabilitation and empowerment, ultimately contributing to safer societies. Examples of life skills (which are closely linked to employability and 21st century skills) include critical thinking, creative thinking, time management, emotional intelligence, communication skills, digital literacy, intercultural skills, self-care and leadership.

People in conflict with the law need customised programmes to acquire these skills, developed and delivered according to their specific needs and capabilities. Furthermore, a non-discriminatory approach and empathetic attitude from criminal justice stakeholders are essential for successfully embedding these new skills.

Goal 2

Justice institutions are people-centred, responsive to the needs and human rights of all, and non-discriminatory towards those in vulnerable contexts.

Indicators:

- Increased efforts by governments and criminal justice agencies to understand and recognise vulnerable groups within prison settings.
- Adoption of individualised approaches and services specifically tailored for vulnerable people in conflict with the law.

All people are vulnerable when they encounter the criminal justice system, undergo criminal proceedings, are detained or under non-custodial sanctions, or re-entering society after imprisonment. However, many systems remain designed for a homogeneous population and exhibit discriminatory practices. They frequently overlook the unique needs and vulnerabilities stemming from diverse circumstances, individual characteristics, or identities.

While advocating for the protection of all people in contact with the criminal justice system, we will continue to prioritise ensuring that governments and criminal justice agencies recognise the unique needs and circumstances of specific groups requiring tailored approaches to safeguard their rights, given they are particularly vulnerable to violence or neglect.

Groups requiring special attention include women, children and young people under 18 years old, young adults (aged 18–25), older people, members of LGBTQI+ communities, people living with disabilities, children

of imprisoned parents, racialised people, ethnic and religious minorities, foreign nationals, people living with mental health conditions, people with poor health, and people who use drugs.

Goal 3

Safeguard and protect the rights of people in detention and the wider justice system during emergencies and crises.

Indicators:

- Increased recognition of the impact of crises on criminal justice institutions by actors from other sectors (humanitarian, health, etc).
- Enhanced capacity among relevant stakeholders to respond to crises with a human rights-based approach.

The convergence of armed conflicts in fragile and conflict-affected situations (FCS), escalating natural hazards and extreme weather events due to climate change, and pandemics or health crises continues to profoundly affect justice systems globally.

We recognise that many systems are inadequately prepared, with people in detention and the broader justice system often being overlooked. Consequently, we are intensifying our efforts in crisis and fragile contexts to address urgent needs and advocate for humanitarian actors to prioritise justice-affected people and institutions. We will advocate for increased awareness of the challenges faced by people during natural hazards and health pandemics, equipping stakeholders with tools to uphold and protect human rights, including digital safeguards for the growing shift to online hearings.

Goal 4

Enhance oversight of criminal justice systems to increase accountability.

Indicators:

- Stakeholders adopt and utilise higher standards of transparent data collection.
- Enhanced capacity among national stakeholders to implement recommendations from independent monitoring and human rights institutions.

Considering Sustainable Development Goal 16, we advocate for greater accountability within criminal justice systems to bolster the protection of the rule of law and human rights. This entails strengthening oversight, increasing transparency and reducing corruption.

We advocate for increased transparency regarding data and information within justice systems. This has been a long-standing priority for PRI, and we persist in enhancing the capabilities, visibility and influence of independent monitoring mechanisms. These mechanisms include national human rights institutions (NHRIs) adhering to the Paris Principles and National Preventive Mechanisms established under the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture. Additionally, we actively engage with international mechanisms to advise governments on implementing their recommendations.

Goal 5

Promote the availability and use of diversion, restorative justice and non-custodial options.

Indicators:

- Increased international focus on diversion, restorative justice, and non-custodial options.
- Enhanced knowledge among stakeholders regarding diversion, restorative justice and non-custodial options.

We will expand our efforts to challenge the automatic resort to imprisonment for criminal offences, a practice contributing to global prison overcrowding. This acknowledges evidence showing that prison sentences fail to deter or reduce recidivism. Our approach includes advocating for and implementing restorative justice practices and non-custodial sentences, such as probation and community service. However, we are mindful of trends that may unintentionally widen the net of criminal justice involvement, potentially harming more people without reducing prison populations.

Additionally, we will address the necessary resources needed to ensure successful implementation of these alternatives. It is crucial that these options are meaningful, address offending behaviour, cater to the needs and circumstances of at-risk groups, and are acceptable to both victims and society.

