

Africa's VUCA Environment: The Imperative for Agile and Resilient Institutions for Sustainable Development

Professor Ukertor Gabriel Moti

(Professor of Public Sector Management and Governance),
Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies, University of Abuja-Nigeria

VUCA: Origin, Use and History

- First used in the US Army War College in 1987 to describe a complex multilateral World.
- Published by Herbert Barber in 1991
- Developed and presented by Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus in their book, **Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge**

THE ACRONYM



VUCA, EXPLAINED

VUCA

Volatile

The environment demands you react quickly to ongoing changes that are unpredictable and out of your control

Uncertain

The environment requires you to take action without certainty

Complex

The environment is dynamic, with many interdependencies

Ambiguous

The environment is unfamiliar, outside of your expertise

AFRICA'S VUCA ENVIRONMENT

- Many African countries are characterised by vulnerable, uncertain, complex and ambiguous political, social and economic environments, which require building and strengthening public institutions to find solutions to such disruptive environments.

CHARACTERISTICS

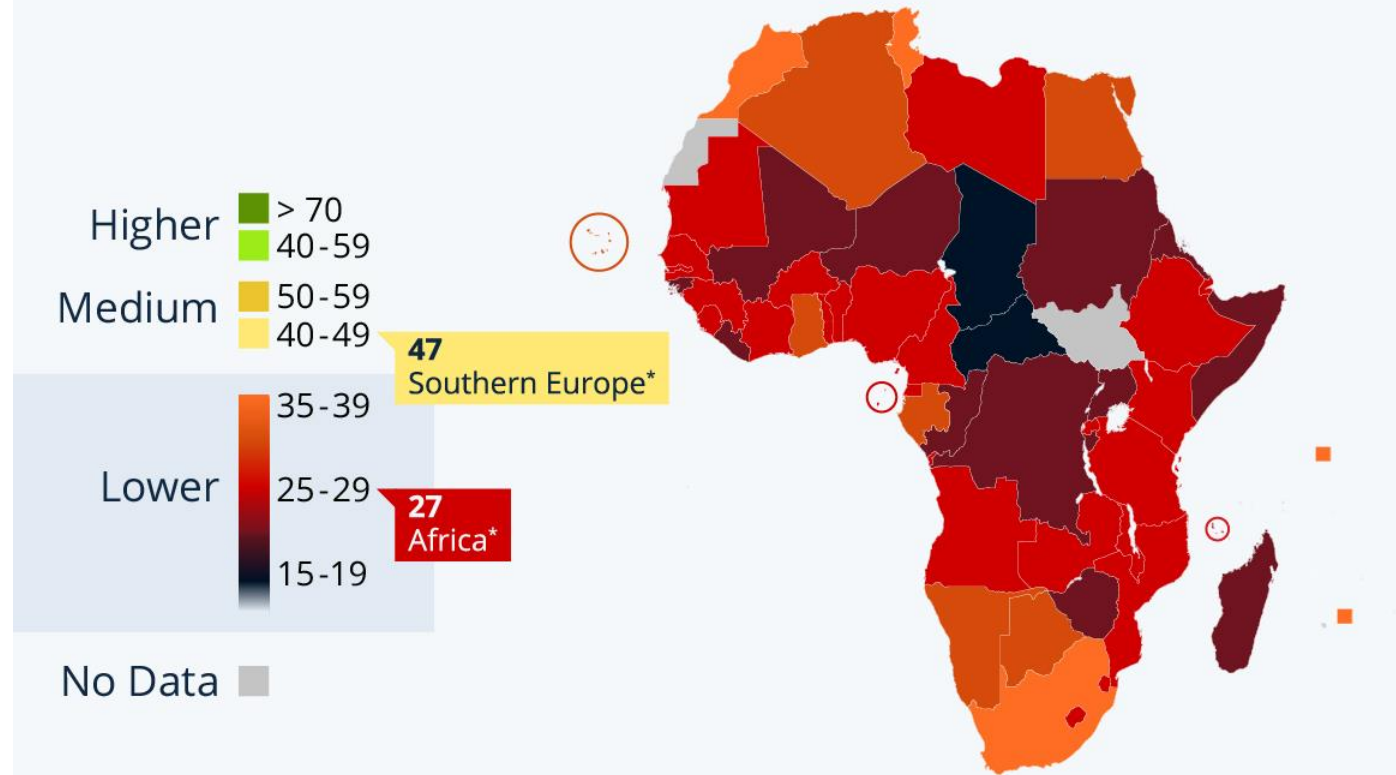
- Typical characteristics of VUCA environments include civil wars and political unrest, hyperinflation, riots, corruption, random disruptive factors such as COVID-19, the Russia-Ukraine war, and climate change.

