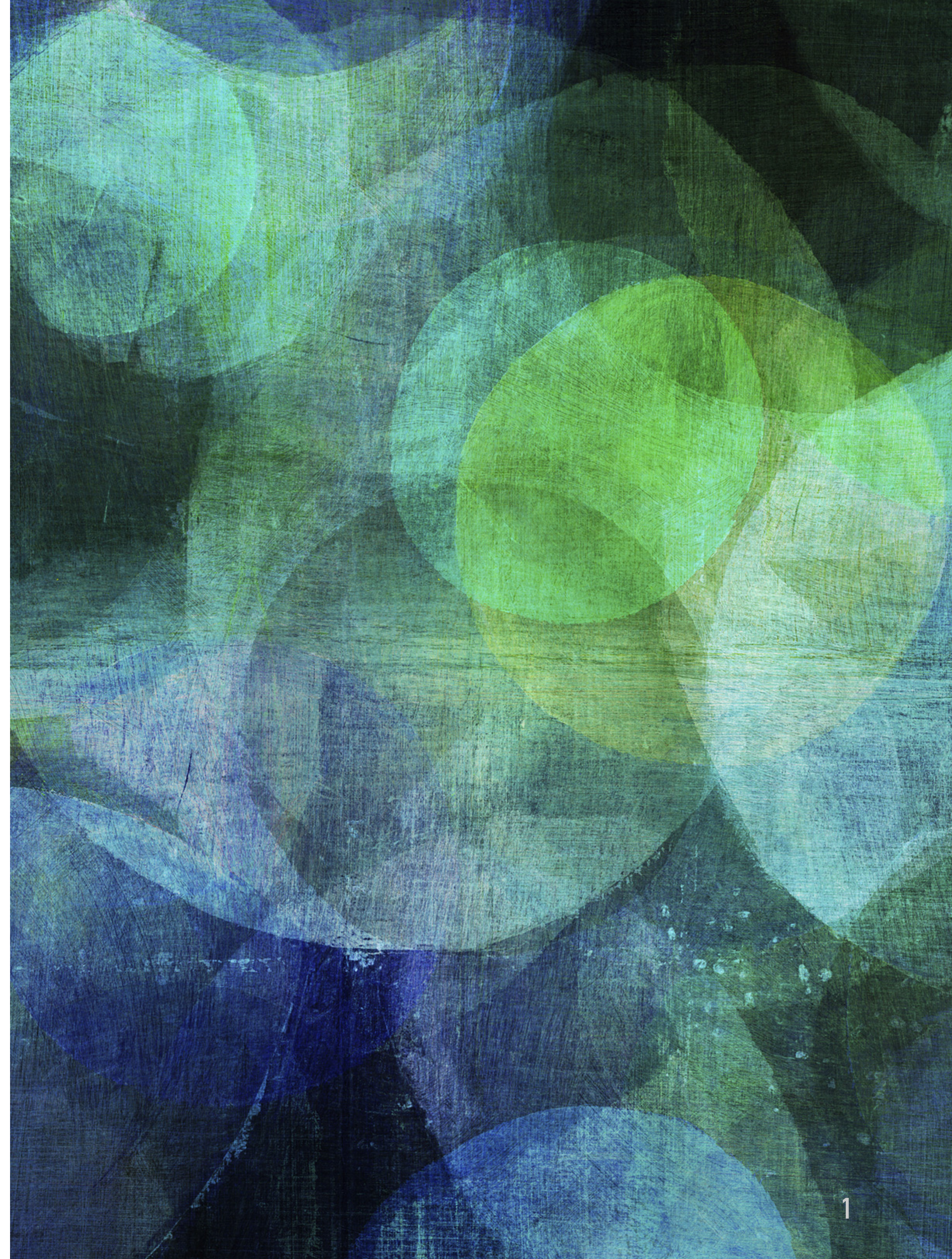


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**Navigating through Crises:
Civil Society Organizations working with
African asylum seekers in Israel**

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RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION

