

How to systematically build resilience at all levels of your destination

Sara Meaney



Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it."

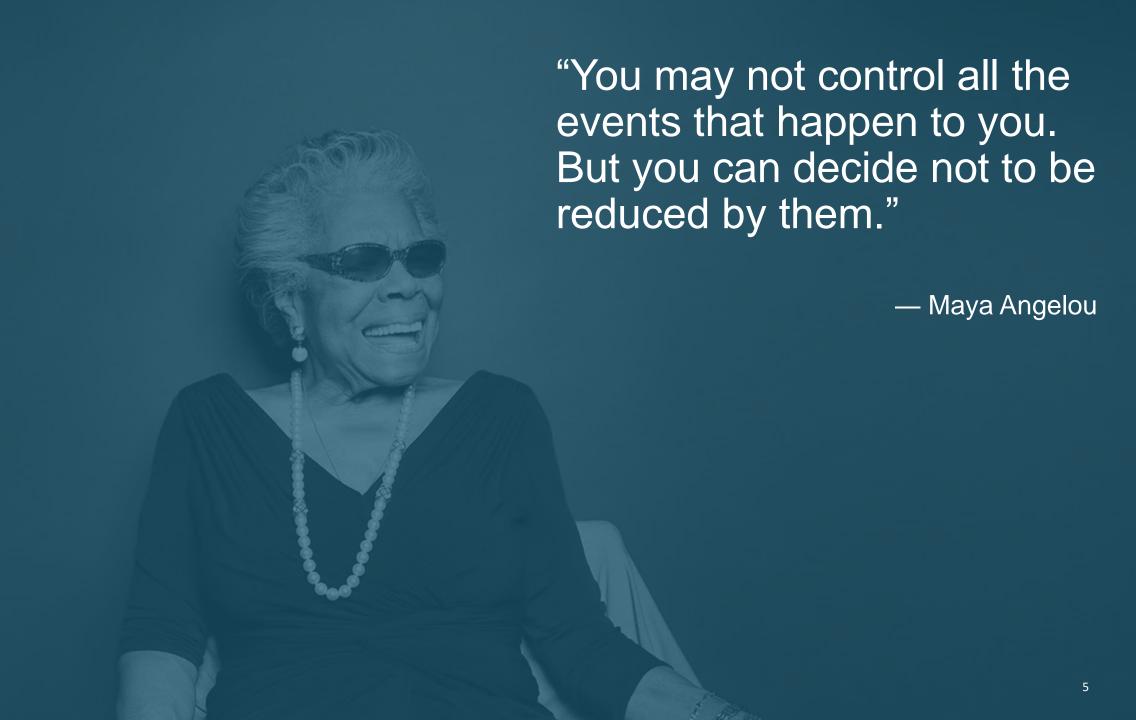
— Helen Keller

# Resilience or Crisis Management?

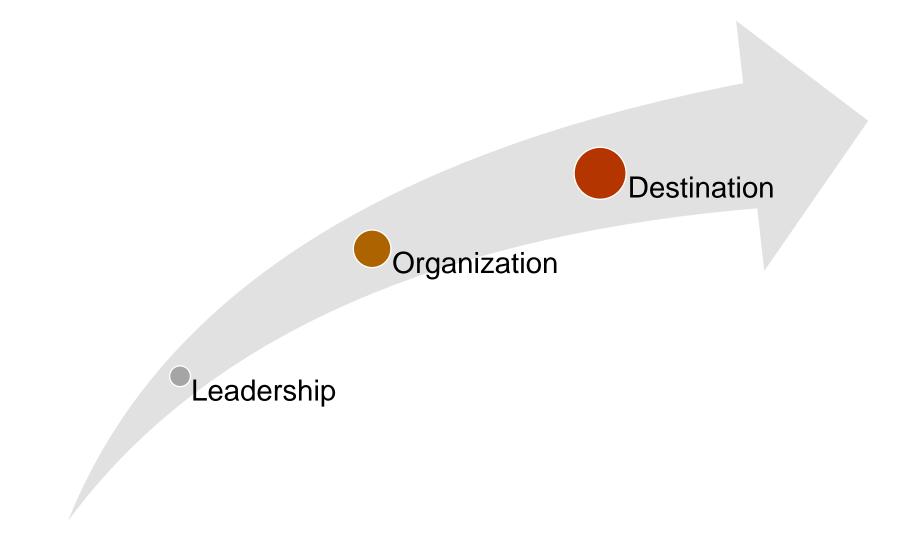


# Resilience is more like agility training



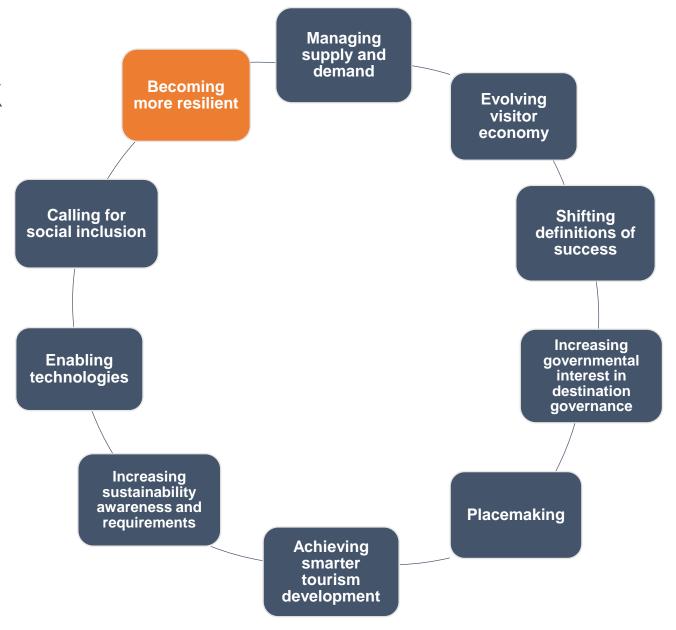


