



International Journal of Sociology Civics Research

Civil Society as a Catalyst for Mitigating VUCA World Spillovers- A Strategic Significance Framework for Developing Countries

El Habib Choubani ^{1*}, Mohamed Buheji ²

¹ Vice President, Makine Center for Strategic Intelligence, Rabat, Morocco

² Founder, International Institute of Inspiration Economy, Bahrain

* Corresponding Author: **El Habib Choubani**

Article Info

ISSN (Online): 3107-6637

Volume: 02

Issue: 04

Received: 21-04-2026

Accepted: 23-05-2026

Published: 25-06-2026

Page No: 01-13

Abstract

This paper examines the critical role of civil society in developing countries navigating volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) environments. Drawing on a comprehensive historical-philosophical analysis of civil society as a political phenomenon centered on "human political needs," the paper argues that civil society's normative essence provides a foundational framework for governance transformation in conditions of uncertainty.

The analysis establishes that effective civil society engagement in VUCA contexts requires institutionalizing the three existential individual political needs—free political contracting, participatory decision-making, and rational limitation of authority—and translating them into five collective societal political needs. This framework positions civil society as a mediating force between citizens and state institutions, essential for building governance resilience and legitimacy.

The paper integrates insights from the Inspiration Economy paradigm, demonstrating how "Inspiration Labs" and purpose-driven institutional frameworks can transform VUCA challenges into opportunities for sustainable community development. Drawing on the concept of "engineering strategic significance" amidst transformation and uncertainty, the paper argues that civil society must address not only institutional capacity but also the crisis of meaning that pervades governance in turbulent times. Through a mixed-methods analysis of cases from Tunisia, South Africa, Rwanda, and the Gulf Cooperation Council region, the paper illustrates how these principles can be applied in diverse contexts while revealing the challenges of implementation.

The paper concludes that sustainable governance advantage in a VUCA world lies not in possessing static institutional resources but in cultivating a continuous capacity for inspired exploration, adaptive regeneration, and the creation of shared meaning that aligns citizens and institutions around common purposes.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54660/IJSCR.2026.2.4.01-13>

Keywords: Civil Society, VUCA World, Good Governance, Inspiration Economy, Developing Countries, Political Needs, Strategic Significance, Institutional Resilience, Participatory Governance, Social Capital

1. Introduction

Developing countries face unprecedented governance challenges in an era defined by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity, a condition now widely recognized in both academic and policy circles as the VUCA environment. According to Bennett and Lemoine (2014) ^[2], the VUCA framework captures the distinctive threats to institutional performance in contemporary governance, where linear strategic planning and efficiency-optimized systems prove increasingly inadequate,

often leading to strategic paralysis, short-termism, and fragmented responses. The COVID-19 pandemic, climate change impacts, digital disruption, geopolitical tensions, and persistent socio-economic inequalities have exposed the fragility of state institutions and the limitations of traditional governance models.

The Arab Spring uprisings (2010-2012), the Sudanese revolution (2019), and ongoing protests in various developing nations reveal a fundamental disconnect between state institutions and citizen expectations. These movements did not merely demand regime change but articulated deeper aspirations for dignity, participation, and accountable governance—precisely the political needs that define civil society's normative core, as argued by Tinder (1993) ^[31] in his analysis of the "eternal questions" that shape political thought. This suggests that understanding civil society's role is essential for comprehending governance dynamics and transformation possibilities in VUCA conditions. Buheji (2026) ^[10]

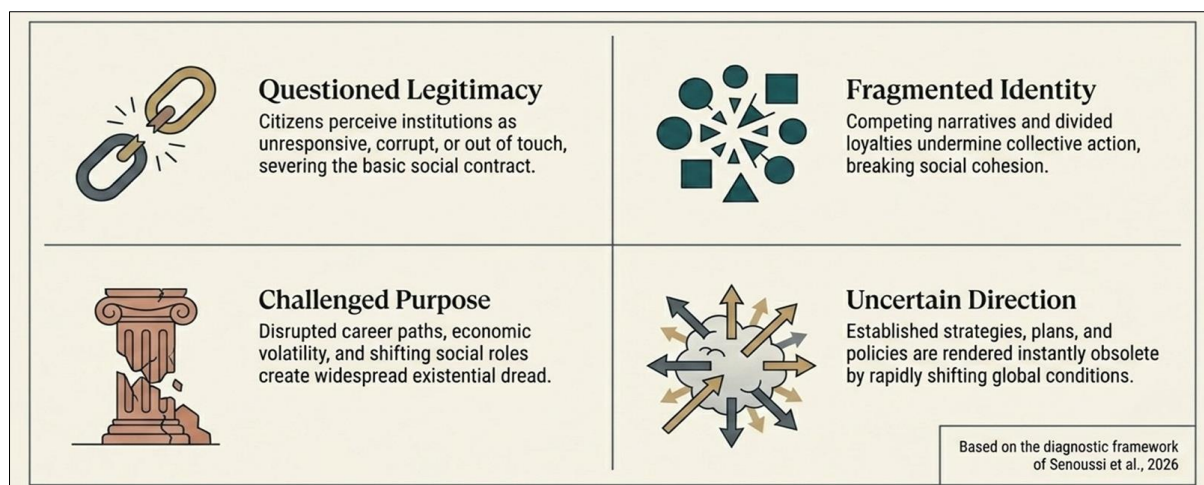
This paper argues that reimagining governance in developing countries requires grounding institutional reforms in the philosophical and historical foundations of civil society. The VUCA environment demands not technical fixes but a paradigm shift toward governance systems that embody the normative principles of free political contracting, participatory governance, and rational accountability—the "genetic code" of civil society as a political phenomenon. Drawing on the Inspiration Economy framework, the paper contends that sustainability in a VUCA world cannot be achieved through compliance, technology, or top-down mandates alone. As Buheji (2026) ^[10] demonstrates in his

analysis of 29 distinct Socioeconomic Advancement Labs conducted globally since 2015, navigating VUCA conditions requires a profound shift in economic and governance logic—from scarcity to regenerative abundance, from fragmentation to connectedness, and from short-term survival to future-fit mindset cultivation.

This perspective finds strong resonance with the work of Lukina *et al.* (2025) ^[21], who argue that beyond traditional sustainability approaches, the Inspiration Economy fosters pro-environmental social and consumer behaviour through purpose-driven engagement. Moreover, the broader philosophical challenge of maintaining institutional coherence in a VUCA world is linked to what Senoussi *et al.* (2026) ^[27] describe as a crisis of meaning. They argue that contemporary transformation and uncertainty generate a fundamental crisis of understanding, requiring an engineering of strategic significance to re-establish coherence, purpose, and direction in governance and societal development.

Figure (1) shows that governance failure stems not from technical flaws but from a deeper "Crisis of Meaning" that fractures the relationship between the state and its citizens. This crisis manifests through four interconnected symptoms: questioned legitimacy, fragmented identity, challenged purpose, and uncertain direction—each eroding trust, social cohesion, and collective resolve.

Ultimately, when citizens feel unheard, divided, adrift, and without a clear future, the very foundation of effective governance collapses, regardless of how well-designed its policies or institutions may be.



