

JUNE 2026 — 2030



VUKA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

(0)

**WHAT IS
IMPORTANT TO
NOTE?**

VUKA is presented as a Solidarity and Civic Action Catalyst, in line with the 50% plurality preference of the Steering Committee. “Coalition” is retained as a transitional descriptor for donor-facing materials.

Relational terminology. Ally organisations are referred to as Solidarity Actors, reflecting the 80% of Steering Committee respondents who described the relationship as network-based or solidarity-based rather than co-ownership.

Optimisation. The Framework now states explicitly what VUKA is primarily optimising for, in response to the breadth–depth concern surfaced through the survey.

Fundability. The funding decentralisation paradox is named and positioned, with a proposed donor narrative that treats decentralisation as the goal rather than the risk.

Sustainability architecture. The sunset clause is reframed as a triggerable governance option rather than a fixed horizon, and the maturity indicators are tightened — particularly the Movements and Tools indicators, which the Steering Committee flagged as too easy to claim.

Open question carried forward. Fiscal hosting succession is named openly as the highest-risk structural dependency and is presented as a deliberation question for the Steering Committee, not pre-resolved in this draft.

On the relationship between the three documents

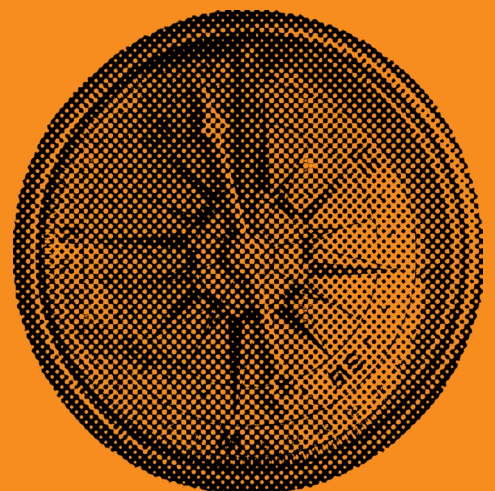
The Framework sets posture, architecture, and direction.

The Theory of Change explains how that architecture produces change.

The Mandate Guardrails define what VUKA must and must not do to preserve coalition integrity. Where the three documents overlap, the Guardrails take precedence on questions of mandate discipline.

(01)

**STRATEGIC
ANCHOR**



The Steering Group has agreed the following as VUKA's strategic anchor for the 2026–2030 period. These are treated as fixed reference points. The architecture that follows is designed to operationalise them, not to revise them.

1.1 Mission

VUKA mobilises and connects civil society actors to defend and expand civic space through coordinated advocacy and collective action. It strengthens solidarity, amplifies narratives that challenge repression, and supports sustainable movements capable of transforming the systems that close civic space.

1.2 Vision

A resilient and connected global civil society that safeguards civic freedoms, amplifies collective action, and drives transformative change toward just and participatory societies.

1.3 Goal

To strengthen global civil society coordination and collective action that defends civic freedoms, responds to repression, and builds lasting solidarity and resilience across regions.

1.4 What VUKA is primarily optimising for

The Mission, Vision, and Goal hold together several distinct purposes such as rapid civic mobilisation, long-term ecosystem strengthening, civic-space protection, narrative power, and the redistribution of resources and decision-making authority. All of these are coherent with VUKA's role. The Steering Committee survey, however, surfaced a legitimate concern that holding all five as equal priorities risks the breadth–depth trap, where VUKA is simultaneously too broad to mobilise around and too politically cautious to confront power.

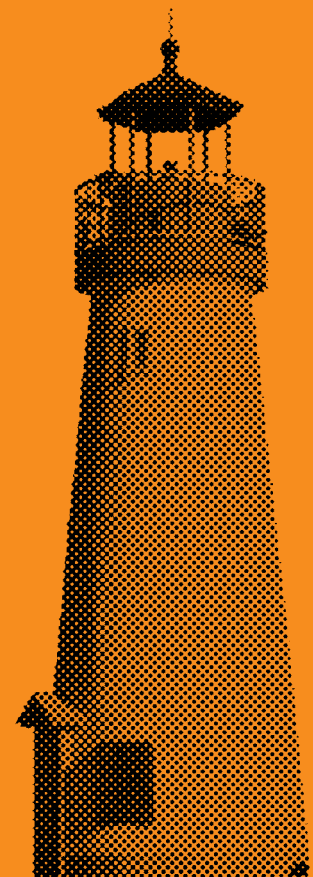
This formulation does three things. It clarifies the trade-off VUKA is willing to make: where speed and depth are in tension, depth takes precedence. It positions VUKA's success criterion as the strengthening of the field, not the strengthening of VUKA itself. And it makes the architecture that follows operationally legible: each pillar can be evaluated against whether it serves durable regionally anchored civic power.

