



Beyond Survival: The Secret For Rural Communities Improved Prosperity and Crisis Management - Post-Genocide Insights

"Organization and cooperation, which are perceived as a burden on communities, are in fact its lifeline to prosperity and resilience."

I dedicate this column to Dr. Shoshan Haran, Founder and President of Fair Planet, who dedicated her life to helping African farmers. On October 7, Dr. Haran was abducted to Gaza from her home in Kibbutz Be'eri with over 240 Israeli citizens.

All smallholders and their communities wish for ongoing sustainable prosperity.

However, you can't have "sustainable prosperity" without the ability to survive crises and challenging times.

Most communities don't handle extreme crises well, and even if they survive them, they fall apart and become permanently disabled and poorer than they were before. Developing countries are filled with such examples.

All smallholders and their communities wish for ongoing sustainable prosperity.

However, the first condition for "sustainable prosperity" is surviving crises and challenging times.

Most communities don't handle extreme crises well, and even when surviving them, they fall apart and become permanently disabled and poorer than they were before. Unfortunately, we witness this too often.

Hence, rural communities require an internal "dual mechanism that enables the resilience of a baobab tree to survive crises, including extreme ones, while flourishing and prospering during good times, as a mango tree does.

Is such a dual mechanism possible, or are we asking for too much?

Do you know rural communities that went through crises?

Do you think having such a "dual mechanism" is possible?

PREDICTING SUCCESS

Previously, by comparing three distinctive community structures, which vary by their internal and external organization and cooperation levels, namely, Kibbutz, Moshav, and Village/City, we observed the link between organization level and cooperation to prosperity.

We saw that even communities organized around agriculture, such as Kibbutz and Moshav, can reach prosperity faster thanks to their high level of cooperation and organization, i.e., integration.

We further noted that when well organized, even small rural communities can persist and flourish under extremely harsh conditions, e.g., in remote, desert, and borderline places ([for more reading](#)).

The above conclusions are aligned and follow the second law of thermodynamics, as reflected by Adizes's "Law of Success" for human organizations.

$$\text{SUCCESS} = f \left[\frac{\text{EXTERNAL INTEGRATION}}{\text{INTERNAL DISINTEGRATION}} \right]$$

Dr. Ichak Adizes formula for Success, i.e., "the law of Success"; Success equals an organization's External Integration divided by its Internal Disintegration.

* Dr. Ichak Adizes is a Holocaust survivor, meaning he has a good idea about harsh times and crises.

Okay, I understand the rationale and the need for a highly organized organization with excellent internal cooperation to fully take advantage of good times and grow fast, as a mango tree does.

After all, isn't this what all successful organizations are doing?

However, I am unsure how high "organization" and "cooperation" levels apply and can help an organization, i.e., a rural community, in harsh and extreme crises.

I am not even sure that there is an advantage to one type of organization/community over others in case of extreme crises.

Is there?

Are there proofs for differences in how communities handle crises differently based on their "organization" and "cooperation" levels?

THE CRISES

The October 7th, 2023 killing by terrorists in south Israel shook the Israeli society to its core and is perceived as genocide.

Israeli society is still in a state of shock.

During the first two weeks, while burying over 1,400 people brutally murdered, no one in Israel spoke of anything but that.

But as we reached the third week after October 7th, we began looking around us, seeing the enormous challenges that those who survived the genocide are facing.

The list of mental, economic, business, physical, emotional, cultural, etc., challenges the survivors of the genocide and the rest of the population faced was and still is overwhelming.

For example, they were evacuated from their houses and moved out of the "war zone." They have lost family members (murdered or kidnapped), were traumatized by the events, and some lost their houses, jobs, friends, or businesses. They face unknown futures.

The above list represents an intermingled multi-dimensional crisis at the individual and community levels.

This is the October 7th crisis in numbers:

Twenty-eight (28) civilian communities and a "Peace Party" with over 4,000 participants were attacked by well-armed (and drugged) 3,000 terrorists belonging to the Hamas.

The civilian communities were mostly Kibbutzim but included also two Cities and four Moshavs.

Over **1,400** people were murdered, **240** kidnapped, **5,000** wounded, and over **40** are still missing. Cars, businesses, and houses were burned, some with the residents in them. Till today, over **10,000** rockets have been shot at Israeli cities.

I am sharing those numbers and information to understand and agree that the communities under attack (i.e., Kibbutz, Moshav, City) are now in a state of unimaginable crisis.

THE QUESTION

After many days and nights of hearing and seeing endless stories, I noticed something peculiar: the stories of the survivors from Kibbutzim and those who came for their help were somewhat different from the stories of survivors and their helpers from cities.

Although all people were under the same attack by the same terrorists, the city survivors seemed less sure and confident, more afraid and insecure than the overall message delivered by Kibbutz survivors.