Generated by the author using NotebookLM

Fig 1

Buheji (2019a) ^[6] further emphasizes that in a VUCA world, uncertainty, ambiguity, and complexity are not temporary disruptions but the enduring reality of the Anthropocene. This understanding is crucial for civil society engagement, as it suggests that governance institutions must evolve from rigid bureaucratic models to adaptive, purpose-driven systems capable of sensing weak signals, exploring alternative futures, and shaping emerging contexts. The work of Sinha and Sinha (2020) ^[28] supports this perspective, examining the possibilities and pitfalls of managing in a VUCA world and emphasizing the need for broader knowledge and application to deal with unpredictable and rapidly changing situations.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Normative-Evolutionary Concept of Civil Society

The historical trajectory of civil society reveals remarkable continuity in its normative essence despite diverse cultural and philosophical expressions. From Confucian emphasis on "noble character" through education and good governance, to Socratic pursuit of wisdom for the "just and happy society," to Aristotelian rejection of tyranny's corruption in favor of democratic constitutionalism, the concept has consistently addressed fundamental questions: What is human nature? What constitutes the good life? How should political authority be organized? As Tinder (1993) ^[31] demonstrates in

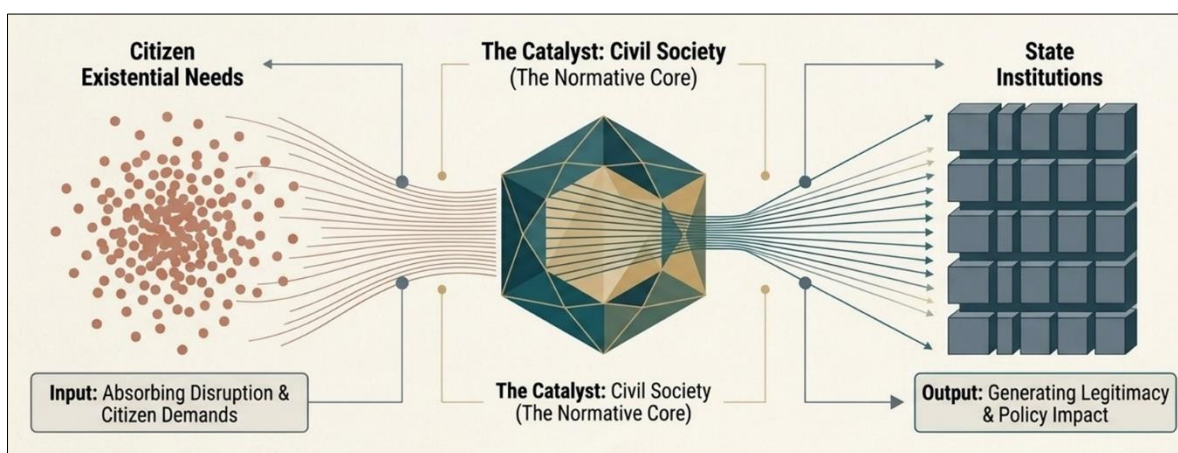
his analysis of political thought, the answers to these "eternal questions" fundamentally shape how societies conceive of and organize their political institutions.

The Roman republican innovation distinguished the *res publica* (public sphere) from *res privata* (private sphere), establishing legal protections for property rights and introducing "military citizenship" that transcended ethnic boundaries, as articulated by Cicero in *De Re Publica*. Augustine's "City of God" transformed this into religious citizenship under ecclesiastical authority, a fusion that would persist for centuries. The European Renaissance and Enlightenment progressively disentangled political from religious authority, producing successive philosophical refinements that progressively expanded the conceptual space for civil society as distinct from both religious and state authority.

The social contract tradition exemplifies this evolution. Hobbes (1651) ^[19] posited absolute sovereignty to restrain humanity's "war of all against all" through the Leviathan. Locke (1689) ^[20] rejected absolutism, establishing civil society as the product of free individuals contracting to protect property and liberty through limited government. Montesquieu (1748) ^[22] constitutionalized this through separation of powers, while Rousseau (1762) ^[24] radicalized it through the "general will" as the expression of popular sovereignty. Hegel and Marx subsequently theorized civil society as distinct from—yet dialectically related to—the state, with Marx ultimately envisioning the dissolution of the state into civil society through proletarian revolution. As Cohen and Arato (1997) ^[12] demonstrate in their comprehensive study of civil society and political theory, these competing visions fundamentally shape contemporary debates about the appropriate relationship between state and

society. Twentieth-century thinkers deepened the analysis. Gramsci (1971) ^[17] reconceptualized civil society as the ideological battleground where cultural hegemony is contested. Habermas (1989) ^[18] developed the concept of the public sphere as the communicative space where citizens deliberate matters of common concern. Tocqueville (2000) ^[32] emphasized voluntary associations' role in resisting state centralization and cultivating "enlightened self-interest" that reconciles individual and collective goods. As Azmi Bishara (2012) ^[3] notes in his critical study of civil society, Tocqueville identified three essential rights that characterize democratic civil society: the right to vote, the right to form associations and institutions, and freedom of expression. These rights, according to Tocqueville, enable citizens first to resist the centralization of power and limit its encroachment through civil society organizations engaged in public decision-making at various local levels; second, to replace negative selfishness with "enlightened self-interest" that harmonizes concern for democratic order with pursuit of individual and collective interests; and third, to establish shared cultural norms and traditions that make trust among community members a referential basis stimulating mutual action and expectation.

Figure (2) shows how the civil society acts as the essential bridge that translates citizens' existential needs into demands that state institutions can understand and act upon. By absorbing disruptions and citizen input, it processes these demands through its normative core and generates both legitimacy and tangible policy impact for the government. Crucially, this mediating role prevents fundamental questions of human rights and dignity from destabilizing or fracturing the state, thereby strengthening overall governance resilience.



Generated by the author using NotebookLM

Fig 2

2.2. The Three Existential Political Needs of Individuals

Despite this diversity, the scholarly synthesis identifies a stable normative core that transcends cultural and historical particularities: civil society inherently expresses three existential individual political needs that constitute the foundation of any genuinely civil political community. These needs represent the enduring human struggle against three forms of bondage that have marked humanity's historical journey: subjugation to nature, religious dogma, and political despotism—both external and internal.

The first existential need is for free political contracting. Individuals require the capacity to enter into voluntary

political agreements free from coercion, establishing constitutional arrangements that protect human dignity and ensure the sustainability of political community. This echoes the social contract tradition while recognizing that contracting is not a one-time event but an ongoing process of negotiated governance. As El Choubani *et al.* (2026) ^[14] argue in their analysis of conceptual and epistemic sovereignty in a world of conflict and civilizational transformation, the capacity for free political contracting depends on a society's ability to maintain its conceptual and epistemic independence while engaging with global systems of knowledge and

governance. Senoussi *et al.* (2026) ^[27] further argue that such contracting must be anchored in a shared sense of strategic significance, where political agreements are not merely procedural but imbued with collective meaning and purpose. The second existential need is for institutionalized participatory decision-making. Public decision-making must be collective and institutionalized through organized participation, making it resistant to arbitrary or authoritarian capture. This requires freedom of assembly, expression, and deliberation for all citizens under the rule of law—mechanisms that prevent exclusion and inequality from undermining citizenship rights. As Salamon, Sokolowski, and Associates (2004) ^[25] document in their comprehensive study of global civil society, the institutionalization of participatory decision-making through nonprofit organizations and civil society institutions has become a global phenomenon, with governments, international organizations, private institutions, and third-sector organizations seeking to promote civil society roles in democratic transformation, poverty alleviation, and social capital accumulation. Their research, based on detailed field studies in 34 countries including four African nations, demonstrates that civil society organizations play crucial roles in democratic transitions, poverty reduction, and social capital formation, using a Global Civil Society Index with three indicators—capacity, sustainability, and impact—to

measure organizational effectiveness empirically.

The third existential need is for rational limitation of authority. All contracting parties must be subject to agreed-upon rules under equality principles, with privilege limited to narrowly justified exceptions such as immunities. This requires continuous refinement of accountability mechanisms and governance systems to prevent abuse of power. In the VUCA context, this need is particularly acute because crises can become pretexts for authoritarian consolidation. Giang (2025) ^[16] explores how civil servants in VUCA environments navigate the paradoxes of bureaucratic structures while maintaining accountability and responsiveness, highlighting the importance of civil capacity to manage tensions between rule-based administration and flexible problem-solving.

Figure (3) illustrate the civil society's "genetic code", as per Choubani (2024) ^[15], rooted in three core human needs that guard against bondage to nature, dogma, or despotism.