VUKA's primary optimisation

VUKA is primarily optimising for the durability of regionally anchored civic power. That is the conditions under which civil society actors, across regions and across organised movements, can coordinate, defend civic space, and sustain solidarity over time, with reducing dependency on any single coordinating actor. Rapid mobilisation, narrative power, and redistribution of resources are pursued because they serve this primary purpose, not as independent ends.

(02)

IDENTITY & ORIENTATION



2.1 What VUKA is

VUKA is a Solidarity and Civic Action Catalyst. It is a coordination space that emerged among diverse civic actors responding to increasingly complex and uneven civic space restrictions. Its strength has always rested in convening, connecting, and aligning, not in directing or implementing on behalf of others.

The catalyst framing is deliberate. A catalyst, by definition, accelerates a reaction without being consumed by it. VUKA's value lies in enabling collective outcomes that the actors it convenes could not produce alone, while remaining recognisable as connective infrastructure rather than a primary actor. This framing also distinguishes VUKA from coalitions structured around shared delivery, from networks structured around information exchange, and from advocacy organisations structured around their own institutional voice.

2.2 Why a Framework rather than a Strategy

VUKA did not emerge as a single organisation with a centralised mandate. It evolved as a coordination space. A conventional strategy, with fixed objectives and linear implementation pathways, would risk narrowing VUKA's role or overstating its mandate. A framework, by contrast, provides shared orientation without centralising control. It clarifies posture, boundaries, and collective intent while allowing regional realities, thematic movements, and Solidarity Actors to determine appropriate action in their own contexts. The choice of a framework is therefore intentional. It protects integrity, prevents mandate creep, and creates a durable architecture for coordination, learning, and adaptive solidarity in a rapidly shifting civic landscape.

2.3 Civic Action, as VUKA understands it

This Framework understands Civic Action as collective, coordinated, and contextually grounded efforts by civil society actors to defend, expand, and reshape civic space. Civic action, in VUKA's framing, goes beyond periodic campaigns or reactive mobilisation. It encompasses sustained practices of solidarity, coordination, narrative power, and institutional imagination that enable movements to endure political repression, democratic backsliding, and structural inequality. Reimagining civic action, therefore, requires shifting from short-term interventions toward ecosystems of practice that are regionally anchored, adaptive in form, and resilient over time.

2.4 Solidarity Actors

The organisations VUKA convenes, supports, and connects are referred to in this Framework as Solidarity Actors. The Steering Committee survey identified this term as the leading replacement for "Allies" (40% plurality), and Q7 of the survey confirmed the underlying intent: 80% of respondents described the relationship as either network-based (lateral, with VUKA holding the connections) or solidarity-based (values-aligned), rather than as co-ownership.

The term "Solidarity Actors" is chosen because it signals a relationship that is neither parity-based nor delivery-based. "Member" would imply parity of governance. "Partner" would imply delivery accountability. "Beneficiary" would imply hierarchy. None of these match how the relationship actually functions. Solidarity Actors are lateral participants in a values-aligned field; VUKA holds the connective tissue, but does not hold authority over their action.

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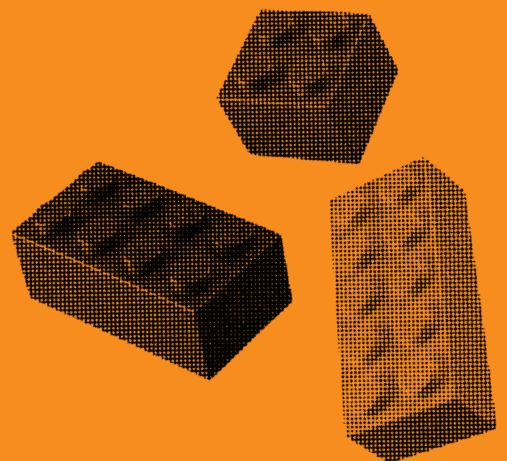
**FRAMING
ASSUMPTIONS**



This Framework is shaped by several core assumptions, made explicit so that they can be examined, contested, and adjusted as conditions change.

- **Civic space is politically and culturally contextual.** Effective coordination and solidarity cannot rely on uniform global templates. Cross-regional learning is valuable, but it must be grounded in regional context.
- **VUKA's added value lies in coordination, not implementation.** VUKA strengthens collective power by connecting actors, not by becoming a delivery organisation. This boundary is maintained through the Mandate Guardrails.
- **Durability comes from adaptability, not permanency.** Structures, tools, teams, and coordination infrastructure including Secretariat hosting must be able to evolve as political conditions and regional realities change.
- **Sustainability is rooted in ownership and use.** Thematic outputs endure when they are actively used, adapted, and stewarded by movements. Tools without uptake are not sustainable, regardless of how well-designed they are.
- **Civic power is geographically situated and thematically structured.** Civic space restrictions manifest differently across regions, but organised civic power is mobilised through thematic movements including labour, feminist and gender justice movements, youth formations, environmental and climate defenders, and strategic litigation actors. Effective coordination integrates both regional context and thematic constituency grounding.
- **Repression is sector-specific before it is generalised.** Labour organisers, feminist actors, environmental defenders, and youth formations frequently experience differentiated legal, digital, or economic pressure before repression becomes broad-based. Anticipatory analysis must read these patterns.
- **Care and safety are political responsibilities.** Civic action that ignores risk, burnout, and repression dynamics is neither strategic nor sustainable. Care is embedded in coordination, not treated as a supplementary concern.

