STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT FOR EFFECTIVE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

October 2025

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After the session, participants will be able to:

- ✓ Gain a comprehensive overview of strategic communications and stakeholder engagement that supports effective and impactful project implementation.
- ✓ Understand the importance of communication in building trust, supporting project goals, managing risks, and communicating benefits.
- ✓ Apply tips and lessons learned on designing communication strategies, stakeholder analysis, working with the press
- ✓ Demonstrate the significance of having access to information while also prioritizing data privacy.

SESSION OUTLINE

1. Strategic Communication
2. Key Questions to Consider when Designing a Communication Strategy
3. Stakeholder Analysis
4. Lessons from Global Experience
5. Working with Press
6. Access to Information and Data Privacy

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Does your project have a communications strategy & a qualified communication specialist?

When you think about communications in terms of the projects you are implementing, what three words come to mind?

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COMMUNICATIONS

Is about

- Providing information, raising awareness, and transmitting knowledge
- Managing risks and expectations
- Gathering and responding to queries and feedback
- Ensuring project transparency in accordance to the disclosure policy

it is also about…

- Involving stakeholders, listening and building trust
- Ensuring mutual understanding
- Building coalitions of support / Mobilizing third-party validators
- Reconciling “realities” and, persuading people to change perceptions or behaviors

WHAT IS STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS?

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

Strategic Communications should be part of the project design and implementation process

Why do you need strategic communications?

- Enhance project visibility
- Meaningful stakeholder engagement
- Anticipate and manage risks
- Help build trust and support
- Securing changes in behavior needed to achieve a development outcome
- Demonstrating progress and benefits
- Creating feedback loops

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COMMUNICATION, PERCEPTION & REALITY

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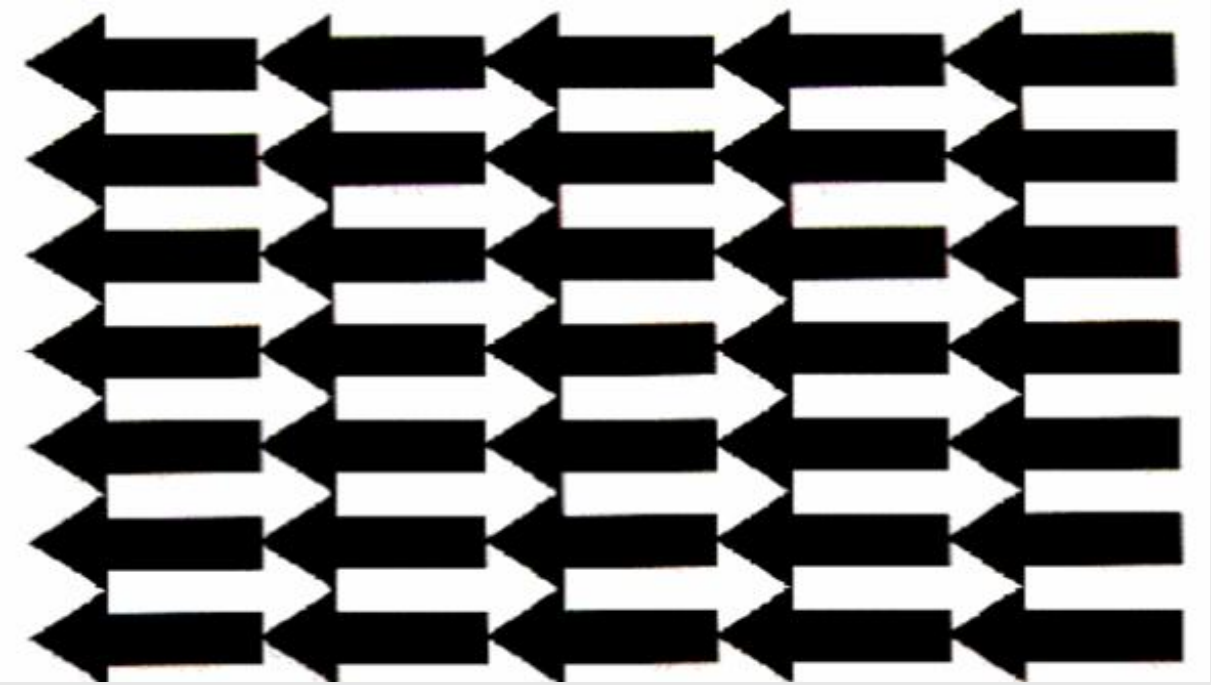