BENEFITS OF VUCA

- A way of recognizing and understanding the complexities and dynamics of a rapidly changing environment.
- VUCA encourages institutions (states) to embrace flexibility and adaptability in their strategies and operations.
- Public Administration must be responsive to changing circumstances.

Africa Is on the Frontline of Climate Change

Index scores for climate resilience of African countries in 2022



Based on assessment of 180 countries for readiness, vulnerability and GDP.

* Averages based on 10 countries in Southern Europe, 53 in Africa.

Sources: Henley & Partners, Statista calculations



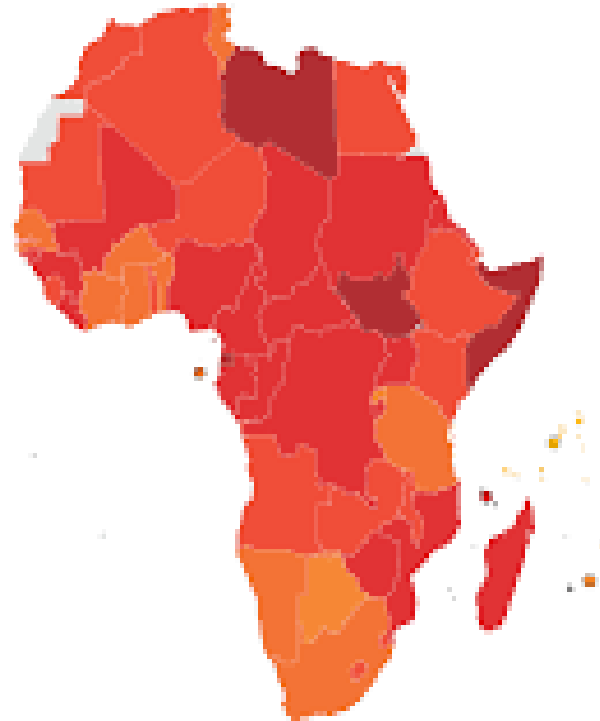
Corruption: A Dangerous Africa VUCA Environment

CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX 2023

AFRICAN UNION

33/100

AVERAGE SCORE



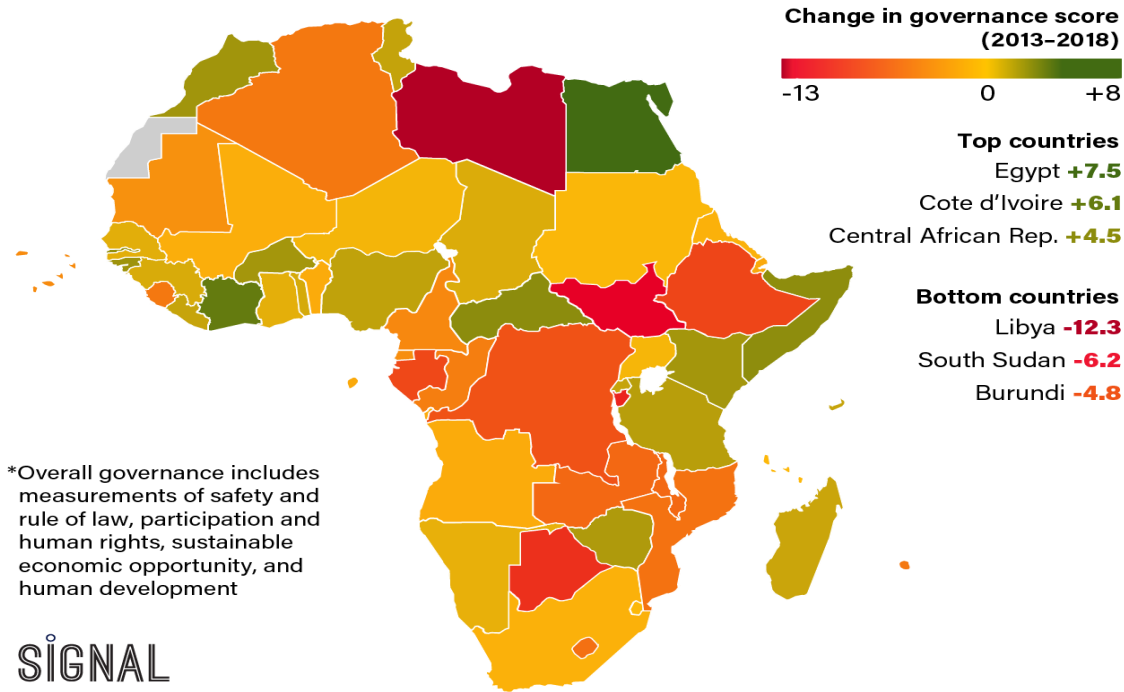
Inflation: Threat to Survival



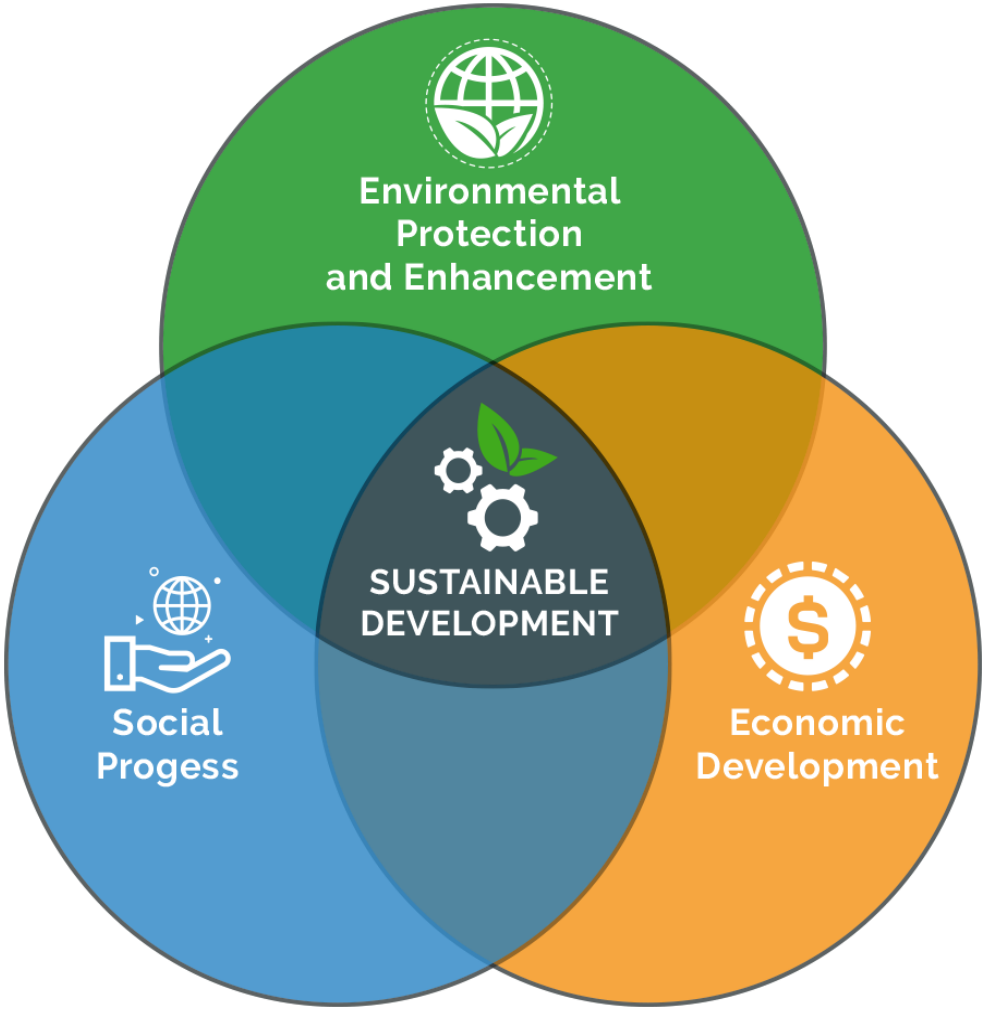
Bad Governance: A Threat to Service Delivery

