

Resiliency+ FRAMEWORK

Tools and Tactics for Civil Society Organizations
in the Face of Closing Civic Space





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ABOUT PARTNERSGLOBAL

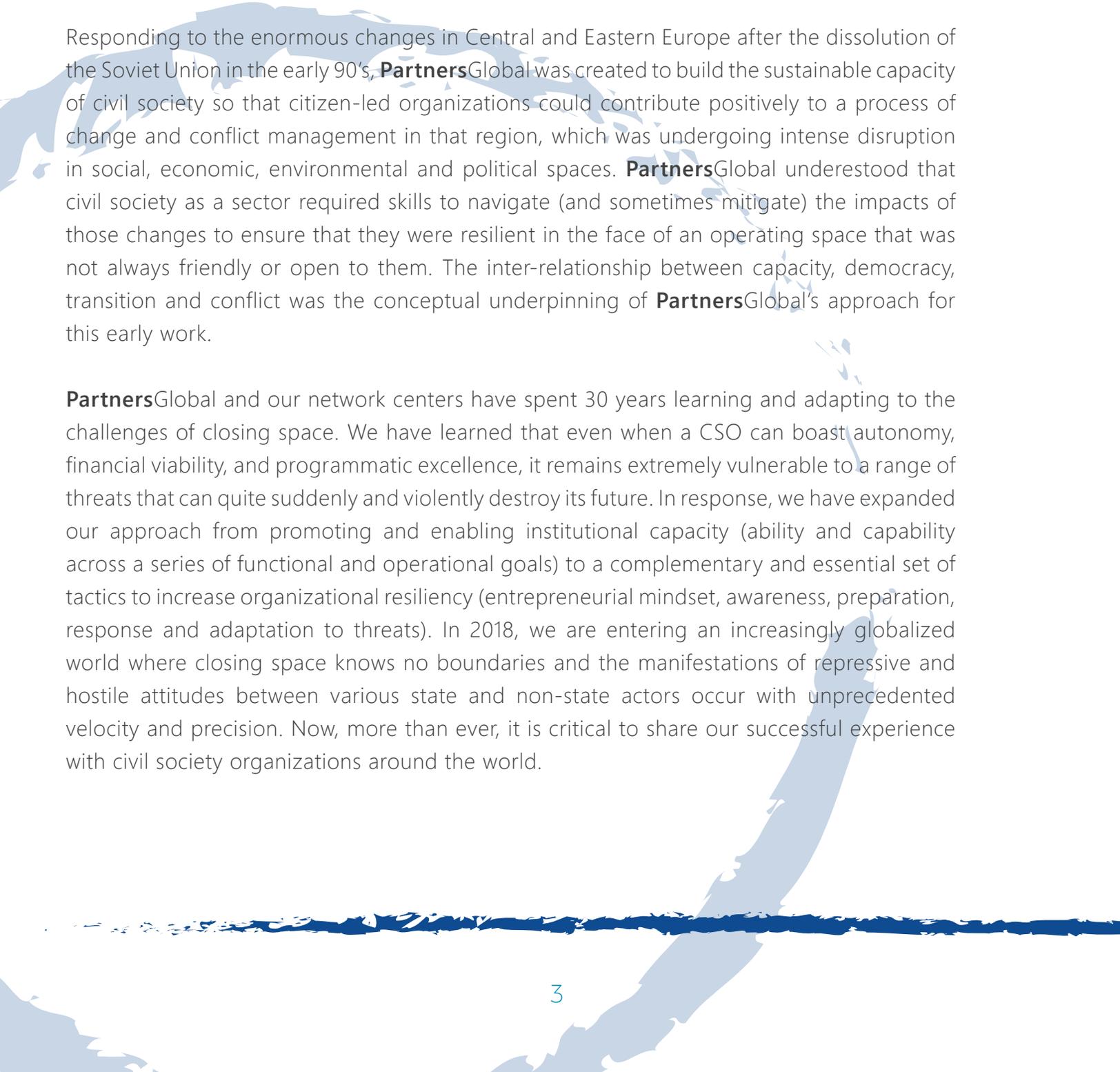
Resiliency+
Framework

PartnersGlobal has been investing in local leaders, local organizations and local solutions since 1989, cultivating a global network of change makers that work for peaceful and democratic change. From its beginning, the **Partners** Network has proven to be resilient in environments of limited civic space. Today, the **Partners** Network represents a rich diversity of 22 civil society organizations and functions as a global civil society platform whose members are among the most respected organizations in their home countries and regions. Network members have worked in over 50 countries amidst highly polarized political climates, weak civil society sectors, ethnic and social conflict, and post-war transitions. Our approach to supporting local civil-society leaders marries seed funding support with a process of organizational development focused on strengthening systems, establishing protocols and selecting leadership structures. This sustainable impact investment model has yielded long-lasting results.