(04)



**THE ARCHITECTURE:
THREE INTERLOCKING
PILLARS**

The VUKA Framework is organised around three mutually reinforcing pillars. Each pillar serves a distinct function while collectively enabling VUKA to deliver on its Mission and Goal. The pillars are not programmes; they are the organising logic of how VUKA works.

PILLAR 1

Regional Anchoring & Contextual Coordination

Purpose. To ground VUKA's coordination and collective action in the political, cultural, and civic realities of different regions.

PILLAR 2

Adaptive Action Teams for Collective Action

Purpose. To operationalise coordinated advocacy, rapid response, and collective action in ways that remain flexible and politically responsive.

PILLAR 3

Thematic Integration & Sustainable Movement Infrastructure

Purpose. To ensure thematic work strengthens collective action across regions and over time through shared stewardship, political relevance, and sustained use.

4.1 PILLAR 1. Regional Anchoring & Contextual Coordination

Strategic rationale

Civic space is contested differently across regions. Strategies effective in one context may be ineffective or harmful in another. Regional anchoring ensures VUKA's work is informed by lived realities rather than abstract global assumptions, and that legitimacy for collective action is built where civic actors operate.

The May 2026 survey identified regional representation as the single most important governance investment for the period (40% of respondents named it as the top priority, ahead of mandate review and resource authority). This Framework therefore treats regional architecture as the leading-edge of VUKA's evolution.

What this pillar enables

- Regions function as sites of strategy, learning, and political legitimacy, not as implementation units for globally defined plans.
- Regional priorities shape collective agendas and solidarity pathways.
- In-person regional convenings act as strategic laboratories for testing tools, sequencing responses, and surfacing contextual risk analysis.
- Regional anchoring interfaces directly with organised thematic movements, recognising that civic power is structured through them.
- Governance arrangements, including rotational Secretariat hosting, reinforce regional legitimacy and prevent over-centralisation.

What this pillar deliberately avoids

- One-size-fits-all global coordination.
- Extractive consultation without decision power or ownership.
- Treating regions as channels for delivering centrally defined positions.

VUKA regions

VUKA recognises five regions: Africa; Asia-Pacific; Americas and Caribbean; Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Europe and Central Asia. The minimum viable governance expectation for each region is set out in the Governance & Operationalisation companion note. For the Framework itself, the operative principle is that each region must be substantively represented in Steering Committee composition and decision rights.

4.2 PILLAR 2. Adaptive Action Teams for Collective Action

Strategic rationale

Civic space conditions shift rapidly. Fixed structures risk becoming misaligned, duplicative, or burdensome. Adaptive Action Teams allow VUKA to coordinate effectively without over-institutionalisation. They are the operational expression of VUKA as a catalyst: time-bound, purpose-specific, and dissolvable when no longer needed.

What this pillar enables

- Action Teams formed around specific pressure points, escalation moments, or coordination needs.
- Clear mandates with built-in review, evolution, or sunset points — every team is designed with an expected end-state.
- A focus on coordination: who should act, when, and how efforts connect across regions and movements.
- Cross-regional alignment during moments of escalation, sequenced by political judgement rather than by calendar.

What this pillar deliberately avoids

- Permanent standing committees with no review trigger.
- Thematic silos disconnected from political context.
- Institutional survival of the team becoming a goal in itself.
- Action Teams substituting for the institutional advocacy of Solidarity Actors.

Boundary with implementation

Action Teams coordinate. They do not lead campaigns, develop campaign strategy on behalf of Solidarity Actors, or speak as the primary advocacy voice. This boundary is enforced through the Mandate Guardrails and reviewed at each team's mandate-review point.

4.3 PILLAR 3. Thematic Integration & Sustainable Movement Infrastructure

Strategic rationale

VUKA's thematic tools and resources risk fragmentation when treated as standalone products or time-bound outputs. When disconnected, they become isolated interventions rather than reinforcing infrastructure. Connecting these tools as an ecosystem strengthens movement coherence, political alignment, and long-term sustainability. The intention is not to produce more assets, but to ensure that existing ones function together as reinforcing components of collective civic power.