GOOD AND BAD GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA

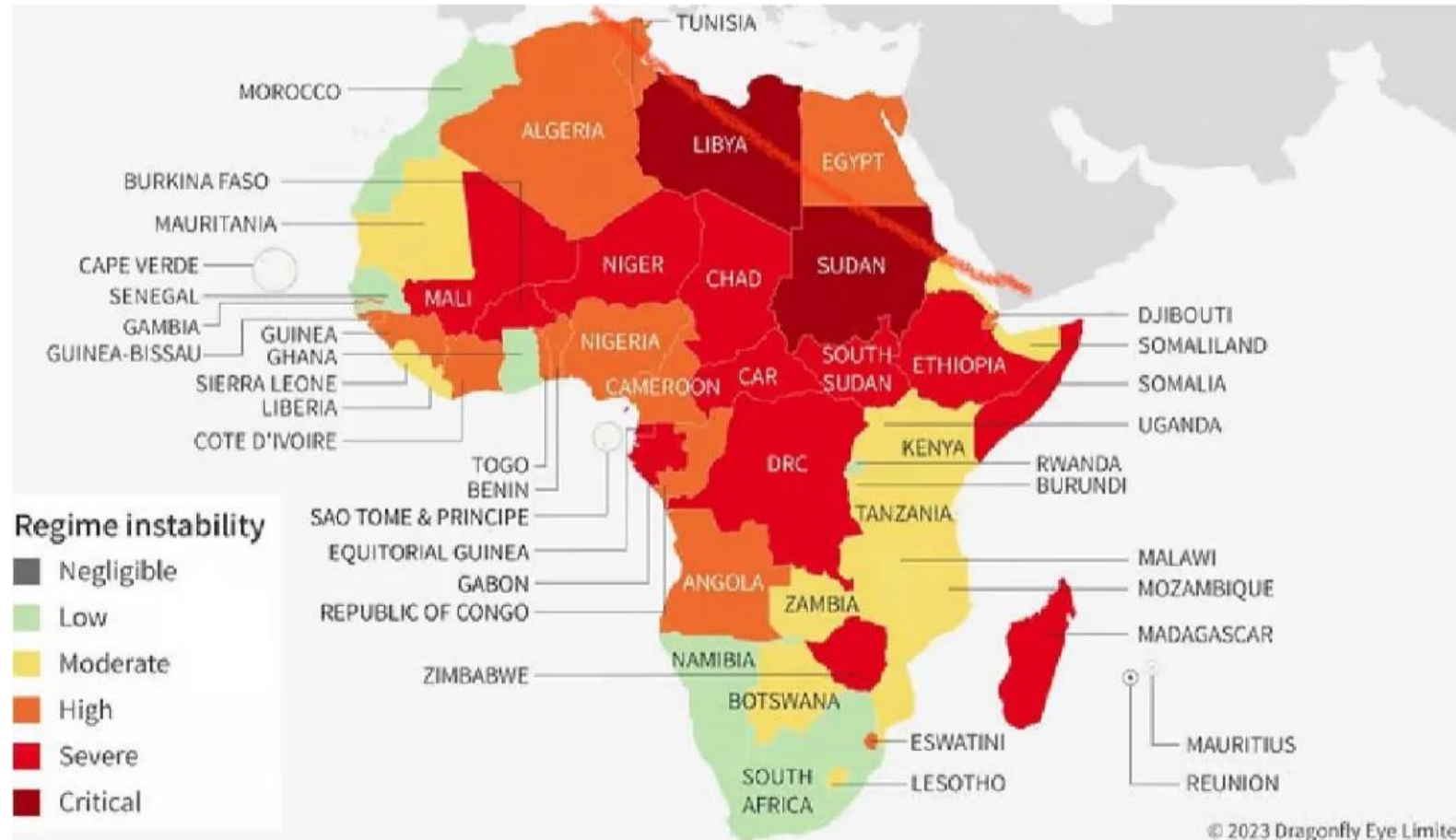
Where has governance been getting better or worse in recent years?*