The Partners Model
In the past 30 years, the Partners Network has proven to be resilient in environments of changing civic space. An independent evaluation found that PartnersGlobal's model of local impact investment resulted in a sustainability rate of 82%.

THE PARTNERSGLOBAL MODEL OF SUSTAINABLE IMPACT INVESTING

The **Partners**Global model of sustainable impact investing seeks a triple bottom line that includes sustainable civil society organizations (financial viability); democracy building and conflict management (social impact) and organizational resiliency (ability to respond and adapt to shocks).

A faint, light blue map of Europe is visible in the background, spanning across the middle of the page.

Responding to the enormous changes in Central and Eastern Europe after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in the early 90's, **PartnersGlobal** was created to build the sustainable capacity of civil society so that citizen-led organizations could contribute positively to a process of change and conflict management in that region, which was undergoing intense disruption in social, economic, environmental and political spaces. **PartnersGlobal** understood that civil society as a sector required skills to navigate (and sometimes mitigate) the impacts of those changes to ensure that they were resilient in the face of an operating space that was not always friendly or open to them. The inter-relationship between capacity, democracy, transition and conflict was the conceptual underpinning of **PartnersGlobal's** approach for this early work.

PartnersGlobal and our network centers have spent 30 years learning and adapting to the challenges of closing space. We have learned that even when a CSO can boast autonomy, financial viability, and programmatic excellence, it remains extremely vulnerable to a range of threats that can quite suddenly and violently destroy its future. In response, we have expanded our approach from promoting and enabling institutional capacity (ability and capability across a series of functional and operational goals) to a complementary and essential set of tactics to increase organizational resiliency (entrepreneurial mindset, awareness, preparation, response and adaptation to threats). In 2018, we are entering an increasingly globalized world where closing space knows no boundaries and the manifestations of repressive and hostile attitudes between various state and non-state actors occur with unprecedented velocity and precision. Now, more than ever, it is critical to share our successful experience with civil society organizations around the world.

ABOUT CIVICUS

Resiliency+
Framework

CIVICUS is a global alliance of civil society organisations and individuals dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society for a more just, inclusive and sustainable world. The alliance works to protect the fundamental civic freedoms that allow us to speak out, organise and take action. We do this by defending civic freedoms and democratic values; strengthening the power of people to organise, mobilise and take action; and empowering a more accountable, effective and innovative civil society. We strive to promote excluded voices, especially from the Global South, and have a growing alliance of more than 4000 members in more than 175 countries.

As outlined in CIVICUS' Strategic Plan 2017-2022 , we work to strengthen citizen action and civil society toward a more just, inclusive and sustainable. Our work is guided by our three strategic goals, which reflect our belief that people-powered and collective action is at the centre of transformative change.

1. Defending civic freedoms and democratic values.

We defend the fundamental civic freedoms of association, peaceful assembly and expression in all countries, particularly when they are under threat. We do this by providing activists with emergency and sustained support; tracking civic space trends globally; incubating and sharing new ways to counter threats to civic space.

2. Strengthening the power of people to organise, mobilise and take action.

We work in solidarity with change-seeking activists, organisations and movements on inequality, injustice, insecurity and climate change. We connect local actors with global

agendas by bringing local voices to global fora, and support people and their organisations to monitor progress and hold governments accountable for their national and international commitments.

3. Empowering a more accountable, effective and innovative civil society.

We work to empower civil society to become more accountable, effective and innovative agents of change by encouraging collaboration, engagement, and shared learning among our diverse alliance members and partners. We advocate for institutional architecture that supports and sustains civil society, including coalitions, umbrella bodies and networks.

HOW WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Drawing on over 20 years of experience, we are working to build on our strengths while also exploring new ways of working to strengthen citizen action and civil society by:

- Building solidarity among civil society across borders and at scale
- Supporting civil society to connect with others
- Producing timely and world-class knowledge and analysis
- Advocating for open spaces and systemic change
- Amplifying voices of those usually not included
- Promoting resourcing of diverse and resilient civil society
- Innovating and incubate bold initiatives
- Promoting, modeling and disseminating civil society best practices