- Research on impact of COVID-19 pandemic on work of civil society organizations working with African asylum seekers (AS) living in Israel
- Interviews with 15 organizations conducted between mid-2020 and beginning of 2023

Organizations	Area of work	Localites
HIAS	Legal advocacy and representation	TLV
UNITAF	Education	TLV, Rehovot
Elifelet	Education	TLV
ASSAF	Psycho-social assistance	TLV
CEC / Levinsky Library	Education	TLV
The Schoolhouse	Education	TLV
ARDC	Education	TLV
KavLaOved	Legal advocacy	TLV & beyond
UNHCR	Legal advocacy and Community work	TLV & beyond
CIMI	Community services	Eilat, Rehovot, Bnei Brak
JACC	Community services	Jerusalem
ALEF	Community services	Haifa
IshaLeIsha	Women's	Haifa & North
Negev Refugee Center	Community services	Beer Sheva, Sderot
MESILA (part of TLV municipality)	Social welfare	TLV

How do organizations navigate crises?



Conditions of Context and History of Context



Crisis Management Habitus

REFORMULATING THE CONCEPT OF CRISIS



CRITICAL CONDITION:
ONGOING



CRITICAL EVENTS:
INTERVENING

PROTRACTED DISPLACEMENT

- “[T]emporary state of violence-induced spatial mobility that ends after the displaced person has found protection at a safe place” (Zetter 2019)
- Result of political action and inaction (UNHCR 2004)

CRITICAL CONDITIONS VS. CRITICAL EVENTS



PROTRACTED DISPLACEMENT of African Asylum Seekers in Israel

- Mainly from Eritrea and Sudan
- Arrived between mid-2000s and 2013 (60,000)
- At onset of COVID-19 pandemic: about 30,000 adults and 8,000 children (born in Israel)
- Israeli “Non-arrival” regime for asylum seekers: non-refoulement yet no processing of claims
- “Temporary protection” visa: no social rights



אשרת השהייה בתנאי

CRITICAL CONDITIONS VS. CRITICAL EVENTS



PROTRACTED DISPLACEMENT

- Global phenomenon, increasingly norm
 - Conventional understandings: static, large-scale, refugee camp settings
 - Emerging scholarship addressing dynamics (Hammar 2020; Kraler et al 2021; Etzold and Fechter 2022)
- >> Organizational perspective of PD in urban settings
- >> Dynamics of crisis management

REFORMULATING THE CONCEPT OF CRISIS



CRITICAL CONDITION:
ONGOING

PROTRACTED DISPLACEMENT



CRITICAL EVENTS:
INTERVENING

EXTERNAL EVENTS

- Breaking the routine work of organizations
- Pertaining to organizations' mandate
- Requiring adaptation and action

CRITICAL CONDITIONS VS. CRITICAL EVENTS



African asylum seekers at the Holot detention facility in the Negev. Credit: Eliyahu Hershkovitz



Israelis and African asylum seekers protest against deportations and imprisonment, Tel Aviv, February 24, 2018. Credit: Meged Gozani



EXTERNAL EVENTS:

Policies and Decrees criminalizing and incentivizing departure of AS in Israel

1. Opening of open-detention facility Holot in Negev at end of 2013
2. Plan to deport Eritreans and Sudanese to Rwanda in beginning of 2018

REFORMULATING THE CONCEPT OF CRISIS

CRITICAL CONDITION:
ONGOING

CRITICAL EVENTS:
INTERVENING

PROTRACTED DISPLACEMENT

Dealing with individual-level crises within AS population as part of daily routine