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



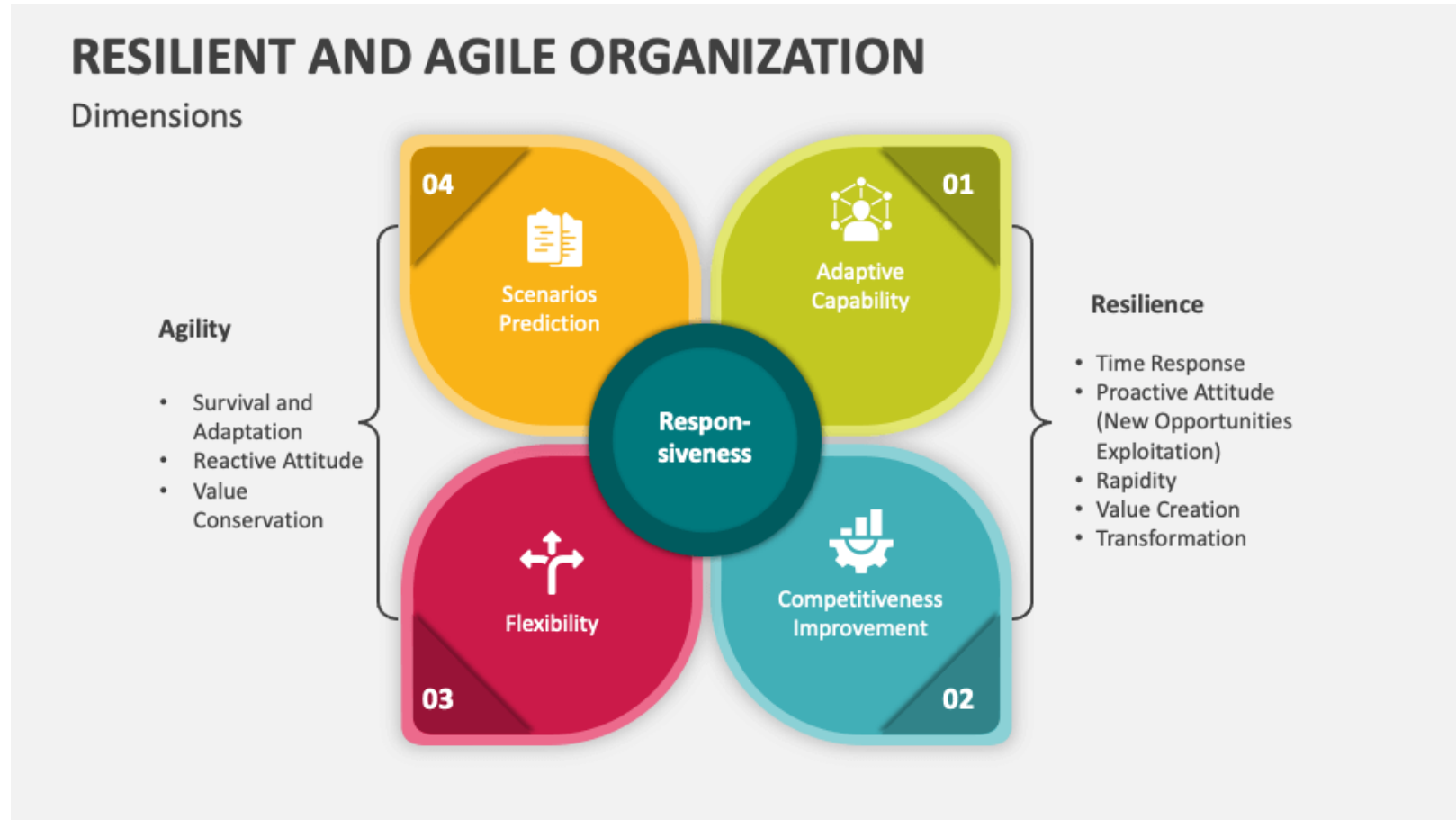
Regime Instability: A Danger to Sustainable Development