That didn't make sense if we took into consideration that the ones to suffer the most were the small Kibbutz communities; some had lost 20-30% of their population, i.e., murdered or kidnapped, versus a magnitude of 0.1% of the city population.

It left me with many questions.

I asked myself, what is the reason for this discrepancy?

Is it related to Adizes's Law of Success and the different levels of integration that characterize Kibbutz vs. City?

Could " Success " also be how an organization/community overcomes crises?

Could it be that the Kibbutz community's "normal state" during peaceful times, of high *External Integration* and low *Internal Disintegration*, is helping it to better cope with the crisis in the face of atrocities?

Could it be that we can "design" a community for Success and provide it with a "crisis vaccination"?

I had many questions that needed answers.

There was one way to start and get some answers: I called some friends who live in the affected region and are now "refugees in their own country" and asked them to tell me their stories and points of view.

I turned to my friends and said –

I am confused. Could you explain to me in simple words why you behave the way you do and why your neighbors who live in a different community type behave differently?

You see, over 550 million smallholders suffer continuous poverty, which means they and their communities are in constant crisis, and this is before we say anything about extreme events such as drought, locusts, war, etc.

I am confused because I saw the different ways Kibbutz members and City residents reacted to the terror attack. Please help me understand the discrepancy I noticed (if you noticed it, too).

Could you share your thoughts and feelings about your current situation and how your community organization and cooperation helped or didn't help?

Also, since you meet and see other "refugee survivors" coming from different types of communities, can you compare yourself to their situation?"

I then pointed them to my focus and primary interest (not that I didn't care about them; they are my friends) -

*My interest here is in understanding the relationship between the level of community organization and **Success**, in the broad sense of the word, of the individual and the community of three types of communities: Kibbutz, Moshav, and City*.*

*Here are some examples of measuring **Success** - feeling of self-value, firm belief in a better future, having a dream/s, personal security, trust in others, business and occupational security, culture, belonging, health, education, housing, food, etc.*

The answers vary, sometimes straightforward, and sometimes I had to extract them from the person's actions.

For example, a person hiding for days under a table and is afraid of coming out of his house, versus one in intensive action to get workers to harvest the tomatoes in his greenhouse.

(*Note that a City represents the organization level of a typical Village.)

SUMMARY OF REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Words of caution. Before I share what I heard and my findings, note that it is possible that my reflection doesn't represent the majority but only the limited source of information I was exposed to.

There is much more work to do concerning that topic, and what I present here is hardly the beginning.

Yet, I hope it can shed light on how individual farmers and rural communities can improve their chances for long-term Success, which also means overcoming extreme crises.

And one more important thing, I chose to use the examples of Kibbutz and City, for I know them well, and they are far better than using "imaginational" organizations.

For our needs and in this column, *the Kibbutz* represents a highly organized with internal solid cooperation organization, while *the City* represents the opposite, with minimal internal organization and cooperation.

When you view the reflections below, consider them in their broad view and with no intention that any of it would or should copy-paste as is to other places. Take the concept, not the details.

From the beginning, it was clear that there was a fundamental difference in how a Kibbutz community faces challenges and crises, with its intense organizational structure and long-term commitment and cooperation between its members, versus how a City community does with its loose organization and cooperation levels.

Those differences became apparent during conversations with “the survivors” and are reflected below.

VALUES

Unlike the City, the Kibbutz is based on values, promoting the importance of contributing to others, making a positive change in other people's lives, mutuality, the sense of caring for the other community members, etc. Money is not the goal of life on the Kibbutz, though most Kibbutzim enjoy economic prosperity as a "by-product" of their structure and how they are managed. In contrast, no standard or unified “set of values” exists for those living in the City.

ACTIONS

Routinely, Kibbutz members (in addition to their work) volunteer for various community activities, including guarding the Kibbutz in case of need, preparing holidays and weddings, participating in committees, etc.

Volunteering and doing it regularly for others in the City is less common, is usually not institutionalized, and is not part of every community culture.

That is reflected in actions in case of crises. For example, on October 7th, each Kibbutz had its volunteer unit, and as soon as they understood there was a problem, they went to protect the entire community. In some cases, that was sufficient to push away the terrorists. In others, the massive number of terrorists (hundreds per Kibbutz) versus the few protecting was not enough to stop the attack. Furthermore, when the battle was over and the survivors were evacuated, the organizational structure of the Kibbutz remained (even when the Kibbutz was in ruins). So, it continued being effective in getting things done.

In contrast, in the City, there was the police but no extra organized force to protect from the terrorists. When the city people evacuated, they did it as individuals, not as a community, with no preexisting organizational structure to help them get things done when needed.

ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP

The Kibbutz is a highly organized community, as organized as a successful factory. Its leaders are growing from within. A Kibbutz is led by a team that navigates the community's everyday life (in Hebrew, Kibbutz means "Group"). Members of the management team change roles and are replaced every few years. In short, the Kibbutz community puts its trust in an **operational** team, not a single individual.

In the City, there is the Mayor, who brings a team that they control. The city people trust an individual, the Mayor, who is a **politician**.

When a crisis arrives, the entire community must work as a team, which Kibbutz members easily practice. In contrast, residents in a city lack a sense of community and are unused to working as or in teams, and the city Mayor faces the crisis alone (versus the management team of the Kibbutz).

CONCEPTS

Kibbutz (and Moshav) is a lifestyle designed and built "**to get things done**", e.g., get the desert green, guard the national borders, supply more food for the nation, etc. Hence, Kibbutz is a geographic entity and a "functional" one. A city, in contrast, has no "function" it needs to complete other than serving its residents, providing them the basic facilities as required and the city budget enables.

THE DOABLE ACTION MECHANISM

It is plain and clear that a well-organized community, as the Kibbutz is, and to a lesser degree, a Moshav acts better in the face of crisis or challenge.

Since "*organization*" and "*cooperation*" are imagined concepts even under extreme crises, such as that on October 7th in Israel, a well-organized community with a high level of cooperation will prevail and recover better and faster.

This is reflected in reality when, following the Hamas genocide, many Kibbutz communities and their members were uprooted.

They had to leave their homes, fields, factories, and offices, all this while coping with the loss of many loved ones who were murdered or kidnapped.

Nevertheless, the community kept functioning and did what it knew best: **get things done**.

In fact, when you think about Israel, this attitude of "getting things done", which began at the Kibbutz, has proliferated years ago to the Israeli army, high-tech, science, and every initiative and place in Israeli society. It became part of the known Israeli Spirit and its mark of innovation.

We see that "operational" organizations, ones well-organized and with strong internal cooperation, i.e., present low Internal Disintegration, are more resilient to crises.

Look once again at the Success equation above.

Note that an organization can improve its Success by minimizing its Internal Disintegration, which is totally under its control, versus External Integration, which requires cooperation with external organizations.

As expected, mainly in times of crisis, External Integration is shrinking, not growing, with little the community can do about it.

At the beginning of this column, I asked if, based on the Adizes formula of Success, we can predict that Kibbutz communities and their members are "pre-designed" to reach prosperity fast

and to deal better with crises versus other types of communities with a lower order of organization and cooperation.

In previous columns, we saw how a high level of organization and cooperation facilitated the Kibbutz (any Kibbutz) fast growth, even under extremely harsh conditions.

In this column, we saw that the same organizational characteristics also help the Kibbutz to cope better in times of challenges when crisis arrives, as did on October 7th in south Israel.

As predicted and anticipated by Adizes Law of Success –

The features and characteristics that helped the Kibbutz grow fast and prosper in times of plenty, as a mango tree does, enabled it in other times to cross and survive crises, as a baobab tree does.

Those conclusions are unlimited to the Kibbutz but apply to any form of organization and community.

By improving a rural community's internal organization and cooperation, we immediately strengthen its chances of reaching prosperity in a shorter time while we "vaccinate" it for adversities and crises whenever those arrive.

This is fantastic and encouraging news for those looking to create prosperity and protect rural communities from inevitable crises.

Based on the Law of Success, which is based on the second law of thermodynamics, as the Kibbutz did - any rural communities can grow fast as a mango tree in times of plenty and show resilience as a baobab tree in the face of crises.

We conclude that the Law of Success can help organizations grow fast and protect them when crises arrive.

Note that **nothing is more predictable** than actions based on universal natural laws.

The [IBMA 2024 conference](#) theme is *Re-Organizing The Agro Sector: Building Organized Prosperous Communities*. If I were you, I wouldn't miss it for the world and register now before it's too late.

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TAKEAWAY MESSAGE

- **SURVIVING CRISES:** Communities must endure and recover from extreme crises or risk long-term disability and impoverishment.

- **DUAL MECHANISM:** Rural communities need an internal structure akin to a baobab tree's resilience in crises and a mango tree's prosperity in good times.
- **ADIZES' LAW OF SUCCESS:** Success in communities correlates with External Integration divided by Internal Disintegration, fostering resilience and prosperity.
- **ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE:** Well-organized communities with high cooperation levels, exemplified by the Kibbutz, cope better with crises and recover faster.

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**** Mental and Economic Freedom Are Interconnected ****

See you soon,

Nimrod



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P.S.

If you missed it, here is a link to last week's blog, "[The Journey From Poverty Gorge To Prosperity Plains](#)".

P.P.S.

[Dream Valley](#) is a field-proven disruptive business model based on the successful Israeli model.

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That The Existing Reality Is A Choice
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