Within localities

Across localities

EXTERNAL EVENTS

Collective crises threatening the AS population led to large-scale mobilization

Amongst organizations

With community activists

Organizational Perspective

Balancing between service provision and advocacy

COVID-19

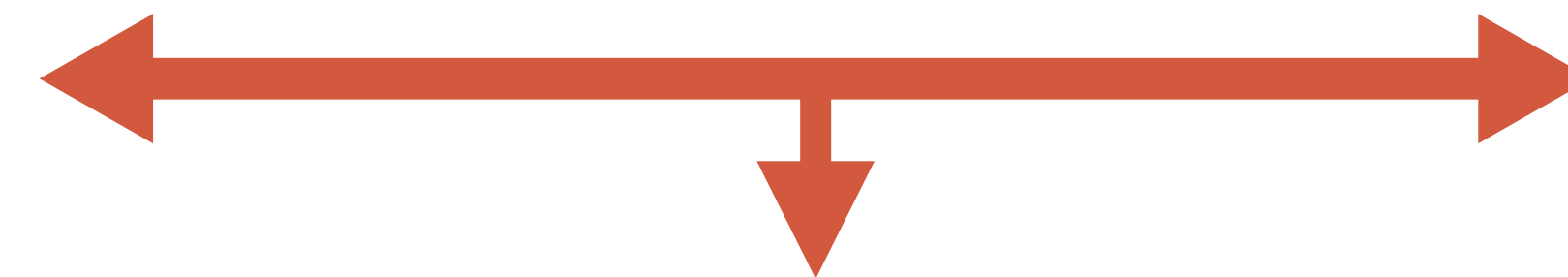
Civil society organizations working in support of asylum seekers in Israel

ADDRESSING A HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

- 'Social safety net' for a hyper-vulnerable population
- Shift to aid provision
- Adaptation of services
- Increase in advocacy



Volunteers with the African Refugee Development Center prepare to deliver food packages to African asylum seekers in south Tel Aviv, April 3, 2020. (Courtesy ARDC)



Crisis navigation develops from interrelation of history of structural context and history of practices in that context

LEARNING FROM CRISES

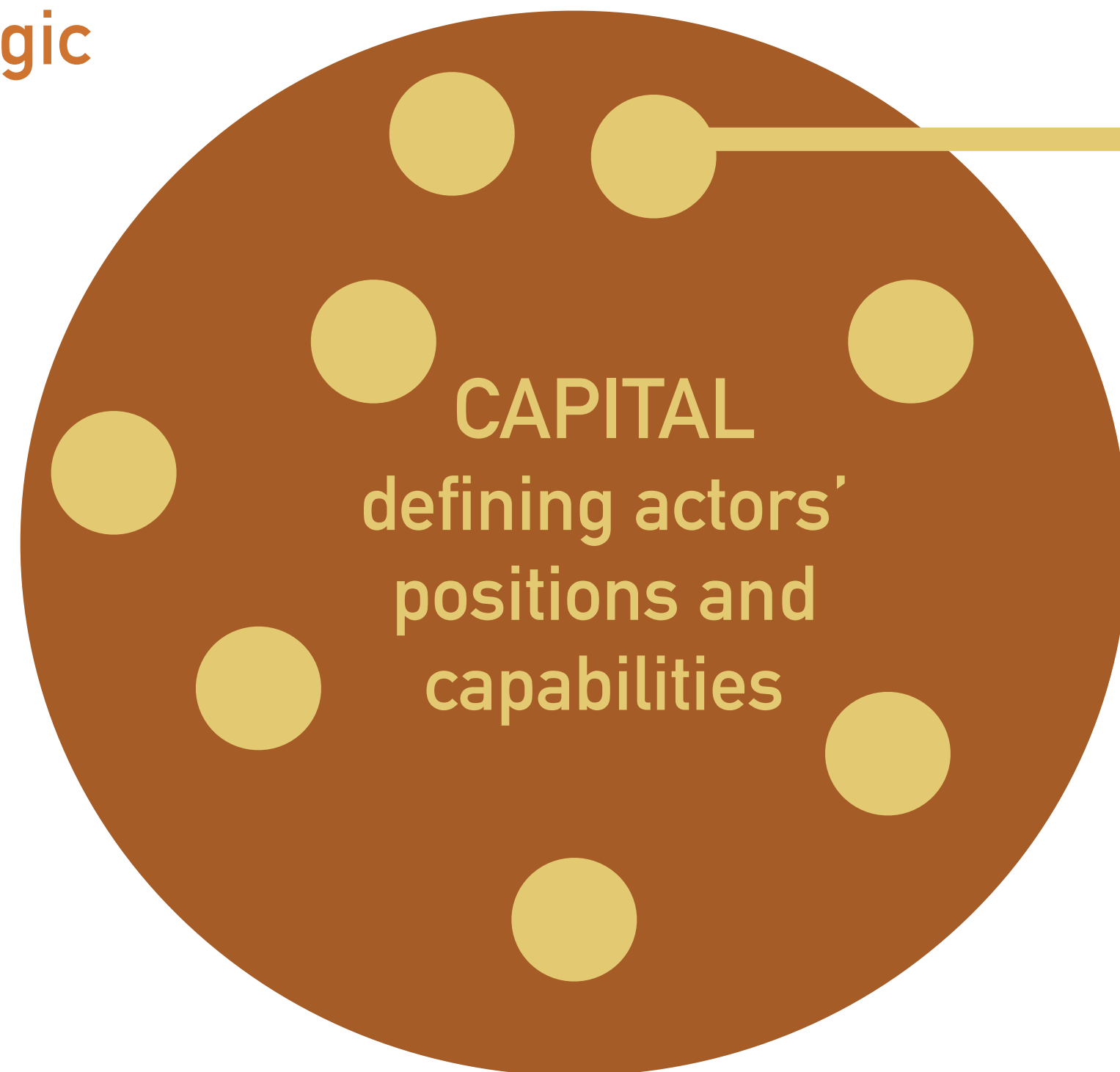
- Opportunities for social innovation and organizational development (Neely-Barnes et al. 2021; Raeymaeckers and Van Puyvelde 2021; Pitowsky-Nawe 2022)
- Importance of preparedness for resilience (Muggah & Katz 2020; Orru et al. 2021)
- Promotion of connections and exchange (Sanfelici 2021)