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

The main contributing authors of the framework are Roselie Vasquez Yetter, Global Director for Civil Society and Alyson Lyons, Senior Advisor to Global Initiatives, both of **PartnersGlobal**. Significant contributions were also provided by Patricia Deniz, Research & Development Officer, and Alex Sadar, Chief Innovation Officer, both of **CIVICUS**.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The development of the **RESILIENCY+ FRAMEWORK** would not have been possible without the intellectual and financial support from CIVICUS, and contributions by several PartnersGlobal staff members. We would like to give particular thanks to Alex Sardar and Patricia Deniz, both of whom offered thought-provoking questions, provided unfettered access to CIVICUS network members, and were a constant source of encouragement when working through the development process. (a complete list of individuals and organizations interviewed appears in the Annex section of this document). Thank you also to Julia Roig and Luis Gomez Chow, both of whom force us to challenge our assumptions and push us to think critically and innovatively about why it is important for civil society to be resilient, what that means in the face of closing civic space, and how we at PartnersGlobal approach resiliency in a way that positively contributes to the peaceful transformation of conflict. And to Jeneva Kuhns for her excellent assistance with research, editing and anything else we threw at her!

We would also like to thank the members of the **Partners** Network who offered their thoughts, experiences and concerns as they navigate these changing spaces and are faced with a number of the threats and challenges noted in the **RESILIENCY+ FRAMEWORK**. Our network members inspire us to learn, reflect, and adapt to the changing needs of civil society in an increasingly polarized world. We are forever grateful for the convening support of May Nasr of Partners Lebanon, the team of Centro de Colaboracion Civica, in Mexico City and Partners West Africa Senegal for their support to organize and participate in focus groups that enabled us to truth-test our assumptions; to refine our understanding of how to incorporate contextual factors from different geographies into the design and content

Framework; and to recognize the sensitivities around terminology and definitions.

We are also incredibly indebted to all interviewees who take numerous risks on a daily basis, including contributing to the development of this framework, in order to promote a better world that is inclusive and provides for the basic human needs and rights of all people.

We would be remiss without recognizing the significant learning that has been ongoing within the framework of the Closing Political Space Roundtable series jointly convened by **Partners**Global and Counterpart International and the many presenters and participants who have shared their concerns, solutions and perspectives within that venue between 2016 and 2018.

Additionally, this framework builds upon the proliferation of work of other groups that have developed guidelines, strategies and tactics in response to governmental attacks on NGOs. Our Framework is an attempt to focus equally on the preventative opportunities to strengthen the resiliency of civil society organizations and the sector, writ large, in order to bolster the individual and collective capacity for civil society to decrease the impact and frequency of such direct attacks.



I. INTRODUCTION

The international community accomplished a major feat in 2015. That was the year all countries around the world unanimously adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The significance of the new agenda, which replaced the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is the inclusion of several key goals that moved the collective understanding of peacebuilding and development forward. Particularly, Goal 16 for Peaceful, Inclusive and Just Societies offered a way to ensure that the SDGs include an open process of engagement with and between UN Members States and civil society. Now, more than ever, governments can be held accountable to incorporate civil society's ideas, opinions and priorities to provide sustainable, inclusive and accountable development for all.

Despite international efforts to normalize the inclusion of civil society in process of the achieving sustainable development, the ability for civil society to operate has, in reality, been shrinking at a rapid pace. The past decade has been marred by **closing civic space**, with governments applying pressures and threats to deter civil society from operating or being perceived as legitimate actors to hold governments accountable.

This issue is not new. Civil society has faced some form of "dissuasion" since people began to organize into groups. What is alarming, however, is the expansion of the types of government that are employing strategies and tactics to delegitimize civil society. The reasons for this new trend are multiple: from historical mistrust

Closing Civic Space
Changes in legislation or government tactics that restrict, weaken, and/or delegitimize the ability for civil society to operate. Closing civic space can further refer to pushback against external support for democratic rights and principles.

of civil society getting involved in issues considered exclusive of the political realm, to direct attempts from government officials to consolidate their power silencing critical voices or opposing views. While the work of independent civil society organizations has always been difficult in authoritarian regimes, it is becoming more common for democratically elected governments around the world to resort to practices that hinder the work of CSOs and networks, particularly of those promoting democracy, human rights, transparency, and civic participation. The reasons for this new trend are multiple, from historical mistrust of civil society getting involved in issues considered exclusive of the political realm, to direct attempts from government officials to consolidate their power by silencing critical voices or opposing views. From Egypt to Ecuador and Mexico to Myanmar, civil society organizations and social movements, together with their international supporters, are facing ever-growing challenges to their work, if not their own existence.