# **Building Toward Greater Resilience**

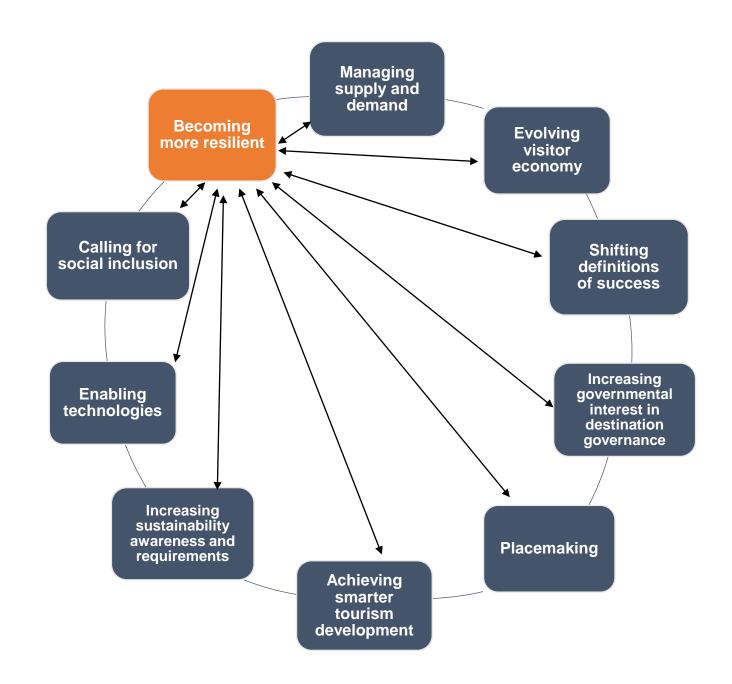


# WTTC Destination Stewardship Framework

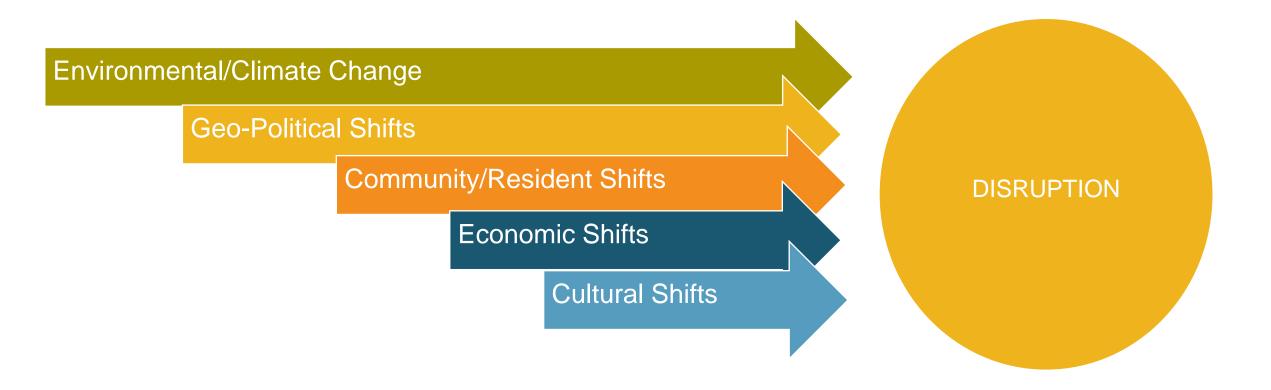
"Destinations that proactively respond to the following ten trends and move towards more effective and integrated governance models will set themselves apart, ensuring a sound footing for sustainable tourism growth."