Goal 6

Promote the inclusion of people with lived experience in criminal justice reform efforts.

Indicators:

- Empowerment of people, including children and young adults with lived experience in criminal justice systems to participate in reform.
- Meaningful utilisation of input from people with lived experience in reform initiatives.

We will focus on a specific group among justice stakeholders: people with lived experience of the justice system, whether directly or indirectly. Their experiential and practical knowledge, as opposed to mainstream theoretical knowledge, represents an underutilised resource in our sector – a situation PRI aims to change.

By carefully selecting and supporting motivated people with lived experience who wish to contribute to improving the justice system, we can incorporate and amplify their perspectives. Involving people with lived experience necessitates a deliberate and thoughtful approach to ensure a safe and meaningful process that centers their leadership.

Goal 7

Decrease the overreliance on criminal justice systems to promote equality, amidst increasing authoritarianism, poverty and discrimination.

Indicator:

- Mobilise efforts to reduce laws and practices that criminalise and discriminate against the poorest members of society or specific behaviours, emphasising their ineffectiveness and connection to the over-reliance on imprisonment.

Through advocacy and by highlighting their detrimental effects, we aim to raise awareness of criminal laws and practices that target the poor or behaviour labelled as anti-social, including certain minor drug offences. We will collaborate with expert groups, civil society organisations, and other concerned groups to advocate for policies that are fair, proportionate, and non-discriminatory. Much of our work will be with our partners in the Global Campaign to Decriminalise Poverty and Status.

Goal 8

Reduce or eliminate disproportionate and inhumane sentences, as well as the use of pre-trial detention.

Indicators:

- Reduction in the use of disproportionate and inhumane sentences.
- Implementation of reforms aimed at reducing the number of people held in pre-trial detention and limiting its use.

Roughly one in three of the world's prison population is held as a pre-trial detainee awaiting conviction. The excessive use of pre-trial detention significantly contributes to overcrowding in prisons. Many people remain in this situation due to a lack of alternatives or inability to afford bail. Considering that an indicator under Sustainable Development Goal 16 measures the proportion of pre-trial detainees and the undeniable harmful impact, we will intensify our efforts to reform current practice so that pre-trial detention is reserved for exceptional cases only. We will continue advocating and supporting reforms aimed at eliminating disproportionate sentences, particularly those imposed for certain drug-related offences.

Additionally, we will collaborate in global efforts to abolish the death penalty, recognised as a cruel, inhumane, and degrading punishment that violates the right to life. We will work with partners to raise awareness about the human rights implications of life sentences, seeking to reduce their prevalence.

Our values

Our values guide our approach to criminal justice reform and shape our internal functioning as an organisation.

We bring our values to the reform of criminal justice systems

We are guided by our values in our own work

Do no harm

Our approach to criminal justice reform seeks to prevent the harms that the criminal justice system can cause to those in contact with the law, as well as to their families and society at large.

We have procedures in place to prevent our actions from causing suffering or damage to our beneficiaries or to others in the criminal justice system.

We endeavour to ensure our actions, interventions and management do not harm our staff. The safety, security and wellbeing of our staff are paramount, and we equip staff to take good care of themselves.

Equality

We promote equal access to justice and fair process for those suspected of having committed criminal offences and those who have committed criminal offences.

We offer paths to address discrimination and intolerance in criminal justice systems.

We actively promote the involvement and participation of disadvantaged and socially excluded groups in efforts to reform and oversee criminal justice systems and ensure respect for their rights.

We value diversity and the talents of our staff and the contribution each one makes.

We work to ensure that all staff are treated with respect, regardless of their position in the organisation.

We do not tolerate discrimination or violence against staff, especially on grounds of gender, ethnicity, disability, age, religion, or gender identity.

Transparency

We aim to be as open and accountable as possible with all our stakeholders, including officials in criminal justice systems and governments, and partners with whom we engage.

We hold each other accountable, regardless of position in the organisation.

Our policies and regulations are generated via inclusive consultation, are clear and accessible, and apply to all staff.

Humanity

We put humanity at the core of our work for justice and fairness.

Our actions and interventions are motivated by compassion towards others, especially those who face difficulties and challenging situations.

We work with each other in a spirit of trust, cooperation and good faith, understanding that we all seek the same common goal.

Good governance

Methodologies and approaches

We employ various specific and cross-cutting approaches and methodologies. Some are familiar and well-established, while others are new and require us to enhance our skills, invest resources, learn, and test innovative approaches.