What this pillar enables

- Thematic coherence at movement level rather than isolated issue work.
- Tools treated as living assets, updated through application, stress-testing, and regional feedback rather than scheduled refresh cycles.
- Shared custodianship with structured regional adaptation and contextual relevance.
- Thematic movements as structured power nodes in the architecture, advisory, co-design, and circulation roles are recognised as governance functions, not engagement activities.

What this pillar deliberately avoids

- Tool proliferation without uptake or sustained ownership.
- Aesthetic or technical updates disconnected from political function.
- Centralised control that weakens legitimacy or contextual relevance.
- Treating thematic engagement as consultative rather than structural.

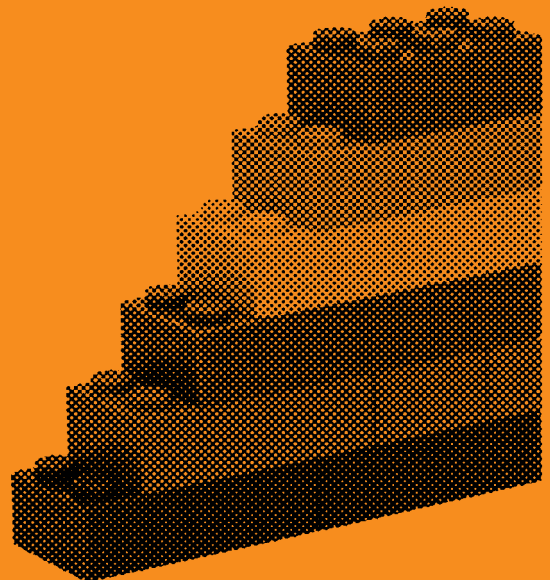
Initial thematic anchors

- Labour movements.
- Feminist and gender justice movements.
- Youth formations.
- Environmental and climate justice movements.
- Strategic litigation actors.

Additional anchors may be introduced over the Framework period through Steering Committee decision. The threshold for inclusion is structural, whether the movement holds the institutional memory, mobilisation capacity, and sector-specific expertise to function as a power node in the architecture rather than thematic breadth alone.

(05)

**HOW THE
PILLARS
WORK
TOGETHER**



The three pillars function as an integrated system, not as parallel tracks.

- **Regional** Anchoring grounds strategy in political and cultural context.
- **Adaptive** Action Teams operationalise timely and responsive coordination.
- **Thematic** Integration sustains learning, institutional memory, and shared power across the field.

Together, they translate a stable Mission and Vision into a way of working that is rooted but flexible, coordinated but non-centralised, and sustainable through practice rather than through institutional permanence.

5.1 The dual grounding

VUKA's architecture operates on a dual grounding. Coordination is regionally contextualised, ensuring action reflects political and legal realities on the ground across Africa, Asia-Pacific, Americas and Caribbean, MENA, and Europe and Central Asia. At the same time, movement integration is thematically anchored, ensuring organised constituencies are structurally embedded in coalition architecture.

This dual grounding ensures that reimagining civic action is not abstract or generic, but embedded in both geography and organised social power. It is also what distinguishes VUKA from purely regional networks on one hand, and purely thematic networks on the other.

5.2 The role of thematic movements

Thematic movements are recognised within VUKA's architecture as structured power nodes. Their participation is not symbolic. It serves three governance functions:

- **Advisory and political economy grounding.** Thematic movements surface sector-specific repression patterns, identify blind spots in civic space analysis, and deepen the architecture's understanding of how economic, social, and environmental structures shape civic action.
- **Tool co-design and stress-testing.** Thematic actors contribute to the adaptation and testing of VUKA-stewarded tools, including the Protest Handbook, narratives infrastructure, and solidarity architecture, ensuring they reflect lived organising realities.
- **Network activation and circulation.** Thematic networks enable the circulation of VUKA-stewarded tools across organised constituencies, strengthen cross-movement coordination, and support solidarity responses where civic space restrictions affect specific sectors.

(06)

**SUSTAINABILITY
ARCHITECTURE**



Even as civic space continues to shrink and authoritarianism intensifies, VUKA's position is that this is a time for building, not retreating. Sustainability is therefore defined here as VUKA's ability to persist, adapt, and remain politically relevant over time. Sustainability has three components. They are interlinked but distinct, and each is governed differently.

6.1 Resource sustainability

- For VUKA, fundraising is a means to sustain coordination infrastructure, not an end in itself. The architecture prioritises:
- Diversified funding streams rather than dependence on single donors.
- Alignment with VUKA's coordination mandate (avoiding mission drift).
- Support for shared infrastructure such as regional convenings, coordination capacity, learning, rather than project-defined deliverables.

Funding modalities

- Multi-year core or flexible funding for coordination and learning.
- Pooled or co-funded thematic initiatives anchored in the ecosystem approach.
- Solidarity-Actor-led resource mobilisation aligned to niche strengths and regional presence.