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DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

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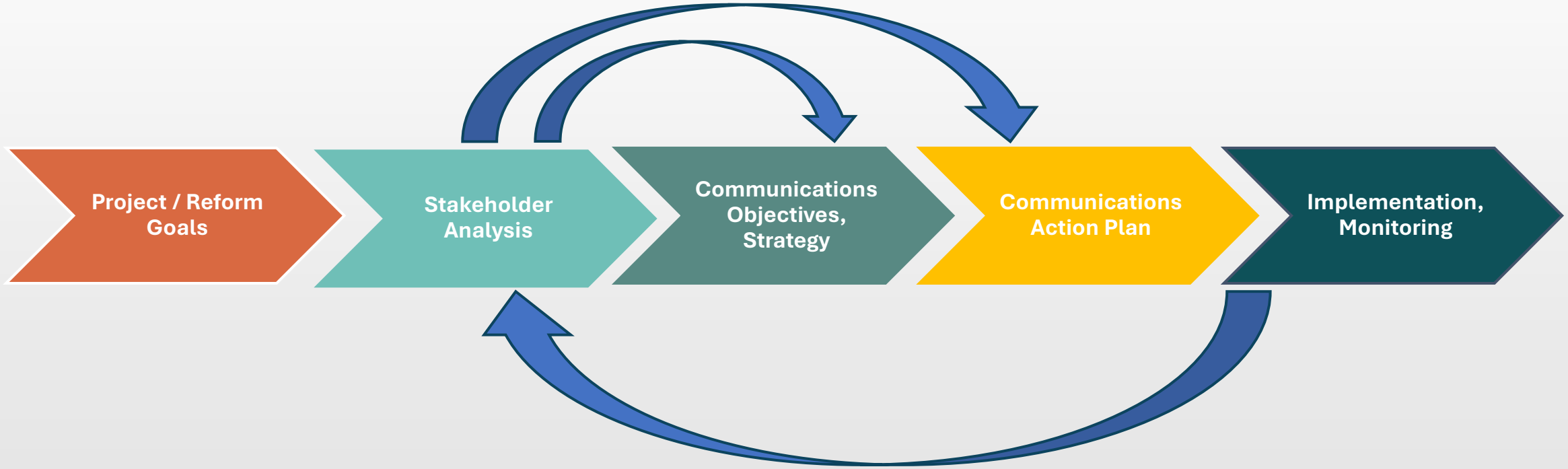
KEY STAGES FOR A COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY



KEY QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN DESIGNING A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

WHAT

- What is the objective of our communication?
- What do we want to achieve?

WHO

- Who is the target audience?
- Who are the key stakeholders?

WHY

- Why is this communication needed?
- What challenges or opportunities does it address?

DESIGNING COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY (CONT.)

WHEN

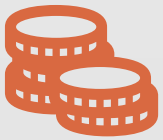
- When should the messages be delivered for maximum impact?

WHERE

- Where will the communication take place (channels, platforms, events)?

HOW

- How will we communicate effectively?
- What tools and approaches will we use?
- How do we measure impact?



MONEY MATTERS

What human and financial resources are needed to implement the strategy?