Centring the leadership of people with lived experience

We recognise the valuable insights and knowledge that people with direct or indirect experience with the law bring to improving our work. As the trend towards involving people with lived experience gains traction in certain regions, we will enhance our expertise in meaningful engagement and share it widely. This will ensure that criminal justice reform initiatives incorporate and prioritise the leadership of people with lived experience including through our established group of Experts by Experience.

Gender sensitivity

Given the enduring impacts of gender inequality, particularly within patriarchal systems across many countries where PRI operates, all our initiatives are gender-sensitive, leveraging our extensive experience in this domain. We adhere to a 'do no harm' principle and advocate for increased attention to addressing gender inequality and discrimination against women, girls and gender-diverse people at international, regional, and national levels. This focus is particularly crucial as we support some of the most vulnerable women in conflict with the law, who often have complex and multifaceted needs. PRI recognises that this demographic frequently experiences heightened marginalisation while being overlooked in their communities, facing multiple layers of stigma.



Partnerships

We will continue to engage a diverse range of stakeholders within criminal justice systems and across other relevant sectors such as humanitarian aid, climate, health, and development. We remain committed to fostering a vibrant civil society and emphasise collaboration with authorities while maintaining our independence.

Proximity to contexts

With our presence in many regions and countries, we maintain close relationships with policymakers, criminal justice authorities, and civil society. Remaining context-specific is critical to PRI's effectiveness.

Long-term engagement

We are renowned for our steadfast commitment in a field where progress can be gradual. We employ practical projects to showcase best practices and advocate for sustainable, systemic policy changes.

Restorative justice

While not a new approach, over the next five years we will increase our use of restorative justice – both as an alternative to, but also as an approach within detention facilities. By doing so, we align with the broader movement promoting restorative justice principles, which underpin much of PRI's work.

Trauma-informed approaches

Recognising the prevalence of trauma experienced by the people including children whom work for, we commit to ensuring that our work recognises and addresses trauma. This will be particularly evident in our rehabilitation and training programmes.

Adult-based learning

We will continue to enhance the capacity of the people we support, empowering them to be champions of human rights-based criminal justice systems. Our training programmes will be further developed in alignment with adult learning theories. This includes tailoring content to participants' backgrounds and needs, respecting their self-concept and autonomy, incorporating their life experiences, and ensuring practical application.

Play and art-based interventions

Acknowledging the growing recognition of play-based activities, particularly in supporting children and young people who have experienced adverse childhood experiences, we will establish programmes using play and art-based methodologies to empower and rehabilitate people in contact with the law.



Recognising and mitigating risks

Growing authoritarianism threatening civil society space and human rights

We will advocate against the rise of authoritarianism, particularly by supporting people criminalised by laws and policies under such regimes. PRI's constructive, non-confrontational approach, coupled with our fierce independence, has enabled us to remain relevant and a trusted partner for 35 years to both governmental and non-governmental actors. We will rally against any restrictions to civil society alongside our partners and continue to defend human rights in our field.

Potential replacement of PRI by other organisation including intergovernmental organisations

Over the past 35 years, we have demonstrated our enduring relevance. PRI operates where we can add distinct value, avoiding duplication and fostering partnerships with national civil society and intergovernmental organisations. We aim to catalyse independent non-governmental groups in every country where we are active.

Operating amidst global crises with justice reform not a priority

In this time of acute global peril, often described as a 'polycrisis', we ardently believe that the justice-affected people, institutions, stakeholders and practitioners we serve cannot be left behind. Whilst crises demand adaptation, our experiences from the COVID-19 pandemic and our work in fragile and conflict-affected contexts demonstrate that PRI is exceptionally agile, effective and more essential than ever.

Limited donor support for justice reform

Our efforts in justice reform rely heavily on institutional donors, primarily from entities such as the EU, the Netherlands, and other contributing countries. While this support is invaluable, there is a significant risk of dependency on these sources. Unfortunately, private foundations have shown less willingness to fund our initiatives, potentially impacting their public standing. We will continue to work towards achieving a healthy balance between institutional and private donors through sustained investments in public relations and network development.

Lack of resources (particularly unrestricted or core funding) inhibiting implementation of this strategy

The implementation of our strategy, encompassing all eight goals, hinges on the availability of sufficient resources. Recognising that donors increasingly prefer to fund specific objectives over comprehensive proposals, we continue to diversify and innovate to ensure access to necessary funding. We will identify specific donors for each strategic goal and seek dedicated donors aligned with our strategic goals to successfully implement our strategy.