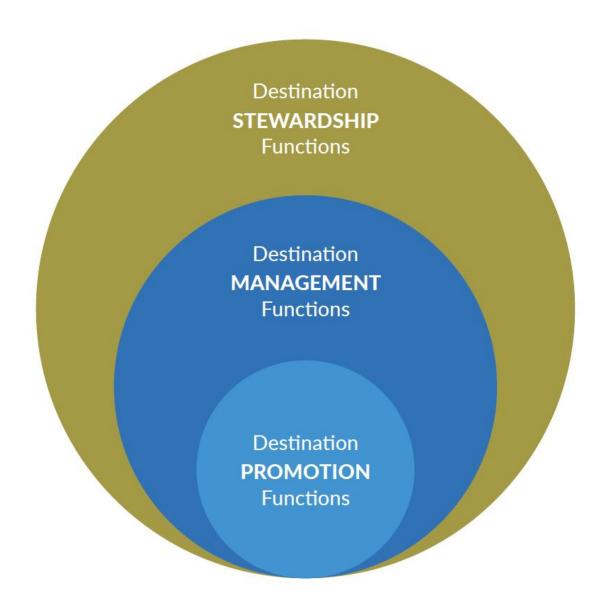
# Interrelated Activities

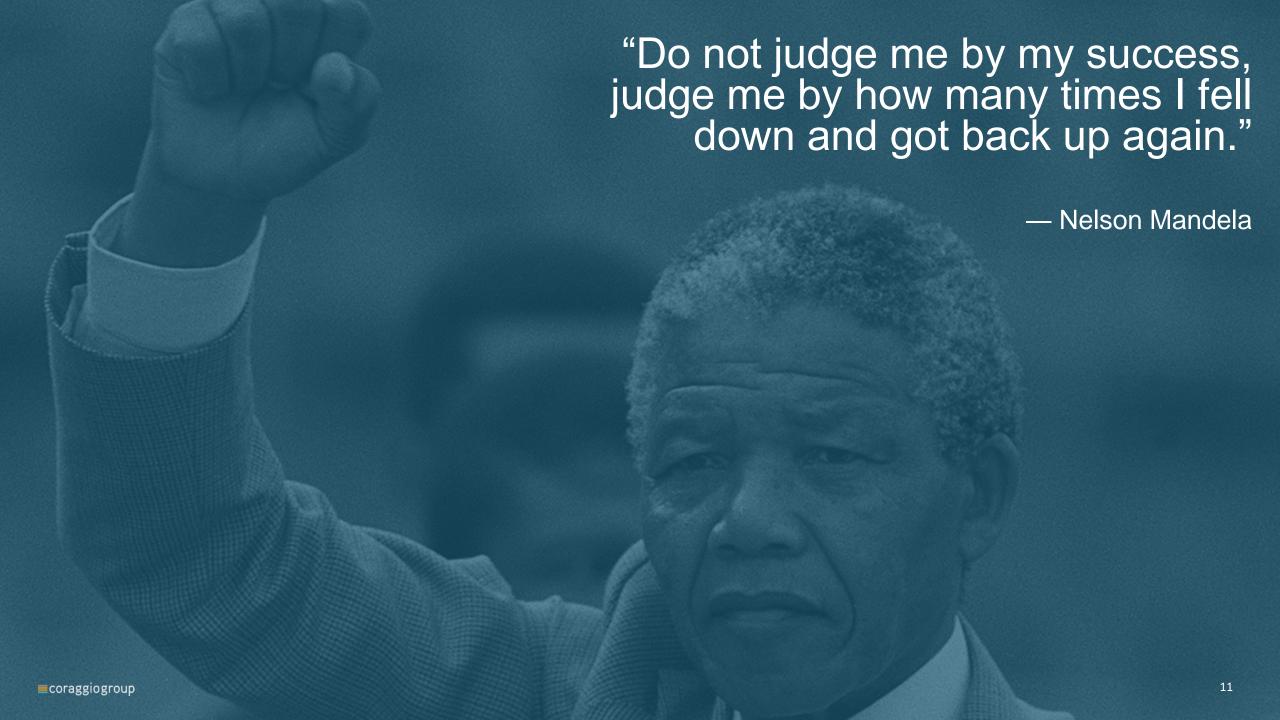


# Ongoing disruptions impacting tourism



## **Destination Organization Roles**





#### What is Destination Resilience?



Ability to anticipate and understand potential impacts of disruption



Ability to effectively respond to disruption



Capacity to rebound and adapt to post-disruption environment

# Conditions necessary for greater destination resilience

Defined and shared purpose

Clear goals & alignment

