

Enabling and Protecting Civic Spaces (EPCS) – Illuminating New Solutions and Programmatic Innovations for Resilient Spaces (INSPIRES)

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: INCREASING CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION (CSO) RESILIENCY IN CHANGING CIVIC SPACES

Purpose: PartnersGlobal, in partnership with the CIVICUS Network and other consortium members with support from USAID, is seeking applications from local civil society organizations interested in strengthening their resiliency in the face of potential impacts of growing restrictions on civic freedoms of association, assembly, and expression.

Goal: The Resiliency+ Process will take selected organizations through a structured assessment and capacity building process to increase their organizational resilience over a period of 12 months. Participating organizations will have a better understanding of their internal organizational vulnerabilities and will be able to identify and mitigate potential external threats impeding growth, endangering staff and reducing sustainability. Selected organizations will be paired with a Resiliency Coaching team who will provide ongoing accompaniment. They will co-design a process with the coaching team's support to prioritize their top resiliency threats and will receive targeted technical assistance to increase their resiliency in those factors identified as most critical. Beyond selection for this support, organizations will also be eligible to apply separately for flexible response grants of up to \$10,000 through the INSPIRES initiative to further enhance specific interventions provided.

APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESILIENCY+ PLAN

Application Deadline: Please fill out this [Google Form Application](#) by 11:59 pm EST on November 6th 2020. Direct any questions to resiliencyplus@partnersglobal.org.

Requirements: Organizations in Ecuador, Georgia, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, and Serbia will be considered for the Resiliency+ process. To be eligible for consideration, an organization must have at least four years of operational experience, since the Resiliency+ Process provides tailored resiliency support and assumes a certain level of general organizational development. Additionally, it is vital for each applicant organization to commit to dedicating staff time to this accompaniment process. The R+ approach involves a small team of staff from different functional teams from your organization who will participate in the assessment and capacity strengthening activities over a period of 12 months.

Selected organizations must demonstrate civic space factors affecting their daily work, such as legal environment restrictions, financial constraints, negative narratives about civil society, and fragmentation of civil society. A diversity of organizations will be considered, including but not limited to rural/urban,

male/female-led, and small/large. Organizations of various types and thematic focus are encouraged to apply.

An initial screening panel will review all the applications to shortlist them based on basic criteria of organizational development and geographic location. Shortlisted candidates will then be interviewed in order to provide more specific information and recommendations to the final technical review committee. A technical review committee composed of USAID and the INSPIRES Consortium will then recommend the final applicants to be selected as R+ Recipients. The entire selection process is anticipated to take approximately four weeks.

Background on Resiliency+

Freedoms of association, assembly, and expression are cornerstones of a healthy society that enable citizens to be engaged in the civic life of their communities, champion democratic principles and ideals, and promote and advance human rights. Civic space is essential for CSOs to function freely and without threats to operations or security. CSOs fulfill many important roles, including fostering citizen participation, exercising accountability in governance, advocating for policy change, and delivering essential services to otherwise underrepresented and marginalized communities.

In recent years however, civic space has been shifting at a rapid pace, with **restrictions becoming the norm rather than the exception**. There are multiple ways that restrictions on civic space threaten civil society organizations' ability to function and operate. These include financial or legal restrictions, as well as the role of transparency within the sector and its impact on civil society legitimacy in the eyes of their communities. As operating space changes globally, the civil society sector is forced to rethink traditional organizational development models geared towards the ability to manage their affairs successfully and focus not only on the idyllic end state of equilibrium, but on what is necessary to navigate in the short-term twists and turns on the road to reaching that end state. Organizational resiliency enables civil society to adapt to the impacts of quickly changing external conditions in order to prepare and respond effectively.

The **Resiliency+ Framework and Process** was born out of the need for a new organizational model. The first of its kind, the Framework provides a 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.

Different from traditional models of sustainability, resiliency gives CSOs the capacity to adapt swiftly and purposefully to shocks or impacts in such a way as to not only survive, but also thrive in an uncertain environment.

Drawing upon several studies and reports, as well as peer interviews and reputable indices developed by peer organizations, the **Resiliency+ Process** helps CSOs to identify the external threats and internal vulnerabilities impeding them from implementing resilient operations. Using this information, the **Resiliency+ Process** then proposes a menu of strategies, tactics, tools, and peer-to-peer assistance to help

CSOs achieve the seven key drivers needed to adapt quickly in the face of closing civic space (see wheel to the right).

EPCS INSPIRES seeks to increase knowledge and capacity to respond to growing restrictions on democratic freedoms of association, assembly, and expression. With civic space shifting rapidly around the globe, faster and more potent interventions are critical for bolstering local civil societies. Through this process, the consortium expects to identify which interventions and delivery mechanisms are most effective under specific circumstances in order to apply the lessons to a critical mass of CSOs and networks globally, resulting in improved resilience to closing space threats on a sectoral level. More information can be found on the INSPIRES website:

www.inspiresconsortium.org.

The INSPIRES Consortium is comprised of the following partners:



THE RESILIENCY+ PROCESS

PHASE ONE: UNDERSTAND THE ECOSYSTEM

Drawing upon systems mapping and political economy analysis, Resiliency Coaches will guide organizations through the analysis of their “civic space ecosystem” to better understand the context in which they operate, as well as the behaviors and relationships that emerge and interact among various factors and actors that shape the way the context is structured.

PHASE TWO: ASSESSING ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCY

CSOs selected via this solicitation will utilize a self-diagnostic tool devised specifically for this process called the Resilient Organization in Changing Civic Space (ROCCS) Assessment, which analyzes the presence of changing space threats and capacities of the organization.

PHASE THREE: DEVELOP A RESILIENCY+ ROADMAP

Using the analysis, CSOs will be guided through a process to devise a customized intervention using the Resiliency+ Matrix, which is comprised of strategies, tools, tactics and approaches that correlate to different threat and resiliency areas, and are intended to increase CSO resiliency.

PHASE FOUR: LEARN & ADAPT TO EXPLORE NEW ROUTES ALONG THE WAY

Throughout implementation of the customized intervention, organizations will pause and reflect at various points in the process to determine if the planned roadmap is still the most suitable for increasing resiliency based on local conditions, and if not, change direction.