STAKEHOLDER MAPPING & ANALYSIS

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STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Stakeholders

Those affected by or interested in a project including individuals, groups, or institutions that may be affected by or influence the project

- Identifies key people;
- Categorizes stakeholders based on their power, participation, interest, support/opposition, and influence in the project, and assesses each group's needs, expectations, and potential impact
- Determines how best to involve and communicate with each of these stakeholder groups throughout project lifecycle
- Is an iterative process that requires updates based on project implementation status and lessons from monitoring and evaluating the communications strategy

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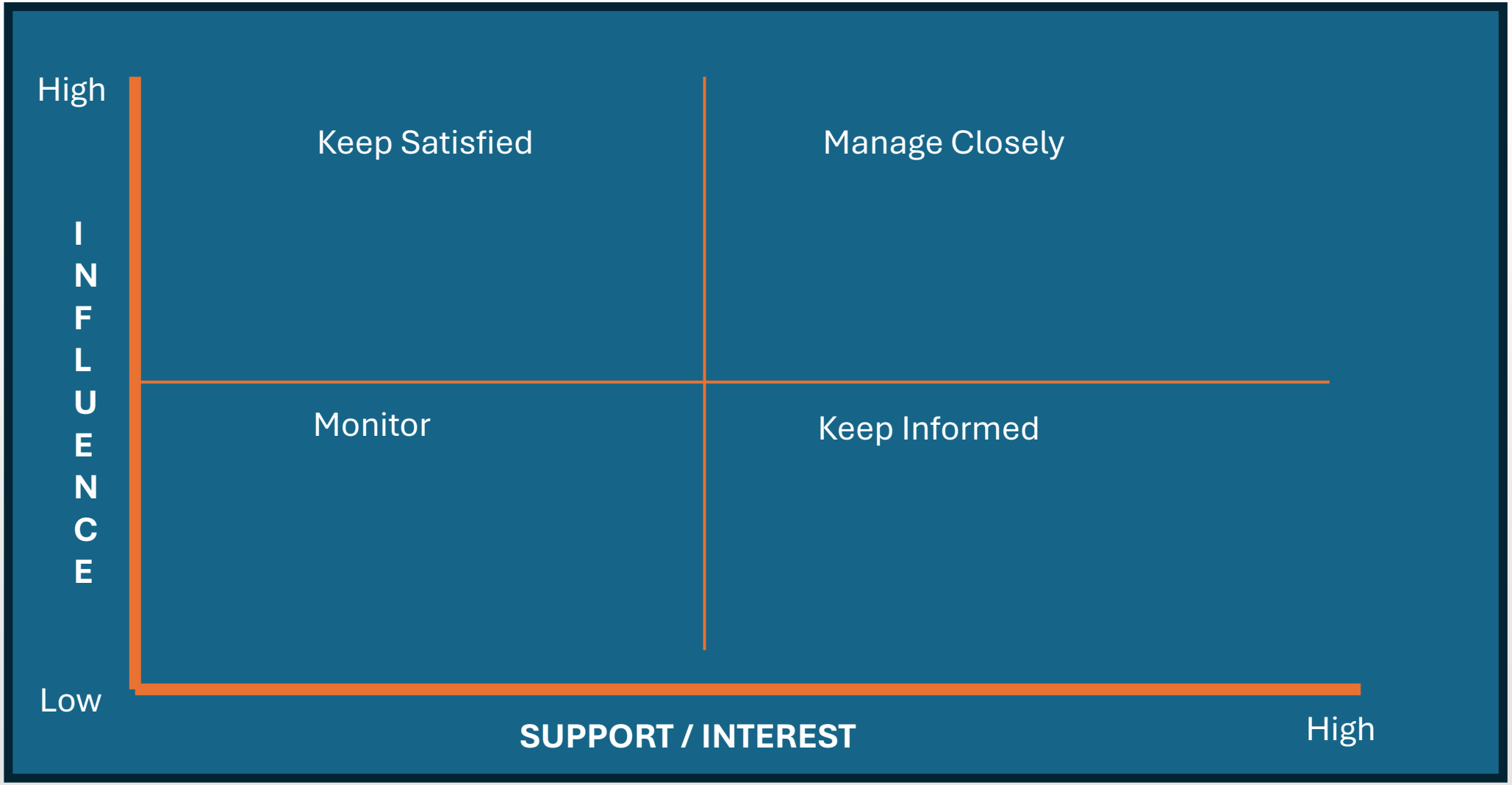
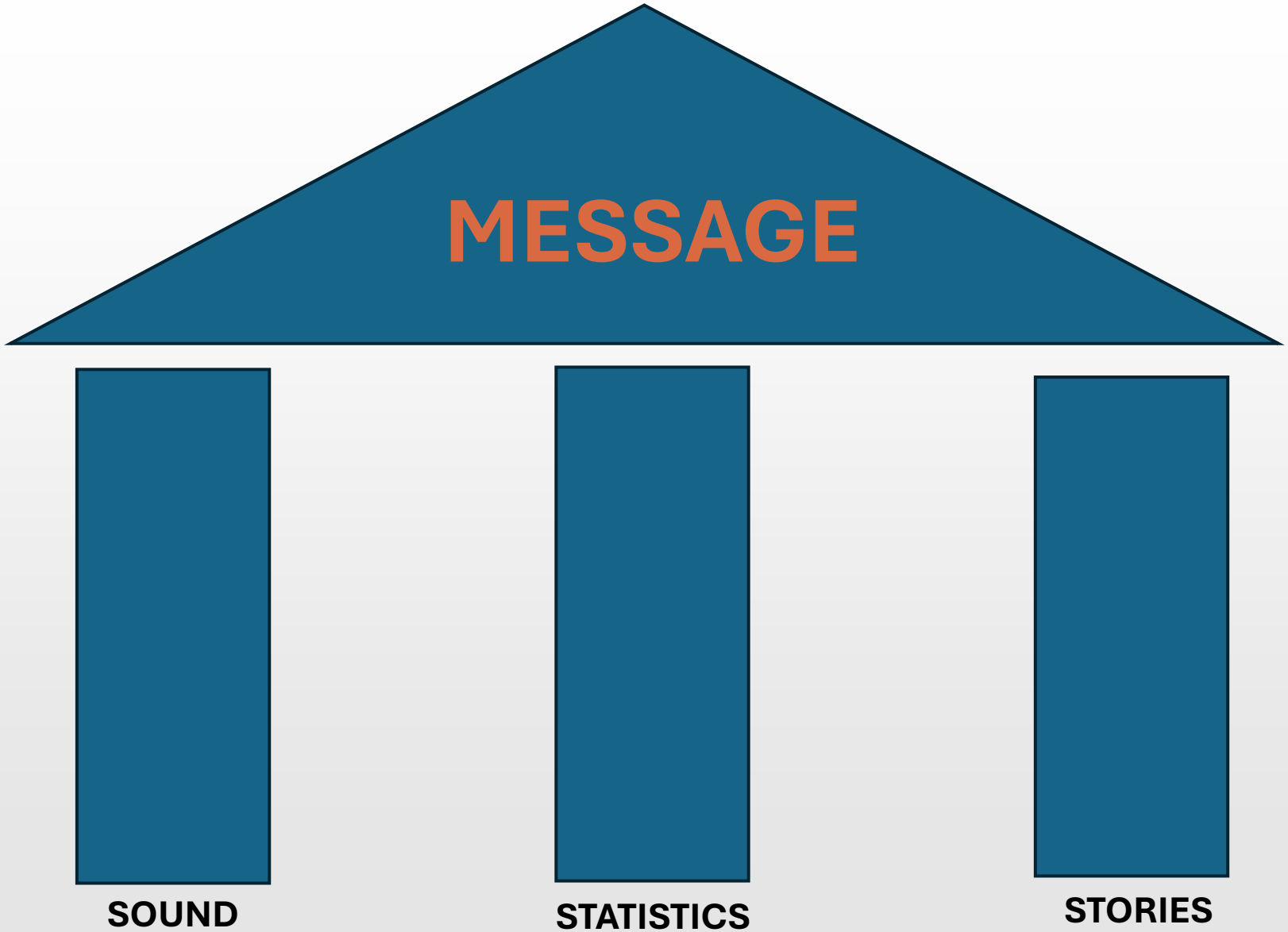
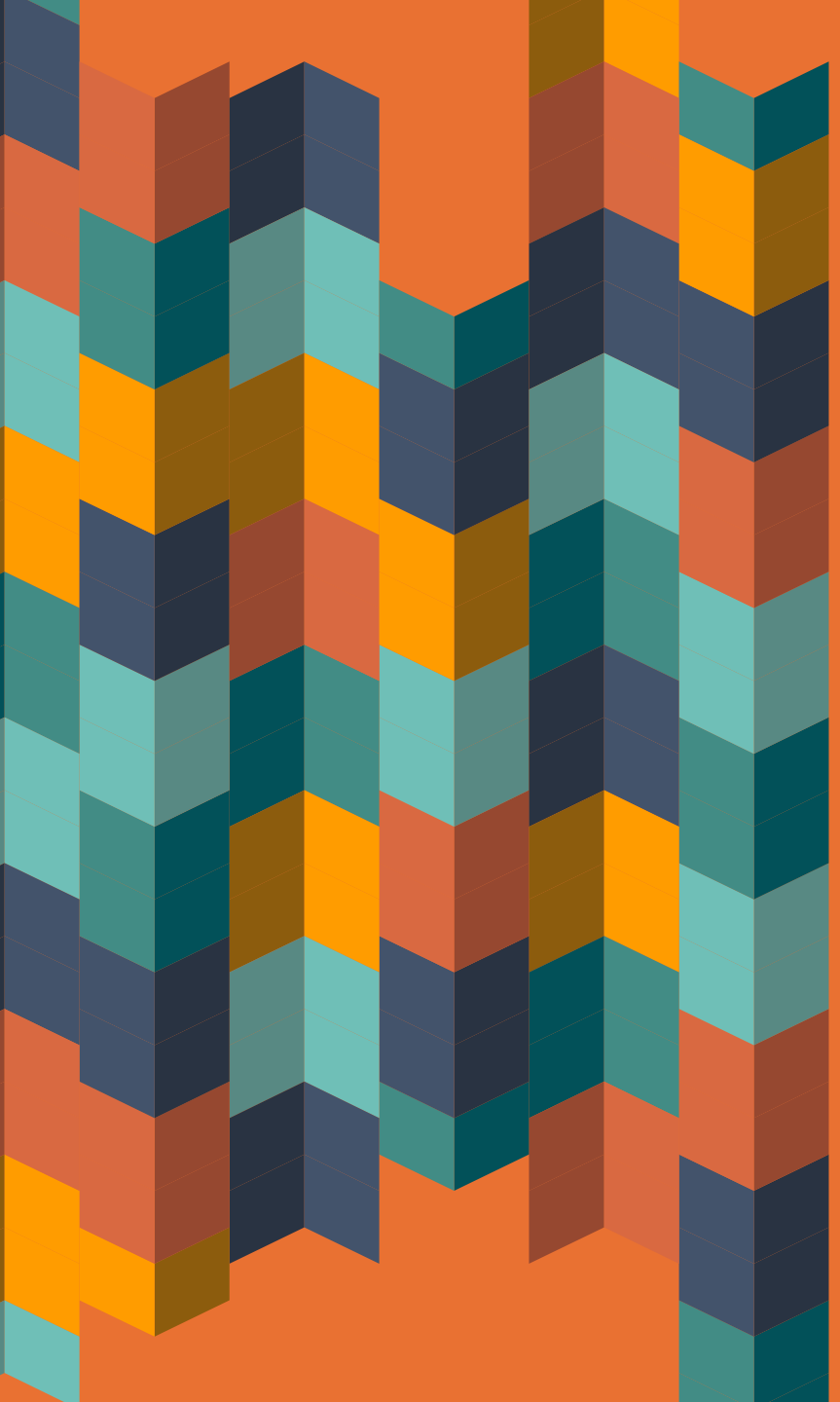
EXERCISE: STAKEHOLDER MAPPING
K-BRT CASE STUDY