First, it requires the freedom to enter voluntary political agreements without coercion while maintaining independent thought, followed by collective, institutionalized participation that resists authoritarian control. Finally, it demands rationally agreed-upon rules based on strict equality to limit authority and prevent the abuse of power, thereby protecting civil capacity.



Generated by the author using NotebookLM

Fig 3

2.3. From Individual Needs to Collective Societal Needs

The individual existential needs translate into five societal existential needs that constitute the normative framework for governance institutions in VUCA conditions, as shown in Figure (4). The first societal need is for free political contracting, requiring governance founded on a constitutional framework emerging from citizens' free will, with independent legislative, executive, and judicial institutions operating under separation of powers and accountability mechanisms. Buheji (2025a) ^[9] argues that in periods of creative destruction and disruption, such as those currently experienced globally, anti-fragility frameworks that absorb disruption and chaos become essential for maintaining institutional integrity and governance effectiveness.

The second societal need is for political competition, requiring free, fair, and regular elections through which citizens select representatives at all governance levels, with official state institutions maintaining strict neutrality. The work of Edwards and Foley (2001) ^[13] on the relationship between civil society and social capital demonstrates that political competition is essential for building the trust and cooperation necessary for effective governance, as it creates mechanisms for peaceful conflict resolution and policy responsiveness.

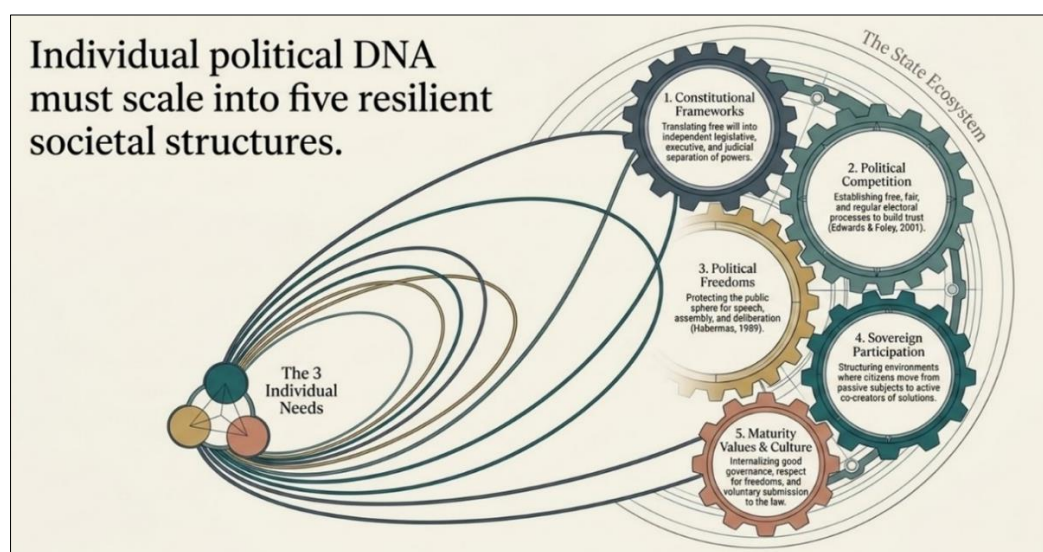
The third societal need is for political freedoms—constitutionally guaranteed freedoms of speech, assembly, deliberation, and associated rights that ensure the integrity and fairness of political competition. As Habermas (1989) ^[18]

demonstrates, the public sphere in which citizens deliberate about matters of common concern is essential for democratic governance, and this public sphere requires robust protections for freedom of expression and assembly. In VUCA conditions, these freedoms are under particular threat as governments may seek to restrict civil liberties in the name of crisis management or national security.

The fourth societal need is for political participation, requiring genuine involvement in shaping society's destiny, grounded in citizens' sense of sovereign ownership that produces spontaneous motivation for public decision-making participation. The Inspiration Lab methodology, as documented by Buheji (2026) ^[10], demonstrates how structured participatory processes can transform passive citizens into active co-creators of solutions to complex challenges. The labs' power lies in their mandated multi disciplinary and interdisciplinary approach, simplifying complexity through multidisciplinary holism, addressing root

systems rather than symptoms, and transmuting ambiguous "problems" into clear, actionable "projects."

The fifth societal need is for political maturity values and culture, requiring political socialization that enables both public officials and ordinary citizens to internalize good governance values—respect for others' freedoms, voluntary submission to law, and acceptance of free and fair competition outcomes. The research of Lukina, Perepelkin, and Buheji (2025) ^[21] on pro-environmental social and consumer behavior demonstrates how cultural transformation can be fostered through purpose-driven engagement that aligns individual behavior with collective values and sustainability goals. Senoussi *et al.* (2026) ^[27] further posit that in an era of transformation and uncertainty, institutions must move beyond transactional governance toward creating shared meaning and strategic significance, embedding political maturity within a broader cultural framework of purpose and collective identity.



Generated by the author using NotebookLM.

Fig 4

2.4. The Inspiration Economy and VUCA Navigation

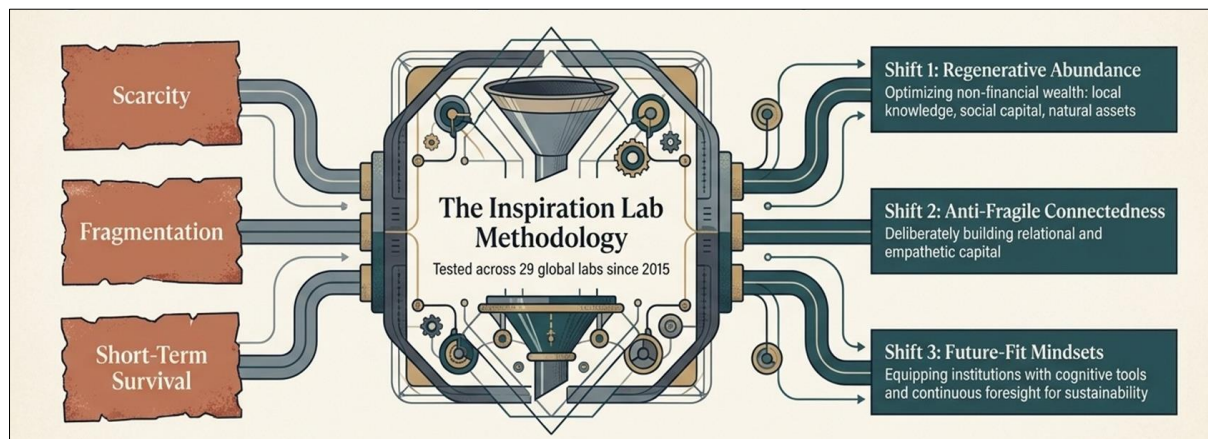
The Inspiration Economy framework provides a critical complementary lens for understanding how civil society institutions can navigate VUCA conditions effectively. Buheji (2026) ^[10] defines the Inspiration Economy as a values-driven economic model that moves beyond the traditional Transaction Economy and the Attention Economy. The Inspiration Economy is characterized by its focus on focused purpose, community-centered approaches, and human-centric success indicators. The value in this framework does not come from what is sold, but from the meaning, aspiration, and positive impact that embodies and inspires with purpose. Buheji (2016) ^[4]

The Inspiration Economy framework has been operationalized through 29 distinct Socioeconomic Advancement Labs conducted globally since 2015 as part of the International Inspiration Economy Project. Buheji (2026) ^[10] demonstrates that these field-based labs provide a replicable methodology for converting systemic VUCA problems into opportunities for sustainable community regeneration. The consistent four-step framework of these labs—Problem Identification, Field Exploration, Opportunity Exploitation, and Outcome Creation using Minimal Resources—itself constitutes a VUCA-navigation tool that

replaces reactive problem-solving with proactive opportunity discovery.