In 2016, **Partners**Global convened its annual **Partners** Network meeting to identify the common challenges across geographies to plan for collaborative action in 2017. The leading issue that emerged across all 22 Network Centers was the impact of closing civic space on their ability to function freely and without threats of operation or security. The most troubling revelation was that this issue had as many drivers as countries assessed. The outcomes of this meeting were reinforced by the *2017 State of Civil Society Report* produced by CIVICUS, which identifies several urgent trends that continue to emerge and threaten the space for civic participation. Most critically perhaps, the report notes that just three percent of the world's population live in countries where civic space is fully open, with civic space being seriously constrained in over half of all United Nations member states. This means that the **restriction of civic space has become the norm rather than the exception.**

We are cognizant that the shrinking of civic space mirrors a decline in democratic ideals globally. Governments adopt repressive tactics from each other and use similar justifications to close civic space, including national security prerogatives and promotion of accountability within the media and civil society sectors. A 2014 report of the UN's Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association specifically addressed the responsibility of multilateral institutions (MLIs) to protect and promote civic rights. In particular, he urged MLIs to demonstrate their commitments by engaging substantively with CSOs, giving them access and speaking rights at meetings, enhancing citizen access to MLI documents and, where possible, financing local CSOs. Further, a repressed civic environment adversely affects not only civil society organizations, the media and ultimately other sectors, but also ordinary citizens, and leads to the cultural, economic, political and social decline of a society.

While much time and effort have been put into dissecting these trends, there's remains a need for concrete and practical strategies that civil society at the global, regional, and local levels can implement to revert this trend and increase their resilience in the face of closing political spaces. The 2016 **Partners** Network meeting, combined with trends identified within **Partners**Global's Closing Space Roundtable Initiative, and CIVICUS' report and information gathered from its members around the globe, drove us to initiate a series of resiliency assessments within and beyond our network to determine how civil society organizations can withstand, adapt and respond to the shocks of closing political space.

The result is the **RESILIENCY+ FRAMEWORK** developed by **Partners**Global, with intellectual and financial support from CIVICUS, **to accompany CSOs through a process to identify**

drivers of and threats to resiliency and to propose strategies, tactics, tools and peer-to-peer assistance to address closing civic space.

The **RESILIENCY+ FRAMEWORK** provides a more nuanced understanding of how civil society organizations and actors operate, adapt and thrive in response to multi-faceted and multi-dimensional changes to socio-political-economic dynamics. The **RESILIENCY+ FRAMEWORK** is a guide and toolkit for civil society organizations that offers insights into what strategies, tactics and tools are useful to increase the capacity to withstand the shocks and trauma of changes and impacts of closing space.

How civil society organizations are prepared to respond to the uncertainty of the current civic space dynamic - as an opportunity, threat, or something in between - will define the shape of development work moving forward and will have a direct impact on the achievement of the SDGs.

FROM ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCY

Support to civil society organizations is not new to the international development and peacebuilding fields. Traditional organizational development for international CSOs measures their ability to mobilize the human, material, and financial resources necessary to attain their vision while remaining financially viable. Key indicators include core capacities such as strategic planning, human-resource management, recruitment, and establishing organizational and financial systems and protocols.

However, the impact of closing political spaces, coupled with dwindling financial resources and legal restraints on civil society organizations, is forcing the sector to rethink organizational models and strategies to enable civil society to adapt to changing conditions. Beyond financial viability, sustainability and, ultimately, **resiliency**, also require leadership succession planning, adaptability, accountability, transparency and, sometimes, transformation. Unfortunately, our models of capacity building are outdated and don't take into account contextual factors, political context, socio-economic drivers or the human factor of psycho-social burnout and stress. They also insufficiently address the trends of globalization and digitization of the economy that have added additional dimensions of both risk and opportunity to the growth cycles of CSOs. Both lead to increased competition and deeper need for CSOs to behave more creatively and think more entrepreneurially to remain viable.

Therein lies the potential for **organizational resiliency** to take root and enable civil society organizations to prepare, adapt and respond to the impacts of closing civic space. The term "**resilience**" (from Latin *resilire* = bounce off) has been used since the 1950s in natural science academic circles to describe the environment's ability to adapt and respond to threats and changes to various ecosystems, and was adopted in the 1970s in psychology and education spheres to describe the human capacity to withstand the shocks and trauma of crises. For international development and peacebuilding practitioners, resiliency is often referred to as a component of sustainability, as the ability of a system and/or society to manage and withstand the impacts and shocks of crises on the population, natural resources, and institutions. The rise of resilience within the international development discourse and its integration as a concept across a variety of agencies and pillars has led to a virtual explosion

RESILIENT FUNDING: WHAT IS IT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Civil society organizations are not only facing a donor retreat from closing civic spaces (including in the US), but also a heavy focus on projects and not on institutional strengthening and support. As a result, many organizations have excellent program managers, but lack strategic leaders capable of overcoming shocks linked to the closing of the civic space.

