Weaving Resilience

A diverse range of civic space allies and defenders from around the world introduce you to Weaving Resilience, the Ford Foundation’s new $80 million initiative to support civil society organizations throughout the Global South. Developed with our partners on the ground in eight regions, this initiative will strengthen and connect the civil society organizations and movements on the frontlines of the fight for social justice—so they can safeguard civic space and flourish for the long haul.

Transcript begins.

[Citizens from around the globe exercising their fundamental rights by marching, protesting, and organizing in their communities.]

Activist: We have come to demand that our rights be respected.

Organizer: We are all together now.

[Interviews with a diverse range of civic space allies and defenders from around the world.]

Lysa John: Civic space is essentially all about people power.

Novi Meyanto: It is the foundation of any democracy.

Henry Garcia (in Spanish): Civic space fosters dialogue, access to information, and the expression of disagreements.

Andrej Nosko: A space to discuss problems that their communities face and talk to those in power.

Vivian Newman (in Spanish): It is the environment that civil society needs to play a role in the political, economic, and social life of society.

Miguel Pulido (in Spanish): In the Global South, many countries are facing restrictions on participation in public affairs.

[An activist, with his mouth taped shut, holds a sign that says “defend press freedom”.

Rony Megawanto: Restrictions undermine innovation and creativity.

[A computer screen reads “access to this site is denied”. News headlines. The coronavirus. Flicking the kill switch: governments embrace internet shutdowns as a form...]}

**Lysa John:** 97% of the world’s population live in contexts where their civic freedoms are under threat.

**Omolara Balogun:** There are accelerated attacks against civil liberties.

**Andrej Nosko:** And with the crisis of political representation, it is very important that we have civil society as a way of coming together and seek solutions that would be fair and equitable for everyone.

**Omolara Balogun:** For civil society in the Global South to be resilient. They need to invest in their capacity to respond to both internal and external threats of restrictions to civic space.

**Helena Hofbauer:** We know that civil society has faultlines and weaknesses. If we want strong civil society ecosystems, we have to be able to provide services that can strengthen the way in which civil society operates and adapts. And that is where Weaving Resilience comes in.

[Weaving Resilience]

**Budhita Kismadi:** Weaving Resilience is the first of its kind: a network of Global South organizations working on capacity-building.

**Helena Hofbauer:** Weaving Resilience is relevant for every field connected to social justice work.

**Helena Hofbauer:** It is a Global South-driven initiative which will kick off in eight regions. The initiative will create strong service providers, strong resource hubs, providing services to movements and to civil society organizations focusing on strategic adaptation, strategic communication, institutional resilience, financial resilience, safety, and well-being.

**Jacqueline Asiimwe:** The kinds of services that we are providing are both technical and programmatic. And not only that, we’re also providing them as people that understand the context, that understand the culture.

**Miguel Pulido (in Spanish):** Weaving Resilience is important because it emerges from the local needs of the Global South. It forces us to have a deeper sensitivity to what organizations that are outside the center or the big capitals are experiencing and facing.

**Jacqueline Asiimwe:** Weaving Resilience helps support community voices, in the sense that it centers their solutions and what success looks like to them.
**Vivian Newman (in Spanish):** Weaving Resilience is guided by principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, because the oppressive systems in the world also translate into civil society. So we have to fight against those oppressive systems that are patriarchy, colonialism, and racism.

**Novi Meyanto:** By building a comprehensive and relevant library of tools and knowledge, civil society organizations can do better planning, implementation, and decision-making to thrive in the ever-changing funding landscape.

**Henry Garcia (in Spanish):** Our intention is for organizations to emerge stronger organizationally, stronger programmatically. And we also hope for greater collaboration between these organizations.

**Rony Megawanto:** This global network will provide a broader perspective for us, so we will understand the issues happening in other countries.

**Novi Meyanto:** We can draw inspirations and lessons from organizations facing similar challenges.

**Budhita Kismadi:** Weaving Resilience is recognizing the different strengths that we have, and weaving them together so we become more resilient.

**Jacqueline Asiimwe:** When you have strong institutions in civil society, then it means you are contributing to creating robust civil society.

**Vivian Newman (in Spanish):** We are forming a solid, strong, and robust fabric to face the weakness that has been derived from the economic, political, and social contraction in which the world finds itself in general.

**Helena Hofbauer:** Weaving Resilience is an opportunity for donors to come together and to work collaboratively in order to ensure that civil society is capable of adapting to challenging contexts in order to keep not only holding civic space but expanding civic space. We need others to join this effort.

[Weaving resilience. A stronger civil society built by the Global South, for the Global South.]

**End of transcript.**