The Inspiration Economy approach transforms sustainability challenges through three core mechanisms, illustrated in Figure (4). The first mechanism is transformation from scarcity to regenerative abundance, moving beyond aid dependency to identify and optimize non-financial wealth—local knowledge, social capital, natural assets. The second mechanism is building anti-fragile communities through connectedness, deliberately building relational and empathetic capital. The third mechanism is cultivating a future-fit mindset, equipping individuals and institutions with the cognitive tools for sustainability. Buheji (2016) ^[4]. For civil society institutions, this means investing in continuous learning, futures thinking, and adaptive capabilities that enable effective governance in uncertain conditions. Senoussi *et al.* (2026) ^[27] argue that this future-fit mindset is essential for engineering strategic significance in an era of transformation.

Figure (5) Illustrated that Surviving VUCA requires a transformation from transactional governance to Inspiration Economy-driven mechanisms that help the civil society more robust for the rapidly increasing challenges.



Generated by the author using NotebookLM

Fig 5

3. Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods research design combining historical-philosophical analysis, case study methodology, and qualitative comparative analysis to examine the role of civil society in governance transformation in VUCA developing contexts. This methodological approach is appropriate for addressing the complex, multi-dimensional nature of civil society-state relations and their evolution under conditions of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity.

3.1. Research Design

The research design integrates three complementary methodological approaches. First, historical-philosophical analysis traces the conceptual evolution of civil society across different civilizations and historical periods, identifying the normative core that persists despite cultural and historical variation. This approach follows the method of conceptual history developed by Reinhart Koselleck and applied to political concepts by scholars such as Tinder (1993) [31] and Cohen and Arato (1997) [12]. The historical-philosophical analysis examines primary and secondary sources from Ancient Greek, Roman, Christian, Islamic, European Enlightenment, and contemporary political thought to identify the persistent normative dimensions of civil society.

Second, case study methodology examines four diverse developing country contexts—Tunisia, South Africa, Rwanda, and the Gulf Cooperation Council region—to illustrate how civil society principles manifest in different political, cultural, and historical settings. This approach follows the comparative case study methodology advocated by Yin (2014) [33] and Stake (2005) [29], which enables in-depth exploration of complex social phenomena in their real-world contexts. The cases were selected to represent variation along key dimensions: political regime type (democratic transitions, post-conflict reconstruction, authoritarian resilience), historical legacy (colonialism, apartheid, genocide, tribalism), and civil society development trajectory (vibrant but constrained, state-captured, state-directed, crisis-mobilized).

Third, qualitative comparative analysis examines patterns across cases to identify conditions and mechanisms that enable or constrain effective civil society engagement in VUCA contexts. This approach follows the methodology developed by Ragin (2008) [23], which enables systematic

cross-case comparison while preserving case complexity. The analysis identifies configurations of conditions—political, historical, institutional, and cultural—that are associated with effective civil society contributions to governance transformation.

3.2. Data Collection

Data collection employed multiple sources to ensure triangulation and validity. Document analysis examined constitutions, laws, policy documents, civil society reports, and international organization assessments for each case. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 45 key informants across the four cases, including civil society leaders, government officials, international organization representatives, academics, and community activists. Interview protocols explored perceptions of civil society-state relations, experiences of governance transformation, responses to VUCA conditions, and assessments of civil society effectiveness. Document analysis and interview data were supplemented by field observations and participation in civil society events where possible.

Secondary data sources included the Global Civil Society Index developed by Salamon, Sokolowski, and Associates (2004) [25], which provides comparative data on nonprofit sector capacity, sustainability, and impact across countries. The Index enabled cross-national comparison and contextualization of case findings within broader patterns. Additional secondary data were drawn from the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators, Freedom House's Freedom in the World reports, and the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) project.

3.3. Data Analysis

Data analysis proceeded through multiple phases. The first phase involved within-case analysis, constructing detailed case narratives that traced the evolution of civil society-state relations and responses to VUCA challenges. The second phase involved cross-case comparison, identifying patterns and variations across cases using the framework of the three existential political needs and five societal needs derived from the historical-philosophical analysis. The third phase involved theory development, integrating case findings with the Inspiration Economy framework and the concept of engineering strategic significance (Senoussi *et al.* 2026) to develop a comprehensive framework for civil society engagement in VUCA contexts.

Coding followed a hybrid approach, combining deductive codes derived from the theoretical framework with inductive codes emerging from the data. Deductive codes included the three existential needs (free political contracting, participatory decision-making, rational limitation of authority), the five societal needs, and the three Inspiration Economy mechanisms (regenerative abundance, anti-fragile connectedness, future-fit mindset). Inductive codes captured emergent themes such as crisis mobilization, meaning-making, strategic significance, and adaptive learning.

3.4. Validity and Reliability

Several strategies enhanced validity and reliability. Triangulation across data sources—documents, interviews, observations—enabled cross-verification of findings. Member checking involved sharing preliminary findings with key informants to confirm interpretations and correct errors. Peer debriefing involved presenting findings to academic colleagues and obtaining feedback on analysis and conclusions. Thick description provided rich contextual detail enabling readers to assess the applicability of findings to other contexts. Reflexivity involved systematic attention to the researcher's positionality and its influence on data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

3.5. Limitations

This study has several limitations. The four cases, while diverse, do not represent the full range of developing country contexts, and findings may not be generalizable to other settings. The reliance on key informant interviews introduces potential biases, though triangulation with document analysis and secondary data mitigated this limitation. The cross-sectional nature of the data collection limits analysis of change over time, though historical analysis partially addresses this limitation. The study's focus on civil society, while appropriate for the research questions, may understate the importance of other factors in governance transformation.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1. Tunisia: Post-Revolution Civil Society Consolidation

Following the 2011 revolution, Tunisia's civil society played a crucial mediating role in the transition from authoritarianism to democracy. The UGTT trade union federation, along with human rights organizations, professional associations, and women's groups, brokered compromises that balanced accountability with institutional continuity. This experience illustrates several principles of civil society engagement in VUCA conditions.

Free political contracting manifested in the constitutional process that established Tunisia's hybrid semi-presidential system. The National Constituent Assembly, elected in 2011, drafted a constitution through extensive civil society consultation, creating a framework that institutionalized democratic governance while maintaining bureaucratic continuity. Civil society organizations organized constitutional education campaigns, submitted proposals, and mobilized public support for key provisions. The National Dialogue Quartet—comprising the UGTT, the Tunisian Human Rights League, the Tunisian Order of Lawyers, and the Tunisian Confederation of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts—facilitated the political transition that produced the 2014 constitution, earning the Nobel Peace Prize in 2015. Participatory decision-making was institutionalized through the 2014 constitution's recognition of civil society's role,

creating spaces for citizen engagement that had previously been nonexistent. Constitutional bodies such as the Independent High Authority for Elections and the Instance for Truth and Dignity institutionalized civil society participation in governance processes. Civil society organizations participated in designing transitional justice mechanisms, monitoring elections, and overseeing anti-corruption reforms. However, implementation has been uneven, with civil society engagement often dependent on international support and vulnerable to political backlash. Rational limitation of authority occurred through judicial reforms, creation of constitutional bodies, and decentralization efforts that checked executive power. The constitution established a constitutional court and strengthened the judiciary's independence, creating mechanisms for holding the executive accountable. Civil society organizations advocated for judicial independence, monitored government performance, and mobilized opposition to executive overreach. However, Tunisia's VUCA environment—economic volatility, security threats, political fragmentation—continues testing these institutions. The 2021 constitutional crisis, when President Saïed dismissed parliament and assumed emergency powers, demonstrates how VUCA conditions can be exploited to undermine civil society gains.