Funders must also adapt to new global realities of closing space and find ways to effectively reach civil society organizations and understand how they are adapting. Unless funders use experimentation, learning, and flexibility to find ways to support innovative and emerging associative forms, the ability of the civil society to adapt will be even further constrained.

WHAT INCREASES RESILIENCE FOR FUNDERS?

Funders whose structure and practice reflect the characteristics of resilience have high adaptive capacity. Adaptive capacity is the ability of a funder to change what it is doing, or the context in which it operates, to maintain its functions. There are three major dimensions to the resilience of funding organizations:

1. Adaptive Procedures – How to Support Social Action
2. Multiple Strategies – What to Support
3. Adaptive Environment – Conditions for Social Action Increased

Adaptive capacity in these three areas promotes the flexibility to weather the shocks and stresses of tightening restrictions and increasing.

of resilience-focused frameworks. They have evolved in the context of disaster and risk reduction, climate change policy, food security, environmental sustainability and livelihoods, among other topics.

For the purpose of the **RESILIENCY+ FRAMEWORK**, “resiliency” is understood on three separate and interconnected levels – individual, organizational and sectoral.

Individual Resiliency involves **behaviors, thoughts, and actions that promote personal wellbeing and mental health, whether an individual is part of an organization or not.**

People can develop the ability to withstand, adapt to, and recover from stress and adversity—and maintain or return to a state of mental health and wellbeing—by using effective coping strategies. Civil society is comprised of individuals that come together in different types of groupings, and as such, the wellbeing of those citizens is key in the overall resilience of civil society.

Organizational Resiliency is **the ability for an organization to prepare and adapt to changing and challenging environments and circumstances, whether they are punctual or part of a series of events.**

The organization is also able to quickly bounce back from challenges and develop long-term initiatives that enable it to flourish despite disruption. Components of organizational resiliency may include a strong leadership and network, as well as a dedicated, flexible and innovative staff.

Sectoral Resiliency is **the ability for civil society organizations, other civic groupings**

and individual activists to effectively communicate and collaborate to both manage and overcome challenges in a changing environment. Components of sectoral resiliency can include promoting innovation, collaborating with multiple stakeholders, establishing a strong network of connections between CSOs, and sharing information and tools to help strengthen and support each other in times of need.

The essence therefore of “resiliency” is an ability to “adapt swiftly and purposefully” to shocks in such a way as not to cause the whole structure to collapse but to thrive. In the case of CSO resilience,

we are promoting a “new wave” of thinking that moves beyond a return to the previous state or maintenance of the status quo during a shock and emphasizes improvements in development.

In other words, “systems need to be managed for flexibility rather than for maintaining stability.”² There are a common set of core principles of resilience in the face of closing political space that all civil society organizations share. They are:

1. **ABILITY TO LEARN** - assessing the environment and operational capacities of the organization, and selecting appropriate strategies and tactics to withstand any changes or threats
2. **RESOURCEFULNESS** - adapting funding mechanisms and models to attract non-traditional financial resources; using non-financial resources to support operations; and success

3. **ADAPTABILITY** - having in place contingency plans for staffing, operational procedures and security protocols (both virtual and physical)
4. **DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS** - investing in diverse, inter-generational, multi-skilled teams, and setting up organizational processes that include broad consultation and communication as part of an inclusive working environment
5. **CONNECTIVITY** - leveraging networks to share information; seek and/or provide support, mentorship and learning opportunities; and collectively advocate on behalf of the sector

These guiding principles clarify how to achieve organizational resiliency and offer a useful path for measuring whether progress is being made. The essence of resiliency for an organization is an ability to **“fail elegantly”**. In other words, **a point of failure in one part of the organization does not cause the whole structure to collapse**. In the case of an organization experiencing tightening civic space, the five principles above represent dimensions of an organization’s capacity to predict and respond elegantly to threats.

METHODOLOGY

The **RESILIENCY+ FRAMEWORK** was designed through a process of co-creation with the participation of experts and CSO practitioners around the globe. The **RESILIENCY+ FRAMEWORK** draws upon research and insights from the latest in academic and practitioner thinking on resilience, complex operating environments and civil society organizational models and capacities.



During the initial phase of data collection and assumption-testing, we interviewed more than 45 civil society leaders, network members, donor representatives and academic experts across regions, sectors and varying degrees of closing civic space to identify the key elements for strengthening resiliency efforts. Some of these included activists from Hong Kong and Uganda; service provision-oriented NGOs based in Kosovo and Mexico; human rights groups from Ecuador and South Sudan; CSO coalition or network representatives from Serbia and India; and members of the donor community including foundations and international aid agencies.