Naming the fundability paradox

The Steering Committee survey surfaced a paradox that this Framework must name openly. If donors fund VUKA precisely because they perceive it as the central, trusted coordinating actor in this space, then the more successful VUKA is at transferring functions and authority to regional actors, the harder VUKA's own funding becomes to sustain. The same logic that justifies VUKA's existence, its convening role, may, if executed well, reduce the funding base for that role.

Res Publica position on the fundability paradox

Decentralisation is presented to donors as the goal of VUKA's work, not as a risk to it.

The donor narrative is that VUKA exists to build a field that is more resilient than VUKA itself, and that VUKA's success is measured by the strength of regional fiscal hosting, regional tool maintenance, and regional convening capacity. A funding trajectory in which VUKA's central footprint shrinks as regional capacity grows is the intended outcome.

This positioning protects mandate discipline: it removes the incentive to hold functions centrally in order to remain fundable. It also reframes the funding conversation from "sustain VUKA" to "invest in the architecture that VUKA is helping to build."

A contingency is required for the scenario in which donor incentives continue to favour centralisation despite this framing. That contingency sits in Section 7.

6.2 Institutional sustainability

Institutional sustainability for VUKA is inseparable from governance design. How coordination infrastructure is hosted is itself a political choice. VUKA is a coordination platform; while it may be hosted by an institution for administrative or fiduciary purposes, it does not function as an advocacy delivery arm for any single organisation. Its legitimacy and effectiveness depend on maintaining autonomy in agenda-setting, preserving coalition trust, and operating as enabling infrastructure rather than as a substitute for institutional advocacy.

Hosting arrangements are therefore understood as supportive and time-bound. They exist to protect VUKA's character, distribute responsibility, and safeguard adaptability within an evolving civic ecosystem.

6.2.1 Rotational Secretariat hosting

Rotational Secretariat hosting is proposed as a governance and sustainability mechanism designed to:

- Distribute institutional burden and political risk.
- Strengthen regional anchoring and ownership of the architecture.
- Reduce over-centralisation of power, visibility, and influence.
- Reinforce VUKA's identity as shared infrastructure rather than an institutional extension.

The Secretariat is positioned as portable infrastructure capable of evolving alongside regional priorities and political context. Hosting arrangements are time-bound, guided by minimum operational standards, and strategically selected on the basis of institutional capacity, political positioning, and added value. Rotational hosting is not only a governance safeguard. It is a practical expression of adaptability, distributed legitimacy, and shared stewardship.

6.2.2 Secretariat transition architecture

To ensure continuity, trust, and institutional memory during rotation cycles, VUKA will invest in a light but intentional transition architecture. Secretariat transitions are treated as moments of renewal and recalibration rather than as disruption.

Transition readiness timeline

- A structured readiness process beginning 12–18 months before the conclusion of a hosting cycle.
- Early identification and assessment of potential incoming hosts.
- Steering Committee oversight of transition milestones and decision points.

Minimum transition package

- Consolidated documentation and institutional memory.
- Financial and operational handover guidance.
- Relationship mapping of regional Solidarity Actors, allies, and funders.
- Transfer protocols for digital platforms, knowledge assets, and coordination systems.

Peer accompaniment

- Structured accompaniment between outgoing and incoming hosts during a defined overlap period.
- Joint participation in key coordination moments to ensure relational continuity.

Governance and learning

- Clear transition timelines approved by the Steering Committee.
- Post-transition reflection to document lessons learned.
- Adjustment of minimum standards and processes based on experience.

6.3 Sustainability of initiatives and interventions

Sustainability of VUKA's work depends on regional and Solidarity-Actor ownership throughout the lifecycle of initiatives, from curation and design to rollout and facilitation. Initiatives are designed to:

- Evolve beyond initial funding cycles.
- Be adaptable to changing political conditions.
- Strengthen local and regional capacity rather than dependency.

(07)

**MATURITY
INDICATORS
AND THE
SUNSET
QUESTION**



7.1 The sunset as a triggerable governance option

The Steering Committee survey resolved a foundational question. 90% of respondents reject a fixed sunset clause, but 50% want the option preserved as a governance tool. This Framework therefore reframes the sunset:

7.2 Year-five maturity indicators

The maturity indicators are the test by which VUKA's evolution is assessed. They are not deliverables, and they are not advocacy claims. They are governance instruments designed to anchor Steering Committee deliberation at year five (2030).

The May 2026 survey rated five draft indicators and identified the Movements and Tools indicators as too easy to claim without genuine change. The Framework therefore strengthens those indicators below.

7.3 Open question: fiscal hosting succession

The fiscal hosting indicator surfaces a strategic question this Framework does not yet resolve. The May 2026 survey identified fiscal hosting as the function most respondents want to stay with VUKA (6/10, Q14) and simultaneously as the function carrying the highest structural-dependency risk if VUKA were no longer to perform it (6/10, Q16). These are the same function.