The organisation

Organisational model

PRI is an independent international non-governmental organisation operating globally through offices in multiple locations. Our headquarters are in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, with regional and country programmes (in 2024) based in Georgia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, and Uganda. In other regions, such as South-East Asia and South America, we collaborate with civil society partners without maintaining a physical office. This structure supports the diversity of our global presence, overseen by headquarters to ensure strategic alignment, centralisation of financial and operations matters, and a shared approach to our work, while remaining context-specific.

Our implementation model:

Headquarters

Our headquarters develop and oversee the global implementation of PRI's Theory of Change and strategy. They also lead the development and implementation Strategic Pathway 3 on Advocacy through our Policy Programme. Central services, including programme development and fundraising, monitoring, evaluation and learning, finance, administration, and human resources (through our Governance and strategy programmes), are based at HQ.

Regional programmes

Our regional offices implement PRI's projects within their respective regions. They are staffed with nationals from the region, bringing expertise, experience, and context-relevant knowledge. Many of our programmes are implemented in partnership with civil society organisations. In some cases, country offices are established for larger, long-term projects (for example in Yemen, Sudan and the Central African Republic).



Organisational development

Objective:

PRI is a dynamic, learning organisation dedicated to delivering work of the highest quality.

We are committed to continuously improving the quality of our work – both what we do and how we do it. As a learning organisation that facilitates the learning of its staff and partners, we have a structured way to

assess our progress, viewing mistakes or errors as opportunities to grow. We aim to work efficiently and effectively, using proven methods while remaining open to new and innovative approaches. We also strive to be an inclusive organisation where everyone feels recognised and heard. Lastly, our work must be urgent and relevant to the challenges facing justice systems today.

Goals:

Increased cohesion across the organisation.

As a global learning organisation, continuous effort is required to stay connected. This is especially important when the workload is high for staff across the organisation. We are committed to making concerted efforts across all teams to stay connected, both online and in person, and to keep learning from each other through internal learning initiatives.

A sustainable pool of experts, trainers and associates established.

For training, consultancy, and other projects, we sometimes rely on experts and trainers. To increase sustainable involvement and connectedness between PRI and its experts, we commit to investing in structural group learning events and debriefing sessions. We will also re-establish an associate-based structure for external experts who regularly support PRI's work.

Guidelines and tools, including good practices of PRI's work, identified and documented.

Developing guidelines for changing practice and policy is common practice at PRI, and we will continue to ensure that we deliver cutting-edge, up to date guidance based on best practices and innovative solutions in the field.

Functioning group of people with lived experience established.

We aim to increase the involvement of people with lived experience at both the project level and organisational level. In 2023, PRI established the Experts by Experience group with a new structural position in the organisation. PRI will regularly consult this group to improve our impact.

Key trends in criminal justice systems analysed and integrated into programme design

Our Global Prison Trends programme, along with other research and analytical initiatives, serves not only external stakeholders but also provides valuable input for our internal learning. We will enhance our use of analysis as a resource for programme design.

Internal Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Capacities, supported by external evaluations.

As a learning organisation, we need to have sufficient in-house monitoring and evaluation capacity. PRI staff should rely on MEL to have standardised methods that help assess our work uniformly. For accountability to external stakeholders, we recognise the need to meet high standards. Additionally, external evaluations are necessary to challenge our assumptions, remove blind spots and biases, and enhance our organisational learning.

Endnotes

- 1 Over 50 people from our external global network of stakeholders, funders, experts, etc. provided insights and input through responding to an online questionnaire. The online consultation with stakeholders included a ranking of priorities with the following top 3 as result:
 1) Rehabilitation, reintegration, and post-release: 64 %;
 2) Diversion and non-custodial alternatives: 52 %;
 3) Children and young adult justice systems: 39%.
- 2 Racialisation: the act of giving a racial character to someone or something: the process of categorizing, marginalizing, or regarding according to race. See: www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/racialization.
- 3 See Penal Reform International, *Why criminal justice reform is essential to the 2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2016.
- 4 See Summit of the Future: www.un.org/en/summit-of-the-future.
- 5 www.sdg16.plus/justice-action-coalition
- 6 See more about the Women, Peace and Security Agenda at: dppa.un.org/en/women-peace-and-security.

FAIR AND EFFECTIVE CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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