We complemented this participatory method of data collection by compiling and synthesizing existing knowledge and tools on CSO organizational resiliency, cross-referencing these resources with more recent analyses and examples of how CSOs can individually and collectively protect their role in society to maintain effective operations while under threat (see main findings in Table 1 on page 21). Then, we truth-tested our initial findings and analysis by convening internal feedback sessions and external focus groups with diverse stakeholders from various geographic, political, and security contexts including in Albania, Kazakhstan, and Senegal, where we presented the first draft of the framework and solicited questions and thoughts that informed this final version.

Through this rigorous process, we designed the **RESILIENCY+ FRAMEWORK** to meet the practical assessment and planning needs of civil society organizations operating in increasingly restrictive environments.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

Existing frameworks and tools designed to promote civil society resiliency are directed at international audiences as part of a larger effort to understand the impacts of closing space on the sector writ large. The **RESILIENCY+ FRAMEWORK** is a useful and necessary resource for international audiences to continue to learn and reflect on best practices and lessons learned from the application of the strategies, tools and tactics offered within the framework. However, the primary intended audience is local and national civil society organizations and leaders experiencing or anticipating increasingly restrictive operating environments.

The secondary audience is the donor community, which is simultaneously developing a parallel Resilient Funding Framework that must be integrated with Resiliency+ for continuity and growth across the sector. Additionally, other civil society actors such as activists, community-based organizations, social movements, and other informal structures may also find the framework useful to adapt and apply to their respective realities and needs.

TRANSFORMING RESEARCH INTO ACTION

The next phase will be to test the **RESILIENCY+ FRAMEWORK** by means of rigorous cross-national impact evaluations, which will be complemented with training modules, peer coaching, organizational pairing and other forms of skills transfer on prevention and response mechanisms for CSOs experiencing closing or closed civic spaces. The accompaniment process will be piloted in direct engagement with established civil society thereby providing

an innovative, multi-sectoral and global response to the crisis of closing civic space. The framework is open for other partners to contribute towards the definition of a methodology that reinforces CSOs readiness and response.

Graphic 1: Pyramid of CSO Resiliency Indicators



TABLE 1: FINDINGS FROM PRELIMINARY RESEARCH

CSOs experience closing space as:	CSOs lack resilience because of:	CSOs increase their resilience by:
<p>Restrictive registration, taxation and activity-approval laws and policies;</p> <p>Politicized application of other laws;</p> <p>Government manipulation of information and repression of independent media;</p> <p>Constrained funding due to regulations and practices that impede receiving external (and sometimes domestic) financial support;</p> <p>Curtailed freedoms of speech, assembly and association; and</p> <p>Threatened or perpetrated violence towards people and property.</p>	<p>Political or sectoral isolation/disconnection;</p> <p>Disconnection with constituencies;</p> <p>Lack of psychosocial support to the individuals and activists that conform CSOs;</p> <p>Rigid organizational models that do not allow for flexible preventive measures and responses to both internal and external shocks and challenges; and</p> <p>The withdrawal of some donors and the shift in interest of others, coupled with the lack of capacity of CSOs to diversify their sources of funding.</p>	<p>Strengthening internal and external strategic communications to convey and demonstrate their critical role in democratic societies;</p> <p>Deepening roots in communities and within CSO networks for peer-support, mentorship and experience-sharing;</p> <p>Improving the safety of online activities and information sharing;</p> <p>Improving safety of offline activities and physical integrity of staff and property;</p> <p>Exploring non-traditional financing;</p> <p>Investing in leadership succession planning and staff training and wellbeing; and</p> <p>Focusing on their own organizational transparency and accountability.</p>