The Steering Committee has not yet decided how to navigate this. The Framework therefore presents it openly as a deliberation question for the validation meeting:

Position on the sunset clause

VUKA does not adopt a fixed sunset date.

VUKA adopts a triggerable sunset pathway, a governance mechanism that the Steering Committee can activate if a defined set of maturity conditions has been met, or if VUKA's continued existence has begun to undermine its own purpose. The trigger conditions are derived from the maturity indicators in Section 7.2. Activation requires a structured Steering Committee deliberation, not an automatic mechanism.

Dimension	Year-five indicator (refined)	Change vs. May 2026 draft
Movements	At least five regional thematic actors function as the first point of contact for cross-movement coordination in their region, evidenced by direct intake of coordination requests and demonstrated convening of cross-movement responses independent of the Secretariat.	Strengthened. Adds evidence requirement (intake + convening) so the indicator cannot be claimed by designation alone.
Tools	At least two regional organisations maintain VUKA-stewarded tools independently, including version control, contextual adaptation, and stress-testing, without Secretariat-led updates.	Strengthened. “Maintain” is now defined operationally (version control, adaptation, stress-testing).
Knowledge	At least two regional organisations co-own institutional memory and knowledge production, with independent funding for that function and demonstrated cross-regional learning outputs.	Preserved. The survey rated this indicator moderate (3.38).
Resources	At least two regional fiscal hosting arrangements are operational, with demonstrated capacity to receive, disburse, and report on field funds at scale.	Preserved. Highest-rated indicator in the survey (3.50). Linked to Section 7.3 below.
Governance	The Steering Committee makes binding resource allocation decisions on a defined and growing set of decision types, in line with the phased authority pathway in Section 8.	Preserved and clarified. Phased authority is sequenced.
Solidarity-Actor experience (NEW)	A repeatable Solidarity-Actor pulse measure shows that, by year five, the majority of Solidarity Actors report being amplified by VUKA rather than coordinated by it, and report a relationship that is lateral rather than directive.	Added. 7/10 survey respondents named this as a missing dimension.

7.4 Governance response if indicators are not met

The Steering Committee survey did not converge on a single response to indicator under-performance: 3 respondents favoured a formal governance review with restructuring authority, 3 preferred contextual judgement at the time, 2 favoured extending the strategic period, and 2 favoured publishing results transparently and letting funders and Solidarity Actors draw conclusions.

The Framework's position is that these are not alternatives. Year-five indicator assessment will produce a structured report (publication of results), feed into a formal Steering Committee deliberation (governance review), and inform the decision on whether to extend, restructure, or activate the sunset pathway (contextual judgement). The three responses sequence rather than substitute.

Open deliberation: fiscal hosting succession

Q1. What is the contingency or succession plan if the current host can no longer host?

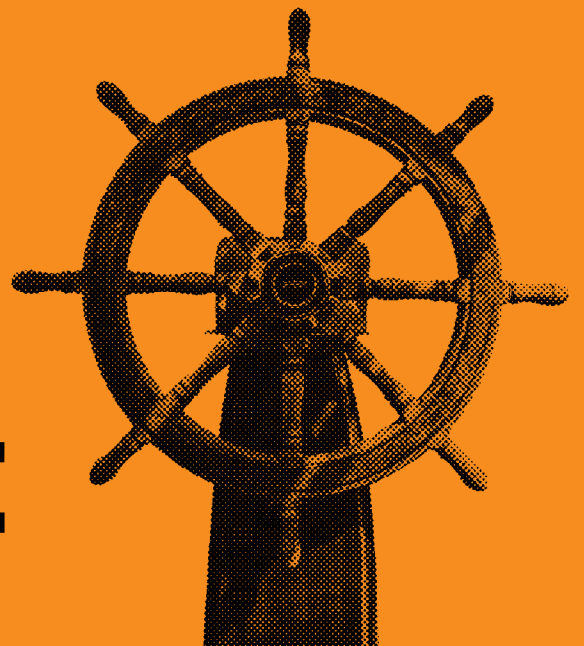
Q2. Should regional fiscal hosting be a binding maturity indicator at year five, meaning its non-achievement triggers a governance review under the sunset pathway, or should it remain a directional indicator?

Q3. Is there a case for parallel fiscal arrangements in the medium term (one global host plus emerging regional hosts) rather than sequential succession?

Res Publica recommendation: that the Steering Committee adopt a position on Q1 and Q2 in the validation meeting, and that Q3 be opened as a 2026–2027 architecture design question.