MESSAGING FRAMEWORK





STORY TELLING

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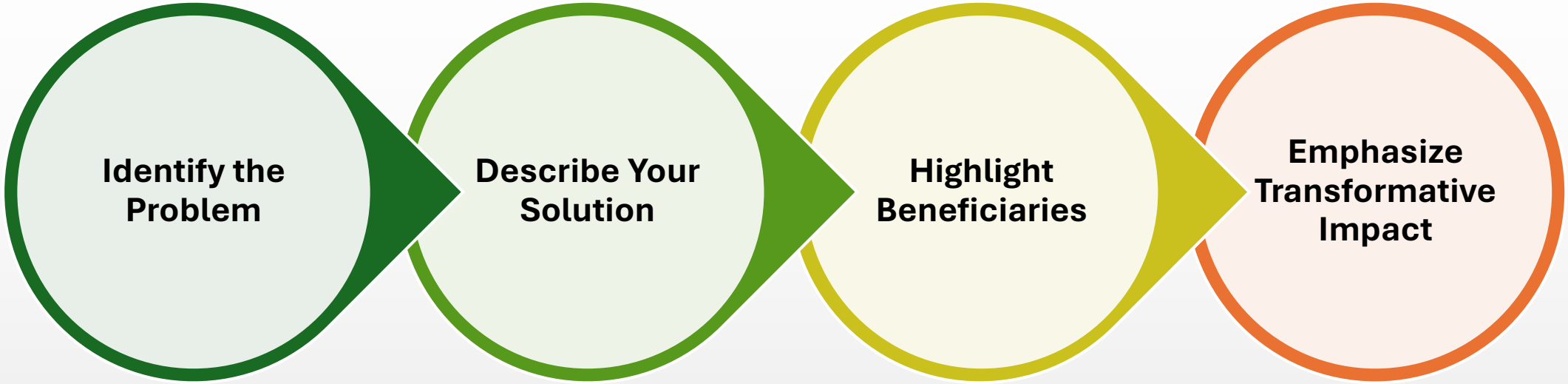
WHY STORY TELLING MATTERS

Engaging Stakeholder	Storytelling effectively engages diverse stakeholders
Conveying Complex Information	Stories simplify complex technical information, helping audiences grasp key concepts easily.
Inspiring Action	Compelling narratives inspire stakeholders to support and participate in project's initiatives and activities
Highlighting Community Impact	Stories showcase the real-life benefits and improvements in communities.

CRAFT YOUR PROJECT STORY



- Keep the story concise – be focused.
- Share personal testimonies
- Use simple language.
- Include visuals – start collecting your materials now.
- Connect to broader project goals.
- End with a call to action or hopeful note.

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ENGAGING WITH THE MEDIA

Who here would jump at the chance to do a media interview without hesitation?

Media is not a foe—it becomes one only when neglected or misused

When harnessed strategically, the media is a powerful ally that:

* Amplifies development goals
* Engages diverse communities
* Drives lasting social change

Make Media Your Friend

TIPS FOR MEDIA ENGAGEMENT FOR GREATER PROJECT IMPACT

Be proactive: Shape the narrative early and share regular updates on milestones and challenges.

Build relationships with journalists: Engage key reporters with insights and maintain ongoing communication.

Know your message. Craft clear messages: Align messaging with project goals and assign the right spokespersons.

Diversify channels: Use both traditional and digital media to reach varied audiences.

Tell human stories: Showcase real-life impact through compelling personal narratives.

Track coverage: Monitor media to manage public perception and respond to misinformation.