Tunisian civil society has responded to VUCA challenges through adaptive strategies that align with the Inspiration Economy framework. Organizations have shifted from service delivery to advocacy and monitoring roles, leveraging digital technologies for citizen engagement, and building coalitions across sectoral divides. The Empathy-Focused approach documented by Ahmed and Buheji (2026) ^[1] is evident in civil society efforts to bridge political divides and rebuild social trust after the 2021 crisis. However, the crisis has exposed vulnerabilities: civil society organizations dependent on international funding have faced resource constraints, while those aligned with political factions have been co-opted. The Tunisian case illustrates both the potential and fragility of civil society engagement in VUCA conditions.

4.2. South Africa: Post-Apartheid Civil Society and Persistent Challenges

South Africa's post-1994 transformation provides another case of civil society engagement in VUCA conditions. The anti-apartheid struggle mobilized a broad civil society coalition that negotiated the transition to democracy and shaped the post-apartheid governance framework. However, South Africa's VUCA environment—deep inequality, unemployment, HIV/AIDS, energy crises, corruption—has exposed continuing challenges in civil society-state relations. Free political contracting was achieved through the 1996 Constitution, widely regarded as one of the most progressive in the world. The constitutional drafting process involved extensive civil society consultation, with organizations submitting proposals on issues ranging from socio-economic rights to environmental protection. The Constitution establishes an independent judiciary, strong oversight institutions, and broad protections for civil and political rights. However, implementation has been uneven, with state capacity constraints limiting enforcement of constitutional provisions.

Participatory decision-making has been institutionalized through various structures, including the National

Development Plan, which was developed through extensive stakeholder consultation. Civil society organizations participate in policy processes through advisory bodies, public hearings, and advocacy campaigns. However, participatory structures have often been marginalized or co-opted, with civil society engagement dependent on political will. The State Capture revelations during the Zuma administration demonstrated how political interference can corrupt institutions, with civil society organizations playing a crucial monitoring and advocacy role in exposing corruption and demanding accountability.

Rational limitation of authority has been pursued through constitutional checks and balances, independent oversight institutions, and civil society monitoring. The Public Protector, Auditor-General, and Chapter 9 institutions provide independent oversight of government operations. Civil society organizations have used litigation, advocacy, and mobilization to enforce constitutional provisions and hold government accountable. However, the erosion of oversight institutions during the Zuma administration and continuing resource constraints have limited civil society effectiveness.

South African civil society has demonstrated adaptive capacity in responding to VUCA challenges. Organizations have diversified funding sources, built coalitions across sectoral divides, and developed innovative advocacy strategies. The FeesMustFall and ZumaMustFall movements illustrate civil society mobilization using digital technologies and new organizational forms. However, the persistence of inequality, unemployment, and corruption continues to challenge civil society-state relations. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed both civil society capacity and limitations, with organizations mobilizing to address immediate needs while struggling to influence longer-term policy responses. Buheji (2019a) ^[6] argues that creating resilient economies in developing countries requires building social capital and community capacity, suggesting that civil society strength is essential for sustaining reform momentum. South Africa's experience illustrates this principle, with civil society organizations playing crucial roles in monitoring elections, exposing corruption, and demanding accountability. However, the case also demonstrates that civil society engagement alone is insufficient without political commitment to governance transformation.

4.3. Rwanda: Post-Genocide Civil Society and State-Directed Development

Rwanda's post-1994 reconstruction presents a distinct model of civil society engagement in VUCA conditions. Following the genocide, Rwanda faced total institutional collapse, economic devastation, and deep social trauma—extreme VUCA conditions. The Rwandan Patriotic Front government pursued a development strategy emphasizing state capacity, anti-corruption, and service delivery, achieving remarkable economic growth and poverty reduction. This experience demonstrates how extreme VUCA conditions can catalyze transformation, though the model raises questions about civil society autonomy.

Free political contracting in Rwanda emphasizes social contracts centered on development outcomes rather than political pluralism. The government's "citizen-centered" approach includes performance contracts (*imihigo*) between officials and citizens, participatory planning through "Umuganda" community work days, and public service

delivery standards. These mechanisms create accountability relationships between state and citizens, though within parameters set by centralized authority. Civil society organizations participate in these processes but within regulatory frameworks that restrict political contestation.

Participatory decision-making occurs through local governance structures, though within parameters set by centralized authority. The government's approach to civil society—regulating organizations, restricting international funding, prioritizing development over advocacy—represents a selective appropriation of civil society functions. Organizations focused on service delivery and development are encouraged, while those engaged in advocacy or human rights monitoring face restrictions. This approach has generated tensions with international actors who emphasize civil society autonomy and political pluralism.

Rational limitation of authority is pursued through systematic anti-corruption measures, performance monitoring, and e-governance that reduces discretion and enhances transparency. Rwanda's anti-corruption institutions are among the strongest in Africa, with the Office of the Ombudsman and the Auditor General providing independent oversight of government operations. However, critics argue that Rwanda's development gains come at the cost of political freedoms and genuine participation. Civil society organizations operate within narrow boundaries, with restrictions on assembly, expression, and association that limit their autonomy.

Rwandan civil society has demonstrated adaptive capacity within these constraints. Organizations have developed innovative service delivery models, built community engagement through decentralized structures, and aligned with government development priorities. The Inspiration Economy framework's emphasis on purpose-driven engagement is evident in civil society contributions to poverty reduction, health, and education. However, the Rwandan model raises fundamental questions about civil society's role in governance transformation: Can civil society contribute to sustainable development without political contestation and advocacy for rights and accountability?

The Rwandan experience suggests that civil society engagement can contribute to governance effectiveness and service delivery without democratic pluralism, but that such contributions may be unstable and dependent on continued state effectiveness and legitimacy. Senoussi *et al.* (2026) ^[27] argue that engineering strategic significance in VUCA conditions requires aligning civil society engagement with collective meaning-making and shared purpose. Rwanda's experience illustrates both the potential and limitations of this approach.

4.4. The Gulf Cooperation Council: Wartime Volunteerism and Civil Society Emergence

The GCC region offers emerging evidence of how crisis-driven volunteerism can catalyze civil society emergence and institutional transformation, as documented by Ahmed and Buheji (2026) ^[1]. Research on volunteer mobilization during the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates how state-sponsored volunteer programs can build social cohesion, community responsibility, and institutional resilience, even in contexts where civil society autonomy is limited. In the UAE, the state-sponsored volunteerism campaign against COVID-19 attracted over 29,000 volunteers in its first six months, with about 2,200 participating in their first volunteer experience.

The program used military-related language to praise healthcare workers and present volunteering as a "sacred national duty," effectively mobilizing a diverse population of over 126 nationalities. These volunteer initiatives create "linking rings" between public institutions and communities, supporting the identification and addressing of community challenges. Ahmed and Buheji (2026) ^[1] identify several dimensions of volunteerism transformation that have relevance for civil society development. The first is transition from dependency to self-reliance and strategic agency, with volunteers developing capacities for autonomous decision-making and coordinated action. The second is cultivation of strategic thinking capabilities, with the experience of navigating complex emergencies developing systems thinking and scenario planning. The third is building social cohesion and collective identity that counters fragmentation, creating shared experiences of collective achievement and mutual trust. The fourth is instilling adaptive resilience—the capacity to operate under ambiguity, absorb shocks, and derive strength from uncertainty. The fifth is providing direct answers to existential questions of purpose, transforming narratives of victimhood into narratives of meaningful contribution. These dimensions align with the Inspiration Economy framework's emphasis on building anti-fragile communities through connectedness and cultivating future-fit mindsets. The GCC experience suggests that civil society can emerge through state-sponsored volunteerism in contexts where autonomous civil society is restricted, though this model raises questions about long-term sustainability and political autonomy. El Choubani et. al. (2026) ^[14] argue that achieving conceptual and epistemic sovereignty is essential for navigating VUCA conditions, as it enables societies to define problems and solutions on their own terms. The GCC experience illustrates how state-directed civil society engagement can build community capacity and resilience while maintaining political stability. However, the model may limit civil society's capacity for advocacy and accountability, potentially constraining governance transformation in the long term.