(08)

**GOVERNANCE
EVOLUTION**



The Steering Committee survey produced a clear and honest self-assessment of governance functioning. The Committee recognises that it exercises real strategic influence (3.8/5), but that binding resource authority and rotational hosting remain aspirational (3.0/5 on both). 80% of respondents support an evolution toward binding authority, but only 10% support an immediate shift; 80% prefer a phased approach or capacity development first.

This Framework reflects that signal. The evolution from strategic guidance to binding authority is sequenced, not asserted as a state change.

8.1 Phased Steering Committee authority

Phase	Decision types under binding SC authority	Decision types requiring capacity development first
Phase 1 2026	Mandate-discipline decisions (whether a proposed action falls within or outside the Guardrails). Sustainability trigger decisions (activation of indicator-review processes). Approval of Secretariat transition milestones.	Full resource allocation. Approval of inter-regional resource flows. Hiring and accountability of Secretariat leadership.
Phase 2 2027–2028	Adds: approval of Action Team mandates and sunset decisions. Approval of thematic anchor inclusion. Co-decision on resource allocation for shared infrastructure.	Full discretionary resource allocation. Full Secretariat accountability authority.
Phase 3 2029–2030	Adds: binding authority over resource allocation across the architecture. Authority over Secretariat hosting transitions. Authority to activate the sunset pathway.	—

8.2 Regional representation

Regional representation was identified by 40% of survey respondents as the single most important governance change. This Framework treats regional representation as the leading-edge governance investment for 2026.

Operationally, this means:

- Each of the five VUKA regions has substantive representation in Steering Committee composition, with associated decision rights, not symbolic seats.
- Regional representation includes thematic-movement voices, not only institutional representatives, in line with Pillar 3.
- Decision-making thresholds and protocols are clear and consistently applied across regions, addressing the 3.3/5 score on this dimension in the survey.

8.3 Thematic-movement integration in governance

Thematic movements participate in governance through three structured roles: advisory contribution to political economy analysis, co-design and stress-testing of tools, and circulation and activation. These are governance functions; they are not consultation. The operational mechanisms — including how thematic representation interfaces with regional representation at Steering Committee level — are set out in the Governance & Operationalisation companion note.

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**TERMINOLOGY
TRANSITION**

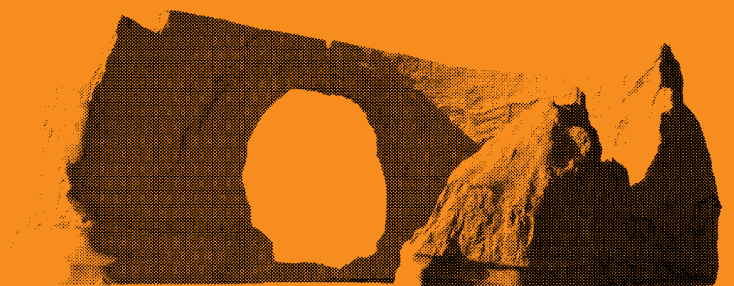
The terminology adopted in this Framework, VUKA as a Solidarity and Civic Action Catalyst, with Solidarity Actors as the relational term, is consistent with the 50% plurality (catalyst framing) and 40% plurality (Solidarity Actors) preferences expressed by the Steering Committee in the May 2026 survey. However, 20–30% of respondents flagged that “coalition” continues to carry value in donor-facing materials, and “Allies” remains in active use in legacy communications.

The transition is therefore phased rather than instantaneous.

Audience / channel	2026 (transition)	2027 onward (lead)
Steering Committee, internal governance	Solidarity and Civic Action Catalyst (lead). Solidarity Actors (lead).	Solidarity and Civic Action Catalyst. Solidarity Actors.
Solidarity Actor communications	Solidarity Actors (lead). Allies used selectively where relationship continuity matters.	Solidarity Actors.
Donor and partner communications	VUKA Coalition retained as identifier. Catalyst framing introduced in narrative.	VUKA as Solidarity and Civic Action Catalyst. “Coalition” used contextually.
Public-facing communications	Both terms in circulation, with catalyst framing leading.	Solidarity and Civic Action Catalyst.

(10)

**CONTEXT
& REALITY
CHECK**



This Framework is grounded in a clear-eyed reading of the conditions VUKA is operating within. The conditions below shape both the Framework's design and the conservatism with which it should be implemented.

10.1 The funding environment

Global funding for civic space and democracy work is contracting. Competition for available resources is intensifying, and donor preferences are shifting toward measurable, project-defined outputs at precisely the moment that the field needs flexible, infrastructure-oriented funding. This reinforces the need for prioritisation, focus, and realistic scope. Adaptive coordination infrastructure, including rotational Secretariat hosting, provides flexibility during funding contraction or institutional strain. Distributed hosting reduces concentration of financial and reputational risk while preserving continuity.

