What Makes for a Resilient Community?
Bojana Selakovic, Program Director, Civic Initiatives, Serbia

- **Overview of the theory, good practice examples and lessons learned**

- **Challenges to developing a resilient community – work in small groups**

- **Gallery walk**

What does resiliency mean to you?

Results

https://www.mentimeter.com/s/3044be50a8ba19e621a8b9938c995f02/6f832e1df20f

Resiliency
Definition by Partners Global

PARTNERSGLOBAL
Together for Democratic Change

Resilience is the capacity and ability to

anticipate and plan for,
respond to,
adapt to shocks/ impacts
and **recover** from threats of the changing civil space.

Not only to survive, but also to thrive
in an uncertain environment.

Resiliency = set of skills + dedicated process + mindset

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7 WAYS TO KNOW IF YOU ARE FACING AN ADAPTIVE CHALLENGE

1. If the solution requires operating in a different way than you do now….

2. If the problem and the solution require learning …..

3. If the solution requires shifting the authority and responsibility to the people who are actually affected …

4. If the solution requires some sacrifice of your past ways of working or living….

5. If the solution requires experimenting before you are sure of the answer …

6. If the solution will take a long time….

7. If the challenge connects to people's deeply held values….

THEN YOU ARE FACING AN ADAPTIVE CHALLENGE.

Adapted from the work of Ronald Heifetz and Martin Linsky

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Changing civic space and VUCA world
www.vuca-world.org

What VUCA means for organizations

Key assumptions

*Things are changing **faster***

*Different kind of things are changing in **different ways***

VOLATILE= rapid, sudden, constant change

UNCERTAIN = unclear information and outcomes

COMPLEX = multiplicity of variables and unknowns

AMBIGUOUS = lack of clarity about the meaning of events

Required skills: visioning, understanding, clarity and agility

In stable environments: organizations will be most successful by optimizing impact around current needs/ problems.

In VUCA: organizations will be most successful by investing in robust strategies that enhance adaptability and flexibility for the future.

About INSPIRES and Resilency+

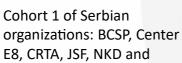The Enabling and Protecting Civic Space (EPCS) INSPIRES project increases

knowledge and capacity to respond to growing restrictions on civic space

which is shifting rapidly around the globe.

Countries of implementation: Ecuador, Georgia, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, Serbia and Tanzania

Cohort 1 of Serbian organizations: BCSP, Center E8, CRTA, JSF, NKD and TRAG

Cohort 2 of Serbian organizations: ATINA, BCHR, BOS, Group COME OUT, YIHR and SCF

Analytical Framework
- Shed light on the new challenges and emerging conflict dynamics that impact civil society organizations.
- Allow organizations to pause and reflect and look at their strengths and vulnerabilities through the lens of resilience instead of traditional OD.

Structured Accompaniment Process
- Embed systems thinking and adaptive management in the organizational culture.
- Develop concrete strategies to prepare and respond to uncertainty, threats and crisis.

Dedicated Resources Space
- Curated collection of diverse resources and tools to support an organization's journey to organizational resilience and long-term sustainability.

Resilient Organizations in Changing Civic Space

FACTORS OF ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE

- Adaptive Capacity
- Connectedness
- Entrepreneurial Mindset
- Legitimacy
- Staff commitment and Capacity
- Creative Communications
- Situational Awareness

If organizations understand the **systemic nature of the external threats** posed by the closing civic space,

If organizations are **aware of their internal vulnerabilities** and how these vulnerabilities affect their ability to respond to threats and crisis,

If organizations develop a **capacity to adapt** in the face of threats,

If organizations develop a **culture of resilience** and resilience issues are key considerations for all decisions that are made,

If organizations stay **meaningfully connected within their sector and across sectors**,

If organizations have an **entrepreneurial mindset**,

If organizations **retain legitimacy** and

If organizations **communicate creatively to defend their legitimacy and respond to divisive narratives**,

Then organizations have the capacity and capability to respond to threats and crisis, to continue to operate and even to thrive even in the most complex environments.

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EU TACSO 3 project is funded by the European Union

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**7 Resiliency Factors
21 Resiliency Sub-Factors**

FACTOR	INDICES		
Adaptive Capacity	Multi-Generational Leadership	Agile Governance	Contingency Planning
Situational Awareness	Internal Vulnerability Awareness	External Threats Awareness	Systems Awareness
Creative Communications	Engaging the Narrative	Crisis Communications	Adopting New Technologies
Staff Commitment and Capacity	Connection to the Work	Preparedness	Wellbeing and Support
Legitimacy	Prioritizing Accountability	Managing Public Image	Connection with Constituents
Entrepreneurial Mindset	Financial Preparedness	Experimentation and Innovation	Diversified Revenue Streams
Connectedness	Network Membership	Active Solidarity	Collaborating to Create Shared Value

ADAPTIVE CAPACITY

Based on the premise that the ability **to adapt to threats, vulnerabilities, or opportunities** within a changing civic space is essential to organizational resiliency for the organization **to thrive.**

Competency under this factor entails cultivating **agility, adaptive and multigenerational leadership**, and **capacities to anticipate and respond** to sudden changes.