4.5. Cross-Case Synthesis: Patterns and Mechanisms

The four cases reveal several cross-cutting patterns in civil society engagement in VUCA conditions. First, path dependence matters: colonial and authoritarian legacies shape current institutional possibilities. South Africa's apartheid bureaucracy, Tunisia's Bourguiba/Ben Ali state, and Rwanda's colonial and post-colonial authoritarian institutions each established administrative traditions, organizational cultures, and interest group configurations that continue to shape reform possibilities. This suggests that civil society strategies must be contextually adapted rather than imported from other settings. Second, civil society-state relations are fundamental to governance transformation. Where civil society is vibrant and independent, it can pressure for reform, monitor performance, and protect against capture. Where civil society is weak or co-opted, governance reform is more likely to serve elite interests. This suggests that civil society capacity-building is essential for governance transformation in VUCA conditions. Third, VUCA conditions require adaptive capacity from civil society organizations. Organizations designed for stable conditions fail under VUCA conditions. Building adaptive capacity requires institutionalizing flexibility, learning, and innovation—qualities that traditional organizational models

suppress. The Inspiration Lab methodology provides a practical framework for building such adaptive capacity. Fourth, crisis can catalyze civil society transformation. The cases of wartime volunteerism and pandemic response demonstrate that VUCA conditions can create opportunities for institutional innovation and capacity development. Civil society organizations that leverage crisis moments for transformation can build resilience that persists beyond the immediate emergency. Fifth, the crisis of meaning pervades civil society engagement in VUCA conditions. Senoussi *et al.* (2026) ^[27] argue that an era of transformation and uncertainty fundamentally challenges understanding of institutional purpose and value. Civil society must address not only institutional capacity but also the deeper questions of meaning and purpose that motivate civic engagement and sustain commitment over time.

5. Discussion

5.1. The Crisis of Meaning in VUCA Conditions

The cases reveal that civil society engagement in VUCA conditions is fundamentally shaped by what Senoussi *et al.* (2026) ^[27] describe as a crisis of meaning. Contemporary transformation and uncertainty generate a fundamental crisis of understanding, requiring an engineering of strategic significance to re-establish coherence, purpose, and direction in governance and societal development. This crisis manifests in several dimensions.

First, institutional legitimacy is questioned when citizens perceive governance institutions as unresponsive, unaccountable, or corrupt. The Arab Spring's demand for "dignity" reflected this legitimacy crisis—citizens who had endured decades of unaccountable, corrupt governance. Civil society organizations that articulate this crisis and propose alternative visions can catalyze governance transformation. Second, collective identity is fragmented in VUCA conditions, with competing narratives and divided loyalties undermining collective action. The cases of South Africa and Tunisia illustrate how civil society organizations can bridge divides and build shared identities through inclusive engagement, coalition-building, and narrative construction. Third, individual purpose is challenged when established career paths, community roles, and social identities are disrupted. Volunteerism during crises provides answers to existential questions of purpose, as Ahmed and Buheji (2026) ^[1] demonstrate. Civil society organizations that provide opportunities for meaningful contribution can sustain civic engagement and build resilience.

Fourth, institutional direction is uncertain when established strategies, plans, and policies are rendered obsolete by changing conditions. Inspiration Labs provide structured processes for generating shared vision and strategic direction, as documented by Buheji (2026) ^[10]. Civil society organizations that facilitate collective sense-making and strategic planning can help communities navigate uncertainty.

5.2. Engineering Strategic Significance

Senoussi *et al.* (2026) ^[27] propose that engineering strategic significance is essential for navigating an era of transformation and uncertainty. This concept encompasses several dimensions that have implications for civil society engagement in VUCA conditions.

First, engineering strategic significance requires moving beyond reactive problem-solving to proactive meaning-

making. Civil society organizations must not only respond to immediate challenges but also articulate compelling visions of possible futures that inspire action and commitment. This requires futures thinking, narrative construction, and capacity to mobilize collective imagination.

Second, engineering strategic significance requires aligning diverse stakeholders around shared purposes. VUCA conditions fragment societies and undermine trust, making collective action difficult. Civil society organizations that build coalitions, facilitate dialogue, and create shared meaning can overcome fragmentation and enable coordinated action.

Third, engineering strategic significance requires connecting individual meaning-making to collective governance projects. Citizens need to see their contributions as meaningful and connected to larger purposes. Civil society organizations that provide opportunities for meaningful participation, recognize contributions, and demonstrate impact can sustain civic engagement over time.

Fourth, engineering strategic significance requires

institutionalizing meaning-making processes within governance systems. Civil society organizations can advocate for participatory governance structures, facilitate citizen engagement, and monitor implementation to ensure that meaning-making is sustained over time as shown in Figure (6).

The Inspiration Economy framework provides practical tools for engineering strategic significance. Buheji (2026)^[10] demonstrates how Inspiration Labs transform VUCA challenges into opportunities for sustainable community development through structured processes that convert ambiguity into clarity and complexity into manageable community-owned projects. Lukina *et al.* (2025)^[21] demonstrate how the Inspiration Economy fosters pro-environmental social and consumer behaviour through purpose-driven engagement. El Choubani *et al.* (2026)^[14] show how achieving conceptual and epistemic sovereignty is essential for engineering strategic significance in a world of conflict and civilizational transformation.

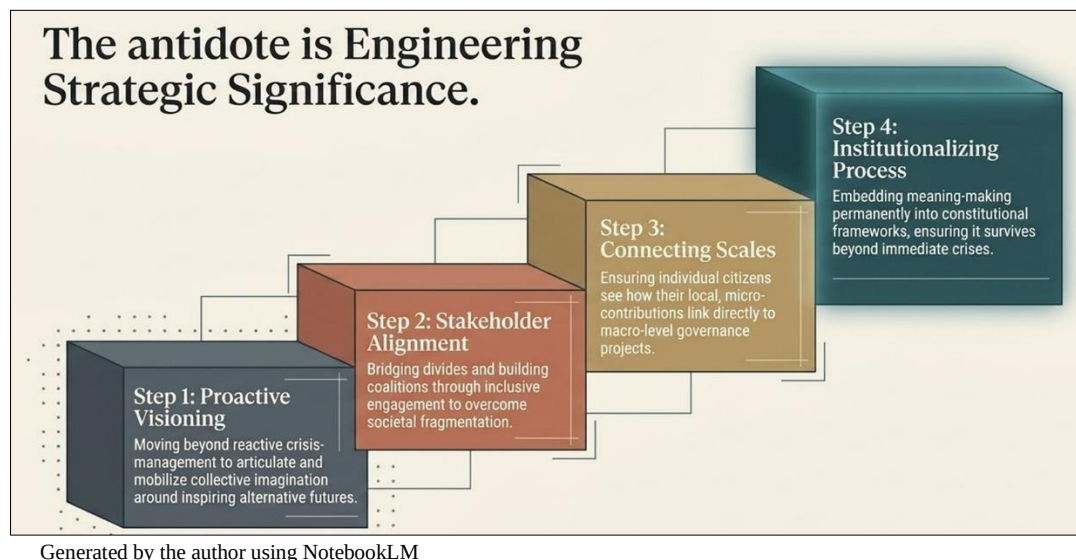


Fig 6

5.3. Implications for Civil Society Practice

The analysis has several implications for civil society practice in VUCA conditions. First, civil society organizations must invest in adaptive capacity: building organizational flexibility, continuous learning, and innovation capabilities. This requires moving beyond rigid programmatic approaches to embrace experimentation, learning from failure, and adaptation to changing conditions. The Inspiration Lab methodology provides a practical framework for building such adaptive capacity.