10.2 Project-based funding cycles

Short-term grants limit institutional memory and continuity. This Framework therefore emphasises designs that can survive pauses, scale down, or reconfigure without collapsing. This principle applies not only to thematic initiatives but also to governance infrastructure: Secretariat rotation enables continuity even when host institutions face shifting capacity or donor constraints.

10.3 Shrinking civic space

Legal repression, criminalisation, and surveillance require flexible coordination models that can shift visibility, pace, and tactics as risk levels change. Repression is often sector-specific before it becomes generalised. Labour organisers, feminist actors, environmental defenders, and youth formations frequently experience differentiated forms of legal, digital, or economic pressure. Integrating thematic movements into VUKA's architecture strengthens anticipatory analysis and responsive solidarity.

10.4 Repressive-context asymmetries

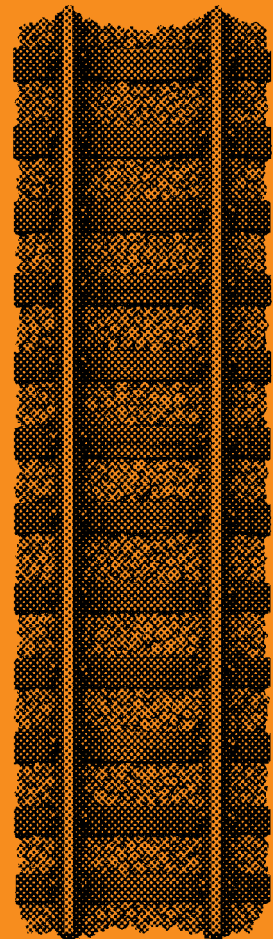
The Steering Committee survey surfaced an important caution: frameworks built around collaboration, innovation, and participation may underestimate the surveillance, digital repression, donor dependency, and physical risk that Solidarity Actors in highly repressive contexts navigate. VUKA's coordination practice must account for these asymmetries, through differentiated convening modalities, careful visibility decisions, and recognition that security and safety burdens are unevenly distributed across the field.

10.5 Wellbeing, care, and safety

Civic action that ignores risk, burnout, and repression dynamics is neither strategic nor sustainable. Exposure to harm without contextual political judgement is irresponsible. Within this Framework, care, safety, and dignity are treated as political responsibilities embedded in movement design and coordination, not as supplementary concerns. Protecting civic actors is integral to sustaining credible and resilient civic power.

(11)

**WHAT THIS
FRAMEWORK
DELIBEARTELY
DOES NOT DO**



In line with the Mandate Guardrails, this Framework names what VUKA is not designed to do. These boundaries are protective. They are how the architecture maintains the trust that makes coordination possible.

- **It does not position VUKA as an implementation actor.** VUKA does not lead campaigns, develop campaign strategy on behalf of Solidarity Actors, or speak as a primary advocacy voice.
- **It does not centralise authority over thematic assets.** Tools are stewarded by VUKA, but owned by movements. Centralised control would weaken legitimacy.
- **It does not treat regions as channels.** Regional structures are sites of strategy and decision, not delivery units for centrally defined plans.
- **It does not assume permanence.** VUKA's durability is measured by the durability of the field, not by VUKA's own institutional continuity. The sunset pathway is available.
- **It does not resolve every open question.** Fiscal hosting succession is named openly as a deliberation question for the validation meeting and the 2026–2027 architecture design cycle

(12)

**DECISIONS
REQUESTED
FROM THE
STEERING
COMMITTEE**



The validation meeting will be asked to endorse the following positions and to deliberate the open question.

Endorsements requested

1. Identity. Adoption of “Solidarity and Civic Action Catalyst” as the lead identity framing, with the phased terminology transition set out in Section 9.

2. Relational terminology. Adoption of “Solidarity Actors” as the relational term for organisations VUKA convenes.

3. Optimisation. Endorsement of “durability of regionally anchored civic power” as VUKA’s primary optimisation, with rapid mobilisation, narrative power, and redistribution pursued in service of that purpose.

4. Sunset pathway. Adoption of a triggerable sunset pathway in place of a fixed sunset, anchored in the maturity indicators.

5. Maturity indicators. Endorsement of the strengthened indicator set in Section 7.2, including the new Solidarity-Actor experience indicator.

6. Phased SC authority. Endorsement of the three-phase pathway from strategic guidance to binding resource authority in Section 8.1.

7. Regional architecture as priority investment. Recognition of regional representation as the leading-edge governance investment for 2026, with operational design to follow in the Governance & Operationalisation companion note.

8. Donor narrative on decentralisation. Endorsement of the position that decentralisation is presented to donors as the goal of VUKA’s work, not a risk to its funding base.

Open deliberation

9. Fiscal hosting succession. Deliberation on the three questions set out in Section 7.3 (current-host contingency; binding versus directional indicator status; parallel versus sequential succession), with a view to taking a position on the first two in the validation meeting and opening the third as a 2026–2027 architecture design question.

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