ORGANIZATIONS AND BOURDIEU'S THEORY OF PRACTICE

(Bourdieu 1977; Emirbayer and Johnson 2008)

FIELD

- formed by actors around specific issues
- with own logic



HABITUS: mechanism (set of dispositions)

- structuring actors' practices
- "embodied history"
- constantly evolving



Organizations'
observable practices

ISRAELI ORGANIZATIONS WORKING WITH AND FOR AFRICAN ASYLUM SEEKERS

FIELD of SUPPORT
for population in
PROTRACTED
DISPLACEMENT

- Providing services in lieu of the state
- Advocating for asylum seekers' rights



CRISIS MANAGEMENT HABITUS

produced within critical conditions of PD by

- daily engagement with individual crises
- experiences of critical events: collective crises

Organizations'
observable practices

THE PRACTICAL DIMENSION OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT HABITUS:

A SET OF RELATIONAL DISPOSITIONS TO NAVIGATE CRISES

PERFORMANCE	DISPOSITIONS	PRACTICES in COVID-19	DIRECTION/ VARIATION
Communication	Sharing information	Reactivation and establishment of channels for constant communication	Between organizations; btw organizations & municipal actors; between organizations and activists; between organizations and community
Collaboration	Working together towards a shared goal	Humanitarian aid provision; mental health support; advocacy for pandemic-related access to rights	Larger organizations support smaller ones; from the center to the periphery
Coordination	Referring to each other	Increase	Towards organizations with larger capacity; towards municipal actors; between organizations
Consultation	Seeking and sharing expertise	Situation-specific expertise; community needs and perceptions	Depending on position; Between organizations; between organizations and community activists
Campaigning	Mobilizing and increasing awareness	Information videos; posters; webinars	Towards communities and public

CONCLUSION

- No one organization can navigate crises alone, neither individual or collective ones
- Relationships conditioning set of dispositions were not created ad-hoc, but emerged from field and history within it
- Crisis navigation as dynamic of protracted displacement
- Organizational 'Crisis Management Habitus': forged by crisis and further develops through crises

Thank you for your attention!