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Proactive Media Engagement

IMPORTANCE

- Helps **in shaping the narrative and ensures accurate** information dissemination

HOW

- **Regularly update media** with project **milestones, successes, and challenges**.

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Building Relationships with Key Journalists

IMPORTANCE

- This can lead to more favorable and accurate coverage

HOW

- **Identify key journalists** covering development issues. Engage them through informal meetings, provide exclusive insights, and maintain regular communication

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Clear and Consistent Messaging

IMPORTANCE

- Consistent messaging ensures that the project's objectives and benefits are clearly understood by all stakeholders

HOW

- Develop key messages and talking points. Identify the right spokespersons to deliver these messages

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

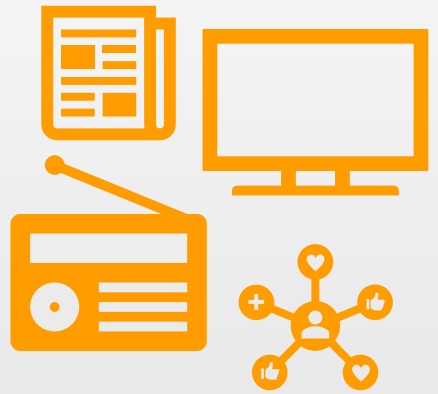
Use Multiple Media Channels

IMPORTANCE

- Different stakeholders consume information through various channels

HOW

- Use a mix of traditional media (print, TV, radio) and digital platforms (social media, blogs) to reach a broader audience.



TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Engage in Storytelling

IMPORTANCE

- Human-interest stories can make development projects more relatable and compelling

HOW

- Highlight personal stories and case studies that showcase the impact of the project on individuals and communities

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Monitor Media Coverage

IMPORTANCE

- Monitoring helps in understanding public perception, risks, and addressing any misinformation

HOW

- Use media monitoring tools to track coverage. Respond promptly to inaccuracies and engage in constructive

LESSONS FROM GLOBAL EXPERIENCE

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LESSONS FROM GLOBAL EXPERIENCE
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Early and continued stakeholder engagement is crucial
- Initial message and the right sequencing often determine the success/failure of reforms and projects

- Feedback from stakeholders can provide insights not only to inform project/program design but also to improve implementation

- Stakeholders should include not only immediate beneficiaries or impacted populations but also broader groups, including those who may oppose the project/program or support/champion it.

LESSONS FROM GLOBAL EXPERIENCE
COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

An effective strategy and action plan need to be based on thorough **stakeholder analysis**

The strategy is dynamic. Stakeholder groups' views/perspectives/ positions may shift over time during project implementation

A **dedicated budget** for communications and stakeholder engagement is key to successful implementation

LESSONS FROM GLOBAL EXPERIENCE
A STRONG NARRATIVE

- The need for change or new approach/service/reform needs to be firmly established
- Benefits need to be communicated in tangible terms
- Proactive and credible messaging timed with actual program milestones is essential to both persuade people of the benefits and mitigate the risks of misinformation
- Data and facts can help strengthen messages – both to establish the need and share results
- Different agencies/levels of government delivering the same message: consistency builds credibility

WORKING WITH PRESS

From strategy

- How is the press acting in the project implementation (supporting or opposing?)
- How do we want the press contribute to the achievement of project objectives (influencing national policies? local decisions? Views of the people? etc.)
- How can the press help us in the project implementation?
- Action plan is needed for a good press relationship (press subjects, activities, time and budget?)

To action plan

- When is media relation needed? What are the prioritized groups of stakeholders? What are the media methods (formal, informal)?
- Forms of engagement: press releases, press conferences, interviews, articles, etc.
- List of press agencies and journalists tracking the project activities: international, national, local press
- Who will be the spokesperson of the PIU, if needed?
- Who is in charge of press relations?