Shared understanding of balanced tourism

Collaborative relationships

# So, how resilient is your destination?

How reliant are you on the way things are today?

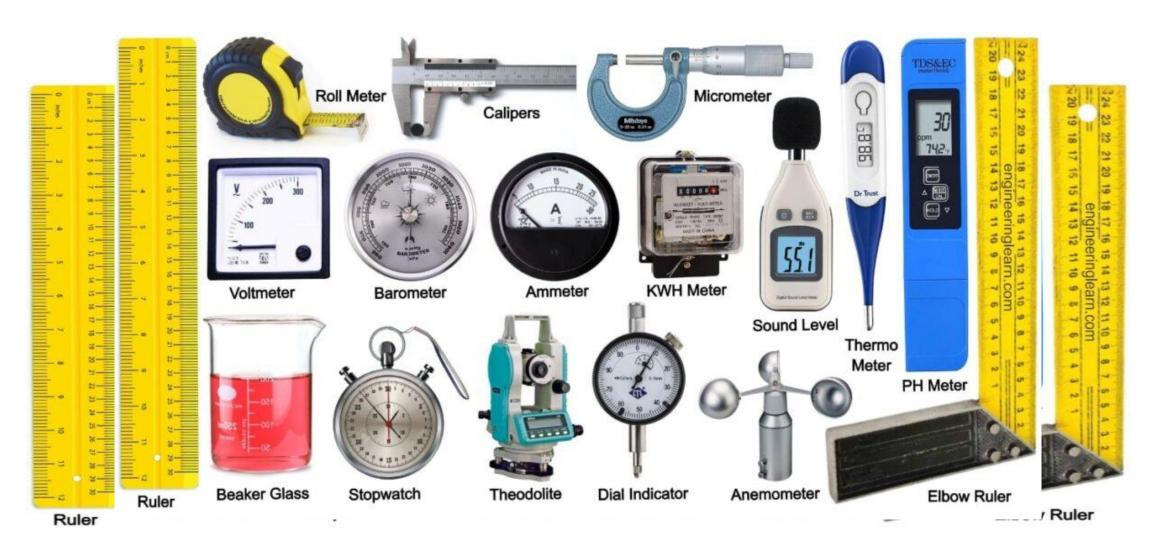
How vulnerable to disruption are your current systems, resources, and plans?

Do your current plans incorporate resilience initiatives to reduce your vulnerability or lessen your reliance on status quo?

Coraggiogroup

"You can't manage what you can't measure." — Peter Drucker

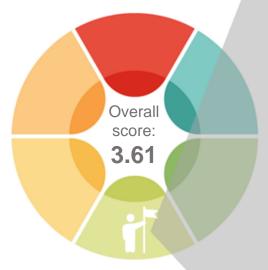
# Q: How do you measure resilience?