Second, civil society organizations must develop strategic foresight capabilities: sensing weak signals, exploring alternative futures, and shaping emerging contexts. This requires futures thinking, scenario planning, and capacity to anticipate transitions before they become crises. The Socioeconomic Future Foresight Lab documented by Buheji (2026) provides a model for institutionalizing such foresight capabilities.

Third, civil society organizations must build relational and empathetic capital: fostering connections across social divides and cultivating trust and solidarity. The Empathy-Focused Labs documented by Ahmed and Buheji (2026)^[1]

demonstrate how structured engagement can build relationships that withstand shocks and enable collective action.

Fourth, civil society organizations must cultivate future-fit mindsets: equipping individuals and communities with the cognitive tools for sustainability. This requires educational and training programs that foster curiosity, systems thinking, and adaptive behaviors. The Curiosity Development Lab and Behavioral Science Lab documented by Buheji (2026)^[10] provide models for cultivating such mindsets.

Fifth, civil society organizations must address the crisis of meaning: articulating compelling visions, facilitating collective sense-making, and providing opportunities for meaningful contribution. This requires narrative construction, participatory processes, and recognition of contributions.

Sixth, civil society organizations must navigate the tensions between autonomy and engagement: maintaining independence while collaborating with state institutions and international actors. This requires clear principles, strategic partnerships, and capacity to manage competing pressures.

Seventh, civil society organizations must embrace frugal

innovation: maximizing value from limited resources through adaptive approaches that balance local contextualization with scalability. Buheji (2023) ^[8] argues that the Inspiration Economy provides a framework for transcending the frugal scalability paradox, building on local knowledge and resources while maintaining quality and effectiveness.

6. Conclusion

6.1. Summary of Findings

This paper has examined the role of civil society in governance transformation in VUCA developing contexts through a mixed-methods analysis of cases from Tunisia, South Africa, Rwanda, and the Gulf Cooperation Council region. The analysis reveals that civil society's normative essence—grounded in the three existential individual political needs of free political contracting, participatory decision-making, and rational limitation of authority—provides a foundational framework for governance transformation in conditions of uncertainty. These individual needs translate into five collective societal needs that constitute the normative framework for governance institutions: free political contracting, political competition, political freedoms, political participation, and political maturity values and culture.

The Inspiration Economy framework extends this analysis by demonstrating how purpose-driven, community-centered approaches can transform VUCA challenges into opportunities for sustainable development. The Inspiration Lab methodology provides practical tools for institutionalizing adaptive capacity, collaborative agency, and regenerative abundance in governance institutions. The concept of engineering strategic significance, developed by Senoussi *et al.* (2026) ^[27], illuminates the deeper challenge of meaning-making that pervades civil society engagement in VUCA conditions.

The cases illustrate how these principles manifest in diverse contexts. Tunisia's post-revolution civil society consolidation demonstrates the potential for civil society to mediate democratic transitions and institutionalize participatory governance, while also revealing vulnerability to authoritarian rollback. South Africa's post-apartheid civil society demonstrates the importance of vigilance and mobilization for accountability, while also exposing the limitations of institutional design without political commitment. Rwanda's state-directed civil society engagement demonstrates how development gains can be achieved without political pluralism, while raising questions about sustainability and autonomy. The GCC's wartime volunteerism demonstrates how crisis can catalyze civil society emergence and institutional transformation, even in contexts where autonomous civil society is restricted.

6.2. Theoretical Contributions

This paper makes several theoretical contributions to the study of civil society and governance in VUCA conditions. First, it articulates a normative framework for understanding civil society's role in governance transformation, grounded in the three existential individual political needs and five collective societal needs. This framework provides a

foundation for evaluating civil society contributions beyond the conventional focus on service delivery or advocacy.

Second, it integrates civil society theory with the Inspiration Economy framework, demonstrating how purpose-driven, community-centered approaches can transform VUCA challenges into opportunities for sustainable development. This integration provides practical tools for building adaptive capacity, collaborative agency, and regenerative abundance in civil society institutions.

Third, it introduces the concept of engineering strategic significance as a framework for understanding the crisis of meaning that pervades civil society engagement in VUCA conditions. This concept illuminates the deeper psychological, cultural, and existential dimensions of governance transformation that are often neglected in institutional analysis.

Fourth, it provides empirical evidence through comparative case analysis of how civil society principles manifest in diverse developing country contexts. This evidence contributes to understanding of the conditions and mechanisms that enable or constrain effective civil society engagement in VUCA conditions.

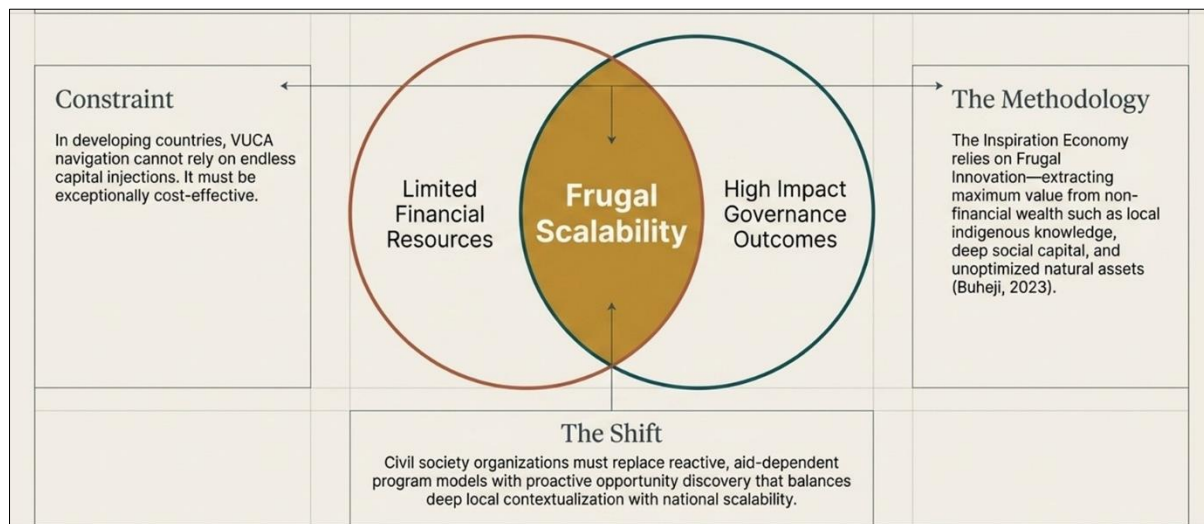
6.3. Policy Implications

The analysis has several implications for policy and practice. First, development actors should invest in civil society capacity-building that emphasizes adaptive capacity, strategic foresight, and future-fit mindsets. Traditional capacity-building approaches focused on service delivery or advocacy are insufficient for VUCA conditions. The Inspiration Lab methodology provides a practical framework for building the capabilities needed to navigate uncertainty. Second, governance reforms should institutionalize civil society participation in decision-making processes, moving beyond consultation to genuine co-creation and accountability. Constitutional provisions, legal frameworks, and institutional mechanisms should create space for civil society engagement while protecting autonomy.

Third, crisis response should leverage civil society capacity and build institutional resilience. The cases of wartime volunteerism and pandemic response demonstrate how crises can catalyze civil society emergence and transformation. Development actors should support civil society organizations in leveraging crisis moments for institutional innovation and capacity development.

Fourth, meaning-making should be recognized as a core function of civil society in VUCA conditions. Beyond service delivery and advocacy, civil society organizations play crucial roles in articulating visions, facilitating collective sense-making, and sustaining commitment to governance transformation. Policy and funding should support these meaning-making functions.