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ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND DATA PRIVACY

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TWO OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION

Access to Information

Data Privacy

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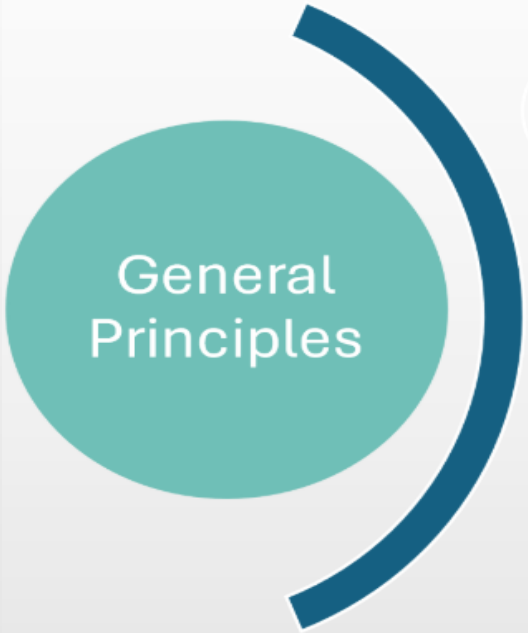
ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The World Bank's Access to Information Policy was approved by WB Board in 2010. It was designed to enhance transparency and accountability by providing public access to information about its projects and operations.



The policy aims to maximize access to information, recognizing that transparency is essential for accountability and development effectiveness.

Information is disclosed unless it falls under a list of exceptions.

The Bank proactively discloses a wide range of information, including project documents, research, and data.

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ACCESS TO INFORMATION – KEY COMPONENTS

Policy Implementation

- Clear procedures for the public to request information.
- Guidelines for declassifying restricted information over time.
- Mechanisms for appealing decisions to withhold information.

Exceptions

- Why restrict some information? **To respect the confidentiality** of clients, shareholders, employees, and other parties; **ensure frank exchange of ideas** and views and **to protect against harm** to specific parties or interests

DATA PRIVACY – GOOD PRACTICE

WBG's **Data Privacy Policy** advances the importance of responsibly collecting, using, and sharing data–including personal data

It safeguards individuals' personal information from unauthorized access, ensuring that sensitive data such as social security numbers, financial records, and health information remains secure.

Key privacy principles

Purpose Limitation	Data Minimization	Transparency
• Personal data should be collected for specified, explicit, and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner incompatible with those purposes.	• Only the minimum amount of personal data necessary for the specific purpose should be collected and processed.	• Individuals should be informed about the collection and use of their personal data, including the purposes for which it is processed and the rights they have regarding their data.

DATA PRIVACY – GOOD PRACTICE

Key privacy principles

Consent	Data Subject Rights	Security
• Proper consent must be obtained from individuals before collecting and processing their personal data. Consent must be explicit and informed, and data collected for one purpose cannot be repurposed without obtaining new consent.	• Individuals have the right to request information regarding their personal data processed by the World Bank Group and to seek redress if they believe their data has not been processed in accordance with the policy.	• Appropriate technical and organizational measures must be implemented to ensure the security of personal data and protect it against unauthorized access, loss, or damage.

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SOME TAKE AWAYS/CONSIDERATIONS

- Inclusion of a **communication component or subcomponent in the project as soon as possible** to ensure appropriate budget allocation, involvement/engagement of qualified communication specialists and the preparation of a communication strategy from the onset.
- Engaging a **qualified Communication Specialist** for ongoing projects to develop and implement a communication strategy, track progress, milestones, and disseminate project achievements.
- Regular **capacity building** for staff supporting communications is necessary
- Prepare for a **Crisis**

RESOURCES

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RESOURCES

- Access to Information Policy: https://www.worldbank.org/en/access-to-information
- Open Knowledge portal: https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/home
- Data Privacy Policy: https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/accountability/data-privacy
- Sample communications strategy

https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/2cd78cad3aee379a40e587de81efe0e9-0020072021/original/CSF-Communications-Strategy.pdf

THANK YOU!

Questions?

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