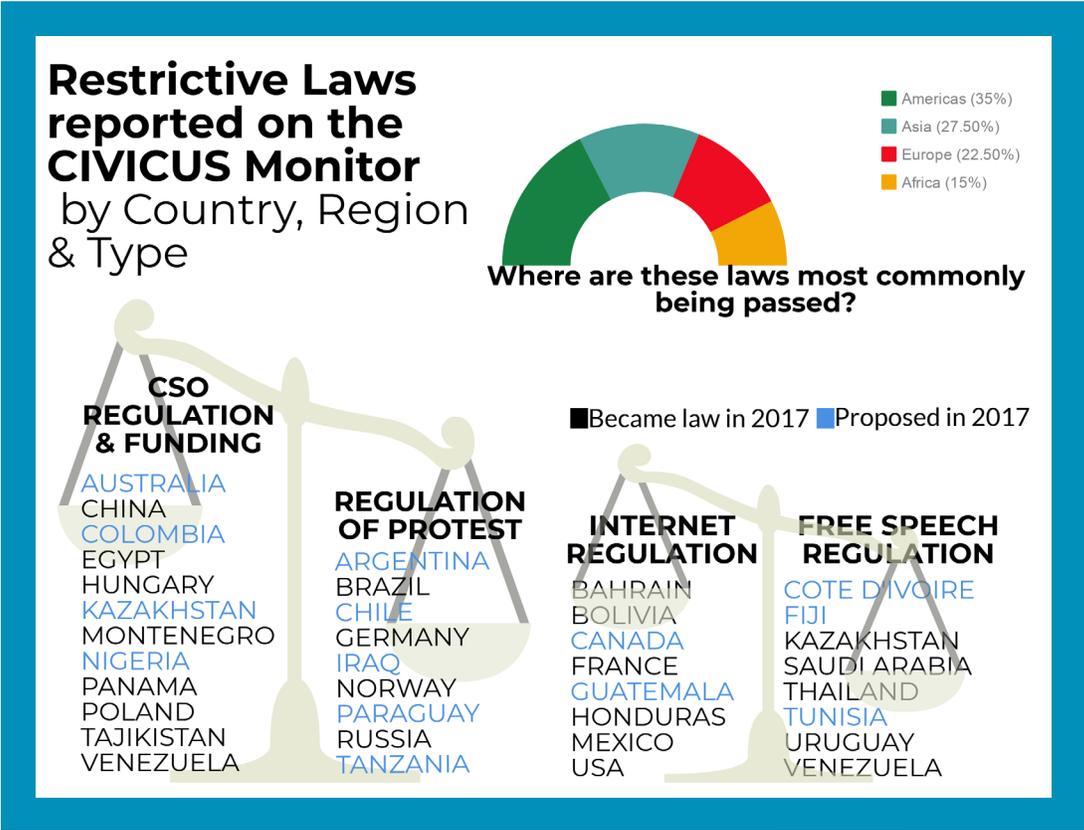
II. RESILIENCY+ FRAMEWORK

The **RESILIENCY+ FRAMEWORK** is comprised of four main steps:

- 1) Conduct an assessment of the operational landscape in the context that any given civil society organization is operating within to gain an understanding of the threats and challenges that they are facing, as well as possible entry points or opportunities that can be leveraged or exploited to support resilience;
- 2) Utilize the Resiliency Matrix to organize and prioritize identified threats and challenges, and choose tactics, tools and strategies that can be implemented to address, mitigate or respond to them;
- 3) Carry out an organizational model and life cycle self-assessment to determine internal strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities related to the CSO's existing business model and life cycle stage, including any existing resiliency elements; and
- 4) Devise a Resiliency Roadmap, or intervention plan, based on the outcomes from the three previous steps and centered on the principles of Do No Harm and iterative learning whereby the intervention is continuously evaluated, adapted and responsive to changing contextual factors to mitigate to the fullest extent possible any potential harm to the organization, its staff and its constituency.

STEP ONE: ASSESS OPERATIONAL LANDSCAPE

Before any organization selects a strategy to address the effects of closing political space, it must understand exactly what the political and economic landscape looks like by conducting a Political Economy Analysis to take into account the various aspects that impact CSO functionality. To complement this methodology, we will also be using elements from some of the CIVICUS tools, such as the CIVICUS Monitor, the Enabling Environment National Assessments (EENA) and the Civil Society Index (CSI).



STEP TWO: IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES AND STRATEGY WITH RESILIENCY+ MATRIX

The **RESILIENCY+ FRAMEWORK** represents a compendium of existing resources and approaches derived from the current experience of our colleagues around the world. The outcome of this research is a detailed **RESILIENCY+ MATRIX** comprised of identified threats to civil society, and corresponding resiliency responses at the individual, organizational and sectoral levels. Unlike other existing frameworks and tools available to CSOs, the **RESILIENCY+ FRAMEWORK** integrates a threats analysis with potential interventions and an updated perspective on CSO lifecycle analysis. Therefore, CSO leaders can base their responses to closing space on a better understanding of their organizational strengths and weaknesses, and engage in three discrete phases of resiliency: the preparation phase that supports the formulation of preventative strategies even when the freedom to operate abides; the adaptation phase when readiness strategies can be devised as civic space begins to shrink; and the response phase of implementing remedial strategies when confronted with the full-on shock of closing space.

The **RESILIENCY+ MATRIX** helps CSOs determine closing civic space threats, internal organizational resiliencies and challenges, and what their options are to adequately address, mitigate, respond to or prevent negative impacts on their ability to operate. Based on the preliminary research phase, the matrix captures the most frequently cited endemic and systemic threats to civil society. It provides a brief overview of each threat and describes the impacts on the different levels of resiliency – individual, organizational, and sectoral. For example, an endemic threat is one that is entrenched in the norms, attitudes, and behaviors



of society, such as negative public perceptions towards civil society that questions their legitimacy and undermines their capacity to deliver much-needed assistance to vulnerable populations. A systemic threat is one that puts the entire sector at risk, such as passing legislation that renders non-profit organizations illegal.