#### A: Establish a baseline and build from there

Resilience Assessment

- 7 dimensions of resilience
- 100+ questions
- Holistic view of destination resilience
- Specific and practical insight



Please rate each item	on a 1-5 scale.			
1	2	3	4	5
never/not at all	rarely/hardly	somewhat/ moderately	usually/mostly	always/completely
Regional A	verage: 3.	.70 <b>Statev</b>	vide Averag	<b>e</b> : 3.31
We understand how visit they may face which limit	ors travel to the region a t access or increase the	and the challenges/ barri risk to visitor safety	iers	3.50
Our organization identifie	es initiatives to make our	region more accessible		4.50
Our region has a public t during peak times	ransport service that me	ets visitor needs, espec	ially	3.00
There is adequate direct support the visitor experi	ional and amenity signagence and encourage dis	ge across the region to persal		3.00
Visitors with disabilities of	can easily access our rec	gion		3.50

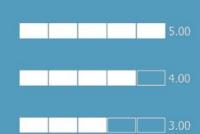
Our visitor experiences cater to visitors with disabilities

We have adequate digital services and infrastructure to meet visitor needs (e.g. Wi-Fi, mobile phone coverage, etc.)

We are aware of the desire for alternative travel options and are planning for the future (eg. EV charging stations)

We understand the strategies of key agencies responsible for investing in and managing our key infrastructure and advocate for improvements for visitors

Our organization actively supports operators in making their experiences more accessible for visitors with disabilities



### Q: How do we build resilience?



# A: Identify gaps to prioritize effort

#### **Resilience Assessment Summary**

**STAKEHOLDERS** 

**MARKETING &** 

COMMUNICATIONS

Overall Score: 3.54 / 5

**VISITORS** 

3.94 3.13 4.47 3.61 3.33 3.13 3.17

\*\*TAKENOLDERS\*\* MARKETING S.\*\* LEADERSHIP TEAM/TALENT FUNDING MARKETING S.\*\*

**FUNDING** 

**ASSETS** 



## Leadership

In what ways could you build greater resilience within your destination's leadership?

Trust

Communication

Delegation and power sharing

Risk tolerance and mitigation

Influencer engagement

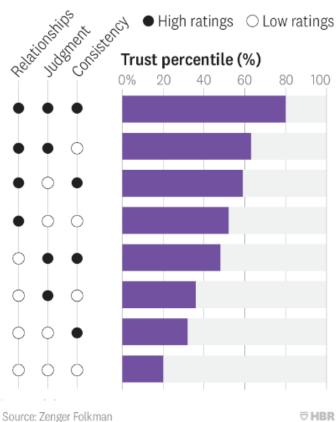
# Three Elements of Trust

### **Positive Relationships** •Balance results with concern for others •Generate cooperation between others •Give honest feedback in a helpful way **Good Judgment/Expertise** Others seek their opinions •Can anticipate and respond quickly to problems •Their knowledge makes an important contribution to results Consistency •Role model and good example Walk the talk •Follow through on commitments

#### One Element of Trust Is More Important Than the Others

Relationships seem to matter more than judgment or consistency.

#### Combinations of the three elements of trust



HBR: Zenger and Folkman; n= 87,000 x 360 Assessments)



#### Stakeholders

In what ways could you increase your destination's resilience through changes in your engagement with stakeholders?

Variety and diversity of partners

Types of collaborations

Awareness of impacts

Resident sentiment toward tourism/visitors

Community engagement in development and planning

Broad-based sources of support

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#### Assets

In what ways could you decrease the vulnerability of your destination's infrastructure and assets?

Infrastructure

Connectivity

Accessibility

Maintenance

Community amenities

Natural resources

Diversity of experiences



# Marketing/Communications

In what ways could you decrease your vulnerability to disruptions in your approach Marketing & Communications?