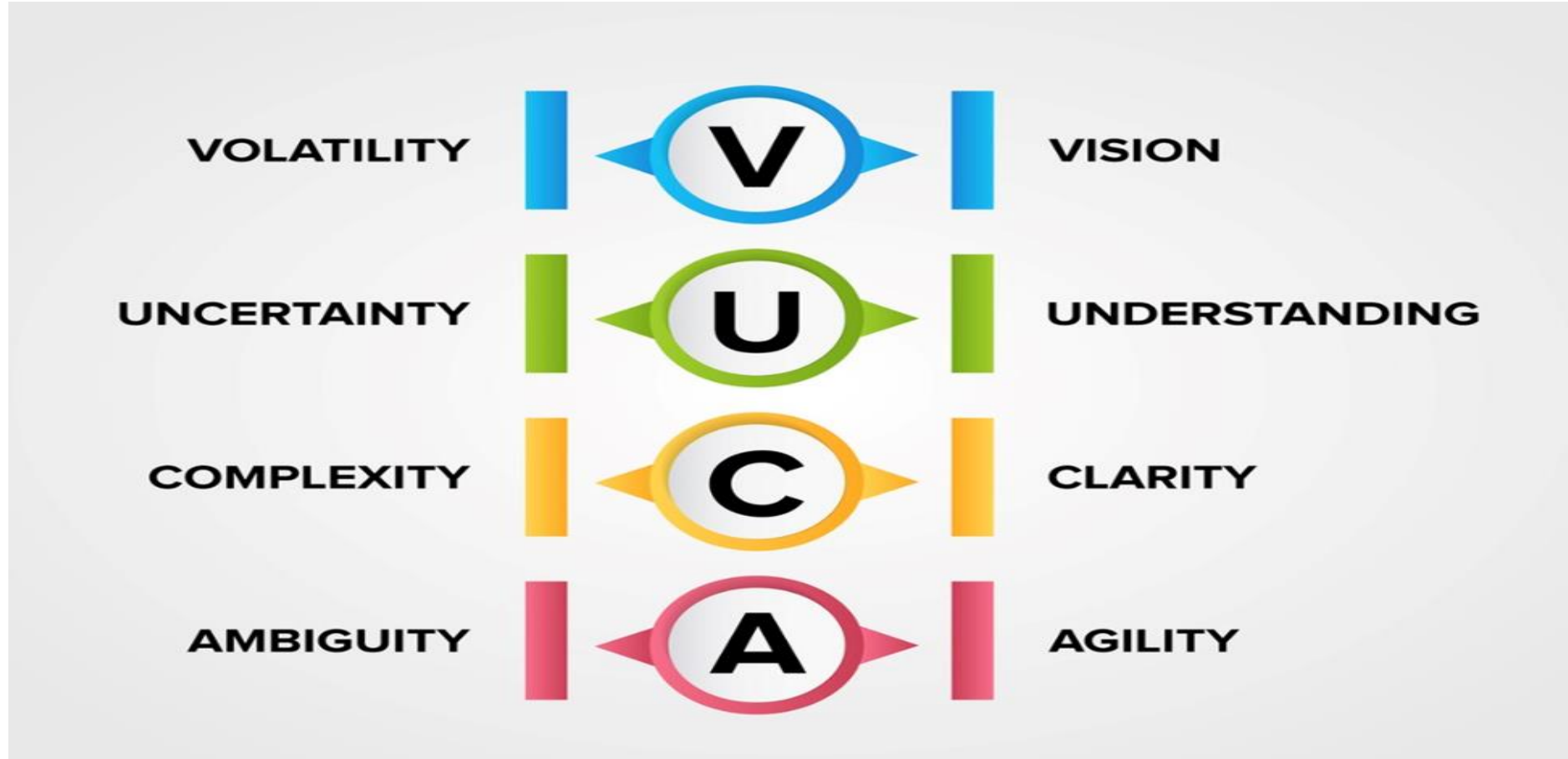
AGILITY AND RESILIENCE

- **AGILITY:** The capacity for moving quickly, flexibly and decisively to solve wicked problems.
- **RESILIENCE:** The capacity for resisting, absorbing, and responding to sudden changes and mitigating their impact.

The Imperative for Agile and Resilient Institutions



WAY FORWARD: Replace VUCA With VUCA



**• THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING ME
PROVOKE YOUR THOUGHTS**