SITUATIONAL AWARNESS

Based on the premise that organizations are **complex systems** that exist **within larger, also complex**, societal systems.

Competency under this factor entails maintaining an awareness of the actors and dynamics at each of these levels and using that **awareness to inform timely the decision-making.**

CREATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Based on the premise that organizations **need to understand the power of intentional communications to better connect** with the public and other stakeholders in the civic space.

Competency under this factor entails to **carefully identify narrative frames and tensions** within society to communicate more effectively **and adapt its communications strategies** accordingly by using the new technologies

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STAFF COMMITMENT AND CAPACITY

Based on the premise that **strong, motivated, and resilient individuals** that understand and embrace the organization's mission are necessary for an organization **to weather crises, survive shocks, and grow** and thrive in complex and uncertain operating environments.

Competency under this factor entails **investing in staff preparedness and wellbeing and having in place mechanisms** and practices that allow individual staff members **to connect to the organization and to each other.**

LEGITIMACY

Based on the premise that **legitimacy is needed to ensure both domestic and international public support** to endure sudden changes in the civic space.

Competency under this factor requires a culture and processes to ensure **transparency** and **accountability** to both donors and constituents and to build connections and *trust*, solidifying an organization's standing and **reputation** in the space.

ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET

Based on the premise that to capitalize on new opportunities, create value, innovate, and effectively network, organizations must maintain an **entrepreneurial mindset that enables access to diversified funding, strategic alliances, innovative service delivery, and quick recovery** from civic space shocks.

Competency in this factor entails the **existence of practices and mechanisms**, as well as an organizational culture, **that encourages creative thinking and the exploration of nontraditional funding sources** and opportunities.

CONNECTEDNESS

Based on the premise that **strong organizations are purposefully and actively connected internally, with constituents, within the sector, and across sectors.** This allows them to proactively manage change and build communication pathways to inform decision-making and increase preparedness.

Competency under this factor entails **the ability of organizations to recognize the importance of forging, maintaining, and leveraging strong relationships and alliances and practicing solidarity.**
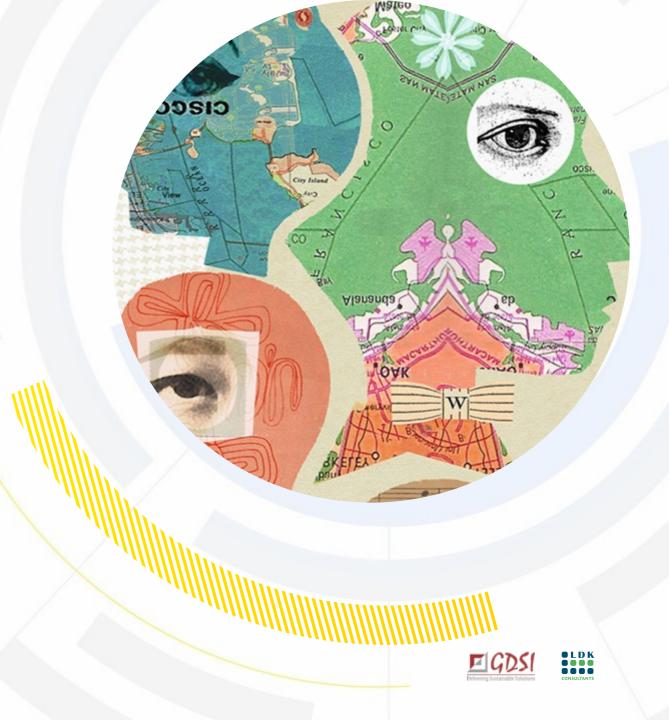
PRACTISING RESILENCY

Changes
(infrastructure, knowledge,
skills, mindset shifts)
**to address resiliency
vulnerabilities.**

Challenges to developing a resilient community – work in small groups

RESILENT ORGANISATIONS BUILD RESILENT COMMUNITIES

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What does community mean to you?

Results

https://www.mentimeter.com/s/ff2790be805ab57c8623acc50615b23a/f947d05b8da8

EU TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY

TACSO

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https://www.partnersglobal.org/who-we-are/signature-approaches/resiliency/

Thank you for your attention!

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