Fifth, frugal innovation should be embraced as a strategy for civil society development in resource-constrained environments. Civil society organizations should be supported in developing adaptive approaches that balance local contextualization with scalability, building on local knowledge and resources while maintaining quality and effectiveness. This is illustrated in Figure (7)



Generated by the author using NotebookLM

Fig 7

6.4. Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that suggest directions for future research. The four cases, while diverse, do not represent the full range of developing country contexts. Future research should examine additional cases in different regions—Latin America, Asia, and other African contexts—to test and refine the framework. Longitudinal research tracking civil society engagement over time would illuminate change processes and dynamics. Comparative research examining the relationship between civil society and other governance actors—state institutions, political parties, international organizations—would provide a more complete picture of governance dynamics in VUCA conditions.

The focus on civil society, while appropriate for the research questions, may understate the importance of other factors in governance transformation. Future research should examine the interaction between civil society and other governance actors, including state institutions, political parties, international organizations, and private sector actors. However, Choubani (2024) emphasizes that the political parties should be seen as part of the civil society. Also, the role of digital technologies in enabling civil society engagement deserves particular attention, given their transformative potential for citizen engagement and collective action.

6.5. Final Synthesis

In conclusion, this paper has argued that civil society plays a crucial role in governance transformation in VUCA developing contexts. The normative essence of civil society—grounded in the three existential individual political needs of free political contracting, participatory decision-making, and rational limitation of authority—provides a foundational framework for understanding and fostering governance transformation. The Inspiration Economy framework offers practical tools for building adaptive capacity, collaborative agency, and regenerative abundance. The concept of engineering strategic significance illuminates the deeper challenge of meaning-making that pervades civil society engagement in VUCA conditions.

The cases reveal both the potential and limitations of civil society engagement in VUCA conditions. Tunisia and South Africa demonstrate the potential for civil society to mediate democratic transitions and institutionalize participatory governance, while also revealing vulnerability to

authoritarian rollback and capture. Rwanda demonstrates how development gains can be achieved without political pluralism, while raising questions about sustainability and autonomy. The GCC demonstrates how crisis can catalyze civil society emergence and institutional transformation, even in contexts where autonomous civil society is restricted. The ultimate implication of this research is that sustainable governance advantage in a VUCA world lies not in possessing static institutional resources but in cultivating a continuous capacity for inspired exploration, adaptive regeneration, and the creation of shared meaning that aligns citizens and institutions around common purposes. Civil society, as the embodiment of citizens' collective political agency, is essential for building this capacity. By fostering civil society engagement, developing countries can transform the turbulence of our age into the velocity for change, uncertainty into collective discovery, complexity into integrated wisdom, and ambiguity into a shared, sustainable, and inspired vision for the future.

References

1. Ahmed D, Buheji M. Wartime volunteerism and the transformation opportunities of the GCC generation. *Int J Sociol Civics Res.* 2026;2(2):56-69.
2. Bennett N, Lemoine GJ. What a difference a word makes: Understanding threats to performance in a VUCA world. *Bus Horiz.* 2014;57(3):311-317.
3. Bishara A. *Civil society: A critical study*. 6th ed. Doha: Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies; 2012.
4. Buheji M. *Handbook of Inspiration Economy*. London (UK): Bookboon; 2016. ISBN: 978-87-403-1318-5.
5. Buheji M. Understanding problem solving in Inspiration Labs. *Am J Ind Bus Manag.* 2017;7:771-784.
6. Buheji M. Reviewing how creating resilient economies can help developing countries in uncertain times. *Am J Econ.* 2019;9(5):259-263.
7. Buheji M. Shaping the anatomy of socio-economic community problems towards effective solutions. *Issues Soc Sci.* 2019;7(1):1-11.
8. Buheji M. Reviewing implications of economics of frugal innovation on developing countries: A comparison to Inspiration Economy Labs. *Int J Inspir Resil Youth Econ.* 2023;7(1):1-14.
9. Buheji M. Creative destruction and Trumpism: Building

- an anti-fragility framework that absorbs disruption and chaos. *Int J Res Publ Rev*. 2025;6(4):10939-10946.
10. Buheji M. Navigating sustainability in a VUCA world through Inspiration Labs. *Int J Multidiscip Res Publ*. 2026;8(8):184-191.
 11. Buheji M, Ahmed D. Book review: Innovation in developing and transition countries—New Horizons in Regional Science Series. *Rev Eur Stud*. 2018;10(3):55-62.
 12. Cohen JL, Arato A. *Civil society and political theory*. 4th printing. Cambridge (MA): MIT Press; 1997.
 13. Edwards B, Foley MW. Civil society and social capital: A primer. In: Edwards B, Foley MW, Diani M, editors. *Beyond Tocqueville: Civil society and the social capital debate in comparative perspective*. Hanover (NH): University Press of New England; 2001.
 14. El Choubani EH, El Senoussi M, Khalaf D, Almohammed K, Buheji M. Conceptual and epistemic sovereignty in a world of conflict and civilizational transformation: Case of Epstein. *Int J Multidiscip Res Publ*. 2026;8(9):135-146.
 15. Choubani EH. *Civil Society as an Existential Catalyst for the Chemistry of Good Governance: On the Importance of Awareness of Historical and Normative Relationships between Functions of Civil Society and Tasks of Rationalizing State Ethics*. Morocco: Al-Khayyam Publications; 2024.
 16. Giang HV. An exploratory study on how civil servants resolve the paradoxes of the iron cage of bureaucracy in a VUCA world. *Policy Gov Rev*. 2025;9(3):318-333.
 17. Gramsci A. *Selections from the prison notebooks*. New York: International Publishers; 1971.
 18. Habermas J. *The structural transformation of the public sphere*. Cambridge (MA): MIT Press; 1989.
 19. Hobbes T. *Leviathan*. London: Penguin Classics; 1651.
 20. Locke J. *Two treatises of government*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 1689.
 21. Lukina A, Perepelkin N, Buheji M. Beyond traditional sustainability: The role of the Inspiration Economy in fostering pro-environmental social and consumer behaviour. *Drucker Herald J*. 2025.
 22. Montesquieu C. *The spirit of the laws*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 1748.
 23. Ragin CC. *Redesigning social inquiry: Fuzzy sets and beyond*. Chicago (IL): University of Chicago Press; 2008.
 24. Rousseau JJ. *The social contract*. London: Penguin Classics; 1762.
 25. Salamon LM, Sokolowski SW, Associates. *Global civil society: Dimensions of the nonprofit sector*. Vol. 2. Bloomfield (CT): Kumarian Press; 2004.
 26. Scharmer CO. *Theory U: Learning from the future as it emerges*. San Francisco (CA): Berrett-Koehler Publishers; 2009.
 27. Senoussi M, Choubani E, Buheji M. Meaning in an era of transformation and uncertainty: From the crisis of understanding to the engineering of strategic significance. *Int J Novel Res Dev*. 2026;11(2):418-437.
 28. Sinha D, Sinha S. Managing in a VUCA world: Possibilities and pitfalls. *J Technol Manag Grow Econ*. 2020;11(1):17-21.
 29. Stake RE. Qualitative case studies. In: Denzin NK, Lincoln YS, editors. *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks (CA): Sage; 2005. p.443-466.
 30. Taleb NN. *Antifragile: Things that gain from disorder*. New York: Random House; 2012.
 31. Tinder G. *Political thought: The eternal questions*. Ghoneim MM, translator. Cairo: Egyptian Society for Knowledge and Global Culture Publishing; 1993.
 32. Tocqueville A de. *Democracy in America*. Mansfield HC, Winthrop D, translators. Chicago (IL): University of Chicago Press; 2000. Originally published 1835-1840.
 33. Yin RK. *Case study research: Design and methods*. 5th ed. Thousand Oaks (CA): Sage; 2014.

How to Cite This Article

Choubani EH, Buheji M. Civil society as a catalyst for mitigating VUCA world spillovers: A strategic significance framework for developing countries. *International Journal of Sociology Civics Research*. 2026;2(4):1-13. doi:10.54660/IJSCR.2026.2.4.01-13.

Creative Commons (CC) License

This is an open access journal, and articles are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as appropriate credit is given and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.