STEP THREE: IDENTIFYING ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS AND LIFE CYCLE STAGE

The **RESILIENCY+ FRAMEWORK** provides a series of potential interventions that best meet CSOs' needs, based on each threat and the CSO lifecycle analysis. For instance, an intervention for an organization that is considered to be mature and faces the threat of financial constraints (i.e. if governments restrict CSOs from receiving foreign funding) might look very different for an organization facing the same threat but is considered to be nascent or in start up mode. This is because the capacities of the organizations will no doubt be different and require nuanced strategies to tackle the challenge(s) at hand. Too often, rigid and simplistic organizational models that lack the dynamism and adaptability necessary to allow for flexible responses to external shocks put CSOs at risk of being adequately equipped to shift with changes to the economic, political and social enabling environments.

Models of CSO governance and organizational capacity building have been largely generic for the past 50 years. Traditional civil society organizational models have followed a somewhat standardized non-profit model promoting a relatively homogenous skillsets across organizational development dimensions of governance structure, financial management, program management, human resources, and communications. These categories and





skill sets reflected reasonable building blocks when the sector was still young and general organizational capacity development within civil society was well-funded and flourishing.



The changes in civic space and resulting threats to CSO operability are requiring civil society as a sector to revisit and update this traditional model of organizational support and development. Recognizing the importance of this to the sector's ability to weather the impacts of closing space, the **RESILIENCY+ FRAMEWORK** intentionally integrates an organizational model and life cycle assessment into the intervention design process. Understanding **HOW** an organization is structured, as well as the stage of an organization in its lifecycle, positions us better to design diagnostic and prescriptive tools to help CSOs predict and respond to shocks at a level that is appropriate to their existing capacities. Incorporating this assessment helps us to:

- Diagnose each CSO's starting point to pursue stage appropriate for resiliency work (which includes organizational development);
- Set realistic expectations based on what is "typical" for CSOs to know or need to know about resiliency threats at different stages;
- Understand the potential pitfalls for CSOs at different stages;
- Consider weaknesses in organizational management and governance as stage-based "growing pains" rather than closing space challenges;
- Build internal support for needed organizational change to increase stability in the face of potential shocks;
- Recruit and/or develop the right kind of staff and board leadership in a particular

operating context; and

- Anticipate and prepare for leadership transitions so they are handled with thought and care.

This tactic of meeting each organization at its current state of institutional growth enables us to design a **RESILIENCY+ ROADMAP** that incorporates training, tools and resources that are geared toward organizations at all levels of growth.

STEP FOUR: CREATE A RESILIENCY ROADMAP TO ADDRESS TOP THREATS

The final stage of assessing and addressing closing civic space is the development of a **RESILIENCY+ ROADMAP**, or intervention action plan. A **RESILIENCY+ ROADMAP** combines the outcomes from the first three stages - context analysis, threats matrix selection, and organizational model and life cycle assessment - to design a customized intervention that graphically guides CSOs through the step by step process of implementation to effectively prevent or respond to the impacts of closing civic space.



Based on the foundational principles of iterative learning, the intervention will be linked with one or more **Resiliency Indicators**, developed specifically for use of this framework to assess ongoing progress. Resiliency Indicators help to capture learning, identify any feedback loops and patterns of behavior related to or as a result of the intervention, and inform ongoing path of implementation. Our framework incorporates **5 types of indicators** that are connected to resiliency:

System resilience indicators	look at the system over time
Negative resilience indicators	explore whether people are using strategies to boost resilience that may have negative impacts on other areas of the system
Process indicators	reflect that the RESILIENCY+ ROADMAP is being used in organizational policy making and programming
Output indicators	reflect the results of implementing different parts of the RESILIENCY+ ROADMAP
Proxy impact indicators	show the results of resiliency programming

Appropriate and relevant indicators will be selected during the intervention design process and will be specific to the context in which the roadmap is being operationalized.

Imbedded also within a **RESILIENCY+ ROADMAP** are Do No Harm principles and process, ensuring that all interventions mitigate to the greatest extent possible any potential negative impacts on those directly (and indirectly) touched by the intervention itself. As such, the **RESILIENCY+ ROADMAP** incorporates several “checkpoints” along the way that enables CSOs to reflect, assess and evaluate intervention impacts to determine if the context has changed since the original analysis was conducted (and if so, what the impacts of those changes might be on the CSO and intervention) and what alternative options are available as a result of these changes.

The Do No Harm Process