Diversification and variety of channels

Risk tolerance

**Budget flexibility** 

Crisis readiness

Brand consistency and relatability



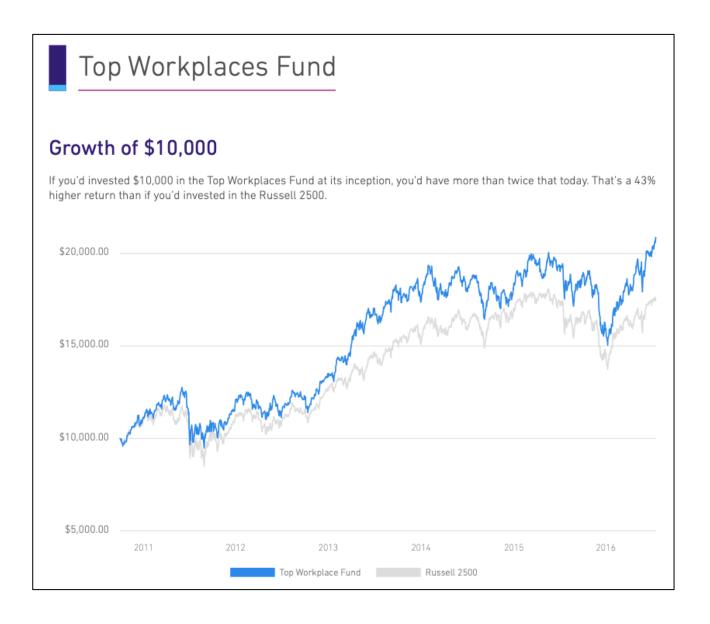
#### Team/Talent

In what ways could you decrease your vulnerability to disruption to your destination's team and talent?

Culture and values Engagement Innovation Bench strength Skills Capacity

# "Culture eats strategy for breakfast."

- Peter Drucker





#### **Visitors**

In what ways could you decrease your vulnerability to disruptions in visitation?

# Audience diversification:

age, socioeconomics, race, culture, gender, ability, origin markets, interests, activities

Geography/seasonality of visitation

Visitor management capabilities

Visitor research/insights



# Funding

In what ways could you reduce your vulnerability to disruptions in funding?

Variety and diversification of funding sources

Flexibility of funding allocation

Structure of funding access

Scope of funding control

# Where to begin?

Identify gaps and leverage strengths

Reduce reliance on status quo

Lower vulnerability to disruption of your current systems, resources, and plans

# Examples of real DMO resilience gaps identified:

#### Leadership

Resilience and sustainability planning

Lack of transparency in processes, data, info sharing

Update policies and processes to be more flexible

Achieve faster approval processes

Advocate to remove the obstacles in work and travel visas

#### Stakeholders

Stronger partner engagement and collaboration strategy

DEIA data, engagement, training

Inclusive engagement: indigenous, underrepresented

Establish responsible tourism initiatives focused on residents

Resident benefits of community tourism planning

Study and improve resident sentiment

#### Visitors

Behavior change create more responsible visitors

Expand destination accessibility initiatives

Study and improve visitor sentiment

### Marketing & Communications

Launch a stewardship campaign

Stakeholder communications plan

#### Team/Talent

Workforce skills, living wages, capacity

Tourism/hospitality skills training

#### **Funding**

Diverse and flexible funding sources and structures

Build a contingency budget line

#### Assets

Infrastructure to increase accessibility

Livability efforts

Determine resources to build infrastructure capacity

Deploy technology and access to it

# Examples of DMO resilience initiatives currently under way:

#### Leadership

Developing a sustainable tourism program – expand it as needs change

Advocacy through our association – formed a Tourism Caucus

More holistic and long-term metrics, shifting away from volume to measure impacts

#### Stakeholders

Having direct conversations and building relationships with Indigenous communities

Conducting insight-driven research into DEIA

Communicating with and educating residents about the importance of tourism

Engaging with expanded stakeholder networks

Invest in building good relationships with our stakeholders

State partners delivering on collaboration

#### Visitors

Strategies in place to disperse visitors from overcrowded areas

More advanced strategies to smooth out seasonal visitation and workforce stability

# Marketing & Communications

Have a strong crisis communication plan in place

Communication strategies for responsible travel

Keep the communication lines established during the pandemic

Adaptive messaging and assets in marketing, and working with agencies skilled at this

Providing support via co-ops to increase diverse marketing assets and messaging

#### Assets

Training programs for our new generation of tourism employees

Utilization of technology – tread map shows visitors when trails are busy

Effective federal and state grant funding

Product diversification to reduce overall reliance on primary draws

